

# APPENDICES

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# Appendix A

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## Land Use and Environment Background

- Additional Details for Core Plan Actions of the Land Use and Environment Chapter
- Supplemental Maps

# Appendix A: Land Use and Environment Background

Appendix A provides background information that supports land use and environment strategies in the Core Plan for the Land Use and Environment Chapter. It offers additional details and policy guidance for specific actions in the chapter, as well as supplemental maps to support the Future Land Use Map and other policies.

## Additional Details for Core Plan Actions

This section expands on specific strategies and actions presented in the core plan, offering examples, implementation ideas, and relevant policy models. These details are intended to guide future zoning updates and help translate high-level goals into practical steps.

### Additional details for Strategy 1, Future Land Use Designations:

Land Use Category	Intended Land Uses	Additional Details
Urban Residential	Residential areas that support a mix of high and low density housing types located near core services, transit, and infrastructure to promote efficient land use and walkability.	All residential areas connected to public sewer systems are included in this designation, where smaller lots and higher housing densities are feasible.
Rural Residential	Residential areas outside of core service areas that may have limits to infrastructure, lot size minimums and where development patterns are shaped by access, terrain, and the capacity of on-site water and wastewater systems.	All residential areas <b>not</b> connected to public sewer systems are included in this designation. This designation reflects areas where lot sizes are expected to be larger due to soil suitability, topography, and separation distances required for safe and effective onsite wastewater treatment.
Recreation and Open Space	Areas designated for parks, conservation and recreation as a principal use, not managed by State or Federal governments.	These areas are derived from the 2023 Master Parks and Playgrounds Plan and the State of Alaska designated recreation and parks areas. Federally managed parks are not included.
Public Management	State, federal and other lands with multiple uses, including but not limited to flood protection, habitat value, traditional use, recreation, tourism, and timber extraction.	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, residents, and community organizations will collaborate with state and federal agencies on development of related area plans.
Unspecified Future Use	Large, vacant private lands where no specific future land use pattern has been identified at this time.	These areas lack infrastructure, access, and may require further planning, community input, and infrastructure feasibility studies before future land use decisions are made.

**Additional details for strategy 2, action a:**

*Replace discretionary permits with administrative permit processes where feasible.*

The Borough processes dozens of setback variance applications each year and nearly all are approved. This trend suggests that certain dimensional standards, especially front and side yard setbacks, may no longer reflect built conditions or community goals. Instead of requiring a public hearing, the Borough could shift some permits to an administrative process, where staff review and approve applications based on clear, pre-written rules. Many communities use this approach—often called a **Type II permit**—when the project meets objective standards but still allows for a public appeal if needed.

<p><b>Conditional Use Permit Approval Process</b></p> <p>Apply → Staff Review → Public Hearing</p> <p>On appeal, decision moves to Assembly</p>	<p><b>Administrative Permit Approval Process (Type II)</b></p> <p>Apply → Staff Issues Public Tentative Decision</p> <p>On appeal, decision moves to Planning Commission</p>
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According to the American Planning Association, moving away from case-by-case approvals toward consistent, rule-based decisions increases transparency, reduces processing time, and improves public trust in the zoning system<sup>1</sup>. Clear criteria and well-structured administrative reviews can help the Borough reduce delays, lower costs for applicants, and ensure decisions are applied fairly and efficiently.

**Additional details for strategy 2, action b:**

*Introduce flexible zoning tools, such as form-based standards or mixed-use overlays in areas targeted for infill and redevelopment.*

Many infill-supportive zoning strategies are already in place within Ketchikan Gateway Borough, including by-right Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), reduced PUD lot sizes, and administrative approval for small-scale multifamily development. To build on these foundations, the Borough could consider introducing additional flexible zoning tools, such as form-based codes, mixed-use overlays, pattern zoning, or adaptive reuse standards. These tools can expand housing options, reduce regulatory barriers, and ensure that new development reflects community character—especially in areas targeted for infill and redevelopment.



**Form Based Code** regulates the physical form of buildings to shape the public realm, rather than separating land uses.



