

Comments on the Draft Tourism Management Plan

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16	Dennis, Jan & Eldon	04/10/02	Email
15	Tillinghast, Jon	04/09/02	Email
14	Mearig, Mary	04/09/02	Email
13	King, Jim	04/09/02	Email
12	Johnson, Mary Elizabeth	04/09/02	Sent in with pin number
11	Unsigned	04/08/02	Sent in with pin number
10	Findlay, Beatrice	04/08/02	Email
9	ALM	04/08/02	Email
8	Unsigned	04/08/02	Sent in with pin number
7	Kirsch, Katya	04/07/02	Email To Assembly & Staff
6	Behnke, Chris	04/04/02	Email
5	Wilson, Dot	04/03/02	Email to Assembly Members & Bob Harvey
4	Wilde, Michael	04/02/02	Email
3	Bremner, Don	04/01/02	Email
2	Titus, Kim	04/01/02	Email
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Barbara Sheinberg
739 5th Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

April 19, 2002

City and Borough of Juneau
ATTN: Maria Gladziszewski
155 S. Seward Street
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Ms. Gladziszewski,

Please accept this brief comment on the draft Tourism Management Plan. I believe that the process has been good, and that generally the Plan's tourism-related "Intentions," "Vision," "Policy," "Strategic Tourism Positioning statements", "Strategic Growth Directions for Juneau Tourism", and "Tourism Product Development Themes" are very good. I suspect people will agree, and this brings us as a community very, very far along to embracing a direction for both positive tourism growth and management. The City's actions now to address and mitigate flight seeing noise and downtown congestion are positive steps that implement the path set out in the plan.

However, I am not sure the Juneau Tourism Partnership (JTP) superstructure/agency is the right vehicle to implement the Plan and manage Juneau's tourism. I was quite surprised to see the level of effort that went into fleshing out this management structure. While I agree that there is a fundamental problem with many different arms of the City all having roles in tourism --- which is based in part on institutional construct --- I am not at all convinced that the JTP is the mechanism that will be successful in Juneau to address this real concern.

I don't want to lose the good work in the Plan simply because it is premature (in my view) to adopt the recommended JTP implementation mechanism. Thus, I would recommend the City consider adopting chapters 1; 2; 3; 6 with the proviso that it is important to manage the impacts as laid out in chapter 6, but *who* manages the impacts has not been adopted yet; chapter 7 with the proviso that it is important to conduct product development as laid out in chapter 7, but *who* conducts this work has not been adopted yet; and so on for chapters 8 and 9. I think more consideration is needed before the City adopts the JTP. It may be the best solution, but alternatives have not been explored - at all. Alternatively, the contractor could be asked to final the Plan but move all the JTP language to an appendix. All the direction they have developed in chapters 6-9 is important embrace and get moving on - it represents significant progress to get Juneau's citizenry onboard with these actions - but one could lay this all out without putting the onus on the JTP to be the body to accomplish it. Let the City figure out the best mechanism, with the JTP as one option to consider.

Thank you for your consideration and all your very hard work, on what is generally a good Plan that was prepared with a good process.

Very truly yours,



Barbara Sheinberg

April 19, 2002

Mayor Sally Smith
CBJ Assembly Members
155 S. Seward Street
Juneau, AK 99801



Dear Mayor and Assembly Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments on the tourism plan. After reviewing the plan the JCVB board met with Bob Harvey via teleconference to discuss the areas of agreement on the plan and our concerns. We asked for some specific corrections regarding JCVB activities and responsibilities listed on pages 50-54 and page 95, which Mr. Harvey agreed to correct in the revised plan. Those corrections are noted at the end of this report.

The JCVB board of directors and CEO support the following tourism plan recommendations for marketing:

- JCVB will establish a marketing committee consisting of JCVB board members and non-board individuals, with recognized marketing expertise, to guide the board in the development of it's annual marketing plan
The marketing committee will include representatives from
 - Alaska Airlines
 - Alaska Marine Highway
 - JPT Director
 - Tourism Marketing experts – as recognized within the Juneau tourism community
- JCVB will present quarterly results statements to JTP and the Assembly
- JCVB will present marketing activities and results at the fall tourism forum
- JCVB will move toward more targeted marketing (both regions and niches)
- JCVB will continue to track performance of its marketing activities and include tracking information in the quarterly statements. Additional funding is required to conduct visitor satisfaction, economic impact studies and independent traveler profile and arrival statistics.
- JCVB board, marketing committee and JTP Director will meet after the fall forum to make sure that marketing directions and adopted changes to the tourism plan are synchronized
- During biennial CBJ budget development, the Assembly will review marketing results provided by the JCVB. The JTP will provide input to the Assembly.
- JCVB agrees that lengthening the average destination traveler's time spent in Juneau and raising spending per arrival is an important marketing objective.

Convention Marketing

- JCVB will develop a more targeted approach to marketing to new convention customers, focusing on niches and regions that match the targets for destination travel marketing and seeking groups that are likely to patronize Juneau's experiences.
- JCVB will improve its efforts to secure repeat business from existing convention customers
- JCVB will track marketing performance, with separate categories for repeat conventions, conventions that JCVB found and brought in, and conventions that JCVB serviced, but which were introduced to Juneau by other means
- JCVB's performance tracking will look at both revenues passing through the convention center and expenditures in Juneau resulting from conventions and related activities
- JCVB will present quarterly performance data to the Assembly (through Parks and Recreation) and JTP
- JCVB will present performance data during each fall tourism forum
- The Assembly will formally review marketing activities and results during each biennium budget session. JCVB will make a formal presentation of performance. Parks and Recreation will present data on revenue breakdown; make comparisons between revenues, costs, and marketing budgets; and recommend adjustments. JTP will present feedback based on input from the fall tourism forum and other perspectives.

The JCVB board and CEO recommend the following changes to the draft plan:

- Bed tax money should continue to be distributed through the established channels at CBJ, not funneled or distributed through the JTP.
- The JCVB continues as the marketing organization for Juneau, not a subcontractor on an annual contract to the JTP. We support a full partnership with JTP and will work collaboratively with the JTP to achieve the objectives of the long range tourism plan.
- The JCVB, the marketing committee and JTP director will craft the marketing plan for Juneau. It is an unreasonable expectation to hire an outside contractor to craft a marketing plan for which the JCVB is liable for the results.
- The JCVB recommends the JTP director job qualifications be redirected to strong skills in conflict resolution, mediation, and consensus building, along with experience in community planning and development.

Please do not hesitate to contact Rick Kasnick or myself if you have questions about any of the information we have provided in the report above. Thank you for your attention.

Lorene Kappler
President and CEO
Juneau Convention and Visitors Bureau

For your additional information I've included the specific corrections to elements presented in the draft plan:

Pages 50, 51 and 54.

A. Marketing: Marketing (destination), current line of communications/approvals...no clear lines...should be corrected to indicate that both Parks and Recreation and CBJ Assembly hold designated seats on the JCVB board, thereby providing two direct lines of communication to the city. In addition, the JCVB has made quarterly or annual reports before the assembly describing the marketing activities of JCVB and use of the bed tax money.

B. Marketing: Meetings and Conventions. Both the Centennial Hall manager and Parks and Recreation director have direct access to JCVB either through the board seat or in meetings with Convention Sales staff.

C. Marketing (community cooperative programs). Previous administrations and the current are involved with the Southeast Alaska Tourism Council in officer positions. SATC has a regional website and is developing a cooperative public relations program for the Inside Passage communities.

D. Monitoring (trends, marketing performance, visitor satisfaction) JCVB has performed in all three activities. The board and CEO would like to see more research done as funding is available.

E. Statement on page 95..."Juneau has a surprising lack of data demonstrating tourism performance." Significant data was provided to Egret Communications in the course of developing the long range plan. Specific research called for in the plan was traditionally provided by the Alaska Division of Tourism (\$500,000 research project – Alaska Visitor Statistics Program) until funding was cut and the program diminished. McDowell Group is now collecting that data again and JCVB is able to request visitor profile information, provided funding allows.

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-----Original Message-----

From: Bob Engelbrecht [mailto:engelbrecht@alaska.com]

Sent: Friday, April 19, 2002 5:33 PM

To: Tourism Coordinator; Bob Harvey

Subject: Juneau Tourism Plan Comments

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Juneau Tourism Plan. The comment period for such a lengthy document is very short and thus my comments will be brief compared to the full review that the document deserves.

First let me say that I support the tourism planning effort in general and that overall the draft tourism plan is a good one. The vision for Juneau succeeding at tourism on its own terms and positioning itself for both cruise and destination markets are well thought out and appropriate.

I also agree with the need to reorganize and orchestrate a more effective tourism effort to reach the goals outlined. I do not agree with the specifics of how the JTP is set-up however. Rather than supervise the JCVB and the Harbor Board, the key person from each of these organizations should be a member of the JTP. One of the things that the Tourism Advisory Committee had tried to do was foster coordination among the various agencies, departments, etc. that dealt with tourism. It would foster coordination to add the Harbor Master and the President of JCVB and it would also bring some additional talent to the group. There may be others that should be on the JTP but these two are obvious to me.

It also seems that the list of items the JTP will be responsible for is unrealistically long and complex. It appears that those on the JTP would have more than full time jobs. The list of responsibilities should be reviewed for their appropriateness and the ability of the group and staff to handle. The expectation for the JTP is very high based on the list.

I concur with the general need to upgrade both the facilities and the experiences offered in Juneau for the destination market but it is also important to point out that there are some excellent resources and examples in the community. There are a number of world class experiences offered in Juneau and some highly skilled guides that should be utilized in addition to the outside help purposed.

It should also be made clear that while government can foster a supportive environment for development of the sort discussed in the draft plan (often it does not) it is almost always the entrepreneurial and creative individuals that are crucial to figuring out what people are looking for and how to do it. I would not place too great a burden on the JTP or the government to develop those ideas.

The idea of a Floatplane Museum is a good one except that the concept is too narrow and should be expanded to encompass the full aviation history of the area including helicopters.

There are some basic facts that should be checked in the Tourism Resources section. The Juneau Icefield is 1,500 sq. miles, the Mendenhall Glacier is 12 miles long and I would question whether Glacier Bay is 3 million sq. miles.

There are many other details and assumptions that I would be happy to discuss with more time but overall the plan lays out a bright future for Juneau in tourism. While we might argue about the details and how we carry this plan out the broad concepts are good and should serve as a framework for moving ahead.

Bob Engelbrecht

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From: Becky Carls, Fritz Cove Rd., Juneau
To: Appropriate folks
Re: Juneau Draft Tourism Management Plan
April 19, 2002

[Just a note to start...I appreciate the amount of work which has gone into this document, however, I would have appreciated reading this entire document a lot more if it had been run past an editor or at least a proofreader before it was sent out to the community. There are many, many errors which were very distracting. Please review the document more carefully before submitting it in its final form. I made notes in my copy if you need some help.]

The Tourism Management Plan (TMP) is a very ambitious. It will be wonderful if mitigations to current problems can be accomplished in the time-frame as listed. I agree "that the challenge was (is) to manage it (tourism) to enhance their (our) quality of life, not compromise it." (Pg 32). But the statement on page 43 was great: "Clearly, Juneau is in the tourism business and must organize itself to respond to the opportunities, challenges and issues it faces in ensuring that tourism sector activities enhances (sic), rather than comprises (sic), the community's quality of life." Did you mean 'compromise' in place of 'comprise?' But the TMP moves in a direction in which our quality of life **will** be comprised of the tourism sector and little else. If the efforts being required by the plan were put into keeping the capital and improving the lives of the most needy among us, we would indeed be a capital city the whole state could be proud of.

