



Huna Totem Corporation

WOOSH-JEE-EEN • PULLING TOGETHER

February 12, 2020

Ms. Carole Triem
Chair, Visitor Industry Task Force
City and Borough of Juneau
255 S. Seward Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Ms. Triem and Members of the Visitor Industry Task Force:

Huna Totem Corporation has participated in the work of the Visitor Industry Task Force (VITF) these past five months with keen interest. We appreciate the VITF's hard work and sustained efforts to gather information. Now, as you enter the analytical and deliberative phase of your efforts, we want to offer our assessment and insights, for whatever value they may have to the group and your decisions.

Let's begin with some regional indicators. Juneau has lost some 600 state jobs these past four years, due to severely constrained budgets and ongoing 'capital creep' as jobs move to Anchorage. The Alaska Marine Highway System is in the worst shape it has been in since its inception. The state has been deficit spending for nearly a decade, burning through some \$16B in savings. These pillars of the local and regional economy are faltering.

Since statehood, Alaska has relied on the oil and gas industry to pay our bills and build our future. That paradigm is broken. While oil and gas remain vitally important, it no longer can carry us into the future. Revenue to the state from the Permanent Fund exceeds that from oil and gas.

While these conditions are dire, we believe that tourism development offers a clear, sustainable path for the CBJ and southeast Alaska citizens to build our economy and its future. While recognizing concerns with 'over-tourism' and congestion, we believe those concerns are both overstated and open to solutions.

For example, Juneau's 1.3 million visitors come for essentially a day, over a six-month season, not all at once. Stating residents are outnumbered 35 to 1 is mathematically false. Simply analyzing daily numbers, ship arrival times and disembarkation of guest flow patterns can lead to true answers. Norwegian Cruise Lines has proposed a dock and upland infrastructure that provides for managed growth while improving the movement of guests to the other side of downtown, lessening congestion around Goldbelt's Tram and lower downtown, which is compounded by "Hot Berthing." Norwegian has focus on constructing a pier in a manner that addresses environmental sustainability, the community viewshed, and use by its neighbors; it has focused on building out the site in collaboration with the community

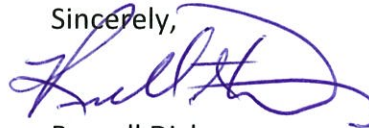
to ensure year-round use of world-class facilities by Juneau residents. This is representative of an organization that truly believes in committed partnerships.

Creating an ongoing and open dialogue with industry leaders like Norwegian Cruise Lines in concert with Tourism Best Management Practices will result in tangible solutions for Juneau and the region. Embracing industry leaders as part of the community is the best way to address future concerns and to resolve unforeseen problems in real-time, both actual and perceived. The key is working together to improve infrastructure, to lessen problems, to find a best path forward.

Which leads me to a crucial point – Juneau is the linchpin of the region, and sustainable tourism in Juneau builds the regional economy – for Juneau but also for Hoonah, Haines, Skagway, Sitka, and any other villages that want to develop their own unique assets. A rising tide lifts all boats.

We are the captain of our ship and can shape our future as we see fit. Huna Totem Corporation is proud of what we have built at Icy Strait Point in Hoonah but recognizes that we are connected to Juneau's ongoing success. We would like to see the VITF focus on positive solutions and next steps that broaden the tourism industry's impact across the region.

Sincerely,



Russell Dick
President & CEO

cc: Visitor Industry Task Force