

**From:** [Diana Rossmiller](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk](#); [Borough Assembly](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Visitor Industry Task Force  
**Date:** Thursday, February 20, 2020 11:06:26 PM

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Feb 20, 2020

Dear Visitor Industry Task Force and Assembly Members,

I have lived in Juneau on North Douglas for the past 26 years and I have witnessed first-hand the changes that have taken place due to increased tourism. I am not opposed to tourism, but I believe the city needs to take local control to solve the problems that are impacting both local residents and tourists. It cannot continue as it's been going or the very reasons why people come to Juneau to visit will be lost and the quality of life for local residents will be severely compromised.

I see the following problems:

1. Too many visitors per day – there is a carrying capacity that our town can support and I believe we have exceeded it. Where we were once thrilled to share our beautiful town with visitors, now many of us feel over burdened by the sheer numbers of visitors who want to watch whales, visit the glacier, take a heli tour, bike down Eaglecrest Road, and congest our downtown. They are often oblivious to signs and traffic, creating significant hazards for drivers and emergency personnel.
2. Too many seasonal workers – the number of people who are hired to be tour guides, glacier guides, and seasonal shop workers increases every year. They all need a place to live and some of them choose to camp and/or park their vans out North Douglas all summer long. They build fires in inappropriate places, they leave their trash scattered all along the roadside, and they urinate and defecate in the areas between Picnic Cove and Fish Creek. I cherish this place, but it has become trashed these past few summers by inconsiderate and disrespectful people.
3. Too many cruise ships – every day from April through October there are cruise ships in port. Sometimes there are as many as six ships per day. The ships foul our clean air, and dump waste inappropriately in our waters. Oversight as was previously provided by the Ocean Rangers program is crucial to ensure that all ships entering our waterways comply with state and federal regulations. The port experience of these cruise ship passengers is greatly compromised by the large number of people requiring

similar services on any given day.

4. Too much impact –the huge volume of tourists who take whale watching cruises stress our local whales when as many as 70-80 vessels surround a single pod. Our local marine fishery is being depleted by charter fishing operations, as passengers ship their hundreds of fifty-pound boxes of fish back home. Our quality of life is stressed by excessive noise, pollution, and traffic. Visitors are all vying for seats in vans, buses, trolleys, taxis, helicopters, airplanes, whale watching boats, fishing charters, the tram, and restaurants, and the stress on our community is evident. The few areas that have not yet been fully exploited, such as Eaglecrest, are at great risk of being ruined by additional development for tourist activities.

Please take swift measures to reduce the negative impacts of tourism before the very place that visitors are clamoring to see is destroyed and the quality of life for locals is damaged beyond repair. We should focus on high quality experiences for the visitor, which will necessitate fewer numbers of tourists, and will in turn improve the long-term quality of life for locals.

I appreciate your time and careful attention to this problem.

Sincerely,

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