Conclusions are drawn about how the community feels about various issues, but this was not determined by a vote. The polls used were not random, scientifically conducted polls, but were instead responded to by those individuals who cared to respond and in the 4th poll, by those who read this long document (at least in theory they read it). This should be stated early in the TMP.

Throughout the document numbers of tourists are mostly from 1999 and 2000. It would be nice to update the document with figures from 2001, even if only for the cruise ship tourists. Repeatedly the number for 2001 is an expected figure, when it should be known by now. The numbers should also be consistent throughout the document.

I object to your stating on page 7 that the differences in outlook between public employees and folks employed in mining, timber, and fishing is what "generate(s) some misunderstanding and community discourse." It is wrong to lump folks into these categories, a gross oversimplification of the cause of our problems, and incorrect to draw this conclusion.

There is a strong segment of the population (41% in the poll) who want to see cruise-ship numbers decrease. That is a large number and does not seem reflected, nor spoken to much, in this document. 62% of Poll 1 respondents want to maintain or decrease the number of cruise-ship tourists but this plan seeks to increase their numbers. On pg. 42 the plan seeks to "maintain and strengthen" Juneau's cruise tourism market.

I was pleased to see that the JTP will work cooperatively with other places in SEAK in promoting tourism. We need to be sensitive to the other communities in Southeast.

Pg. 42 "Industry cannot make Juneau a successful destination by itself - it needs a partnership with government..." It seems that once the TMP is adopted, very few actions will be taken in CBJ unless the effects on the tourism industry are taken into account. To the best of my

knowledge, no other industry or employment sector has this kind of power over the rest of the town and it is wrong! Even if JTP is created as a non-profit agency, it seems to be set up more for the profit of the tourism industry than the citizens. There is so much money and effort that will be directed to tourism once the TMP is adopted that I wonder if much will be left for the ordinary citizens of Juneau.

Pg. 37 "This team reads flightseeing as an issue that must be addressed, however, if tourism is to continue in Juneau." I would prefer to see that read "flightseeing noise is a problem that must be solved." This has been a sore spot in many polls, meetings, and studies concerning tourism problems in Juneau. If this could be resolved in a manner which greatly reduces noise at residents' residences, I believe there would be far more support for the tourism industry in Juneau than there is at present, and the TMP claims to want broad support from the community. I am not sure that new heliports are "the" solution, but until one is found, the TMP should have other solutions which could be more quickly implemented. Routing all copters around the backside of Douglas Island and up/down the Taku River, returning the helicopter route over Mendenhall Peninsula to the same route the jets use, and voluntarily lowering the number of landings until a more permanent solution is found are examples which might help this year!

At some point the plight of many residents who are forced to live with the continual noise all "summer" must take precedence over the convenience of the tourists and the length of time a tour takes. We have been asked to be patient for at least 6 summers and you are asking for us to be patient for at least 3 more! I strongly doubt that the new heliports can be ready in 2 and 3 years, if they are ever built. There should be short-term alternative solutions presented in the TMP and alternative long-term ones as well. Many proposals have been made at numerous public meetings if you need suggestions. Folks have suffered for YEARS with the flightseeing noise in their HOMES. We need relief soon! 100% of the "summers" since we have occupied our home and 1/3 of the "summers" since we moved to Juneau have been spoiled by the blight of helicopter noise.

If the community decides after more study and consideration of the neighborhoods involved to create new heliports, Phase 2 should follow right behind the footsteps of Phase 1 and not wait until Phase 1 is done, or Phase 2 will be far behind the target date of April '05. Ideally this should begin with narrowing the possible sites for Phase 2 by the end of the tourism season in '02, so that noise demonstration studies can be done this summer for both Phase 1 and Phase 2.

I thought it was interesting that in a footnote on page 41 you stated "Tourism can be managed to reinforce those values - or, as in such places as Disneyland or Las Vegas, tourism can proceed at its own course..." One of my very best friends lives in Las Vegas. Helicopters were flying over her neighborhood on their way to the Grand Canyon. This did not last more than a few weeks. One call from the mayor to the helo companies and they were told to fly a different route that did not go over homes. Wouldn't it be nice to get such a supportive response from our Manager or the Mayor and Assembly!

The updates to the Comprehensive Plan do not indicate any management of tourism. Policy 2.12 should be amended to read "...natural resources, making a positive contribution to the community's quality of life and protecting that quality of life." And Policy 2.12.1 should read "The CBJ shall promote and manage tourism in accordance..." Also, where are the new bed and

breakfasts and “small hotels” expected to be located? I hope they will be far from residential areas. Some new hotels in the airport area have greatly encroached upon long established residential neighborhoods. “Small hotels” and larger (more than 3 rooms) bed and breakfasts are not appropriate in residential neighborhoods.

It seems beyond the scope of the TMP to be asking the Forest Service to speed up its permit process. It could suggest that the JTP consider doing so, but to have dedicated funds in the budget to do this seems out of line. It could also lead to development moving too quickly once again as well as causing problems instead of preventing them in the first place, which is one of the reasons for a slower permitting process. Also, why should the USFS donate to the JTP budget?

Which brings up...On pages 109 and 111, why is the budget for the JTP being established before the Tourism Management Plan is ever adopted?

Regarding impact management: What if the response to a complaint by the business involved is inadequate, inappropriate, or does not happen at all? What if solutions/mitigations to tourism impacts are ignored or not implemented? The public needs more assurance written into the TMP that action will be taken on our behalf. You acknowledge that the current impacts are real and significant, but the plan’s response is weak. The TMP is biased toward tourism promotion and needs more emphasis on managing tourism impacts.

Regarding the seats on the board of directors: I would like to see the three “Public” representatives written into the plan as being folks who are neither a business owner or a family member of a business owner, nor a person who works in the tourism industry. Otherwise it seems that the representation could appear to be less than equally balanced between business and non-business interests.

Regarding the JTP Executive Director: Much emphasis is put on how this person will be working hard for the tourism industry, but almost nothing is said of this person’s role in managing tourism impacts. This person needs to be sensitive to the needs/desires/wishes of the community at large not just tourism and related businesses. They should be seen as working for the best interests of the community as a whole and not just the industry. Otherwise the tourism industry should be paying for this whole JTP thing out of pocket since it would seem to be strictly promotional.

I thought it was interesting to find the convertible plaza between Marine Park and the library proposed in the Tourism Management Plan before the Assembly had acted on it during an Assembly meeting.

Section 7.2.1 The waterfront vision should support the “proposed” tourism future for the City (instead of “accepted” as you have written). Nothing has been accepted yet. Regarding the “Panamax” cruise ships....do we want even larger ships tying up on our waterfront and blocking any views that are left? I think these should only anchor out! On page 81...bullet point 2...the word “needs” would be better than “demands” of the tourism sector.

I do not like the idea of a floatplane festival (7.2.2), particularly in May when it is still relatively quiet. We cannot control the level of noise we have now and this will just add to it and probably spread it all around the borough. There are plenty of other, QUIETER, events that could be planned instead, such as a bear festival, a glacier ice-cream social, or a gardening event, such as a primrose festival. The proposed floatplane festival cannot really “showcase quiet technology” when we would have dozens of extra floatplanes in town. Having this festival will totally disregard residents’ complaints about floatplane noise. You could still have the floatplane museum proposed in 7.2.4 if the planes are for display only. At the end of that section it is stated that the museum and floatplane event “are dependent on the satisfactory resolution of noise-related issues.” This statement should be made sooner, at the beginning of section 7.2.2. If the noise issues are resolved to the satisfaction of residents first, then the festival would be fine. The current location of the statement to deal with the noise issue makes it look like an afterthought, which makes it seem that the noise may be treated as an afterthought. And regarding No. 49 on page 117... It is fine to work on a signature event, but please do not select one yet. Let’s get input from the community at large for other events. We could even build on some events that already occur here.

Section 1.13.2 lumps ecotourism, nature travel, and adventure tourism into ecotouism and defines it as “responsible travel that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people.” Then in Section 7.2.6 Nature Experiences...“The nature-based experiences that Juneau should focus more aggressively on include” activities that involve helicopters and float planes. This does not “sustain the well being of the local people” under current circumstances and should be discontinued until a solution to the flightseeing noise is found. Therefore, flightseeing noise should be included in the issues section of the table for Destination travel on page 33 unless the helicopter portion of proposed activities is eliminated. Aircraft are not the only methods of transportation listed for these activities, so please remove them from use in these ecotourism activities. Otherwise you will be exacerbating an already tense situation.

You repeatedly use the term “fixed roof” which makes it sound like a repair. Could you please come up with a new term?

Chapter 9. Just because parts of the “plan aggressively seek to alter the volume/impact ratio,” it does not necessarily follow that “volume ceases to be a good indicator of social capacity.” That result depends entirely on how successful the mitigation measures are.

Section 9.1 The “safety valve” for cruise ships needs to be decided and planning for it put in place during the first year of the JTP. There needs to be something that would relieve the problem the very next season, not after many years of permitting and construction. The proposed new destination off the Juneau road system would probably take 3 to 10 years to develop. Not a very good time table for a “safety valve.” Perhaps in the meantime the JTP could “modify marketing to take pressure off volume increases (especially relating to specific triggering mechanisms) and focus on growing price per visitor” (from destination safety valve) and actually work toward decreasing volume until a new port is ready.

Section 9.1.1 How is the fall poll going to be taken? It should be stated in the TMP that polling will be contracted to be conducted in a random/scientific manner. In Poll 1, 62% of respondents indicated they felt Juneau has reached or exceeded capacity for cruise ship passengers. Under the TMP a trigger would have gone off. It should be stated that “any one of the indicators will trigger the safety valve,” and the same thing stated in Section 9.2.2 under Destination Indicators.

I keep wondering how long this fall tourism forum will be. Will it be a week of evenings or a whole weekend? More and more topics are inserted into it as the plan progresses. I hope that written comments will be accepted at the forum as time at these meetings always runs out. There should also be communication with the public after this meeting to let us know what mitigation will be taken if problems come up at the meeting which need to be dealt with.

One concern I have with the TMP is that we will lose the distinctive character of Juneau in our rush to be a high-end destination. We may become all glitzy and polished and look more and more like many other cruise-ship ports in the world. Will the “training” result in workers who act overly polished as well? Changing our town too much would be a great loss to us and to the tourists. Do we really need to meet the “standards expected by destination travelers in today’s tourism markets” (Pg 75)?

Overall, the TMP does a great deal to promote turning Juneau into even more of a tourist town. But, I do not believe that enough is done to have residents feel welcome in their own town. That is the crux of the matter. To keep folks from feeling that they have lost the town they loved and wanted to call home for the rest of their lives. I know of several folks who have already moved out because they felt this way. What is Juneau willing to do to keep more folks from doing the same? Pg. 40 "Juneau intends to be a high quality destination, providing rich and positive experiences for its visitors. It intends to make those visitors feel warmly welcomed.” Wouldn’t it be great if the JTP could do a similar thing for the current residents of our town?

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----- Original Message -----

From: Steve Behnke <srbehnke@ak.net>

Date: Fri, 19 Apr 2002 11:05:01 -0800

The following are my comments on the draft Egret tourism plan:

As a Thane resident I'm glad to see the CBJ moving to plan for tourism so that it works for both business and inhabitants. Over the past decade tourism has increasingly intruded into life in Thane. Our daily commutes and shopping trips have become longer because of cruiseship-related congestion downtown, as well as more hazardous because of increasing traffic on narrow, shoulderless Thane Road. Our homes and recreation activities have become noisier because of flightseeing traffic along Gastineau Channel.