**Pattern Zoning** offers pre-approved building designs that fit neighborhood character and speed up permitting.



**Adaptive Reuse** allows existing buildings to be converted to new uses with relaxed zoning and code requirements.

<sup>1</sup> American Planning Association, *Equity in Zoning Policy Guide v2* (2022), [https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/publication/download\\_pdf/Equity-in-Zoning-Policy-Guidev2.pdf](https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/publication/download_pdf/Equity-in-Zoning-Policy-Guidev2.pdf).

### Additional details for strategy 2, action c:

*Reform the use of special limitation (SL) zoning to improve zoning consistency and reduce precedent-driven spot zoning.*

The Borough has developed dozens of individualized Special Limitation (SL) areas – or spot zones – through stand-alone ordinance amendments without consistent mapping or policy basis. These zones contribute to zoning complexity and reduce transparency. To resolve this, the Borough could conduct a comprehensive inventory and map of all SL/spot zones, then institute a sunset and public-review process alongside consolidation into standard or overlay zoning categories. The American Planning Association recommends such measures to restore clarity, fairness, and strategic consistency in zoning practice<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Example: Kenai Peninsula Borough – Local Option Zoning Cleanup**

For many years, the Kenai Peninsula Borough allowed resident-initiated Local Option Zoning Districts (LOZDs), which enabled rural neighborhoods to adopt stricter, customized land use regulations. While initially useful for tailoring standards to local preferences, the LOZD system resulted in a patchwork of hyper-specific zoning districts with inconsistent rules and unclear enforcement procedures. Over time, these localized zones began to resemble spot zoning in function and effect, complicating administration and undermining code consistency. Recognizing this, the Borough began repealing or streamlining LOZDs, including the formal repeal of the Kalifornsky Center R-1 LOZD in 2022. This example illustrates how tailored zoning mechanisms—while well-intentioned—can lead to long-term fragmentation and eventually require cleanup to restore a more predictable and transparent zoning framework.

### Additional details for strategy 2, action d:

*Evaluate the feasibility and community support for adopting a basic building code in all Borough areas to enhance life safety, structural integrity, and resilience, while considering local needs and capacities.*

The Borough currently lacks mandatory building and site development standards outside of municipal areas, which has contributed to recurring drainage issues, slope failures, and potential flood and seismic vulnerabilities. Local and national guidance—from the Borough’s floodplain management program to the Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission—recommends adopting a basic building code to enhance life safety, structural integrity, and resilience<sup>3</sup>. FEMA highlights that local code enforcement can notably improve resistance to flood damage, while Alaska’s experience shows that most post-earthquake building failures occurred in areas without enforced codes.

To explore the potential benefits and challenges of adopting a basic building code in the Borough, start with these **key considerations**:

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<sup>2</sup> American Planning Association. (2016). *Zoning Practice, Issue 7: Rethinking Spot Zoning*. Chicago, IL: APA. Retrieved from <https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/document/Zoning-Practice-2016-07.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission. (2020). *Policy Recommendation 2020-1: Improve Building Code Adoption & Enforcement*. Retrieved from [https://seismic.alaska.gov/download/ashsc\\_meetings\\_minutes/pr\\_2020-1\\_code\\_adoption\\_and\\_enforcement.pdf](https://seismic.alaska.gov/download/ashsc_meetings_minutes/pr_2020-1_code_adoption_and_enforcement.pdf)

1. **Community Engagement:** Conduct surveys and public meetings to gauge resident perspectives and concerns regarding building code adoption.
2. **Resource Assessment:** Evaluate the Borough's capacity to implement and enforce building codes, including staffing, training, and funding requirements.
3. **Model Codes:** Review simplified or "building code lite" models that focus on essential safety standards, which may be more acceptable to the community. For example, the City of Homer is currently exploring the provision of requiring certification from a licensed inspector that new dwelling units (single-family, duplex, and triplex) meet the requirements of the Residential International Building Code.
4. **Incremental Implementation:** Consider phased approaches, starting with voluntary compliance or limited scope regulations, to ease the transition.

