

COMMITTEE REPORT  
SENATE

FURTHER:

2/22/84

Date 3/8/84

Mr. President

The Committee on FINANCE considered SB 319

special appropriations for payment as grants to the City of Fairbanks and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough for the construction of multipurpose activity centers; efd. and (a majority of the committee) (the committee) reports it back with the following recommendations:

- do pass
- do pass with attached amendment(s)
- replace with/or adopt CS for \_\_\_\_\_
- new title
- same title and recommends \_\_\_\_\_
- and attached a "LETTER OF INTENT"  NEW FISCAL NOTE
- reports it back without recommendation
- recommends referral to \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

MEMBERS SIGNING  
DO PASS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERS HAVING  
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

John Smith No Rec

James N. Rec

V. Fisher No Rec

Bob ...

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Chairman

Chairman recommendation Do Pass



B

Introduced: 1/9/84  
Referred: Community and Regional  
Affairs and Finance

Funding Information  
General Fund \$42,000,000  
Other Funds -0-  

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\$42,000,000

BY FAHRENKAMP, BENNETT,  
AND KERTTULA

1 IN THE SENATE

2 SENATE BILL NO. 319

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act making special appropriations for payment as  
7 grants to the City of Fairbanks and the Matanuska-  
8 Susitna Borough for the construction of multipurpose  
9 activity centers; and providing for an effective  
10 date."

11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

12 \* Section 1. The sum of \$24,000,000 is appropriated from the general  
13 fund for payment as a grant to the City of Fairbanks for the construction  
14 of a multipurpose spectator activity center.

15 \* Sec. 2. The sum of \$18,000,000 is appropriated from the general fund  
16 for payment as a grant to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough for the  
17 construction of a multipurpose sports activity center in the Wasilla urban  
18 area.

19 \* Sec. 3. The appropriations made by this Act shall be disbursed in  
20 accordance with AS 37.05.315.

21 \* Sec. 4. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.-  
22 10.070(c).

23

SENATE BILL NO. 319

"An Act making special appropriations for payment as grants to the City of Fairbanks and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough for the construction of multipurpose activity centers; and providing for an effective date."

1/09/84

FIRST READING, SENATE  
Referred: C&RA, Finance

2/22/84

Moved from C&RA by unanimous consent

3/07/84

Scheduled for Senate Finance Hearing

FISCAL NOTE:

\$42,000,000

SUMMARY:

SB 319 would appropriate \$24,000,000 from the general fund for construction of a multipurpose spectator activity center in Fairbanks. The contract would be managed by the City of Fairbanks. A Community Activity Center Task Force (volunteer group) was appointed by the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough to further define the type of facility needed.

Attached is a copy of the pamphlet prepared by the Task Force, including a list of local organizations which support the activity center concept.

SB 319 would also appropriate \$18,000,000 from the general fund for construction of a Multipurpose Activity Center in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. In 1979 a group of Mat-Su Valley residents formed a non-profit organization called the Mat-Su Recreation Center Committee, Inc. to promote the project. In 1980 the legislature appropriated \$50,000 for a feasibility study. The Multipurpose Center would be used by the school district during school hours, and by the community at other times.

Attached is additional information on the Mat-Su Multipurpose Center.

3/06/84

SB 319: Section 2

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough is the fastest growing area of the State. The area has no general use public recreation or cultural facilities. Schools in the borough are at maximum use currently. Two schools will be double shifting in the 1984-85 academic year and many "portable" classrooms are in use. The time frame for school construction is at least two years. The construction of this multipurpose center, designed eventually to grow into a major school complex, will make the construction time frame much shorter when a school is designated to be built.

Currently, there are no public use meeting rooms in the greater Wasilla and Palmer area. The largest meeting room is at Wasilla High School and holds approximately 250 people. There is a desperate need for an area for large group meetings and cultural activities and performances.

The idea of enhancing recreational and cultural opportunities in the Valley is strongly embraced. The facility would provide areas for meeting rooms, athletic facilities and, potentially, presentation rooms, a focus of community pride, and use as a true multipurpose complex.

With the rapid growth of southcentral Alaska from a rural to an urban environment, the Matanuska-Susitna Valley has been left to be a "recreational and cultural desert".

SB 319: Section 2

The attached fact sheet from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District details the space and use problems that the area is working with. Page two of this memo includes explicit support for Section 2 of SB 319.

## FACT SHEET ON THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Mat-Su School District is the fastest growing district in the state. Student enrollment has increased dramatically since May, 1981, when 4,422 students were enrolled. To date, enrollments are 6,967 - more than a 50% increase in less than three years.

This growth has 16 of 20 schools at or near enrollment capacity. Following is a summary of Mat-Su facilities:

- \* Iditarod Elementary School - double shift next fall until the opening of Tanaina Elementary, scheduled for fall, 1985. Tanaina is predicated to be full when it opens.
- \* Wasilla Junior High School - double shift beginning next fall until at least the fall of 1986, when a new junior/senior high is scheduled to open. We have five portables at Wasilla Junior High now.
- \* A Wasilla area elementary school which opened this year is already at enrollment capacity. It lies in the fastest growing region of Wasilla.
- \* Wasilla and Palmer High Schools and Palmer City Elementary Schools are predicted to be at enrollment capacity next year.
- \* We are presently using 29 portable classrooms districtwide.

According to national statistics, Alaska is the fastest growing state in the union, and the Mat-Su Borough is the fastest growing region in Alaska. The bulk of the new population is settling in the Wasilla area, which is over-taxing schools and social service agencies. In the last 15 months we have accumulated \$70 million in bonded indebtedness for school construction. At present, we are at bonded capacity. The need for state grants to accommodate new school construction for the Mat-Su School District is critical.

Since Mat-Su has more affordable housing than Anchorage, the area is attracting young families which generally have two or more children, and this rapid growth is expected to increase this summer. The district's greatest enrollments are occurring at the elementary school level, particularly in kindergarten. Our core area elementary schools are tremendously impacted, and there is presently one junior and one senior high in the Wasilla area that absorb graduating sixth graders from five elementary schools.

Also hard hit is the school district budget, which is \$37.6 million for the current fiscal year. Next year's proposed budget is \$50.6 million, which is a dramatic increase to local taxpayers. The Mat-Su Borough Assembly has passed a resolution on the amount they will fund the district next year. That amount falls far short of the money needed to hire new teachers, purchase materials and cover operating expenses. Unfortunately, a large increase in the construction of single family dwellings does not increase the Borough's assessed valuation in proportion to the costs of educating the new students.

FACT SHEET, PAGE 2

It is crucial that the State of Alaska review a provision to aid areas which are experiencing extreme growth. This growth not only affects schools, it burdens social service agencies, state trooper offices and the courts. As a school district, we ask your support for all legislation which will alleviate some of the costs of educating children. We view education as a statewide issue, and support like legislation for other districts which are overburdened with population growth.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District supports Senate Bill No.319 for a multi-purpose activity center to be built in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. A recently completed census reveals that the Borough population has increased 70% since 1981. The unprecedented growth in population and the fact that the Borough has reached its maximum recommended bonding capacity has put a tremendous burden on the present school facilities for recreational and community meetings. The various public schools in the Borough are the primary focal point for community activities and recreational pastimes. Ironically at the same time the community is requesting more time for using the schools for non-school activities, the school facilities are becoming less available because of overcrowded schools, double-shifting, and budget constraints.