So I support working toward overall tourism planning. The draft Egret plan that the Assembly will consider Monday, April 28, is a good start, and has a number of valuable recommendations.

However, the draft plan falls down in addressing helicopter flightseeing noise. It offers only an incomplete solution, building a new heliport in the Thane area.

Building a heliport in or near Thane is a bad idea. It would disproportionately impact our quiet neighborhood and is inconsistent with zoning. It would create significantly more helicopter noise, particularly if the site on the beach near Sheep Creek is selected. It would also add to traffic problems. Thane Road is already substandard and hazardous, not only for vehicles, but for all the Juneau walkers, joggers, and bikers who use it. If big busses are added to the traffic on the road every thirty minutes, things will only get worse.

The Assembly should not accept this inadequate recommendation. The city already acknowledges that more studies are needed before it can determine if Thane is an appropriate location. ERA Helicopters has joined with Thane to emphasize that adequate information needs to be gathered before a decision is made. Yet the only solution offered by the draft plan is that of alternative heliports, with Thane specified as one place one will be built. This section should be dropped or revised to address the need for more complete information and a more comprehensive look at solutions.

Steve Behnke
4545 Thane Road, Juneau
586-9768

----- Original Message -----

From: Larri Spengler <lspengler@ak.net>

Date: Thu, 18 Apr 2002 10:55:12 -0800

Hello --

Attached and pasted in below are the comments of the Thane Neighborhood Association on the draft Egret tourism plan. Also attached is an October 2001 letter from Juneau Neighbors to Mayor Sally Smith on alternate heliport options, which we refer to and incorporate in our current comment letter.

Thank you.

Larri Irene Spengler
President, Thane Neighborhood Association

cc: Thane e-mail list

THANE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

4545 Thane Road, Juneau, Alaska 99801

586-9768

LSpengler@ak.net

Juneau Assembly
City and Borough of Juneau
155 S. Seward Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

April 18, 2002

Re: comments on draft tourism plan

Dear Assembly Members:

The Thane Neighborhood Association has the following comments on the draft tourism plan put together for the city by Egret Communications/ARA Consulting.

First, we would like to express our appreciation to the Assembly for moving toward taking an overall approach to managing tourism impacts. This is much preferable to addressing issues piecemeal as they arise, an approach that can have the unintended potential for pitting neighborhood against neighborhood. To that end, the draft asserts that "Juneau has no alternative but to address flightseeing noise in a significant way. Both float plane and helicopter flightseeing impacts need to be addressed." (Draft, page 64)

However, we note with disappointment that the draft plan specifically calls for "phased relocation of heliports" with the first phase involving "the development of a new heliport south of Juneau, probably in the vicinity of Dupont or Sheep Creek." (Draft, page 65). The draft assumes that this decision is already final, and that it is on a fast track: "Phase one is underway as of February, 2002. The CBJ will press phase one forward with as much speed as possible, making every effort to move operations by the 2004 season." (The portion of the draft plan addressing the option of a heliport in Thane is reprinted at the end of this letter, for your convenience.)

The Thane Neighborhood Association, as we have indicated to the city before, opposes any headlong rush to locate a satellite heliport in our neighborhood. A survey of Thane residents reveals strong, widespread opposition to a heliport at either Dupont or Sheep Creek. Further, Era Helicopters is not in a rush, and wants all necessary information before deciding about these options.

The Assembly should resist the temptation to piecemeal a solution to an important community problem. Building a heliport in Thane will unquestionably change the character of our neighborhood forever -- yet it will do little to solve the overall noise problem for most

Juneau residents. Such a solution to this particular problem would strike the wrong balance, devastating the Thane neighborhood, while not improving noise that much for others in Juneau.

In this regard, we note that in the web polling done in conjunction with developing the draft plan, 293 respondents replied “very much” to the question “Does helicopter flightseeing noise bother you personally?” Is that level of high annoyance worth inflicting more tourism impacts on a neighborhood that already suffers from flightseeing noise and downtown congestion? Further, no doubt some of those “very much” bothered were Thane residents, who, as our survey shows, would rather suffer the helicopter noise than have their neighborhood and its quiet, substandard road turned into a throughway for helicopters and large busses every half-hour.

The Assembly promised an orderly, three-phase process culminating in an assessment that would consider all impacts before deciding on new heliports. Yet this draft tourism plan assumes the choices for a southern heliport have been narrowed to two (both in Thane) on the basis of one factor (noise), without considering other environmental or socio-economic impacts, including the effects on Thane. Some, but not all, of the information needed before rational consideration of these two sites can occur are:

- How would each of the two options work, exactly?
- What could be done about water, sewer and fire protection for Era at each site?
- How would each option be financed?
- What exactly would be the noise consequences of a full contingent of fully-loaded helicopters taking off, traveling from and to, and landing at each site?
- What would be the traffic and land use consequences, including traffic noise?
- How does each option fit into Juneau’s overall tourism plan?
- What about the comprehensive plan, and other existing planning documents?
- What are the zoning considerations?

Other important questions have been raised in an October 2001 letter from the West Mendenhall Valley Neighborhood Association to Mayor Sally Smith and by a similar letter from Juneau Neighbors. A copy is attached for your convenience. All of these questions need to be resolved as they apply to Thane before reasonable decisions can be made. The draft tourism plan simply assumes a heliport in Thane will be built, no matter what the answers to the questions are.

Ironically, the location apparently receiving the most attention -- the shore by Sheep Creek -- was not even recommended by the Assembly’s heliport consultants. Their recommendation contemplated two Sheep Creek sites -- the shore site being used only when weather conditions precluded operations at the valley site. This combination might have mitigated noise heard by Thane residents. Using only the shore site would create new noise for Thane, and effectively destroy the Sheep Creek delta as a community recreation site.

The current talk of basing all operations on the shore there also ignores the heliport consultants’ conclusion that it, alone, is not large enough to satisfy FAA design requirements. Heliports must include sufficient area for all functional elements, including hangars and fuel farms. Further, we understand that federal financial aid is contingent upon meeting FAA guidelines.

The Assembly instructed its heliport consultants that any sites evaluated should be consistent with current city planning documents. As we have described to you, neither of the two Thane locations meets that criterion.

Dupont is currently zoned low-density residential and rural reserve, where heliports are not a permitted use. Both the Dupont and Sheep Creek sites are on the shoreline where Juneau's Coastal Management Plan limits development to water-dependent or water-related activities. Siting major new non-water related transportation facilities there is inappropriate.

Although the shore near Sheep Creek is zoned "waterfront industrial," it is also designated in the Coastal Management Plan as a special waterfront district, where heliports are not among the permitted uses. Sheep Creek is also designated a "new growth area," where a master plan must precede development. The decision to site a heliport in the middle of this area would effectively preclude most other uses.

Additionally, Juneau's Comprehensive Plan lists as a goal for Thane: "maintain recreational access to Sheep Creek Basin and minimize impacts on the existing recreational use of the area."

Thane Road is an integral part of our neighborhood. The wider Juneau community uses the trails accessed by the road for hiking, jogging, dog walking, bird watching and fishing. Both the Dupont and Sheep Creek Trails were rejected for commercial use because of their value to Juneau residents. The increase in surface and air traffic contemplated by the Thane proposals would seriously impact these activities.

Although the effects on Thane are potentially devastating, siting a heliport here would do little to alleviate the overall noise problem for most of Juneau. It would relocate only one of the four helicopter companies. It does nothing to address the problem of floatplane noise, which is a larger problem than helicopters for many residents of lower Gastineau Channel.

We are urging the Assembly to complete an assessment that addresses all alternatives for solving the noise problem, and to consider all the evidence before committing to a solution. Have all reasonable options been considered? One intriguing possibility Era mentioned to us is a road linking downtown directly with a heliport on the backside of Douglas. The draft tourism plan assumes a heliport in Thane is a "done deal," and does not discuss exploration of other options for helicopters at all.

What would a Thane heliport actually cost the public? In addition to the cost of acquiring land and air rights, major road improvements would be required, plus extension of sewer and water utilities -- a code requirement for siting major new transportation facilities.

In light these considerations, we believe it is inappropriate for the draft tourism plan to simply assume a heliport will be built in Thane. It should, instead, call for a thorough look at all impacts of all possible solutions, so that the right balance can be struck in addressing the problem of helicopter flightseeing noise.

Sincerely,

Board of the Thane Neighborhood

Association

Larri Irene Spengler, President
Sally Bibb
Louise Champagne
David Crosby
Marjorie Menzi
Jeanine Smith
Paula Terrel

Enclosure: October 30, 2001, letter to Assembly from Juneau Neighbors

The draft tourism plan states beginning on page 65, with regard to a heliport in Thane:

The plan acknowledges the important work accomplished in the Alternative Heliport Site Analysis study and the community discussions conducted by the Assembly regarding that study. The plan also acknowledges the efforts of the helicopter operators to adopt and follow practices and routes that have reduced noise and the number of people impacted by that noise. The plan further acknowledges the data gathered by web polling which indicates that helicopter flightseeing noise does “bother” a significant portion of the Juneau population. Frequency and volume are both significant factors in noise irritation.

Following the recommendations of the noise study, and understanding that relocation involves further study, time, and both public and private sector investment, the plan calls for phased relocation of heliports. Heliport relocation processes will be coordinated by the City Manager’s office, which process is already underway.

Relocation processes will pay close attention to:

- Reducing helicopter noise levels for residents
- Fostering a healthy business environment for the operators
 - Assisting small operators (Coastal, Northstar) in making the move
 - Protecting cooperating operators from uncooperative competition
 - Creating an environment that enables reasonable growth
 - Avoiding actions that substantially raise costs of operation
- Ensuring a quality experience for visitors
- Mitigating impacts caused by the relocation
- Avoiding environmental damage, mitigation if required

The first phase will involve the development of a new heliport south of Juneau, probably in the vicinity of Dupont or Sheep Creek. The development will require impact analysis, land transfers, zoning adjustments, road development and/or improvement, construction of one or more helipads and support facilities, and mitigation of impacts on the Thane community. Once complete, and after operational agreements and/or contracts are in place, ERA's flightseeing operations will move to the new heliport. The new heliport, and associated flight paths, will substantially reduce helicopter flightseeing noise.

The second phase will develop a northern heliport. The Alternative Heliport Site Analysis study points to Montana Creek as a target site. The process will concentrate on moving toward that site, but will be receptive to reasonable alternatives presented by operators and community early in the process. The development will require impact analysis, land transfers, zoning adjustments, road improvement, construction of one or more helipads and support facilities, and mitigation of impacts for nearby residences. Once complete, and after operational agreements and contracts are in place, TEMSCO, Coastal, and Northstar flightseeing operations will move to the new heliport facility. The new heliport, and associated flight paths, will substantially reduce helicopter flightseeing noise.

The cruise lines serving Juneau, as represented by Northwest Cruise Association, have indicated they will agree to voluntarily limit flightseeing sales to companies cooperating with the heliport relocation effort. Non-cooperating companies and new companies that don't locate at the designated flightseeing helipads will not be eligible for on-board sales of flightseeing packages.

Phase one is underway as of February, 2002. The CBJ will press phase one forward with as much speed as possible, making every effort to move operations by the 2004 season. CBJ will move phase two forward more slowly, working to enable the move about one season after the southern site is operational.

