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## **Seward Chamber Named Chamber of the Year**

(Anchorage, AK, September 13, 2007) – The Alaska State Chamber of Commerce named the Seward Chamber of Commerce Alaska’s Chamber of the Year at their 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention and Trade Show in Anchorage. The Alaska State Chamber of Commerce annually recognizes an Alaskan chamber for consistent community involvement and an excellent business reputation. The 2007 Chamber of the Year award is presented to the Seward Chamber of Commerce, who embodies both qualities in their efforts to build a year round economy in their community.

Incorporated in the early ‘50’s, the Seward Chamber has a rapidly growing membership base of dynamic and proactive professionals who are committed to Seward’s economic success and quality of life. More than 36 percent of their membership has been with the organization for more than ten years. The Seward Chamber is a leader in maintaining Seward’s community identity through traditional events such as the Seward Silver Salmon Derby and the eighty year old Mount Marathon Race. Both events blend Seward’s history with modern efforts to revitalize and grow the area economy.

While preserving Seward’s historic roots, the Seward Chamber is the driving force behind the success of a comprehensive branding initiative. One of the strongest efforts in South-Central Alaska, the Seward Chamber’s endeavor resulted in the community brand, “Alaska Starts Here”. The Chamber independently raised tens of thousands of dollars to support the brand development, allowing them to use their marketing tools and products to expand the brand’s use in the community and increase recognition among target business and visitor segments.

According to Mayor Vanta Schafer, the Seward Chamber is a hands-down leader in the community – an often sought, valuable resource for the City Council and leaders in the City administration. Their Executive Director’s ability to represent the Chamber Boards priorities and goals fosters a strong partnership between the City and this leading group of business professionals.

The Chamber Board clearly endorses the concept that “a rising tide lifts all boats” and tries to advocate for programs and perspectives that not only best serve the business community but also strengthen local community services and quality of life. Despite its small size, the Seward Chamber thinks big.

An annual marketing plan and budget reinforce the goals within the Chamber’s Strategic Plan and provides the basis for fulfilling an annual marketing services contract with the City of Seward. By Council Resolution the Seward Chamber is designated the marketing entity for the City of Seward.



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The Resolution allows the Chamber to eliminate its need for general financial subsidies from the public sector by establishing a contractual relationship with the City for services rendered.

The Chamber and City administration have entered into a think-tank partnership. The group has reinforced partnerships with key community investors, highlighted key City services as well as benefits and incentives for local businesses and developed web –based tools highlighting Seward’s quality of life. Those efforts demonstrate a strong partnership between the City, Chamber and community organizations and set the tone for future development initiatives.

The Seward Chamber is much more than events and tourism. The organization is also about economic development, membership and advocacy, and is a vital part of the community of Seward.

The Alaska State Chamber of Commerce commends the Seward Chamber of Commerce for being an integral, well-respected and valuable asset to the Community of Seward. The Alaska State Chamber is delighted to recognize the Seward Chamber of Commerce as the 2007 Chamber of the Year.

The Alaska State Chamber of Commerce is a business advocacy organization whose mission is “to drive positive change for Alaska’s business environment and to improve our member organizations by providing leadership, advocacy, connectivity and support”. The Alaska State Chamber of Commerce is a private, nonprofit corporation operating under IRS Code, Section 501 C (6). The Alaska State Chamber began operations in 1953. Visit us on the web at [www.alaskachamber.com](http://www.alaskachamber.com)

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