The District is convinced that there would be a mutual advantage in the building of the multi-purpose activity center. By building a needed secondary school on the same land as the activity center millions of dollars could be saved. The secondary school could utilize the activity center for their P.E. and fine arts programs and not have to duplicate those expensive features or buy the land.

Also, the people would begin to identify themselves with a regional concept rather than just the neighborhood school concept which the present smaller facility use seems to foster. This is a very important concept in an area of rapid growth where a community suffers from an identity crisis encouraged by commuting and the hectic pace of contemporary living standards. A regional activity center large enough to accommodate the needs of the people would polarize many facets of the community including sports clubs, civic organizations, local promotions of special events, and the public as individuals with special interests.

In summary, the Mat-Su School District enthusiastically supports Senate Bill No. 319 because it has the potential to serve the recreational and cultural interests of the community and to aid the District in fostering quality education at affordable prices through development of a multi-use concept.

Gordon C. Tope  
Superintendent  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District



**A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER FOR FAIRBANKS**

**A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER  
FOR FAIRBANKS TO MEET A VARIETY  
OF COMMUNITY NEEDS?**

**MANY RESIDENTS DO SEEM TO SUPPORT  
THIS IDEA, BUT.....**

**LET'S MAKE SURE WE PLAN AHEAD  
CAREFULLY  
TO CONFIRM THE REAL COMMUNITY NEEDS  
FOR THIS CENTER,  
TO CLARIFY WHAT FACILITIES  
THE CENTER SHOULD CONTAIN, AND  
HOW MUCH THIS WILL COST.  
THEN WE CAN MOVE AHEAD  
WITH CONFIDENCE!**

# WE

the groups and organizations indicated on the adjacent page, are representative of the organizations that have pledged their support to the concept of a Community Activity Center in Fairbanks. We believe that careful planning of this center now in response to the current and future needs of our citizen will result in the construction and operation of the proper facility at the right time in the correct location for the betterment of our community.

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## SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

The Local organizations listed below have submitted letters of endorsement for the concept of the Community Activity Center.

Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce	Fairbanks Convention & Visitors Bureau
Fairbanks Drama Association	Fairbanks Native Association
Fairbanks Light Opera Theatre	Fort Wainwright Commanding Officer, Col. Fraser Driver
Tanana Valley Fair Association	Alaska Repertory Theatre
Dance Omnium	Institute of Alaska Native Arts
Malloy and Company Dance Studios	Fairbanks Symphony
University of Alaska - Fairbanks	Rotary Board
UAF Athletic Department	Alaska Dog Mushers Association
Tanana Valley Community College	Goldpanners
Central Labor Council	Fairbanks Restaurant Association
Fairbanks Arts Association	Fairbanks Choral Society
Eskimo-Indian Olympics	CAC City/Borough Task Force
Associated General Contractors	
Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival	

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## **COMBINED FACILITIES**

### **WOULD RESULT IN EFFICIENCIES AND COST SAVINGS**

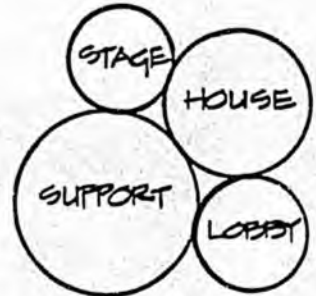
The Community Activity Center will be used for many different interests of the people of the Interior. The general description of this large capacity, year-round, multi-purpose activity facility includes a proscenium theatre, a banquet hall and an arena. The actual future activities within these facilities should only be limited by the imagination of the user groups in Fairbanks.

The Statement of Purpose for the Center is presented below. A preliminary description of the size of the Center is on the facing page. The facility must:

1. Serve the needs of the majority of residents of Interior Alaska,
2. Maintain acceptable ongoing maintenance and operations cost,
3. Provide positive benefits toward the overall quality of life,
4. Provide positive, long-term economic benefits,
5. Complement and enhance existing and planned facilities without unnecessary duplication and,
6. Generate, within the residents of the Interior of Alaska, a sense of pride.

THEATER

Performing Arts; Lectures	
1,000 Seat House.....	8,400 sq.ft.
Stage; Pit; Etc.....	5,250 sq.ft.
Support Spaces.....	13,665 sq.ft.
Lobby & Circulation.....	5,685 sq.ft.
Subtotal	<u>33,000 sq.ft.</u>



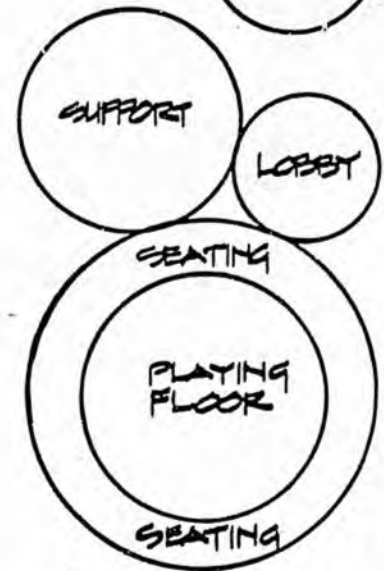
BANQUET HALL

Meetings; Banquets	
1,000 Seat Hall.....	12,000 sq.ft.
Meeting Rooms.....	800 sq.ft.
Support Spaces.....	3,300 sq.ft.
Lobby & Circulation.....	4,400 sq.ft.
Subtotal	<u>20,500 sq.ft.</u>



ARENA

Sports Events; Trade Shows; Entertainment	
Playing Floor.....	26,000 sq.ft.
6,000 Seating Area.....	25,000 sq.ft.
Support Spaces.....	19,000 sq.ft.
Lobby & Circulation.....	17,000 sq.ft.
Subtotal	<u>87,000 sq.ft.</u>



Common Circulation & Services. 20,000 sq.ft.

GRAND TOTAL/BUILDINGS 160,500 sq.ft.

Estimated Parking Need..... 2,500 spaces

## **THE COMMUNITY'S NEEDS FOR THE CENTER HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED**

Residents have become aware that the community is placing demands on local facilities that cannot be met at all times. Some of these demands overload the schedules of existing activity areas. In other cases, the existing facilities have not been able to accommodate the size of audience and/or type of activity. Activities have been cancelled in the community because there was no rain protection for the audience. The projected future growth of the Fairbanks population and economy suggest increasing unmet demands on the existing community facilities.

### **THEATER**

A report in latter 1982 showed there were 58 performing arts groups in the community. These groups held most of their performances in six major facilities: The borough library auditorium (75 seats); the new FDA theater (80 seats); the Alaskaland theater (381 seats); the University of Alaska theater (481 seats); The University of Alaska concert hall (967 seats); and the Hering Auditorium (1,490 seats).

Each of these facilities has draw-backs for the performing arts such as size, acoustics and rehearsal facilities. One of the major documented problems is the inability of the performing arts groups to schedule events because of over-utilization.

The principal new facility needed in the community to meet rehearsal and performance scheduling problems, according to the 1982 needs assessment study, was an 800-1,000 seat Proscenium Theater, with orchestra pit and stagehouse with fly space.

Such a theater would have the greatest potential utilization by all types of performing arts groups in Fairbanks.