The helicopter flightseeing operators will work to reduce noise (both volume and coverage) through neighborly flying practices. The Juneau Tourism Partnership will forward community observations during each tourism season and will conduct a review of the issue in its impact session each fall. The operators will meet annually, after the review, and adjust routes and practices as needed. Each season the route and practices plan will be provided to the JTP, which will distribute to the public through the media and on a dedicated portion of the community tourism website operated by the JTP.

October 30, 2001

The Honorable Sally Smith
Mayor, City and Borough of Juneau
155 South Seward Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Mayor Smith:

Juneau Neighbors, a coalition of neighborhood associations, is following the heliport issues with great interest. Several neighborhood associations are also tracking the issue. We recognize that the Assembly has probably not yet considered the alternative heliport issue in depth. However, a number of questions have come up with respect to the issue and we thought it would be helpful to share with you some of the questions we have on the process to be followed and on some of the specifics that we believe need to be addressed. Thus, we are hopeful that you would be in a position to answer the following questions so that we may better inform the residents of our various neighborhoods. For convenience sake, we have grouped the questions according to process, facilities, operations, finances, authority, and implementation, although the questions may well be overlapping.

PROCESS

1. What process will be used to determine whether to create and operate the heliports? What is the timeline for the process? When will meetings be held, where, before what body or bodies and when and who will coordinate the process?
2. Input - What public input, if any, will there be?
What input will there be from the industry and operators, if any?
What input will there be from neighborhood associations, if any?
3. Will the two heliports, presently proposed, be considered jointly or separately?
4. Can one heliport be implemented without the other? If so, will there be separate processes for each heliport?
5. What criteria will be used to determine whether to proceed with each heliport?
6. Have the helicopter operators been approached for a reaction to these sites, and if so, what is their reaction? If not, will they be approached and how? What operators, if any, are interested in which sites?
7. Will any other noise studies be conducted with respect to the two heliports? If so what and when?
8. What is the plan to shift current operators from their present locations to the heliports?

FACILITIES

1. What is proposed for each heliport? For example, will there be hangars, fuel facilities, maintenance facilities, passenger facilities, parking, security facilities, government and regulatory offices, food and other services? Will the facility look like a mini-airport or something else?
2. What infrastructure, if any, is proposed in connection with each heliport? What utilities will be provided to the sites and how will they be provided?
3. For Dupont, will the Thane Road be upgraded and extended? Will there be access by sea, and if so where will the port facilities be located in Juneau?
4. For Montana Creek, will Montana Creek road be upgraded, extended and improved? If so, to what extent? Will there be sidewalks or bike trails in addition to the road improvements? Will Montana Creek be bridged, and if so, where and how large of a bridge?
5. Exactly where (meaning not just the general vicinity but the exact location) will the heliports be located, and how will their location be determined?

OPERATIONS

1. What flight operations are proposed to occur at the heliports? Just tourism or other operations?
2. What support operations are proposed to occur at the heliports? Will fuel and maintenance be supplied at each heliport, or will the helicopters have to return each day for fuel and maintenance to the airport?
3. What security will be provided at each heliport and who will provide the security?
4. What months of the year and hours of the day will helicopters operate out of each heliport?
5. How many operators will there be at each heliport and who are the proposed operators for each heliport?
6. To where will the helicopters fly? For instance just to the icefields or elsewhere?
7. Will there be personnel at the heliport 24 hours per day? If so, what personnel and how many?
8. What environmental safeguards will be instituted? For instance, how will Montana Creek and Little Sheep Creek be protected during construction and then from nonpoint source pollution? How will wetland impacts be addressed?
9. What, if any, conditions will be imposed to reduce the impact of the heliports on neighborhoods located near the heliports and the transportation corridors to the heliports?
10. What will be the flight plans for tourist helicopter usage during clear and cloudy weather, and how will the flight plans be enforced?
11. What is the frequency and time of ground transportation to and from the heliports?

FINANCES

1. **Construction:** What is the cost for the construction of each of the two heliports and the roads, utilities, buildings and other facilities that will have to be built to operate the heliports?
How will construction of the heliports, roads, utilities, buildings and other facilities be financed? Through passenger proceeds funds, sales tax property tax, State funds, user fees or other sources? What is the estimated cost per Juneau resident of the construction costs?
2. **Maintenance.** What will be the ongoing maintenance and repair costs of the heliports, roads, utilities, building and other facilities?
Who will pay the ongoing maintenance and repair costs for the heliports, roads, utilities, buildings and other facilities? How much will it cost for management of each heliport?
3. Will the costs of land acquisition, construction, maintenance, and repair mean that other public projects presently being contemplated by the Borough will not proceed or be delayed? If so, which ones?
If the Borough does not already own the land proposed for the heliports, what will it cost to acquire the land? Money or land trade? If a land trade, what land will be traded and what is its value? If money, how much will be paid? What will be the source of funding to acquire the land?
4. Will the airport lose revenues if present helicopter operators move from the airport to the heliports, and how much will be lost?
5. Will the Borough provide incentives to move the helicopter operators to the heliports? If so, what incentives and how much will it cost and what is the source of the funds to pay the incentives?

AUTHORITY

1. Who will own the heliports? Will there be a heliport authority? If so, what will be its legal status and relationship to the Borough? Who will be responsible to manage and run the heliports?

2. Does the current comprehensive plan authorize heliports at the proposed locations? If not, will the plan be changed and if so, when and how?
3. Do current zoning laws authorize the heliports at the proposed locations? If not, will the laws be changed, and if so, when and how?
4. Will ownership and responsibility for management and maintenance of Thane Road and Montana Creek Road change due to the heliports? If so, what are the changes?
5. Who will regulate ground traffic to the sites?
6. Who will regulate air traffic at the sites? The FAA or someone else?
Will the Borough have any authority to control air traffic? That is, will the Borough be able to limit flight operations by time and number of flights?
7. Will the Borough lease space to the operators at the heliports? If so, what will be the terms of the lease? If not, what will be the relationship between the operators and the Borough and can that relationship be used to control flight operations?
8. Will the heliports increase or decrease helicopter flights in Juneau, or have no impact?
9. Will the heliports impact the Forest Service's authority or plans with respect to flight landings on the Juneau Icefield? If so, how?
10. Who will manage traffic to and from the heliports, and how?

IMPLEMENTATION

1. How will the heliports be implemented?
2. What is the timeframe for implementation?

We realize these questions are quite lengthy and address substantial matters. However, these are the matters that residents are asking as a result of the recent release of the alternative heliport study. We look forward to your response to these questions and would appreciate the opportunity to participate in the process.

Sincerely,

Paula Terrel, Chair
Juneau Neighbors
586-3451
Email: soforty@alaska.net

Cc: CBJ Assembly members

----- Original Message -----

From: <cuadra@gci.net>

Date: Wed, 17 Apr 2002 11:42:18 -0800

I did review the recent draft tourism plan document. It still is missing mention of 3 out of 4 of the RV campgrounds we have here in Juneau. It only mentions the single commercially owned one, and omits mention of the 3 publicly owned ones: Forest Service's at Mendenhall Lake and at Auke Bay (both of which have wonderful views, and the one by the lake even has handicapped persons' facilities now), as well as the one at Eagle Beach (which is now undergoing major improvements).

I did send this comment/info, by email, to the consultant after reviewing the prior version of the report, some months ago. But my information was ignored.

If we want to increase destination travelers to Juneau (and I agree we do), then we don't want the final version of the report to go out without adding in the other 3 RV/campground facilities. People in other states will get the idea Juneau is no place to come if they are RV travelers. Will you please take this up with the consultant?

I would like a reply, please.

Elizabeth Cuadra, Juneau, AK (789-2084)

32

-----Original Message-----

From: Sara H. Willson [mailto:shwillson@hotmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2002 3:41 PM

To: Borough Assembly; talktous@cbjtourism.com; Maria Gladziszewski;
Tourism Coordinator

Subject: Comments on Juneau Draft Tourism Management Plan

Hello to All,

I hope the attached comments will be considered as you develop the final Tourism Management Plan.

Please feel free to include them in any distribution to persons interested.

This plan certainly reflects a lot of work!

Thank you.

Sally Willson

Box 211235
Auke Bay, AK 99821-1235
April 16, 2002

Comments on
Juneau Draft Tourism
Management Plan
March 29, 2002

I think the Juneau Draft Tourism Management Plan (“D-TMP”) addresses many of the concerns and offers ideas for reconciling the diversity of opinions that exists in our community. I like the plan and hope that we are able to “succeed at both cruise tourism and destination travel – with success being defined on Juneau’s terms.” (Page1).

My comments relate to four broad areas:

- ❑ **Poll Participation**
- ❑ **Juneau Tourism Partnership (“JTP”)**
- ❑ **Juneau Convention and Visitors Bureau (“JCVB”)**
- ❑ **Cruise Ship Safety Valve Strategy**

Poll Participation

The number of respondents has decreased each time. I realize that the time to respond to Poll 4 was much great since one needed to read the D-TMP but this is a huge decrease!

Poll 1 – 1511 respondents

Poll 2 – 1089 respondents

Poll 3 – 977 respondents

Poll 4 – 171 respondents (as of 10am, April 16, 2002)

Juneau Tourism Partnership

The JTP is a good idea. A specific requirement that the public stakeholders group be limited to those Juneau residents who are **not** involved with cruise-related, destination-related or downtown retail sectors would ensure participation from these residents.

Juneau Convention and Visitors Bureau (“JCVB”)

The idea of requiring the JCVB to demonstrate the effectiveness of their marketing activities would provide accountability for the city funds paid to that group. I like this idea.

Box 211235
Auke Bay, AK 99821-1235
April 16, 2002

Comments on
Juneau Draft Tourism
Management Plan
March 29, 2002

Cruise Ship Safety Valve Strategy

The report states “volume of visitors (about 700,000 in 2001) represents a near-capacity situation for Juneau harbor” (Page 42). The industry is advising that there may be an additional increase of about 10% in 2002, although many factors may influence that.

The idea of a cruise ship safety valve strategy (Page 100) needs to be considered now. The development of a new cruise destination off Juneau’s road grid but within the same general destination could result in a win-win situation.

Since the report indicates that Juneau has reached near-capacity and since we are developing a proactive, rather than reactive approach, this new destination strategy could mitigate some of the disparate attitudes about tourism here.

Thank you for your attention. You may contact me at 586-8292.

