



Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update: February 2025 Community Snapshot



About Ketchikan (Most recently available data)



2023 Population: Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB): **13,475** | Ketchikan City: **7,803**
Like other boroughs and census areas in Southeast Alaska, the population in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough is projected to decline about 20% from 2023 to 2050. Nearly 15% of the population identifies as Alaska Native/American Indian and nearly 10% identify as Filipino, comprising the two largest non-white racial/ethnicity groups in the Ketchikan community. Source: Alaska Dept. of Labor + Workforce Development and U.S. Census Bureau



Median household income: **\$86,370** | Poverty rate: **4.2 percent** | Unemployment rate: **3.4 percent**
Residents of the KGB earn more per capita than Alaskan residents, but their median household income is slightly lower compared to other Alaskan residents. From 2013 to 2024, the KGB has often had higher rates of unemployment during the winter than Alaska as a whole and lower rates of unemployment during the summer. Source: U.S. Census Bureau



2023-2024 School enrollment (PK-12): **2,095 students**
Enrollment peaked in the 2014–2015 school year at 2,474 students. Since then, enrollment has declined slowly, reaching its lowest in the past 10 years in the 2023–2024 school year. The KGBSD is forecasting substantial declines in enrollment between the 2023–2024 and 2028–2029 school years. Source: Ketchikan Gateway School District



KGB residents who fished on commercial permits in 2023: **188**
Pounds landed by KGB residents: **34.8 million lbs.** | Estimated gross earnings: **\$22.3 million**
The number of permit holders in 2023 is about 7% less than 2014. From 2014 to 2023, the percentage of permit holders who fished has decreased from 69% to 58%. The total pounds landed in 2014 is slightly below the total pounds landed in 2023. Estimated gross earnings in 2023 were also similar to those in 2014. Source: Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission



Ketchikan is the **second most visited destination in Alaska**, with 47% of visitors to the state making a stop here.
There was an estimated 1.5 million cruise ship passengers to Ketchikan in 2024, remaining about the same as the number of cruise ship passengers to Ketchikan in 2023. Source: Alaska Travel Industry Association

Kichxáan (Ketchikan) is Lingít Aaní (Tlingit land), the territory of the Taant’a Kwáan (Sea Lion Tribe) of the Tongass Tlingit and Saanya Kwaan (People of the Southeast Wind). The present-day Ketchikan community is home to three federally recognized and sovereign Tribes; The Organized Village of Saxman, Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, and Ketchikan Indian Community.



What have we learned so far?

These are some of the emerging topics and ideas we’ve learned so far from background research, existing community plans and documents, and interviews with community leaders and members.



What has been some of Ketchikan’s biggest accomplishments in the last 10 years?

- Capital Improvements, including the airport, recreation center and pool, new turf for ball fields.
- Renovated NOAA port facility/homeporting Fairweather.
- Continued U.S. Coast Guard presence.
- Ward Cove Development.
- Community partnerships and relationships across the region and state.



How has Ketchikan changed over the last 10 years?

- Population decline, impacting the tax base.
- Increased reliance on tourism as economic driver.
- Degrading infrastructure and impacts on infrastructure from increased tourism.
- Increasing housing challenges (affordability and availability).
- Changing climate impacts and risks from natural disaster increasing.
- Increased need for behavioral health services and substance use disorder treatment.



What are our potential priorities for the next 10 years?

- Attracting new industry and diversifying the economy.
- Upgrading utilities and public infrastructure to accommodate growing needs.
- Possibly expand utilities to accommodate growth and housing opportunities.
- Attracting/retaining younger generation and families in Ketchikan.
- Addressing the community’s approach to tourism.
- Creating more attainable housing for all members of the community.
- Addressing high cost of living and food security.
- Focusing on the city and borough being fiscally responsible.



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a process for communities to plan for their future by creating a long-term vision, community goals, and practical short-term strategies. The updated plan will guide decision-making on topics including land use, housing, economic development, transportation and quality of life. Ketchikan Gateway Borough's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2009.

Our Timeline



Get Involved: Share Your Ideas & Questions



Visit our website: kgbCompPlan.com



Receive project updates: sign up on the website or email meg@agnewbeck.com



Respond to our project survey:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/futureketchikan>
Closes March 21, 2025



Contact Us to Learn More

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Ketchikan Gateway Borough General Location Map