## **BANQUET HALL/MEETING ROOMS**

The demand for meeting space is growing each year. The facility should be designed to posture Fairbanks to attract regional, national, and international meetings. The American Society of Association Executives estimates that by 1985 approximately 16,000 national, regional, and state associations will be holding 20,150 annual meetings per year. These meetings will draw 1.4 million convention delegates. Seventy percent of conventions held in the United States range in attendance from 400 to 1,500. Eighty seven percent or approximately 2,250 require less than 30,000 square feet of exhibit space or enough to accommodate an average of 200 booths. Additionally, thousands of corporate meetings with attendance ranging between 50 and 153 are held throughout the country each year. Convention delegates spend money and the economy of the host community grows stronger. If Fairbanks desirability as a meeting destination were increased, in only seven years a new meeting facility could generate more dollars to the Fairbanks economy than it cost to build. The development of a year-round visitor industry would help level off the seasonal fluctuations in the Fairbanks economy and would provide more permanent, year-round jobs.

Fairbanks' lack of an appropriate meeting facility was emphasized in 1983 when we saw fewer numbers of actual meetings held here than the previous year. This decline reflects the increased competition among Alaskan communities which now have convention facilities and are aggressively marketing them. How far we fall behind our competition depends upon the vision and commitment of our community. Much of the space Fairbanks now offers is not adequate for large meetings and conventions. Experience demonstrates that Fairbanks needs a banquet facility flexibly planned capable of accommodating 1,000 to 1,500 people.

## ARENA

Fairbanks is a community of active people. We are energetic participants and enthusiastic spectators. The community's available facilities to accommodate this healthy characteristic are strained to their limits. The facilities currently serving as an arena are:

UAF Patty Gym	FNSB School District Facilities
UAF Ice Arena	Tanana Valley Fair Coliseum (summer only)
Big Dipper Ice Arena	

University of Alaska Fairbanks athletic and recreation facilities have reached their maximum use because of growth in student enrollment, expansion of the athletic program and an increase in the population of the Fairbanks community. Requests for use and space for community purposes must be increasingly denied.

The Big Dipper Ice Arena is now used nineteen hours a day. Since its opening in 1982 use of the Big Dipper facility has escalated by 65%. Current figures for the year 1983 indicate that there will be a 25% increase over the use level of 1982 when the monthly use was:

Public skating-----	1,850	Gold King hockey----	15,000
Figure skating-----	1,600	Men's hockey-----	1,000
Youth hockey-----	2,800	Co-ed hockey-----	400
Women's hockey-----	400	High school hockey--	5,000
Old Timers hockey---	400	Exercise classes----	2,500

In short, the building is used to capacity and will accommodate virtually no increased use.

Facilities at the North Star Borough School District were shown by the Burcell Study in 1983 to be serving 347 community activities. These facilities are used in excess of 230,000 hours per year by over 14,000 participants. The conclusion of the fact gathering study was that the Fairbanks community would greatly benefit from a large community center.

Over the past several years numerous entertainers, professional ice shows, evangelists, and exhibitions have asked for space to present their programs. Because of the exceptionally high local use and the limited size of the facilities, most of these requests had to be denied.

The Tanana Valley Fair Master Plan, completed in 1981, has verified the need for an arena seating of 6,000 to 7,000 people in the Fairbanks area.

#### REPRESENTATIVE ARENA USES

<u>Athletic Uses</u>		<u>Entertainment/Commercial Uses</u>	
Figure Skating	Horse Shows	Shows	Fairs
Boxing	Olympic Archery	Concerts	Circus
Basketball	Volleyball	Religious Crusades	Cultural
Indoor Soccer	Tennis	Political Rallies	Demonstrations
Indoor track	Junior League Baseball	Exhibits	Jamborees
Curling	Rodeo	Conventions	
Hockey	Softball		

An arena with floor space sufficient to house an Olympic sheet of ice would coordinate well with the other proposed components. The size would be sufficient to accommodate most athletic uses except football and the regulation outdoor soccer. However, we do not rule out and would request that the feasibility of housing a football field or indoor soccer field be studied.

We propose that an arena be built which will accommodate 6,000 permanent seats. It is recommended that the floor space be large enough to include an Olympic size sheet of ice.

Floor space would be sufficient to meet the suggested criteria for an exhibition hall as determined by the American Society of Association Executives. The area could also house large entertainment events, laserium performances, electrical amplified productions and unstructured theater in the round.

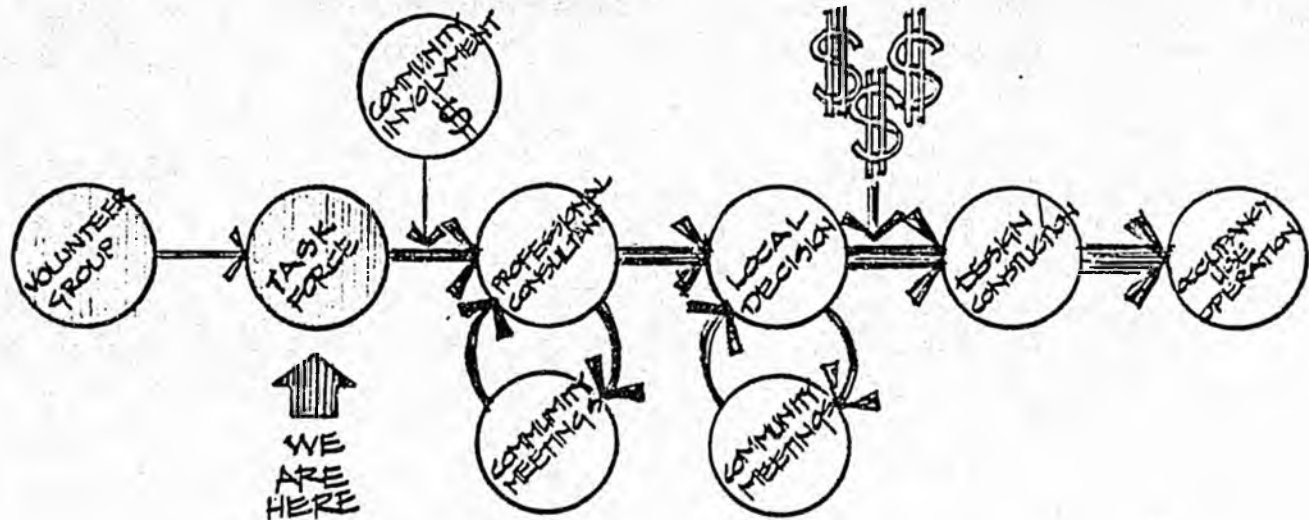
## THE PLANNING TASK FORCE

The issue of constructing major facilities in Fairbanks for community activities has been discussed before. However, 1984 appears a particularly appropriate time to begin planning for this facility. Fairbanks is a growing economic force in Interior Alaska with strong and active social groups supporting action that enhances our quality of life. There is now a "let's do it right this time" feeling in the community about the Community Activity Center. A task force appointed by the city and borough majors has been given the following charges:

1. Define the goal and objectives of the facility(ies).
2. Determine the social and economic benefits to the community at large and provide basis for your findings.
3. Determine a cost for the professional planning of the project and develop the scope of work for planning process.
4. Determine community needs for a multi-purpose facility.
5. Determine land required in terms of acreage and how site location should be determined.
6. Determine infrastructure required to support facility(ies), i.e., water, sewer, telephone, transportation access and air quality.
7. Determine construction costs.
8. Determine administrative, maintenance and operations costs (all life cycle costs.)
9. Determine optimum ownership arrangement.
10. Determine source of revenue to meet administrative, maintenance and operations expenses for first five years. A pro forma profit/loss statement is required.

