

Brenwynne Grigg

From: David Summers [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 10:54 AM
To: Economic Stabilization
Cc: Borough Assembly; Rorie Watt
Subject: Economic Stabilization Committee - Downtown Juneau

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Economic Stabilization Task Force Members, Cc: CBJ Assembly & Management

Thank you very much for your time and dedication to serve on the Task Force, any and all efforts are greatly appreciated.

The population of Juneau itself is not large enough to remotely sustain our downtown business infrastructure in any shadow of the form it existed in previously. The very foundation on which we're precariously teetering can be summed up simply; *So long as we stare out at our newly-built yet vacant cruise ship docks, other actions although appreciated, will prove insufficient without cruise ships tying up this summer as currently planned in July through September.*

A mere 5 months of cruise ship visits, in the summer of 2021, over the next 24 months into spring 2022 will not sustain us, we must have cruise ships this summer or the downtown Juneau economic engine will collapse.

None of the businesses that make up the economic engine of downtown can succeed in such a way that they are meaningful to our economic base with anything other than a robust cruise ship industry. Locals and their traveling friends and families are important, and appreciated, to the downtown environment however it's all for naught if there are no cruise ships tied to the docks each summer. Cottage industries may be quaint, but they don't even begin to fund basic municipal needs such as water / sewer, police, fire, and K-12 education.

Please, do not harbor or proliferate any illusion of a minimalist view of the number of visitors to Juneau that might sustain businesses that contribute in any meaningful way to the economic health of our city without cruise ships. That would be economic ignorance, pandering to anyone who might suggest it at this time is not empathic or sympathetic, it's hurtful to our absolute needs. It may not be all-or-nothing, but it's damn close to it, do not mollify yourselves or others in this time of need for clarity of our circumstance.

The circumstances in downtown Juneau are dire, so dire, in fact that it likely will require wholesale career changes for many. Some have already fallen as we read despairing stories of long time admired local businesses closing up permanently. To call the situation a "business bloodbath" is not hyperbole, the effects of which radiate throughout our community. Sales tax, property tax, port and passenger fees are the short view losses, the far reaching effects of our empty cruise port permeate so much further than that, even to those who may not otherwise appreciate what it is that cruise ships bring to Juneau. No one who may disagree is also lining up for a massive decrease in their property valuation or equally massive increase in their cost of living. Populous talk of virus spread is best left to social media audiences, the economic health of our city is equally important and

in fact a priority as is born out through the actual bodily, social, and mental health consequences of choosing otherwise.

What shall we to do?

A. **Above all:** Actively lobby the cruise industry to return in July as currently planned. Prioritize a robust and public messaging campaign through CBJ government channels that we need cruise ship calls to our port as soon as possible and rebuke any and all pressure otherwise as what it is, a direct assault on the personal health of our citizenry and the vitality and economic well being of our city.

B. Pressure local banks to finalize and fund PPP loans. Local bankers are doing their best I'm sure, however they need our voices to support them as they fight archaic procedures that stand in the way of actual distribution of cash dollars into the hands that are so desperately needing it immediately.

C. Extend payment times, remove interest, and ultimately forgive the principal amount of CBJ (through JEDC) Emergency Loan Program funds. Having an expectation that downtown business can rebound and service these debts as it's been done isn't realistic, forgiving these loans is an investment in ur future not burdening it. Full disclosure is that I have received one of these loans along with many others.

D. Realistically communicate with each other, this is the time, there is no higher sense of urgency. Do not downplay, sugarcoat, or otherwise diminish the absolute need for cruise ship visits this summer among each other, the days of a pleasant non-reaction to any other view are gone.

If it's not clear enough, the only things that can help right now are cruise ships and cash. Otherwise it's taxation of the people, loss of net worth, and default of the downtown economic engine.

- David

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