

From: [Hoag Stephanie](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Visitor Industry Task Force comments
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To Visitor Industry Task Force Members:

Thank you for your work to address this issue that is so important to our community.

I basically like tourism and its economic benefits and amenities that it has brought to Juneau, but I would like to see us welcome visitors with a quality experience that makes us proud to share our home. Almost twenty years ago, I was visiting another Alaskan town where I overheard (independent) tourists talking about Juneau. They were advising each other to avoid coming here – even then they felt that the crowding from large numbers of cruise ship passengers made it hard for them to enjoy their visit. While there are probably a few tourists who travel mainly so that they can buy gifts and jewelry, I think that most would prefer to visit an authentic Alaskan city where they can meet local people, learn about our history and culture, and experience the quiet and beautiful wilderness that is unique to Alaska. I think that the number of cruise ship passengers has been increasing at a rate that exceeds our community's capacity to offer that kind of quality experience, and that the time has come to slow that growth.

Impacts that affect both residents and visitors include increased traffic, downtown sidewalk congestion, long lines and crowding at the tram, restaurants, the glacier, and other attractions, the takeover of our downtown historic area by seasonal outside businesses, noticeable noise from helicopters, and more. And even more importantly, we need to consider the impacts of the tourist industry on the world's climate.

Here are some of the things that I would like to see the tourism task force consider:

1. Electrification of docks
2. Stringent emissions standards for tour busses and incentives for electric busses
3. Incentives or programs to encourage tour operators to minimize their use of fossil fuels.
4. Zoning or incentives to favor year-round local businesses downtown over outside seasonal businesses.
5. No additional cruise ship docks.
6. A plan to construct the North Douglas bench road sooner rather than later. Increased summer traffic presents dangers and inconvenience to residents who want to walk

their dogs, run, bicycle, or enter the highway from their driveways. With the necessity of summer development at Eaglecrest the traffic is likely to increase even more.

7. Pedestrian zones in the downtown area
8. Free shuttle services around downtown to reduce vehicle congestions, and help to alleviate parking problems for residents who might want to come downtown.
9. A moratorium on any new or increased helicopter, float plane, and whale watching activity.
10. Establishment of “ship free” weekend days, at least occasionally during the summer.
11. Continued ways to attract independent tourists.

While I think that the TBMP has worked hard to reduce impacts to residents and I read that calls and complaints have decreased in spite of a large increase in tourist numbers, I don't think everything is fine. I personally hear a lot of complaints, especially from downtown residents who tell me they have quit calling to complain out of the perception that it doesn't change anything. Poll results presented at the tourism meeting I attended last spring showed that, both twenty years ago and recently, a majority of Juneau residents believed that there were either enough or too many tourists visiting Juneau already.

I want to live in a town that benefits from and is served by the cruise ship industry, rather than a town that exists primarily to serve that industry. As community forums and task forces and decision-making takes place, I'd like to see a stronger voice from neighborhood associations and from individuals who do not receive profit directly from the tourist industry.

Stephanie Hoag

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