## THE PLANNING HAS JUST STARTED

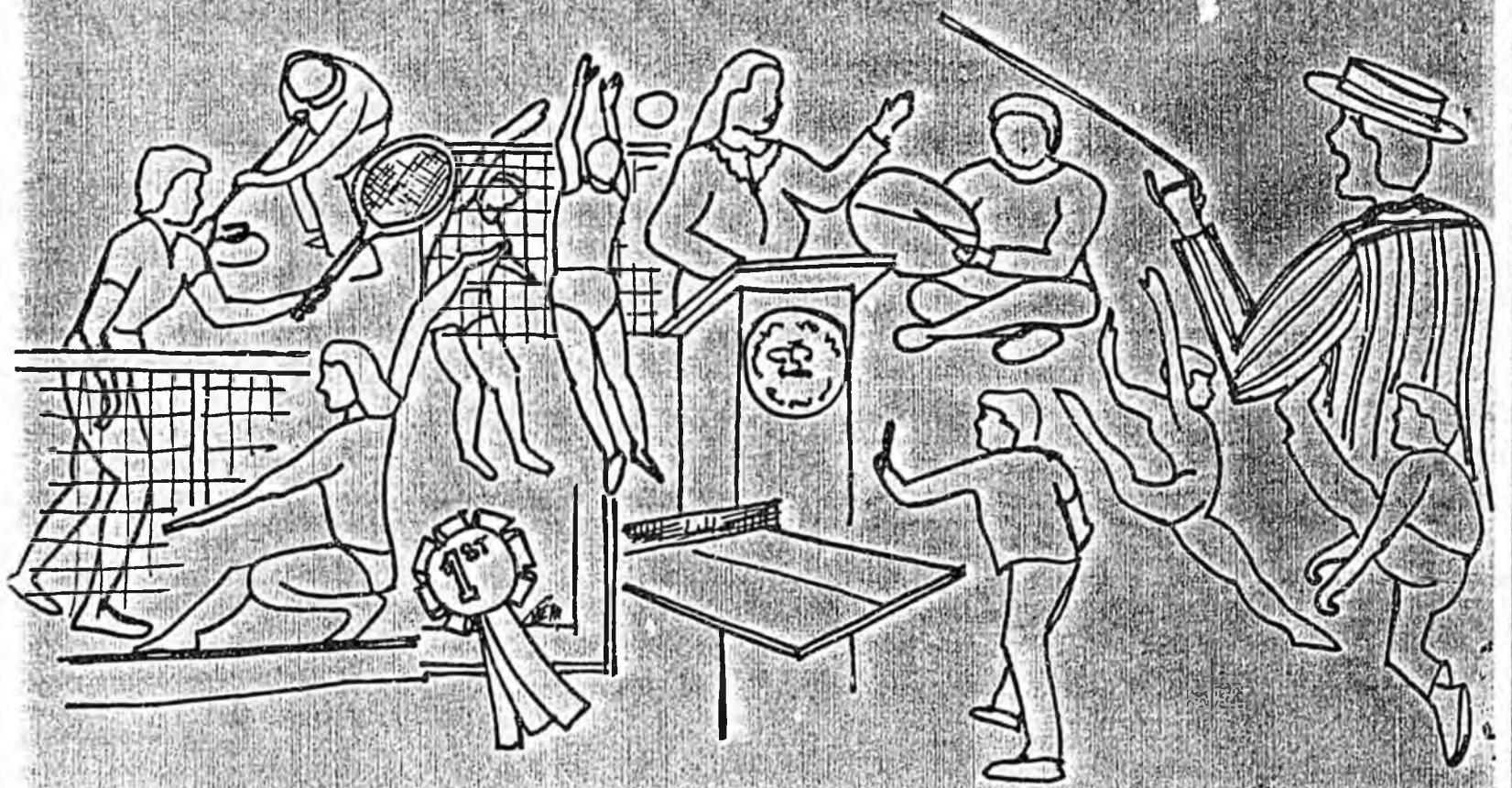
The City/Borough Task Force members recognize that a facility with the community significance of the Activity Center requires careful planning. Planning will continue to occur in careful, logical steps. Following receipt of planning funds, a professional consultant team will be engaged to answer the needs, locational and operational charges to the Task Force. Conclusions of their work will set the most realistic course for the creation of the Center in the future. Community opinion will be sought.



Local authorities will make the final decisions concerning what the Center will contain, how and when it will be constructed, where it will be located and how it will be operated. Senators Bettye Fahrenkamp and Don Bennett have introduced Senate Bill 319 in the 1984 legislature. This bill could make grant money available to Fairbanks for the construction of the activity center. The infusion of capitol funding from State monies and/or local bonds will initiate design and construction of the Center. Occupancy and use could take place as early as summer 1986.

**A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER  
FOR FAIRBANKS?**

**A GOOD IDEA!**



RESOLUTION OF CONSENSUS AND SUPPORT FOR  
COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER CONCEPT

A group of individuals and representatives from many groups and organizations throughout the community has come together to gather support for a multi-purpose COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER. Many needs in our community are not being met due to the lack of a proper facility. We believe that a facility can be designed and built which will be affordable, and will be truly useful to the majority of residents of the greater Fairbanks area. The groups and organizations listed below have reached consensus on the following points. We enthusiastically urge your support and active participation in these efforts.

1. The community needs a facility, or facilities, to accommodate large group gatherings. Residents would benefit from such facilities through participation in recreational, cultural and educational activities that improve the quality of life; by economic development of business, commercial and basic resource industries; and by bringing new people and dollars into the community through conventions and the visitor industry.
2. As presently perceived, three basic component functions need to be included in the COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER:
  - A. An arena with seating for at least 6000 to be used for sports, entertainment, trade shows, graduations, large meetings, rodeos, and other large attendance events.
  - B. A banquet hall capable of seating at least 1000 for dinner which could also be divided into smaller rooms.
  - C. A theater with seating for 800 people which could also be used as a lecture hall or auditorium even though built to theater specifications.

One additional component we feel must be addressed, and hopefully accommodated, is small community group meeting spaces, for groups numbering 10-50.

3. It is apparent that one facility and one appropriation cannot meet all community needs. Therefore, we commit to maintain in active consideration all similar capital needs in the greater Fairbanks area as expressed by various organizations and groups in order to seek and support funding on a prioritized basis for projects which meet other needs at other sites.
4. There are several sites in the greater Fairbanks area that could be acceptable for the COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER. There are many divergent considerations regarding site selection. Land availability and ownership, accessibility, availability of power and other utilities, desires of local residents and political considerations must all be taken into account. The decisions as to site selection may be controversial ones, and must be handled openly and professionally. We feel that site selection should be determined professionally during the developmental planning stages, and therefore for the purposes of planning for the type of facility desired by the community, and for gathering support, we agree to remain non-site-specific. A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER in ANY reasonable location is better than no COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER at all.

5. It is imperative that any facility realized be right for the community. It must be useful for many years to come, be capable of future expansion, be complimentary to existing facilities, and must be affordable. Cost of operations and maintenance, efficient administration and management, site selection and provision of support services will be the first considerations of the professional planning effort. Funds will be sought for architectural and engineering services, selection of firms to be open to anyone interested. Community input and knowledge will be a crucial contribution during the planning effort.