Sincerely,

Sara H. Willson

31

-----Original Message-----

From: Reuben & Erin Willis [mailto:willis@gci.net]

Sent: Monday, April 15, 2002 2:32 PM

To: Tourism Coordinator

Subject: Draft Tourism Plan

April 15, 2002

CBJ Office of Tourism,

I have intently followed the conflict and attempts at a community resolution to the flightseeing noise issues for several years now. I live in West Juneau and feel that this area is adversely affected by the constant flight tour noise from the helicopters above and the float planes below. After reading the Alternate Heliport Site Analysis, I must say I would be thrilled to see this proposed solution become a reality in Juneau! I am not "anti tourism" and I am happy that people want to come and experience Alaska. I also realize the financial benefit tourism infuses into our economy, and though I am not a direct beneficiary to tourism dollars, I understand the trickle down effect into other businesses. Despite this, I do feel frustrated and upset that the best weather months outdoors in Juneau are accompanied by intrusive, unending flight sound. Like many, many other residents I choose to live here in Juneau because of a love of the outdoors and the peace and relative quiet that may be experienced here. Unfortunately, I and my family have found it impossible to recreate from Sandy Beach to Auke Rec. (not to mention our own yard) without the flightseeing noise accompanying us. I think the best approach that the City of Juneau can take is to manage the tourism we have by getting the tours away from the residents by relocating the heliports and float plane sites. My negative feelings towards the tourist industry would be negated by this development. I feel this course of action would make great strides towards closing the rift between residents, city officials, and the tourist industry. Recent history has shown a growing disdain for the inevitable effects of tourism growth. How can we create a win-win-win situation for residents, tour operators, and the tourists themselves? Try to eliminate the cause of conflict. Relocate the heliports and float planes. I am sure there are people on both sides of this issue who will not agree with me. Some residents will say we must cut back tourism completely. Tour operators may balk at leaving their established comfort zones to relocate to new sites. City officials may complain that alternate heliport sites will be costly and take time to accomplish. But most of the people in Juneau realize that this issue is not going to disappear and needs to be resolved, and if it is ignored the rift in our fair city will continue to grow. Resolutions come through compromises. That means everyone tries to work at resolving the situation and making Juneau a better community. I think alternate heliport sites are the answer for Juneau. When these sites become a reality, Juneau will be a quieter, happier city. Resident tour guides will be able to make their living without harassment and resident citizens will be able to enjoy the peace we hope everyone can feel while in Juneau- whether for only a day or for a lifetime! Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erin Willis

Erin Willis
2912 Jackson Road
Juneau, Ak. 99801

----- Original Message -----

From: TerryAToon@aol.com

Date: Mon, 15 Apr 2002 09:27:36 EDT

- 1- Plan doesn't seem to address issues destination travelers I've met on trails, etc. the last few summers have had-regarding how to enjoy Juneau without tripping over cruise tourists at every turn...
- 2- Is the idea for restricting deliveries in downtown when ships are in for real? Businesses would have to maintain extraordinary hours to beat that time frame...
- 3- I am glad to see some plans to reduce float plane noise- the long hours of listening to multiple planes take off down the channel past my home has driven me away from home on days off the last few years.
- 4- I am hoping part of working with Alaska Marine Highways mentioned includes developing off season time schedules that allow our Southeast neighbors to come visit /shop/etc. at people friendly hours. I hope someday someone takes a real look at developing efficient and cost conscious transit for ferry travelers into town. (If Sitka can do it - why can't Juneau?) If the tourism industry really wants to mend some fences with the community it is time to pay attention to the grudges held about these issues.
- 5- It bothers me that the figure of 750 jobs related to cruise industry keeps popping up without info regarding how many are full-time, seasonal, rates of pay, etc. SOME jobs are poorly paid, go to folks who just come to work for the summer, etc. It would be nice to have a better idea of what those jobs are in relation to overall community financial gain.
- 6- I think Juneau would be healthier if it started talking about a more diverse economic base. The too-many-eggs-in-one-basket aspect of committing so many resources and energy to one activity-tourism- bothers me.
- 7- 7- I am concerned that working trails group, that by and large has done so well, will lose some of its steam under the new proposal. It is a unique to have a group which manages to co-ordinate across so many lines...
- 8- There are a lot of good ideas in the draft and is obvious that much work and thought went into the project. I am glad to see the collaborative concept have such a prominent place in language guiding proposed JTB. I have reservations about how it will work out in real life given the usual cast of "stakeholders" locally but is one of the better ideas to pop up...

Thank you,

T. Toon

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-----Original Message-----

From: Margot Knuth [mailto:margot_knuth@correct.state.ak.us]

Sent: Monday, April 15, 2002 3:27 PM

To: Tourism Coordinator

Subject: Draft Tourism Plan

Greetings.

I have taken the time to review the draft tourism plan and I am somewhat concerned about its proposals for responding to community concerns about flightseeing noise. I generally favor the satellite heliport plan, but I understand that a number of citizens are concerned that these plans will unduly impact their neighborhood. Hence, I think it likely that the two-year timetable set out in the plan for the Thane location and the three-year timetable for the Montana Creek location do not end up being met.

I strongly urge you to recommend that existing flightseeing traffic levels be MAINTAINED until resolution of the noise issue occurs. My concern is that the currently-authorized levels far exceeds existing levels and if an existing-levels cap is not imposed, then the flightseeing noise levels could increase significantly.

The actual revenues generated for the community by the helicopter tour industry total far less money than people seem to think. I believe that the controversy and unpleasantness associated with helicopter noise exceeds the controversy and unpleasantness associated with the cruise ship industry in general by a factor of at least 4:1. The number of helicopter tours booked by the cruise ship industry represents only 10% of the cruise ship passengers. In short, I believe that over half of everyone's problems with "tourism" in Juneau these days can be traced to what represents less than 10% of the industry's economic value to the community. This is quite disproportionate. It suggests that the city and the tourism industry could get the most "bang for their buck" by compromising on this one issue.

Thank you for your consideration and your willingness to tackle these difficult problems.

Margot Knuth
mknuth@gci.net
4015 Ridge Way

----- Original Message -----

From: "Beverly Haywood" <bhaywood@gci.net>

Reply-To: "Beverly Haywood" <bhaywood@gci.net>

Date: Sun, 14 Apr 2002 22:37:29 -0800

I am SO IMPRESSED with the tourism management plan -- congratulations to everyone, including the poll voters. Best is the inclusion of things in the plan that will make Juneau nicer for us who live here. I'm not connected with the tourism business, but I would love a park-n-ride and the opportunity to make much of downtown Juneau a pedestrian place and not a car place. I would love a performing arts center, even if it has to be combined with a visitors center, making it less useful in the summer. But along those lines, I think the JTP might consider how a renovation of the Gross Theater would be a boon because it would allow summer theater and concert productions for tourists while the visitors center is busy with its own stuff.

I really miss having the Na'a Kahidi (sp?) theater right in the center of things, the way it was that first beginning year. Everyone I know thought it was an impressive presentation. If a quality Native center could be built in that space next to the library, it would be a big draw.

Most of all, I love the idea of our city (that is, ourselves) taking charge of our great resources and making Juneau THE place to visit in the whole USA. As long as the growth is beneficial and not degrading-- let's go for it! --

Beverly Haywood.

----- Original Message -----

From: "Mark Regan" <mregan@ptialaska.net>

Date: Mon, 15 Apr 2002 18:37:52 -0800

Dear Tourism Consultants,

On balance, the polls were useless, and the draft plan is one of the worst-written documents I've had the bad fortune to read. The process failed, and you failed. Please acknowledge this, collect your money, and go away. If you want examples of lousy writing in your draft plan, beyond, say, the first sentence of the second paragraph of your executive summary,

"The project, from the beginning, has employed sustainable development philosophy and criteria to the development of a plan that is designed to work for both community and tourism industry,"

I would be glad to supply them.

Leaving jargon aside (the draft plan appears deliberately and aggressively to embrace it), two problems in the executive summary's second paragraph's first sentence are that the verb in this sentence should have been "applied," not "employed," and the word "the" should have appeared between both "both" and "community" and "and" and "tourism industry." Larger and slightly more substantive problems are that at no point I can find does the plan bother to justify applying "sustainable development philosophy and criteria," whatever they are, to anything at all, and at no point I can find does the plan bother to justify designing a plan that must "work" not just for the community, but for for the tourism industry. If you insert into your premises the idea that a plan has to satisfy the tourism industry as well as the community, of course you will end up with the sort of garbage you propose.

So, and with due "application," not "employment," to the CBJ as well as to you,

"Garbage in, garbage out."

Mark Regan
Box 535
Douglas 99824

----- Original Message -----

From: "Douglas K. Mertz" <dkmertz@ak.net>

Reply-To: dkmertz@ak.net

Date: Sun, 14 Apr 2002 16:58:59 -0800

It seems to me that the Plan is flawed in two main ways. First, it creates a cooperative process that is supposed to mirror community sentiment, but there is no guarantee that the full spectrum of opinion will be represented on the JTP or other groups. The likelihood is that commercial tourism interests will continue to be overrepresented since they view participation as a money-making activity and hence are willing to send paid personnel or unpaid people who expect an economic payoff. That is not true of the other wing of the dispute. The JTP will, over time, become simple another voice for commercial interests.

Second, the plan relies overwhelmingly on cooperative non-mandatory efforts. There is no room in the plan for mandated minimum protections on the local level. This is a major error -- industry historically does the minimum required or the minimum it believes will avoid real regulation. My belief is that the Assembly must have the courage to declare that some minimums -- in air, water, noise, and open space requirements -- must be adhered to even when the industry believes it would cost it money.

D.K. Mertz

25

-----Original Message-----

From: Douglas Mertz [mailto:margowaring@ak.net]

Sent: Sunday, April 14, 2002 3:54 PM

To: tourism@ci.juneau.ak.us

Subject: Tourism Plan Comments

I read the draft plan with increasing concern. The plan is structured around the development of the Juneau Tourism Partnership. I will not comment extensively on my impression that the JTP heavily favors the tourism industry, especially the cruise industry. My main concern is that the JTP appears to be the old Tourism Advisory Board dusted off and given a great deal of power. The old committee proved itself to be an ineffective means for dealing with tourism issues, largely because it was several removes from decision making authority and from elected officials. This is why it was "returned" to the Assembly.

The proposed JTP is given too many municipal powers and authority, without a context that requires the protections that go with municipal government. Many responsibilities are taken away from tasks which should be done by city government--and others which should remain in the private sector because that is where all their cost and benefit should be.

I also think that the proposed JTP is a solution to a non-problem: I have attended many meetings and did not hear that the city needed closer working relationships with the industry. Rather, much concern was expressed that the industry has too much influence, along with the DBA and the CVB. The JTP will increase that influence.

The proposed JTP, as an appointed body, has many of the flaws of other appointed groups, notably that there is no guarantee that appointments will be representative of the real diversity of views in the community. I suspect that it will be another pro-industry set of appointments, called "representative" by the Assembly, but actually picked to represent the views of the majority of Assembly members. Without true representation of all the community's views, it will not solve the divisiveness within the community on the subject of tourism.

Lastly, the "plan" is very short on actual plans. Rather, it sets up the JTP as the way to plan, thereby creating a relatively closed process that will not assure common agreement about objectives.

