



CITY OF WASILLA

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COUNCIL MEMORANDUM NO. 94-72

From: Mayor Stein

Date: October 6, 1994

Subject: State Fair - 1998 Centennial of the Alaska Gold Rush

State fair general manager Sara Jansen and board member Joe Lawton presented the enclosed proposal to celebrate the 1998 centennial of the Alaska Gold Rush. The idea is to develop a display for the fair to promote Wasilla.

Conceivably we could do a joint project with the Historical Society, Transportation Museum, Museum Department and Chamber of Commerce.

Given the four years lead time, we could begin a capital project account and make regular budget contributions.

I have invited Ms. Jansen to attend the October 10 meeting and elaborate on her proposal.

John C. Stein, Mayor



From the desk of Sara Jansen

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10/4/94

OCT 4 - 1994

City of Wasilla, Alaska

Dear John:

Thanks for your time to meet with Joe Lawton and myself. We are excited about this project, as is the rest of our staff and Board. I am happy to say the Palmer City Council was extremely supportive and "will present a resolution of support for the exposition to make a conceptual commitment with tangible efforts to follow."

This one page hand out provides the basics and I look forward to being able to flesh out the idea at your City Council meeting on the 10th.

Should you have any questions or words of wisdom, don't hesitate to call me at 746-7150.

Thanks again John.

Sara Jansen
General Manager

5 October 1994

Wasilla City Council Members:

**Alaska State Fair
Plans Gala Celebration**

Alaska's premier event will produce an 18 day Fair and Exposition in 1998. This special Fair will honor the various gold rushes which developed and settled the north. Those displays will be counterbalanced by futuristic exhibits of what we might experience in the new century. Cities, business, and institutions are being invited to participate in this historic event. Wasilla is asked to join with Palmer as the lead participant communities by agreeing in concept to an investment in the \$50,000 range for its own participation at this memorable celebration.

Early investment in the Exposition makes good business sense, with almost four years to allow for adequate advance planning and funding. Here's why:

Attendance Figures Unrivaled in the State

In 1994 the State Fair hosted more than 265,000 guests. Five year daily attendance averages and seven more days point to a conservative estimate of 400,000 guests in 1998.

The Fair is a Proven Visitor Attraction

Our latest exit survey indicates that 15% of Fair guests reside outside Alaska. In 1998 that translates to a whopping 60,000 tourists. Alaskan visitors from outside the Mat-Su Anchorage area constitute another 16% of our attendance and continue to increase as well. With its proposed international scope, we are apt to attract over 100,000 new attendees to the area for the 1998 Exposition.

It's Good for Economy

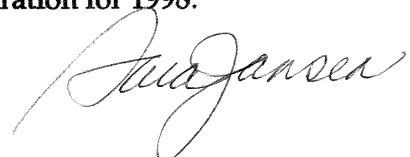
1994 figures are not yet available, but over \$5,000,000 changed hands in 1993. Preliminary estimates for 1998 anticipate \$10,000,000 will infuse the Southcentral economy. Payroll estimates for employees hired by the Fair alone in 1998 exceed \$1,000,000.

The Mat-Su Valley Benefits Most

Thousands of visitors pour into the Valley for the Fair. They inject excitement into local businesses, add to city coffers through sales tax revenues, and increase sales for independent businesses through lodging, food and gas purchases, etc. Certainly many visitors return to the Valley for recreation or even to settle, and all are left with a positive vision of our growing and vital region.

The Fair has a Stable Organizational Structure

Housed at its 222 acre facility is a professional staff with 148 years total experience, guided by a Board of Directors with over 60 years experience. Retained earnings of a half million dollars over the last three years have been poured back into the facility, earmarked for an ambitious capital improvement program in preparation for 1998.





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