# The Fairbanks Community Multi-Purpose ACTIVITY CENTER

## WHAT IS THAT?

*At this point, it's only an idea . . . But, it could really happen if our communities want it to happen!*

## WHAT COULD I DO THERE?

*As presently envisioned, the Community Activity Center would consist of three component parts:*

### AN ARENA

. . . that could hold around 6,000 spectators, and would be large enough to accommodate most sports uses short of football or outdoor soccer. It could serve as an exhibition hall for trade shows, etc., and could hold large entertainment events. (Remember when Johnny Cash and Billy Graham wanted to come to Fairbanks?)

### A BANQUET/MEETING HALL

. . . that could seat around 1,000 people for dinner, or could be divided into smaller rooms for smaller meetings, workshops, etc.

### A THEATER

. . . where up to 1,000 people could watch (or participate in) a live theatrical event (musical, drama, dance, etc.). It could also serve as a lecture hall, where seminars or large workshops are held.

## OH, SO THIS IS GOING TO TAKE CARE OF ALL OUR PROBLEMS?

*Not really — but it will answer our most pressing present and future needs for specialized space where the people of our communities might gather for many kinds of community activities.*

## WHEN ARE WE GOING TO START BUILDING?

*Whoa, wait a minute! First we want to gather professional help in determining if such a facility is right for Interior Alaska. What is it going to cost to build and maintain it? Who should own it? Who should operate it?*

## WHERE'S THIS GOING TO BE BUILT?

*That hasn't been decided, yet. Once it has been determined what kind of facility will be built, then we will know some of the places it might be built. Then the people of the community must have a chance to state their preference and the professionals must determine the advantages and disadvantages of various sites.*

## WHAT NOW? HOW DOES THIS INVOLVE ME?

*The Community Activity Center needs everybody's support and input in order to be built. The Task Force is requesting funding from our communities and the State to perform a professional development recommendation. We need you to support that request. Also, Senators Fahrenkamp, Bennett, and Kertulla have introduced a bill in the Alaska State Senate for 24 million dollars to fund construction of the Community Activity Center. They, and our other Interior legislators, need to know that the community supports the concept of a Community Activity Center that is right for Interior Alaska. We urge you to contact our legislators and tell them you support the request for planning money as well as Senate Bill 319. Please send a Public Opinion Message via the Legislative Information Office, a telegram, or telephone our legislators immediately.*

**BY THE WAY . . .** The following organizations have already endorsed this concept. If your club or group would like to get involved in this effort, let us know . . .

Greater Fairbanks  
Chamber of Commerce

Fairbanks Drama Association,  
Fairbanks Light Opera Theatre  
Tanana Valley Fair Association  
Dance Omnium

Molloy and Company Dance  
Studios

University of Alaska —  
Fairbanks

Tanana Valley  
Community College

Central Labor Council  
Fairbanks Arts Association  
Eskimo-Indian Olympics

Associated General Contractors  
Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival

Fairbanks Convention &  
Visitors Bureau

Fairbanks Native Association  
Alaska Repertory Theatre  
Institute of Alaska Native Arts

Alaska Dog Musers  
Association

Goldpanners

Fairbanks Restaurant  
Association

Fairbanks Choral Society

*For more information contact Gary Wilken at 456-7088 or Buki Wright at 452-1105 or any member of*

**— THE MAYOR'S COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER TASK FORCE —**

Introduced by: Council Member Anderson  
Council Member Immel  
Date : February 27, 1984

RESOLUTION NO. 2507

A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE CONCEPT OF A  
COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER FOR THE CITY OF  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA.

WHEREAS, many needs in our community are not being met due to the lack of a large scale, multi-purpose activity facility; and

WHEREAS, many organizations and individuals from the City have demonstrated their support of such a community activity center; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that the facility be useful for many years to come, be capable of future expansion, be complementary to existing facilities, and affordable; and

WHEREAS, the Community Activity Center Task Force recommends the continuation of the effort to build such a structure; and

WHEREAS, the support of local governments is vital to the continued effort;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS, ALASKA, that they express their support of the community activity center concept.

PASSED and APPROVED this 27th day of February, 1984.

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BILL WALLEY, Mayor

ATTEST:

---

CARMA B. ROBERSON, City Clerk

By: Jerry Nolan  
Phil Younker  
Sandra Stringer  
Paul Chizmar  
Bill Walley  
J.B. Carnahan  
Howard Otis  
Juanita Helms  
B.B. Allen

Introduced:

ORDINANCE NO. 83-20-2Y

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FY 1983-84 BUDGET  
BY APPROPRIATING \$100,000 TO PLAN FOR A  
COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER

WHEREAS, as interest has been demonstrated in having a Community Activity Center in the Fairbanks North Star Borough; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of our citizens to carefully plan for and evaluate the feasibility of such a facility; and

WHEREAS, the legislature of the State of Alaska has expressed interest in the project and requested a local commitment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Assembly of the Fairbanks North Star Borough that the FY 1983-84 budget is hereby amended by appropriating \$100,000 from General Fund - Fund Balance to the Capital Projects Fund budgetary guideline entitled "Community Activity Center Planning" and increasing estimated revenue from contribution from General Fund in a like amount.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that this ordinance is effective the day after a signed contract for matching funds is received from the state.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the Mayor is empowered to enter into a contract with the state for the matching funds.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 1984

\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Officer

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the Assembly

TESTIMONY OF SENATOR BETTYE FAHRENKAMP  
BEFORE THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

MARCH 8, 1984

SB 319

MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR BRINGING SB 319 PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF MULTI-PURPOSE ACTIVITY CENTERS IN FAIRBANKS AND WASILLA, BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

AS THE CHAIRMAN AND SOME OTHERS OF YOU KNOW, THE IDEA OF HAVING A MULTI-PURPOSE ACTIVITY CENTER IN THESE TWO COMMUNITIES IS NOT NEW. I THINK YOU HAVE BEFORE YOU TODAY A PLANNING DOCUMENT OF THE PROPOSED WASILLA FACILITY. HOWEVER, MANY MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT OUR COMMUNITY HAS BEEN WORKING WITH THE IDEA OF A MULTIPURPOSE FACILITY TO MEET SPORTS, RECREATIONAL, SPECTATOR, CIVIC AND THEATRICAL NEEDS SINCE I'VE BEEN IN THE SENATE.

IN 1979 I WORKED TO SECURE FUNDS TO PERFORM A FACILITIES STUDY WHICH INVESTIGATED VARIOUS TYPES OF MULTIPURPOSE SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WHICH WAS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED TO THE LEGISLATURE IN 1980. AN OCTOBER 1982 NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR PERFORMING ARTS GROUPS LOOKED AT THE USE OF EXISTING FACILITIES AND MADE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW FACILITIES TO MEET THIS NEED. AND FINALLY, THE FAIRBANKS DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION WHICH IS CHARGED WITH THE REVITALIZATION OF OUR DOWNTOWN CORE AREA HAS BEEN DISCUSSING PLANS WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL FIRMS AND HOTEL OPERATORS OVER THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A MAJOR HOTEL DEVELOPMENT FOR DOWNTOWN.