Margo Waring

24

-----Original Message-----

From: Bremner Don [mailto:Don.Bremner@sealaska.com]

Sent: Sunday, April 14, 2002 3:50 PM

To: 'borough_assembly@ci.juneau.ak.us'

Cc: 'bobharvey@egretcommunications.com'

Subject: Juneau Draft tourism management Plan Comment

Dear Mayor Smith and Members of the Assembly;

This is follow up comment regarding the new Tourism Management Plan proposed by Egret Communications;

1. In previous comment I stated my opposition to the make-up of the JTP Board and Marketing committee. Those comments stand for the same reasons.
2. In addition to that I object to prearranged contracts and references to the JCVB being the marketing arm of this plan. Again, they have no track record of marketing the independent market and they had an obligation to do so in the current system. They have no experience or track record of success in marketing historical or Native cultural tourism. The JTP should go out on bid with this to recruit a company that is plugged into these various markets. We are sure to get more for our money this way, and accountability.
3. I believe it is not true (pg.9) that Juneau has great air service. I know most of you realize the rates we pay out of here. It's not great and part of the plan should be to attract competitive air carriers so we can improve the independent market. We have to begin again somewhere, and it might as well be in this plan.
4. It seems like by now people in the industry should realize that where there are Native and minority cultures the best way to describe an invitation to visit our community is to get away from the "heads in beds" destination mindset, and re-educate themselves to marketing and terminology that will attract visitors to a "sense of place", this is our home. We live here, let's invite them like they are visiting our home. Add all the necessary ingredients and they will be educated that this is our home, the land, water, air, community, cultures and it is worth respecting and caring for. "Heads in beds" destination is and will be just that. More of the same, note all areas where "destination tourism" is used extensively throughout the plan.
5. Page 27 is clearly a reflection of how this is so much a Cruise ship driven plan. The community of Juneau and our life here should be at the top of the thinking and implementation pyramid. In this plan the Cruise ship market is driving the community. Flop this chart over and give it meaning locally and we might have the beginning of a community driven document!
6. Pg 30, it appears that since Alaska didn't come up with Tourism industry recovery plans and cash, we in Juneau are going to rush forward with an incomplete plan to try & save the summer Cruise ship industry? It doesn't make sense to lock into the cruise line mindset when our past working relationship with them has been and appears to be adhesive in their favor?
7. pg. 31, Of course you know there is still incomplete participation by all people of Juneau, so the team didn't have a pulse on the community of Juneau.
8. pg. 37, In re/ to operating in a sustainable manner it would seem like this plan would have at least an addendum that not only spells out the number of cruise ship passengers and their impacts on all of our land and resources, and not just percentages, but real numbers in each area of Juneau, or product capacity. This includes independent traveler capacity. For example we know the numbers and

percent increases for the next few years, but nowhere in this plan does it say, by the way... the maximum capacity for this trail, this street, this culture, etc, that if and when the tourist number reaches this level it is the "drop dead" number where the area, culture will experience negative irreversible impacts that we cannot ever get back. So ends the product and culture so the next level will obviously be "fabricated, staged, or just books and IMAX imitations of what was. See, monitoring negative impacts and feelings are nice, but each area of our lives, and these tourism products do have finite capacity and we should say so, for our planning and monitoring purposes.

9. pg. 41, in re/ to guiding principle, "Native people and Culture" needs to be included in the guiding principles of ...they keep their integrity, and ..utilized in such a way that they keep their integrity, and at such a pace that they withstand the impacts of use....social and cultural community impacts need monitoring and insertion into the planning system.

10. pg. 42, Juneau has not met it's meeting & convention market? The JCVB had this obligation, and again my objection to an automatic marketing contract. This should go out on bid.

11. pg. 45, and in other areas...updating the CBJ Comp. Plan, and in the Implementation Plan from pages 116-121, Egret Communications hastily assumes the plan is OK, and recommends adoption of the plan immediately without consideration to a lot of changes to CBJ Policy, codes, commissions, staff, existing plans that might require public approval. Or, will CBJ just say, Ok, the plan is good and all of the changes recommended to areas of our government are hereby changed? If this is the case, there are recommendations to add a section on Native culture and tourism that should be added before adoption of the plan. Seems like the legal framework would be that each CBJ policy, code, Board, commission, staff, etc. be changed to become acceptable to the community then..adopt the plan, but don't adopt the plan and change our lives and government to meet the plan!

12. pg. 107, in re/ to developing a land based museum, it seems like one of the short-term solutions to this is can the industry come up with "Flyable vintage aircraft" that can do short live airplane tours until we can find space. Right now it seems we can't even find proper space for resident and tourism bus parking?

13. pg. 107, How is it that the DBA becomes the waterfront development planner with assistance by Parks and Rec.? I'm sure both DBA and parks and Rec. would do the best job they can, but again, who are they representing. Personally it would seem like some public relations training would take place in the Parks & Rec. department before they are given a role here. I don't think they have the best character and personality, staff to implement this plan. They should not be at the helm here until we see that they have the professional ability and training to work with diverse groups.

14. pg. 117, I'm not sure that DBA, and Parks and Rec. are the proper groups to head up the waterfront events program. This should be a Community program. Where the JTP gets feedback and does the events program.

15. pg. 118, It also seems shocking that the Cruise Industry is involved with the responsibility of developing the Cultural products? What do they know of Native cultures? Each heritage and culture should be tapped for participation on a case by case basis. Products developed in partnership with the industry just as we imagine the purpose of the JTP and are accorded all of the benefits of the plan when they are on board as a product.

16. pg. 2, of the Technical Addenda, need for waterfront planning. I respect that an effort was made to get the industry to recognize that our waterfront must be a "Place for people," but throughout this whole plan I don't see any plans for how the Cruise line and independent market providers will educate and implement programs to ensure that our air, land, and water resources are protected for our living, and cultures. We still make a living here from these resources and no mention is made where the industry commits to education of their guest about our life here?

In addition I don't think Juneau needs to write in that we become "more" sport fish oriented. That area seems to be covered pretty well. Heck, we don't even know what the resource capacity is for all of our seafood resources. We need clear guidelines on this and upfront information and checks and balances on this before we attempt to increase this market. So what happens if some big European company from Germany for example puts together a huge "sport fishing" company similar in size to a cruise line and they get a foothold and arm lock on us like the cruise ship industry. What then? What are they saying on board the ships, and busses about how we make a living from this land that we live in? Seems like a perfect requirement that can be implemented in all Alaska waters? We still don't know the long range impacts in our waterways, yet we are inviting them to our community. This is exactly why there should be a "Link" in the plan with all coastal communities in this area. Gosh forbid we have an Exxon Valdez incident in our SE Alaska waters while one of the ships are coming to our community and we didn't make it our Number One Priority to have in our plan about how important this is!

17. pg 7,8, 9, &10, of the Waterfront Plan scope of work. It looks like CBJ in partnership with the DBA will regulate other public and private waterfronts with zoning laws? This doesn't seem like community networking? DBA will naturally try to keep all the business downtown without consideration to areas outside of the downtown priority area. this shouldn't be written into the plans until all options are considered. This includes the plan opposition to private dock development. There are waterfront properties that are in the hands of private ownership that could probably be better suited to what is written here but not yet available. If the fear is that the Cruise lines can buy large tracts of land within the borough and build what they want, then, I don't see this addressed in the plan? So what of it, the Cruise lines do buy large tracts of land in other areas of the state and world and residents have no say on what happens. How are we addressing this issue in the plan? It's a possibility that can happen right on our waterfronts?

18. Finally, in this plan, and in the best management practices local residents are still being asked to give up parking downtown for tourist and tourism? this doesn't make sense, and again is yet another reflection of this being an overwhelming Cruise line plan.

I hope you are able to address these comments in the plan before adoption.

Thanks,
Don Bremner

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-----Original Message-----

From: Scott and Betsy Fischer [mailto:foggymtn@alaska.net]

Sent: Friday, April 12, 2002 3:19 PM

To: Maria Gladziszewski

Subject: Re: have you done your webpoll?

I tried filling out the web poll and actually got through it and submitted it, but immediately regretted doing so. I have advised my husband and daughter to NOT fill it out. I think it is a very bad poll and does not allow for a good analysis of the plan. The answers are very limited in their scope. I have many issues with the poll and do not believe it is going to give a good representation of how people feel about the plan.

Betsy Fischer
2301 Meadow Lane
Juneau AK
789-2033 hm

-----Original Message-----

From: Rory Darling, Jan Moyer [mailto:kayaker@alaska.net]

Sent: Friday, April 12, 2002 9:40 AM

To: borough_assembly@ci.juneau.ak.us

Cc: tourism@ci.juneau.ak.us; talktosu@cbjtourism.com

Subject: Comments on the Draft Tourism Plan, including comments on the Marine Park Deckover

In the process of completing the last tourism poll, I read the draft tourism plan. Before making my comments, I would like to thank the assembly for engaging in an open process with a published plan and polls. I think that is a good way to involve the community while avoiding the obvious problems with past public forums on the issues.

I am left with 3 general impressions regarding the Plan:

1. It did a pretty good job of acknowledging the primary points of view that need to be addressed. The city should be happy with the clear focus on organization of tourism management and emphasis on growth, the tourism industry should be delighted with the bonanza of publicly financed amenities for their customers (including marketing), and the residents finally got an acknowledgement of the obvious that noise is a problem that must be solved.
2. The Plan is heavily weighted towards industry concerns, and in that regard it is not that much of a departure from the status quo, which to my point of view (oriented towards respect for the local residents) is completely unacceptable. More on this later, but after reading the plan I remain deeply concerned that my elected local government officials do not represent the interests of the people that vote for them, but large corporations to whom Juneau is simply a product for 5 months of the year. I think this emphasis is wrong - I resent paying (high) property taxes in a company town, which is what Juneau is and will remain under this plan. The JTP removes me one more step from my elected representatives in tourism matters.
3. The mandate of the JTP is far too broad and ambitious, stretching the credibility that it can achieve the desired effects that it describes. It would be nice to have all of the things listed (a new performing arts center, etc.), but there has to be some sense of relative priority in view of what is sure to be limited funding. I think it is important to attach a priorities to different actions, and prescribe prerequisites that identify which items must be completed before moving on to other areas.

My fear is that the items that expand and develop the tourism market will be performed, while the mitigation issues will be ignored. There is nothing in the Plan that says that expanded marketing and product development will not occur unless mitigation measures are in place. I think this is a serious omission. More to the point, if the satellite heliports do not happen, this plan is a recipe for disaster for the 6000 households identified in the Baker study that are negatively affected by noise. I strongly support the satellite heliports as identified both in the Plan and the Baker study and feel that ample groundwork is in place to move ahead, but I have yet to hear the assembly make a definitive statement that it is their policy is to move ERA to a south heliport site before the 2004 season. On the contrary, the process is being held hostage by a small interest group that is playing the time tested game of finding some fault (possible under any proposed solution), then using this fault as an excuse to do nothing or perpetuate endless study. Doing nothing is what led us to the existing problem. The Plan must overcome this by providing incentives for the mitigation provisions to be in place BEFORE any of the expansion activities take place.

I also do not see any penalties or disincentives for the operators that do not adhere to the spirit of the plan in the ongoing evaluation process. The "safety valves" mentioned in the plan will, based on my experience, simply result in affected residents being marginalized (as they are now) while the industry

does whatever they please. The Plan should specify penalties for exceeding the local tolerance for industrial tourism if it intends to affect the behavior of the industry.

Restating my general concern, I feel that the tourism process should be responsive primarily to the taxpaying residents. Unless the plan prevents further expansion of the industry before mitigation is a reality and builds disincentives for exceeding reasonable carrying capacity, I think it will be a continuation of the existing policy of the industry doing whatever it pleases in spite of residential impacts.

I like the emphasis on waterfront planning, repeating the caveat that local considerations should predominate the direction of that plan. With this in mind, I think it is premature to embark on the Marine Park "deckover" that is currently before the assembly. In addition to being done outside of the plan, it commits \$ 5 million dollars on DEVELOPMENT at the expense of MITIGATION. If there is that kind of money available for tourism issues under the plan, I think that the southern alternate heliport is a higher priority use of funds. Already I hear "where is the money coming from" objections to the alternate heliports; the Plan and the planning process would indeed be shallow to do the deckover and then plead poverty for the alternate heliports. I think the deckover diminishes the use of Marine Park by residents, but I could live with it if, under the direction of the Plan, it was done AFTER the alternate heliports are funded.