Potential Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved safety and resilience of structures.</li> <li>- Eligibility for certain grants and funding opportunities.</li> <li>- Enhanced community preparedness for natural hazards.</li> <li>- Increased resilience for public infrastructure</li> <li>- Long-term reduction of costs to private homeowners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential resistance from residents valuing autonomy.</li> <li>- Increased building costs</li> <li>- Resource constraints for enforcement and administration.</li> </ul>

### Additional details for strategy 2, action e:

*Continue to improve the usability, applicability, and accessibility of Ketchikan Gateway Borough Code, Titles 17 Subdivisions and 18 Planning and Zoning.*

In 2023, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough adopted a major rewrite of Title 18 (Planning and Zoning), to address years of incremental amendments that had made the code difficult to navigate for both the public and Borough staff. The new code consolidated fragmented provisions, simplified terminology, and enhanced usability by integrating all zoning districts and land uses into a single, comprehensive table. Key improvements also included clearer application procedures, more transparent standards for variances and conditional use permits, and a consistent format across chapters. Overall, the update promoted greater clarity, efficiency, and public accessibility in land use decision-making.

While the code rewrite was substantial, continued refinements can support implementation of comprehensive plan priorities such as infill development, hazard mitigation, and equitable permitting. Additionally, the Borough should revise Title 18.80 (Signs and Advertising Devices) to ensure consistency with *Reed v. Town of Gilbert (2015)*, a U.S. Supreme Court decision that prohibits content-based sign regulations under the First Amendment. Although some changes were made in the 2023 rewrite, portions of the sign code may still raise legal concerns and lead to enforcement challenges.

### Additional details for strategy 3, action b:

*Strengthen floodplain management policies through code updates, interagency coordination, and community outreach.*

The following code revisions and procedures are recommended for this action:

- **Codify flood protection standards for critical facilities** to minimize long-term risk. See model code from the City of Valdez.
- **Require Base Flood Elevation (BFE) data** on subdivision plats in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) when the development meets the federal 50-lot or 5-acre threshold.
- **Establish a formal mechanism for tracking substantial improvement and damage determinations**, particularly for pre-FIRM structures, and ensure appeals are recorded by the Borough Clerk.
- **Pursue participation in FEMA’s Community Rating System (CRS)** to reduce flood insurance premiums for residents and incentivize higher standards.
- **Coordinate with the City of Ketchikan and utility partners** to review building permit applications for compliance with floodplain requirements, especially where development spans jurisdictional boundaries.
- **Develop and deliver public education and outreach programs** about SFHA regulations, grading limitations, and building standards to reduce post-construction violations and protect residents.
- **Explore creation of a simple site development permit or review process**—even outside the SFHA—to address uncontrolled grading or fill that could exacerbate flooding or erosion.

### Additional details for strategy 4, action a:

*Develop and implement a Ketchikan Gateway Borough Land Management Plan to guide the acquisition, disposition, leasing, and use of Borough-owned lands in alignment with land use, housing, recreation, and conservation goals.*

The land classification system is outlined in Ketchikan Gateway Borough Code §11.40.060, which allows Borough land to be classified or reclassified by resolution as either enterprise land or economic development land. While this provides a foundational framework, it is relatively broad and may not fully capture the diverse land management needs of the Borough. Consider expanding the classification system to include more nuanced categories that align with plan goals. **Other implementation guidance is as follows:**

#### 1. **Comprehensive Inventory**

Conduct a detailed inventory of all Borough-owned lands, noting current classifications, uses, and any existing encumbrances.

**2. Assessment Criteria Development**

Establish clear criteria for evaluating land parcels, considering factors such as location, accessibility, environmental sensitivity, and market demand.

**3. Stakeholder Engagement**

Engage with community members, developers, and other stakeholders to gather input on land use priorities and needs.

**4. Classification Assignment**

Assign each land parcel to one of the recommended categories based on the assessment criteria and stakeholder input. Possible classifications include:

- a. Enterprise: Land intended for revenue generation or economic development purposes.
- b. Economic Development: Land designated to support economic growth initiatives.
- c. Public Use: Land reserved for public facilities, such as schools, community centers, and government buildings.
- d. Residential Development Land: Land suitable for housing projects, including affordable and workforce housing.
- e. Recreational: Land designated for parks, trails, and other recreational uses.
- f. Conservation: Land preserved for environmental protection, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, and other sensitive areas.
- g. Future Development: Land held for potential future use, pending further planning and community needs assessment.