WHY ALL THE FUSS? THE SIMPLE ANSWER IS THAT WHILE OTHER AREAS OF THE STATE HAVE BEEN UNDERGOING MAJOR EXPANSIONS IN THEIR AVAILABLE SPACE TO ACCOMMODATE LARGE GROUPS, FAIRBANKS HAS NOT ADDED ONE NEW STRUCTURE TO ACCOMMODATE A GROUP OF MORE THAN 400 PEOPLE SINCE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TRAVELERS INN IN THE MID

60's. THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT NEARLY ANY GROUP OF ALASKANS WITH STATEWIDE REPRESENTATION WILL BRING A GROUP OF 500 OR MORE PEOPLE TOGETHER FOR A MEETING.

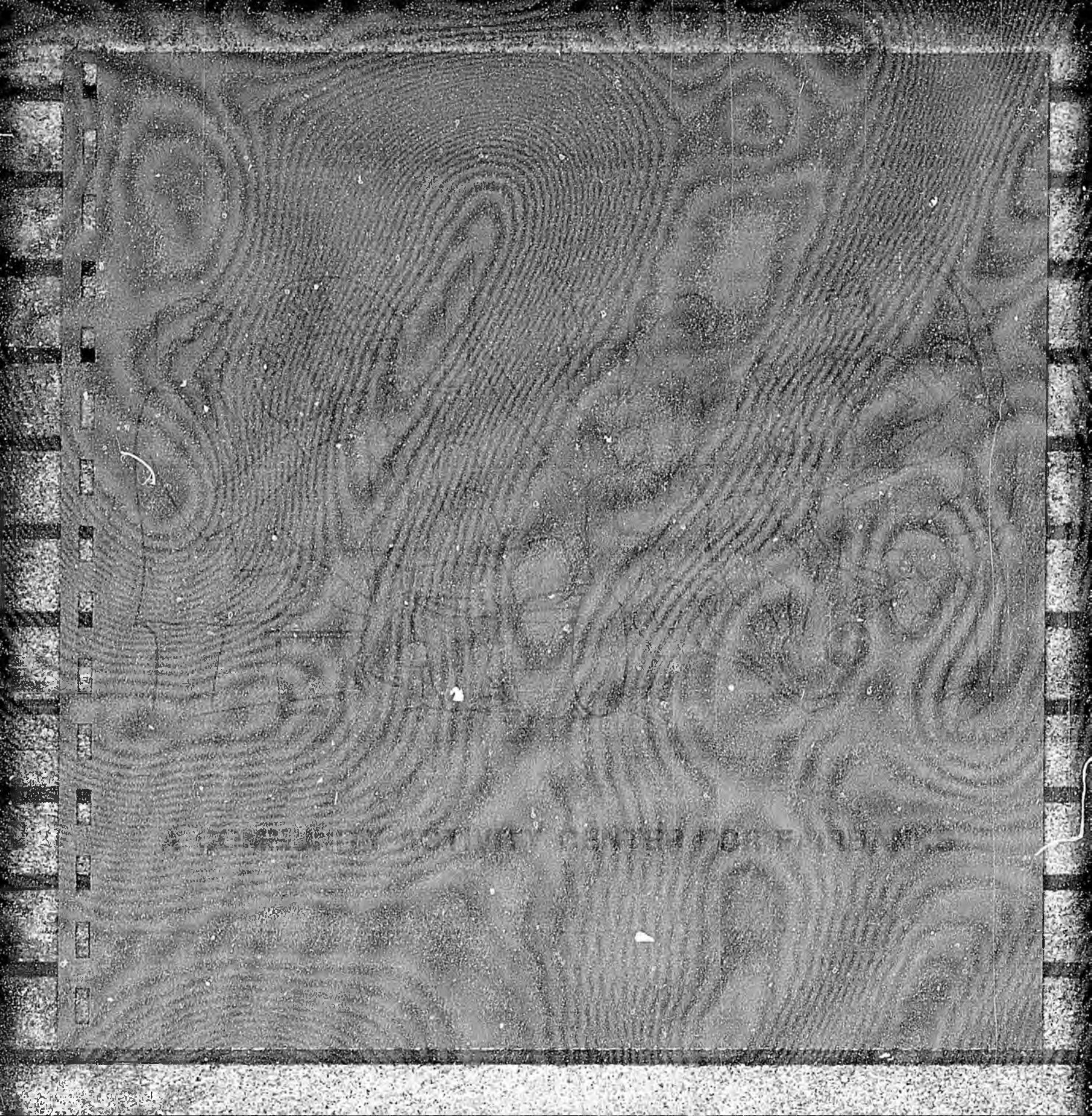
MOST RECENTLY, FAIRBANKS HOSTED THE WESTERN CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATORS. OVER 500 WESTERN LEGISLATORS, AND THEIR STAFF CONVERGED ON FAIRBANKS. WE HAD TO HOUSE THEM IN PRIVATE HOMES AND 5 HOTELS IN TOWN. MEETINGS WERE NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE TO HOLD AS THERE IS NO FACILITY WHICH CAN ACCOMMODATE THE PLENARY SESSIONS WHILE ALSO ACCOMMODATING THE SMALLER WORK GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH SUCH A CONFERENCE.

AS THE HOST COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE, I CAN TELL YOU THAT THE TASK OF ACCOMMODATING SUCH A GROUP WAS NO EASY TASK.

PERHAPS MOST ALARMING, HOWEVER, WAS NEWS LATER IN THE YEAR THAT TWO LARGE STATEWIDE GROUPS HAD DECLINED TO CHOOSE FAIRBANKS AS THE SITE OF THEIR ANNUAL CONVENTIONS BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF HOTEL ROOMS, MEETING ROOMS, BANQUET FACILITIES AND ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES.

THE FACT THAT THE ASSOCIATIONS OF MUNICIPAL CLERKS AND THE ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS CHOSE NOT TO COME TO FAIRBANKS WAS ALARMING. SO ALARMING THAT I FEEL PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY HAVE AGAIN BEGUN TO FOCUS THEIR ATTENTION TO THE NEED FOR A TRULY MULTI-PURPOSE ACTIVITY CENTER TO BEGIN TO MEET THE OBVIOUS NEED.

WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF SB 319 A WIDE CROSS SECTION OF OUR COMMUNITY CAME TOGETHER TO CONCEPTUALLY DISCUSS THE IDEA OF AN ACTIVITY CENTER FOR OUR COMMUNITY. THEY ARE REPRESENTED HERE TODAY BY MR. GARY WILKEN WHO WILL TESTIFY IN MORE DETAIL IN A FEW MINUTES. WHAT I'D LIKE TO LEAVE THE COMMITTEE WITH IS THE MESSAGE THAT FAIRBANKS IS BECOMING SOLIDLY SUPPORTIVE OF THIS PROJECT AND EACH OF US WILL BE HEARING MORE FROM THEM IN THE WEEKS AHEAD. I ENCOURAGE THE COMMITTEE TO ACT FAVORABLY AND EXPEDITIOUSLY ON THIS LEGISLATION.