Finally, I think the mandate of the JTP is far too ambitious for the funding that is available. It should be satisfied with more mundane and practical achievements such as mitigation and public facility planning. I view the JTP as defined in the plan as an extension of government; it is inappropriate for government to spend taxpayer money for items such as marketing, which is well within the capabilities of the operators that provide tourism services. Avoid corporate welfare. I predict that the broad mandate of the JTP will dilute its efforts to the point where meaningful change is beyond its capabilities. Better to do fewer key things well. Also, the board of the JTP is once again dominated by tourism development interests. The events of the past years clearly indicates to me that assembly seat is pro development, and recent permitting actions by the USFS also puts them in that camp. And who are the public representatives? Please consider a different mix of representation on the board. The JTP and the tourism industry should respond to the residents, not the other way around as my past experience with joint "working groups" leads me to believe.

I support the use of a Plan to dictate actions. I support efforts to improve Juneau's economy with tourism, and would like to see individual businesses prosper. If growth can occur without grinding down the residents, that would be great. The current draft has promise, particularly in regard to the specifics of the alternate heliport move. But will mitigation happen? Unless the Plan converts the talk into prioritized actions with incentives / disincentives for achieving mitigation, I think we are in for more of the same industry oppression which is way too far out of balance at present. Thanks for considering these Plan improvements.

Rory Darling
6732 Gray St.
463.4861

Comment from Juneau Chamber of Commerce.
See PDF File "Comments8-11-12"

20

-----Original Message-----

From: Karla Hart [mailto:khart@gci.net]

Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2002 10:02 PM

To: Bob Harvey; tourism@ci.juneau.ak.us; sally_smith@ci.juneau.ak.us

Cc: Chip Thoma; Kim Metcalfe-Helmar; Mala Reges

Subject: Re: Draft Tourism Plan

Bob,

I still have not forced myself to read all of the plan. Reading off the internet isn't very inviting and I'm not into printing that many pages. Can't read it at the library as when I get excited (good or bad) about something, I'm bound to write on the pages.

That said, I looked at the safety valve section and have serious concerns. You state the safety valves would go into play when a stated percentage of people "strongly feel" about whatever impact. In the surveys offered in Juneau to date we have a scaled response with strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree. By the time you EVER got enough STRONGLY opinions on this scale you would have a situation already in place that mirrored that in the Middle East just now. I don't think Juneau wants to go there. To implement the safety valves and see relief would take long enough that we would be one step beyond that.

If this plan is to work, you need to provide a reasonable safety valve that allows time for the safety to come into play and keep a bad situation from becoming explosive. Do I have a number? I could but doubt that it would be considered or taken seriously. Were I so inclined, but I'm not because I doubt it would make any difference in this whole thing, I would suggest reviewing sociology and political science literature on social change and see where researchers have found is the threshold in which opinions and attitudes sway. I expect there is a body of literature that addresses this and that the numbers are FAR lower than you have and certainly not as strong.

Karla

19

-----Original Message-----

From: Randy Wanamaker [mailto:berners@ak.net]
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2002 7:53 PM
To: Juneau Assembly
Subject: Fw: Implementing the Juneau Tourism Partnership

Thank You Randy,

Even at the face of this, it doesn't look like any Natives are involved. We have some top Native people that should be tapped to serve on these Boards and committees, and advisory boards. We should talk about this, especially if non-residents are sitting on the board and heavy cruise ship folks.

Thanks,
Don

-----Original Message-----

From: Randy Wanamaker [mailto:berners@ak.net]
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2002 3:29 PM
To: Bremner Don
Subject: Re: Implementing the Juneau Tourism Partnership

Don, these are good points and they will be addressed. There is no attempt to bypass the Native Community, just a lack of coordination. With all that is going on at the same time, some points have not yet been taken up. The coordination and participation will come.

Randy W.

18

-----Original Message-----

From: Bremner Don [mailto:Don.Bremner@sealaska.com]

Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2002 2:56 PM

To: 'Borough_Assembly@ci.juneau.ak.us'

Subject: Implementing the Juneau Tourism Partnership

Dear Mayor Smith and Members of the Assembly:

I wanted to take a minute with you to question the April 1, 2002 letter from Bob Harvey to the Assembly regarding the make up of the JTP Board and the Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee.

1. As I stated to Maria and Bob, the Board does not have Native representation. I recommended that Sealaska have a seat, and Tribal and Native Elders have representation.
2. It appears heavily weighted to the Non-Native community and by the industry. Again, I asked..who did Bob and the Assembly talk to in the Native community about representation?
3. I'm unclear about membership, are all members year-round residents at least. This should be a key requirement, if a person or company is just seasonal and tied to the Cruise line Industry how can we say they represent the community and cultures of Juneau? These are the same people who have not given the Native community consideration in the past, aside from using our people as silent marketing hooks.
4. It seems that the land based businesses should outweigh any cruise line representation. The local hotels that cater to S.E. Alaska residents and bring in year-round taxes should have more seats on this. It makes sense, they are a large part of the CBJ Tourism tax base.
5. The same questions apply to the Tourism Advisory Committee. Are all members year-round residents, and for the same reasons.
6. From the looks of the top four listed people they are all tied to the Cruise line industry. I don't see any Native or year round cultural tourism representation here?

I think a lot of time needs to be spent on how these appointments were made. Were there public meetings on this portion and can I get copies of all notes, minutes of meetings, phone logs, e-mails regarding from Bob Harvey, and any members of the Assembly, Juneau Conventions & Visitors Bureau, Maria's office, and from exchanges with each person appointed.

This is a pretty glaring disappointment of representation if this is the final make-up and appointments. I look forward to line item responses to my questions and concerns here.

Thanks,
Don Bremner

17

----- Original Message -----

From: Bremner Don <Don.Bremner@sealaska.com>

Date: Thu, 11 Apr 2002 11:16:47 -0800

Again, Maria and Bob

Can someone show justification on why only one Native from a Native Corporation is on the Board, and none on the second tier with Marketing as well. natives are heavily marketed as a product and after all this talk they aren't included in the decision making system? How did Egret get authority to make these recommendations. Can I see the list of Natives you contacted throughout this whole process?

Don Bremner

586-9261

16

----- Original Message -----

From: James Dennis <james.dennis@acsalaska.net>

Reply-To: james.dennis@acsalaska.net

Date: Wed, 10 Apr 2002 09:52:31 -0900

This is to register our very strong opposition to a heliport at Sheep Creek. It's absolutely unfair, unjust and despicable that the CBJ would even be considering taking a known noise problem and moving it from one neighborhood to another. The only honorable solution is to find a location that won't impact any neighborhood or reduce the noise level by reducing the number of flights and the times they are allowed to operate.

Jan and Eldon Dennis
5955 Thane Road

-----Original Message-----

From: Jon Tillinghast [mailto:Jon@STSL.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2002 10:14 AM
To: 'borough_assembly@ci.juneau.ak.us'
Cc: 'tourism@ci.juneau.ak.us'; 'talk-tous@cbjtourism.com'
Subject: Draft Juneau Tourism Plan

Thank you, first, for the opportunity to comment on the draft Juneau tourism plan. My initial concern is that, according to the Juneau Empire, the comment period apparently runs only to April 15. This is far too short a time for such an important, lengthy and complex document to be fairly considered by Juneau residents, and the artificially-short time frame would seem to guarantee that the bulk of responses you will receive will be from well-organized interest groups.

Because of the short time period apparently allowed, let me make brief comments on two aspects of the plan that worry me the most:

1. The Role and Composition of the JTP. This group would be given a major role in both policy formulation and policy implementation. In-and-of-itself, I object to this approach. Tourism issues are fundamental, controversial issues for this community, and I really do hate to see the Assembly abdicate its responsibility to take a front line mediation and problem-solving role on these issues. I do not wish to see decisions on such politically-sensitive issues as the Marine Park staging area decided (or even significantly influenced) by unelected (and thus unaccountable) interest-group representatives, whomever they might be.

Even more importantly, the proposed composition of the JTP is not balanced, and, in fact, would seem to guarantee domination by a single interest group-the commercial tourism sector. That sector is guaranteed fully half of the six board seats; and, as a result, the JTP will be viewed as an industry advocacy group and will not enjoy community credibility. If (i) such a group is to be formed (and I don't support forming any such group, for the reasons above-stated); (ii) the group is intended as something more than a promotional organization; and (iii) it is to receive any city money, then I would respectfully suggest that the city choose a membership such as the following: (a) 1 representative of commercial tourism; (b) one representative of the town's conservation community; (c) one representative of the public service sector, who will provide expertise on how to provide public services to both tourists and residents (such as a Parks and Rec or Public Works employee); and (d) three members of the general public, none of whom have any demonstrable ties (direct or indirect) to either side of the tourism controversy. As an attorney, there is nothing more precious to my core values than an absolute insistence on a decision-maker, or a mediator, who has no actual or even apparent bias in the outcome of the debate. A JTP that seems (to any segment of the community) to be biased or weighted in one group's favor will only serve to more deeply divide and embitter this town.

2. Taking Sides on the Marine Park Controversy. The draft plan takes sides on the Marine Park staging area controversy. I was sorry to see this, as this one aspect of the plan badly damages its attempt to appear as an even-handed document. The plan goes to great length to sell itself as a blueprint for fairness and balance, but then it touts a proposal that is very actively opposed by many (and I suspect most) of our citizens who live in downtown Juneau. The city has not met its burden of demonstrating that idling busses will not make the Marine Park area less attractive to local residents. Until our neighbors in downtown Juneau are assured in this regard, it is highly inappropriate for an ostensibly neutral planning document to advocate one particular outcome.

I have noticed, in recent debate on this issue, a concern over attracting more Juneau residents back to downtown. I am encouraged by those expressions of concern, because downtown Juneau is dying, and I wonder whether asking summer concert-goers who now pack the Marine Park shelter to attempt to enjoy the concert within smell-shot of a bus lot is really a good way to entice a

community of well-educated and sensitive people to spend their summer evenings in town. We're a long way from reaching community consensus on that point, and the draft plan is much too pushy on that count.

I really hope the community is given far more opportunity to comment on this product. As a 28-year resident of this town, I have a lot invested in assuring that downtown Juneau doesn't become simply a seasonal theme park, and I think we need a lot more than one week to comment on a blueprint for deciding those issues.

Jon Tillinghast

14

-----Original Message-----

From: Mary Mearig [mailto:mearig@gci.net]

Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2002 12:36 PM

To: talktous@cbjtourism.com; tourism@ci.juneau.ak.us; borough_assembly@ci.juneau.ak.us

Subject: Comments on the Draft Tourism Plan

I completed the final web poll, but found the questions leading. Is the formation of the JTP really a given? I am not convinced that establishing and funding this additional layer of bureaucracy is the best solution.

In my opinion, more bureaucracy leads to less representative government - aiding special interests in pushing their own agendas.

13

-----Original Message-----

From: Mary Lou King [mailto:kingfarm@ptialaska.net]

Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2002 11:15 AM

To: tourism@ci.juneau.ak.us

Subject: Comments on Draft plan and Survey

I do not have enough information on some of the questions. I am not neutral.

The Juneau Tourism Plan should include University of Alaska Southeast and Department of Transportation. UAS has the research, training, transient housing, potential work force and library facilities for consideration by JTP. DOT is not facing the reality that a million some and growing number of tourists, college students, legislative people, elderly residents, and juvenile residents do not have cars and need alternative ways to get around.

The concept of the Juneau Tourism partnership is wonderful.

