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Interactive Online Portal Makes Community Data Available to Alaskans in Timely and Meaningful Way
New Community Database Online (CDO) website offers interactive custom maps, downloadable datasets, and access to historical information

November 27, 2018 JUNEAU – Thanks to the new Community Database Online (CDO), Alaskans now have improved access to datasets and interactive maps to support local government development, community planning, local capacity building, maintenance of state and federal investments in infrastructure, and policy development.

Using the new CDO (<https://dcra-cdo-dcced.opendata.arcgis.com/>) Alaskans are able to:

- Explore informational maps and create custom maps using a variety of available datasets, including demographic, education, utilities, and economic data
- Search, filter, compare, and download single and multi-year community, state, and regional data
- Utilize the Alaska Contacts Directory to find contact information for communities and community entities and create targeted mailing lists

With a focus on providing efficient, timely, and meaningful data to Alaskans, beginning in early 2016 the Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA) reimagined its community database all the way from the end user interface to data collection, storage, and verification. The result of the multi-year project is a modern database that makes a wealth of current and historical information (including regional taxes, demographic data, climate change) available in a relevant and easy-to-use format.

“This is a game changer. With the new CDO, DCRA can better assist Alaskans, communities, state, for-profit, NGO, and policy leaders by strategically importing relevant data,” said Katherine Eldemar, director of the Division of Community and Regional Affairs. “I am very proud of the DCRA team’s collective efforts to create a CDO which organizes data such that decision makers can be well informed.”

In addition to improving access to vital community data to better meet the needs of Alaskans, the project made time-intensive process more efficient, reducing the time and money needed to collect, verify, and display the community information. DCRA received international recognition for its creative use of geospatial software, including a Special Achievement in GIS Award at the 2018 ESRI User Conference; the June 2018 Member of the Month from the International Association of Assessing Officers; and a feature article in *ArcUser*, an international trade magazine with a circulation of over a half-million readers.

As mandated in Article 10, Section 14 of the Alaska Constitution, the Division of Community and Regional Affairs advises and assists local governments to maintain vital services through training, grant management, technical and fiscal support. For information about the division, visit commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra. DCRA is housed within the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, which is tasked with promoting a healthy economy, supporting strong communities, and protecting consumers in Alaska. For information about DCCED and its other agencies, visit commerce.alaska.gov.

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