**A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER  
FOR FAIRBANKS TO MEET A VARIETY  
OF COMMUNITY NEEDS?**

**MANY RESIDENTS DO SEEM TO SUPPORT  
THIS IDEA, BUT.....**

**LET'S MAKE SURE WE PLAN AHEAD  
CAREFULLY  
TO CONFIRM THE REAL COMMUNITY NEEDS  
FOR THIS CENTER,  
TO CLARIFY WHAT FACILITIES  
THE CENTER SHOULD CONTAIN, AND  
HOW MUCH THIS WILL COST.**

**THEN WE CAN MOVE AHEAD  
WITH CONFIDENCE!**

# WE

the groups and organizations indicated on the adjacent page, are representative of the organizations that have pledged their support to the concept of a Community Activity Center in Fairbanks. We believe that careful planning of this center now in response to the current and future needs of our citizen will result in the construction and operation of the proper facility at the right time in the correct location for the betterment of our community.

## SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

The Local organizations listed below have submitted letters of endorsement for the concept of the Community Activity Center.

Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce	Fairbanks Convention & Visitors Bureau
Fairbanks Drama Association	Fairbanks Native Association
Fairbanks Light Opera Theatre	Fort Wainwright Commanding Officer, Col. Fraser Driver
Tanana Valley Fair Association	Alaska Repertory Theatre
Dance Omnium	Institute of Alaska Native Arts
Malloy and Company Dance Studios	Fairbanks Symphony
University of Alaska - Fairbanks	Rotary Board
UAF Athletic Department	Alaska Dog Musers Association
Tanana Valley Community College	Goldpanners
Central Labor Council	Fairbanks Restaurant Association
Fairbanks Arts Association	Fairbanks Choral Society
Eskimo-Indian Olympics	CAC City/Borough Task Force
Associated General Contractors	
Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival	

## **COMBINED FACILITIES WOULD RESULT IN EFFICIENCIES AND COST SAVINGS**

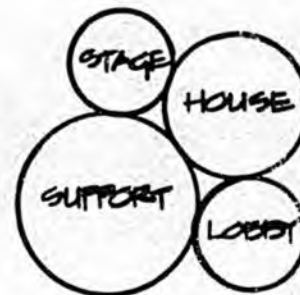
The Community Activity Center will be used for many different interests of the people of the Interior. The general description of this large capacity, year-round, multi-purpose activity facility includes a proscenium theatre, a banquet hall and an arena. The actual future activities within these facilities should only be limited by the imagination of the user groups in Fairbanks.

The Statement of Purpose for the Center is presented below. A preliminary description of the size of the Center is on the facing page. The facility must:

1. Serve the needs of the majority of residents of Interior Alaska,
2. Maintain acceptable ongoing maintenance and operations cost,
3. Provide positive benefits toward the overall quality of life,
4. Provide positive, long-term economic benefits,
5. Complement and enhance existing and planned facilities without unnecessary duplication and,
6. Generate, within the residents of the Interior of Alaska, a sense of pride.

### THEATER

Performing Arts; Lectures	
1,000 Seat House.....	8,400 sq.ft.
Stage; Pit; Etc.....	5,250 sq.ft.
Support Spaces.....	13,665 sq.ft.
Lobby & Circulation.....	5,685 sq.ft.
Subtotal	<u>33,000 sq.ft.</u>



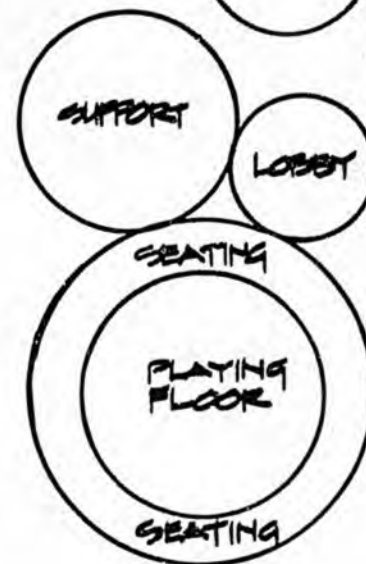
### BANQUET HALL

Meetings; Banquets	
1,000 Seat Hall.....	12,000 sq.ft.
Meeting Rooms.....	800 sq.ft.
Support Spaces.....	3,300 sq.ft.
Lobby & Circulation.....	4,400 sq.ft.
Subtotal	<u>20,500 sq.ft.</u>



### ARENA

Sports Events; Trade Shows; Entertainment	
Playing Floor.....	26,000 sq.ft.
6,000 Seating Area.....	25,000 sq.ft.
Support Spaces.....	19,000 sq.ft.
Lobby & Circulation.....	17,000 sq.ft.
Subtotal	<u>87,000 sq.ft.</u>



Common Circulation & Services. 20,000 sq.ft.

GRAND TOTAL/BUILDINGS 160,500 sq.ft.

Estimated Parking Need..... 2,500 spaces

## **THE COMMUNITY'S NEEDS FOR THE CENTER HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED**

Residents have become aware that the community is placing demands on local facilities that cannot be met at all times. Some of these demands overload the schedules of existing activity areas. In other cases, the existing facilities have not been able to accommodate the size of audience and/or type of activity. Activities have been cancelled in the community because there was no rain protection for the audience. The projected future growth of the Fairbanks population and economy suggest increasing unmet demands on the existing community facilities.

### **THEATER**

A needs assessment for the performing arts and related organizations has been completed for the Fairbanks area. This study, known as the Matheson report, shows that as of October, 1982, there were 58 groups utilizing six major facilities.

The groups surveyed had total membership of approximately 13,435, and produced or sponsored over 682 productions annually. Attendance at these events is estimated at 142,000.

The six facilities carrying the heaviest load of performances range in size from the Borough Library Auditorium (75 seats) to Hering Auditorium (1490 seats). Each of the facilities have drawbacks and over-utilization prevents the scheduling of many events. Even if events could be scheduled, problems of size, structure, and rehearsal space remain.

The Matheson study identified three types of performance spaces needed to overcome these problems: An 800-1000 seat proscenium theater including a stagehouse with fly space and an orchestra pit, a 1500 seat concert hall, and a 400 seat warehouse/studio theater. The Study suggests that these spaces be incorporated in a single larger structure.

It appears, however, that if one facility was to be chosen, the proscenium theater would have the greatest utilization by performing arts groups. This theater could also be used for meetings and lectures associated with trade shows and conventions.

## **BANQUET HALL/MEETING ROOMS**

The demand for meeting space is growing each year. The facility should be designed to posture Fairbanks to attract regional, national, and international meetings. The American Society of Association Executives estimates that by 1985 approximately 16,000 national, regional, and state associations will be holding 20,150 annual meetings per year. These meetings will draw 1.4 million convention delegates. Seventy percent of conventions held in the United States range in attendance from 400 to 1,500. Eighty seven percent or approximately 2,250 require less than 30,000 square feet of exhibit space or enough to accommodate an average of 200 booths. Additionally, thousands of corporate meetings with attendance ranging between 50 and 153 are held throughout the country each year. Convention delegates spend money and the economy of the host community grows stronger. If Fairbanks desirability as a meeting destination were increased, in only seven years a new meeting facility could generate more dollars to the Fairbanks economy than it cost to build. The development of a year-round visitor industry would help level off the seasonal fluctuations in the Fairbanks economy and would provide more permanent, year-round jobs.

Fairbanks' lack of an appropriate meeting facility was emphasized in 1983 when we saw fewer numbers of actual meetings held here than the previous year. This decline reflects the increased competition among Alaskan communities which now have convention facilities and are aggressively marketing them. How far we fall behind our competition depends upon the vision and commitment of our community. Much of the space Fairbanks now offers is not adequate for large meetings and conventions. Experience demonstrates that Fairbanks needs a banquet facility flexibly planned capable of accommodating 1,000 to 1,500 people.