**5. Policy and Procedure Updates**

Update Borough policies and procedures to reflect the new classification system, ensuring consistency in land management decisions.

**6. Monitoring and Review**

Implement a regular review process to assess the effectiveness of the classification system and make adjustments as needed.

**Additional details for strategy 4, action b:**

*Update and implement a consistent framework for area/neighborhood plans in the Borough, building on past policy commitments to guide development, public investments, and community character in neighborhoods and areas identified on the Future Land Use Map Area Planning Overlay.*

Plans should include land use designations, infrastructure needs, transportation considerations, design guidance, and an implementation strategy. Prioritize planning in areas experiencing growth or land use pressure. Consider revising the code to formalize when and how neighborhood plans are initiated.

#### Additional details for strategy 4, action c:

*Develop an area plan for Herring Cove to guide land use, infrastructure improvements, and visitor management strategies that balance tourism activities with resident quality of life, public safety, and habitat protection.*

Herring Cove is a unique and ecologically sensitive area at Mile Post 8 on South Tongass Highway that has become a hotspot for wildlife viewing, particularly bears, by both independent travelers and cruise-based tours. The area lacks the infrastructure necessary to support high seasonal visitation and safety concerns have increased due to the absence of formal pedestrian walkways, limited parking, and growing conflicts between visitors, residents, and wildlife. The 2022 Tourism Strategy

Figure A-1: Herring Cove Area



Situation Analysis identifies Herring Cove as a “dispersed tourism node” experiencing impacts from unregulated growth and the 2023 Ketchikan Alaska Tourism Strategy calls for site-specific management plans in high-use areas like Herring Cove. The Borough’s 2024–2028 Strategic Plan also suggests the use of Commercial Passenger Vessel (CPV) funds and interagency coordination to mitigate congestion, improve public safety, and invest in visitor infrastructure.

No cohesive land use or infrastructure plan currently exists for the area. An area plan can respond to these recurring issues with community-backed solutions and proactive strategies that balance tourism activity with the needs of residents and habitat protection. The plan can ensure real, on-the-ground improvements that reflect community input and respond directly to long-standing safety, infrastructure, and tourism pressure points. Implementation should focus on identifying fundable projects—such as pedestrian infrastructure, designated viewing areas, and improved tour staging—and setting clear management and monitoring protocols to address congestion and wildlife impacts. Coordinating early with DOT&PF, private landowners, and tour operators will help define responsibilities, align funding sources like CPV funds, and establish a framework for monitoring progress and adjusting strategies over time.

#### Additional details for strategy 4, action e:

*Subject to Borough priorities and funding availability, collaborate with partners to develop an area plan for Ward Cove that addresses land use, infrastructure, and redevelopment opportunities, with a focus on improving access, coordinating utilities, supporting compatible mixed-use development, and guiding reinvestment in the former industrial site.*

Ward Cove is a former industrial site and evolving tourism node in the unincorporated Borough that has experienced significant redevelopment since the closure of the Ketchikan Pulp Mill and the construction of a large private cruise ship dock. Although located outside City limits, the site directly impacts transportation networks, visitor flows, and land use across the greater Ketchikan area. The Borough's

2024–2028 Strategic Plan identifies Ward Cove as a priority area for long-range planning and redevelopment, while both the 2022 Tourism Strategy Situation Analysis and the 2023 Ketchikan Alaska Tourism Strategy emphasize the need to coordinate land use, infrastructure, and tourism management in locations experiencing cruise-related growth. Key issues in Ward Cove include fragmented land ownership, limited public oversight of tourism infrastructure, environmental monitoring, and the need to integrate industrial, residential, and commercial redevelopment opportunities.

Figure A-2: Ward Cove Planning Area



A focused area plan can help resolve these long-standing challenges by establishing a clear land use vision, identifying infrastructure priorities, and addressing public-private coordination gaps that currently hinder cohesive development. The plan can also respond to growing calls for more consistent oversight of cruise-related impacts and land-based reinvestment strategies. Borough participation will be key to aligning zoning, infrastructure planning, and interagency coordination in a way that ensures local benefits from private redevelopment and cruise activity.