Jim King

12

Comment from Mary Elizabeth Johnson.
See PDF File "Comments8-11-12"

11

Unsigned Comment

See PDF File "Comments8-11-12"

10

-----Original Message-----

From: Beatrice Findlay [mailto:msbhaven@gci.net]
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2002 4:24 PM
To: talktours@cbjtourism.com; tourism@ci.juneau.ak.us
Subject: tourism draft

I have just completed reading the tourism draft and I must say I was surprised and alarmed with it. It would appear that Egret did not take the time to find out exactly what a CVB did or HOW it markets the community. The CVB is a member driven organization and although it is responsible to market the community as a whole, it is MOST beholding to the members who support it through dues (and often substancial dues at that) Bed taxes are specific to them because those folks will benefit most. It takes TIME to cultivate relationships with Cruise Lines, Convention Contacts, Trade show participants, Overseas contacts and to have a "contract" awarded on a yearly review basis would be (excuse me) STUPID. You could not plan a budget, solicit for conventions (often given as long as 5 years in advance) or know how to plan at all. This plan appears to be giving Egret a big chunk as an "advisor" and created a system that is already in existance and I may say runs well already. They have a new director (although the last two had done the job well and went on to bigger and better things)The CVB is NOT a city department (most CVB's are not) for the very reason that they DO stay clear of specific politics. They already have a capable board with a diverse members from many businesses and industry. Tell me....where is the money to come from to support a \$110,000 job (including benefits) and a second \$45,000 job. The first is more than the current director makes and the second job would be underpaid! Where (in Juneau) would they find an office to rent for \$30,000 a year including phones, office equip, etc. Not sure what community they could do that in....surely NOT in Juneau! I will be greatly disappointed if this passes. If the CBJ goes with this plan then shame on them. If they allow a parallel organization to supervise the already existing one...shame on them. If they are unhappy with the current Convention and Visitors Bureau then they need to talk to them, not cripple them, which this plan would do.

Please read the plan carefully and then turn it away for the health of the community. Government involvement in State Tourism has in effect destroyed the marketing of the State. It would do the same to local marketing as well. Additionally, they have gone backwards with the duties of the Harbor Department and the others. They are suggesting they do things they are not equipped for and that would most likely result in increasing their staffs as well. Think long and hard before going ahead with this very flawed plan.

Sincerely,
Bea Findlay/Juneau
resident and voter

9

----- Original Message -----

From: anilomo@webtv.net (A. Moser)

Date: Mon, 8 Apr 2002 16:44:07 -0800 (AKDT)

NO EXPANSION OF TOURISM~~~~ alm/

8

Unsigned Comment.
See PDF File "Comments8-11-12"

7

-----Original Message-----

From: Katya Kirsch [mailto:katyakirsch@hotmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, April 07, 2002 7:54 PM

To: talktous@cbjtourism.com; tourism@ci.juneau.ak.us

Subject: thane helicopters/city draft tourism plan

Dear City Assembly and Staff,

I object strenuously to locating a heliport at Sheep Creek, Dupont or anywhere out Thane. It is a terrible idea because of the narrow road, the effects on one of the most peaceful neighborhoods in Juneau-- Thane--and the still unknown costs to the public of this project.

Going through an avalanche zone, and the current narrow road make this a bad idea. I am nervous just driving past a school bus due to the skinny lanes now; a fleet of commercial tourist buses poses grave danger to other drivers plus bicyclists, runners and walkers who use Thane road. What would be the cost to widen the road, including through the avalanche zone???

Extending the road out to Dupont is a boneheaded idea. This trail and the Dupont beach has been traditionally used by non-commercial recreationists as well as independent travelers for many years. The use of Dupont Beach for such purposes would be ruined by the helicopter noise. What would be the cost of a road there???. I understand that neither the Assembly nor City Staff know. How can you possibly make such decisions in a final tourism plan, if you don't know the costs of the project?

The real problem is that summertime helicopter volumes in the Juneau area are outrageously high. With more than 15,000 landings, Juneau is the 2nd or 3rd highest volume helicopter tourism in the United States (led by Hawaii and the Grand Canyon (although the Grand Canyon may now have less than Juneau). The volume of helicopter traffic should be reduced from 2001 levels.

Please consider the needs of residents in all neighborhoods, as well as wildlife (goats and more) in the backcountry, the road safety factors, traditional non-commercial recreation use of Dupont, and the full financial costs of the proposed Thane site. Drop this harebrained proposal.

Katya Kirsch
5675B Thane Road

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----- Original Message -----

From: "Mel Sinclair" <melsinclair@hotmail.com>

Date: Thu, 04 Apr 2002 10:24:18

My name is Chris Behnke, I have lived on Thane Road since I was 6 years old. I am a student at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

I am very, very disturbed about the Helicopter proposals, I am disturbed because I know that It will ruin my home. Moving Helicopters to Thane is only a partial, fallible solution, a knee jerk reaction, inappropriate, thoughtless, and destructive, a typical solution from wealthy developers.

Thane is pristine, and not like the rest of the city. It is sparsely populated, beautiful, wild, and tourist development right in front of my home is the worst thing that could happen.

I will fight against this, just like Thane residents, because this is WRONG.

-Chris Behnke

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-----Original Message-----

From: Dot Wilson [mailto:dotw@pci.net]

Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2002 10:19 AM

To: Ken Koelsch; Frankie Pillifant; Jim Powell; Don Etheridge; Jeannie Johnson; Randy Wanamaker; Dale Anderson; Mayor; Marc Wheeler

Cc: Jim M Wilson

Subject: Fw: Draft Tourism Plan

Assembly Members: I read through (admittedly quickly) the tourism draft from Harvey. I have already written him with my most burning question: Why are they trying to add another layer of bureaucracy to the tourism mix? In my opinion he describes the job the JCVB should be doing in the first place. Rather than hire someone to oversee and "contract" with JCVB to do their job, why doesn't the Assembly take action to give JCVB the direction/support they need. If additional staff is needed to do more marketing - and if there is money to pay for it - (\$320,000 salary and \$165,000 for "budget?") - why not have JCVB do it. If JCVB board doesn't want to do what the city wants - get a new board.

What Harvey told me is that they aren't doing it at this point and the "board" doesn't want to. Adding another \$110,000 position to "contract" with them doesn't seem like the solution to the problem - it seems more like perpetuating and adding layers to the problem.

I will probably have more comments as I plow through the draft - but this proposal really needs to be thought out carefully.

Dot Wilson

----- Original Message -----

From: [Bob Harvey](#)

To: ['Dot Wilson'](#)

Sent: Tuesday, April 02, 2002 5:55 PM

Subject: RE: Draft Tourism Plan

Dot,

Would love to talk this through with you. Basically, to deal with impacts and planning, you have to have a balance between community and business JCVB isn't interested - board told me in person We also have some strong concerns about marketing and the track record on that for both the bed tax and the convention center

Need to have a level of accountability marketing needs to work for your business, better than it has!

The whole thing lets the community get out of the battle and behind tourism, work together

-----Original Message-----

From: Dot Wilson [mailto:dotw@pci.net]

Sent: Tuesday, April 02, 2002 6:17 PM

To: Bob Harvey

Subject: Re: Draft Tourism Plan

Bob: Thanks for notifying me of your proposed plan. I don't understand why, instead of hiring a whole new set of people then contracting to the JCVB, we don't just change/add responsibilities to the current JCVB and staff accordingly rather than add a whole new layer of bureaucracy to the city.

Dot Wilson

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----- Original Message -----

From: Michael Wilde <mwilde@gci.net>

Date: Tue, 02 Apr 2002 11:03:34 -0900

I wish to state my objection to the Tourism Plan as it relates to the helicopter traffic in the Mendenhall Vally.

This plan fails to provide any immediate mitigation with regard to the noise generated by the helitour operations over the Mendenhall Valley. The current "Best Practices" program has not resulted in reduced noise in my neighborhood. In fact, the noise problem has gotten worse in the last few years.

Furthermore, waiting until the summer of 2005 for the proposed Montana Creek Heliport is too long a time frame given the increased number of flights that will occur over this period. That is, if the heliport will ever be developed, which I seriously doubt it ever will be. It appears as though the industry is not supporting this proposal given the off the record comments made by some operators.

The plan fails to "encourage" the industry to address the substantial helicopter noise impacts, fails to set meaningful interim noise reduction goals and practices, and further establishes the business as usual environment that has created the rift in the community between those that want a reduction in helicopter noise and the industry and business community which don't want any changes.

Finally, this plan failed from the get go as the authors did not even make an effort to contact those members of the public who used the Tourism Hotline or were involved in in previous committees and noise studies, leading me to question the objectivity of this plan.

Sincerely,

Michael Wilde
PO Box 33182
Juneau AK 99803

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----- Original Message -----

From: Bremner Don <Don.Bremner@sealaska.com>

Date: Mon, 1 Apr 2002 19:03:59 -0900

Hello Maria,

In re/to the makeup of the Board I think it would be in the long term and best interest of CBJ to have designated seats for the Native community and Juneau Historical Preservation Society.

There needs to be balance. The industry is heavily weighted just by being the industry and having a role, however, Native organizations and the Historical Preservation Society and similar organizations are new to having their voices heard, but are critical to the long term tourism attraction of Juneau so should have separate seats available. There should be a Tribal seat, a Native Non-profit and one Native profit making business seat. This is a cross section of the Native community and it would be very permanent way of allowing participation.

Thank you for your consideration of our suggestions.

Don Bremner,
Sealaska Heritage Institute

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-----Original Message-----

From: Kim Titus & Deb Rudis [mailto:akwildlife@gci.net]

Sent: Monday, April 01, 2002 9:22 PM

To: Tourism Coordinator

Subject: Information on Draft Tourism Plan

Thanks for the opportunity to review this draft tourism plan.

A few initial thoughts.

1. The plan is slow to download off of the web. Please let me know how I can obtain a personal copy. I guess I could download from the web but this is sure slow and it will take at least a week of evenings to do so.

2. Regarding the vision and guiding principles. My initial read does not tell me where these came from. I can only assume that these were arrived at either a) by consensus among the City assembly, or b) by some consensus process among the citizens of Juneau. If you could inform me of how these important introductory materials were arrived at, this would help my future comments.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,
Kim Titus
4638 River Road
Juneau

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Box 211235
Auke Bay, AK 99821-1235
March 28,2002

To the Assembly:

In April 2001, the City/Borough of Juneau (CBJ) contracted with Egret communications to develop a tourism plan for CBJ. The planning is still in process and interested citizens will respond to another questionnaire in the next week or so. After the results are analyzed and citizens provide additional input, Egret will present a proposal for tourism here.

Any decision related to tourism (for example, the proposed deck over of Marine Park) should be deferred until we decide what our plans for tourism are. City officials did not answer when asked how such work would be financed. I wonder if this is related to the proposed new payments for dock fees.

The proposal to have the cruise ships pay for dock and wharf improvements means that we may cede our responsibilities to companies that have no fixed investments here. Who will decide what projects will be done? Who will decide how much each will cost? Who will decide when they will be done?

The fact that the bonds have been repaid is irrelevant to the fees charged here. The cruise ships pay for the use of our facilities. Our financing arrangements are a separate issue from the fees that we charge for such usage. Fees paid for services are usually negotiated between provider and user.

Why did the fees expire on Jan 1,2002 without our city officials negotiating a new fee structure? Both the cruise ship companies and the city officials were aware that the fee agreement expired on Jan 1,2002. Are we in a situation in which thousands of cruise ship visitors will arrive this summer and we don't know how much the ships will pay in port fees?

Thank you for your attention. I am also submitting this letter to the Juneau Empire.

Sincerely,
Sara H. Willson