## ARENA

Fairbanks is a community of active people. We are energetic participants and enthusiastic spectators. The community's available facilities to accommodate this healthy characteristic are strained to their limits. The facilities currently serving as an arena are:

UAF Patty Gym	FNSB School District Facilities
UAF Ice Arena	Tanana Valley Fair Coliseum (summer only)
Big Dipper Ice Arena	

University of Alaska Fairbanks athletic and recreation facilities have reached their maximum use because of growth in student enrollment, expansion of the athletic program and an increase in the population of the Fairbanks community. Requests for use and space for community purposes must be increasingly denied.

The Big Dipper Ice Arena is now used nineteen hours a day. Since its opening in 1982 use of the Big Dipper facility has escalated by 65%. Current figures for the year 1983 indicate that there will be a 25% increase over the use level of 1982 when the monthly use was:

Public skating-----	1,850	Gold King hockey----	15,000
Figure skating-----	1,600	Men's hockey-----	1,000
Youth hockey-----	2,800	Co-ed hockey-----	400
Women's hockey-----	400	High school hockey--	5,000
Old Timers hockey---	400	Exercise classes----	2,500

In short, the building is used to capacity and will accommodate virtually no increased use.

Facilities at the North Star Borough School District were shown by the Burcell Study in 1983 to be serving 347 community activities. These facilities are used in excess of 230,000 hours per year by over 14,000 participants. The conclusion of the fact gathering study was that the Fairbanks community would greatly benefit from a large community center.

Over the past several years numerous entertainers, professional ice shows, evangelists, and exhibitions have asked for space to present their programs. Because of the exceptionally high local use and the limited size of the facilities, most of these requests had to be denied.

The Tanana Valley Fair Master Plan, completed in 1981, has verified the need for an arena seating of 6,000 to 7,000 people in the Fairbanks area.

#### REPRESENTATIVE ARENA USES

<u>Athletic Uses</u>		<u>Entertainment/Commercial Uses</u>	
Figure Skating	Horse Shows	Shows	Fairs
Boxing	Olympic Archery	Concerts	Circus
Basketball	Volleyball	Religious Crusades	Cultural
Indoor Soccer	Tennis	Political Rallies	Demonstrations
Indoor track	Junior League Baseball	Exhibits	Jamborees
Curling	Rodeo	Conventions	
Hockey	Softball		

An arena with floor space sufficient to house an Olympic sheet of ice would coordinate well with the other proposed components. The size would be sufficient to accommodate most athletic uses except football and the regulation outdoor soccer. However, we do not rule out and would request that the feasibility of housing a football field or indoor soccer field be studied.

We propose that an arena be built which will accommodate 6,000 permanent seats. It is recommended that the floor space be large enough to include an Olympic size sheet of ice.

Floor space would be sufficient to meet the suggested criteria for an exhibition hall as determined by the American Society of Association Executives. The area could also house large entertainment events, laserium performances, electrical amplified productions and unstructured theater in the round.

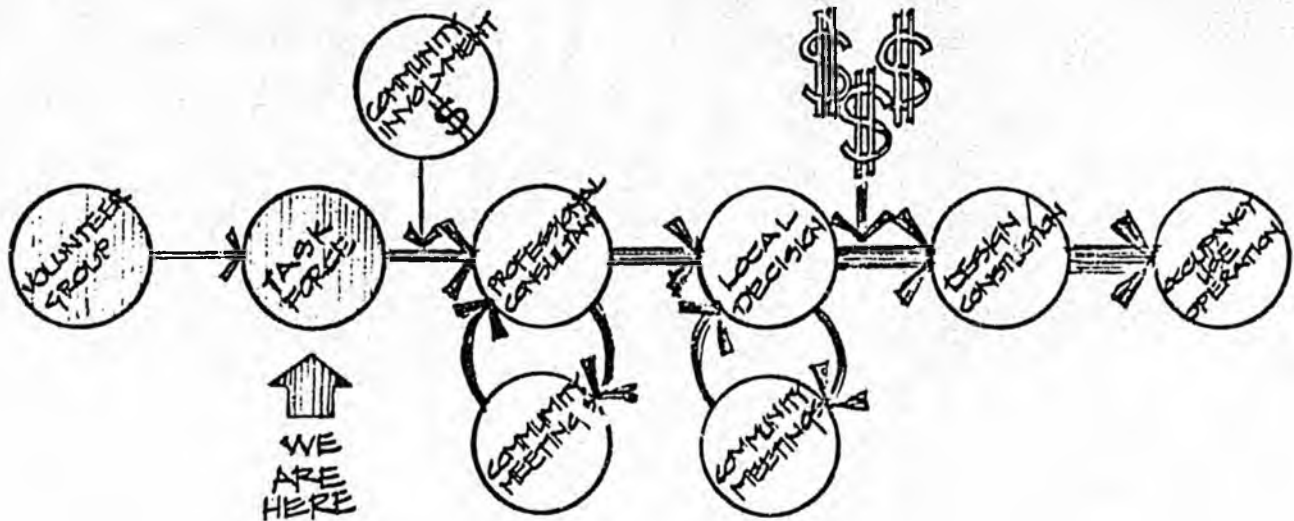
## THE PLANNING TASK FORCE

The issue of constructing major facilities in Fairbanks for community activities has been discussed before. However, 1984 appears a particularly appropriate time to begin planning for this facility. Fairbanks is a growing economic force in Interior Alaska with strong and active social groups supporting action that enhances our quality of life. There is now a "let's do it right this time" feeling in the community about the Community Activity Center. A task force appointed by the city and borough majors has been given the following charges:

1. Define the goal and objectives of the facility(ies).
2. Determine the social and economic benefits to the community at large and provide basis for your findings.
3. Determine a cost for the professional planning of the project and develop the scope of work for planning process.
4. Determine community needs for a multi-purpose facility.
5. Determine land required in terms of acreage and how site location should be determined.
6. Determine infrastructure required to support facility(ies), i.e., water, sewer, telephone, transportation access and air quality.
7. Determine construction costs.
8. Determine administrative, maintenance and operations costs (all life cycle costs.)
9. Determine optimum ownership arrangement.
10. Determine source of revenue to meet administrative, maintenance and operations expenses for first five years. A pro forma profit/loss statement is required.

## THE PLANNING HAS JUST STARTED

The City/Borough Task Force members recognize that a facility with the community significance of the Activity Center requires careful planning. Planning will continue to occur in careful, logical steps. Following receipt of planning funds, a professional consultant team will be engaged to answer the needs, locational and operational charges to the Task Force. Conclusions of their work will set the most realistic course for the creation of the Center in the future. Community opinion will be sought.



Local authorities will make the final decisions concerning what the Center will contain, how and when it will be constructed, where it will be located and how it will be operated. Senators Bettye Fahrenkamp and Don Bennett have introduced Senate Bill 319 in the 1984 legislature. This bill could make grant money available to Fairbanks for the construction of the activity center. The infusion of capitol funding from State monies and/or local bonds will initiate design and construction of the Center. Occupancy and use could take place as early as summer 1986.

**A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER  
FOR FAIRBANKS?**

**A GOOD IDEA!**