## Supplemental Maps

The maps in this section illustrate current land use conditions, zoning patterns, infrastructure coverage, and environmental constraints. Together, they provide a visual foundation for understanding development trends and planning priorities across the Borough.

Figure A- 3: Land Ownership, Public Hearing Draft - Overview

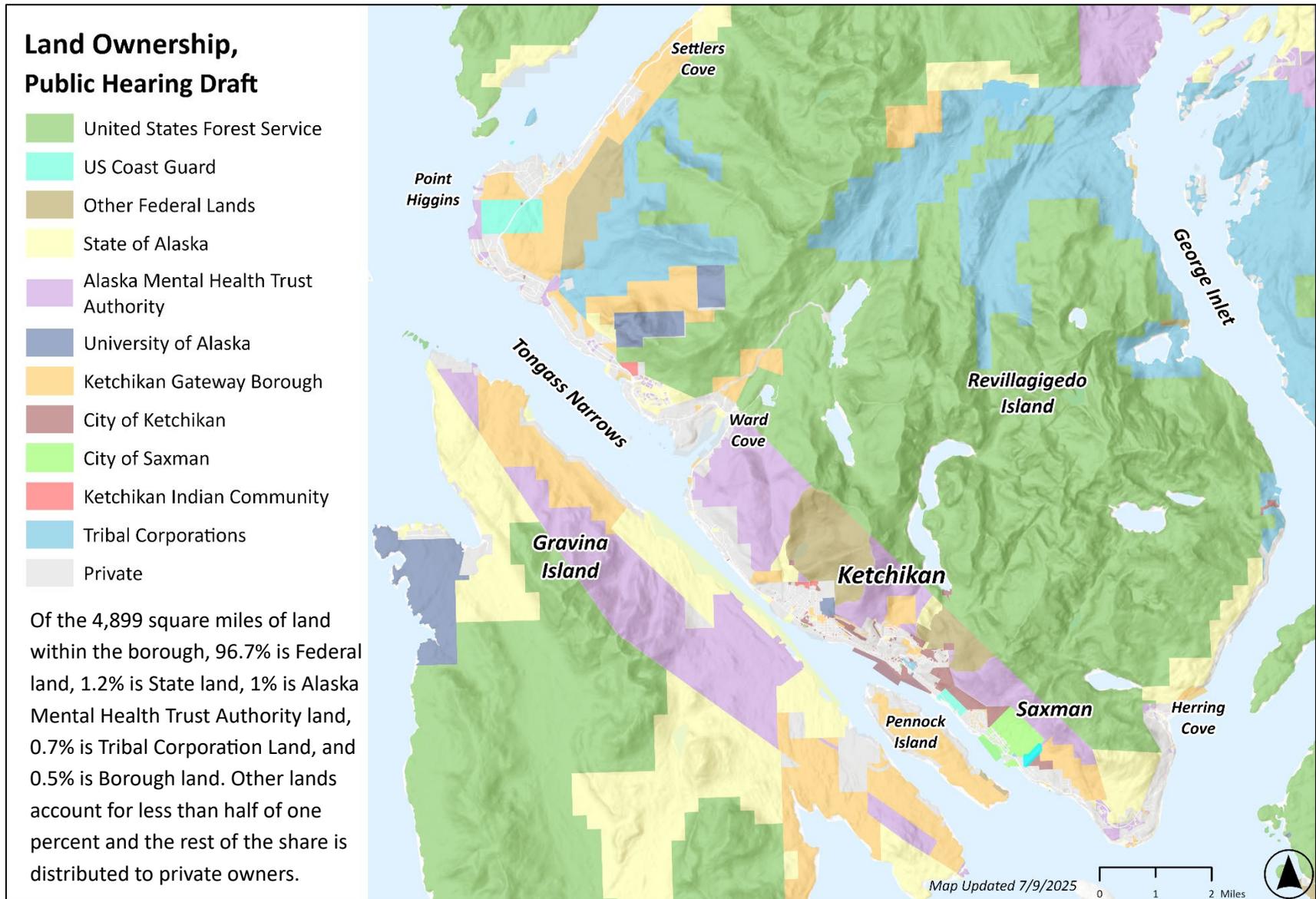


Figure A-4: Road Jurisdictions, Public Hearing Draft - Overview

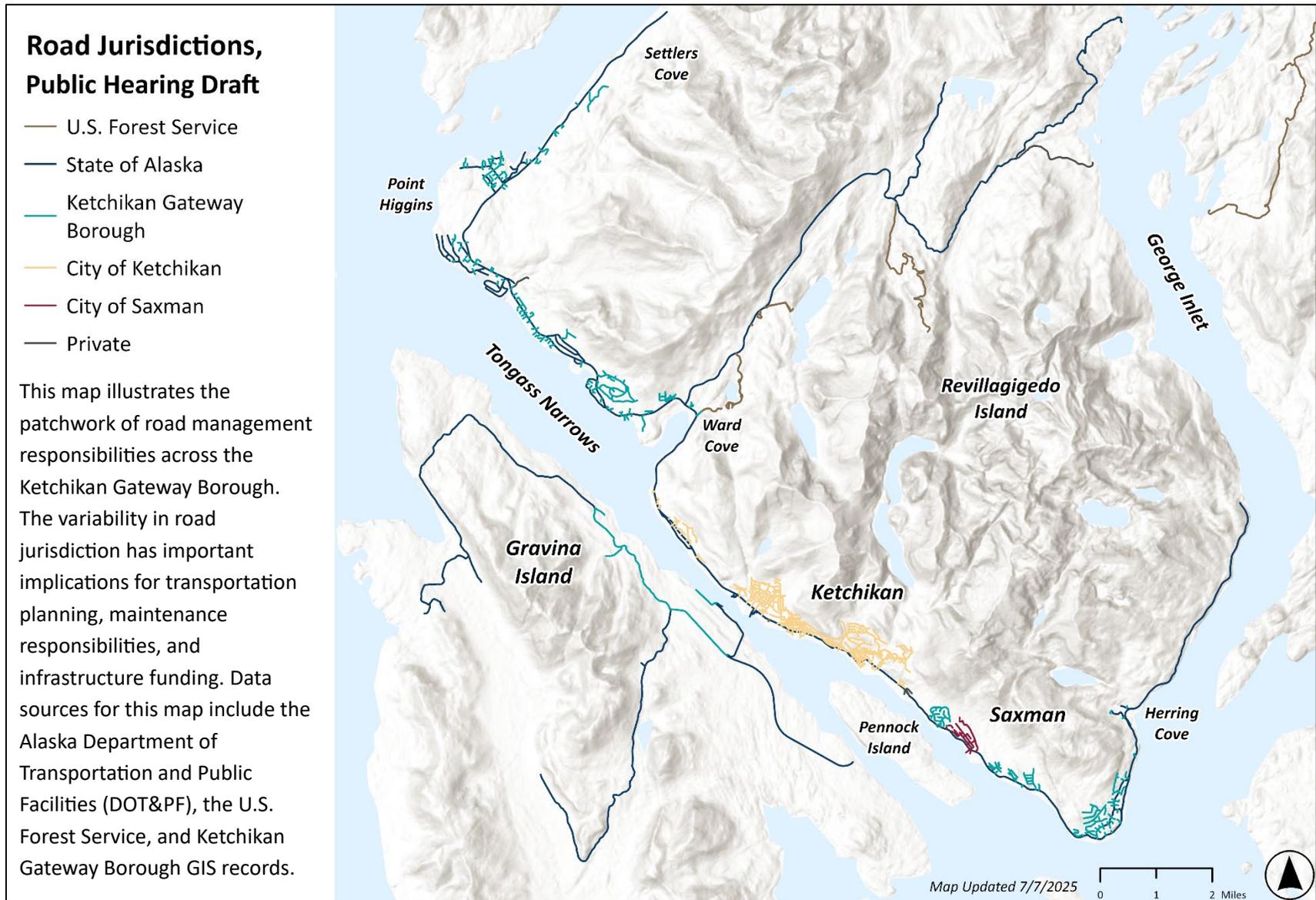


Figure A-5: Assessed Uses, Public Hearing Draft - City of Ketchikan

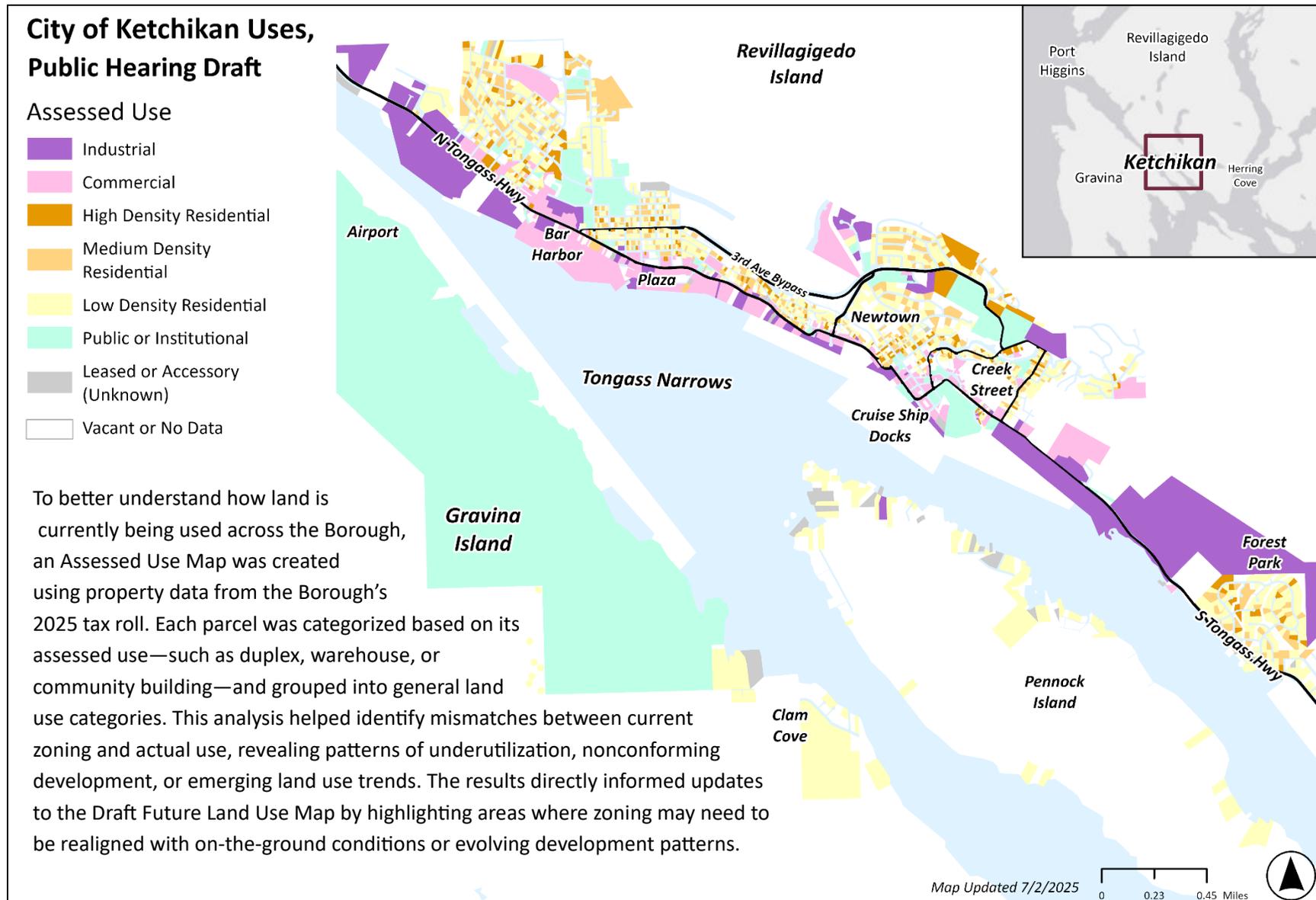


Figure A-6: Service Areas of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Public Hearing Draft

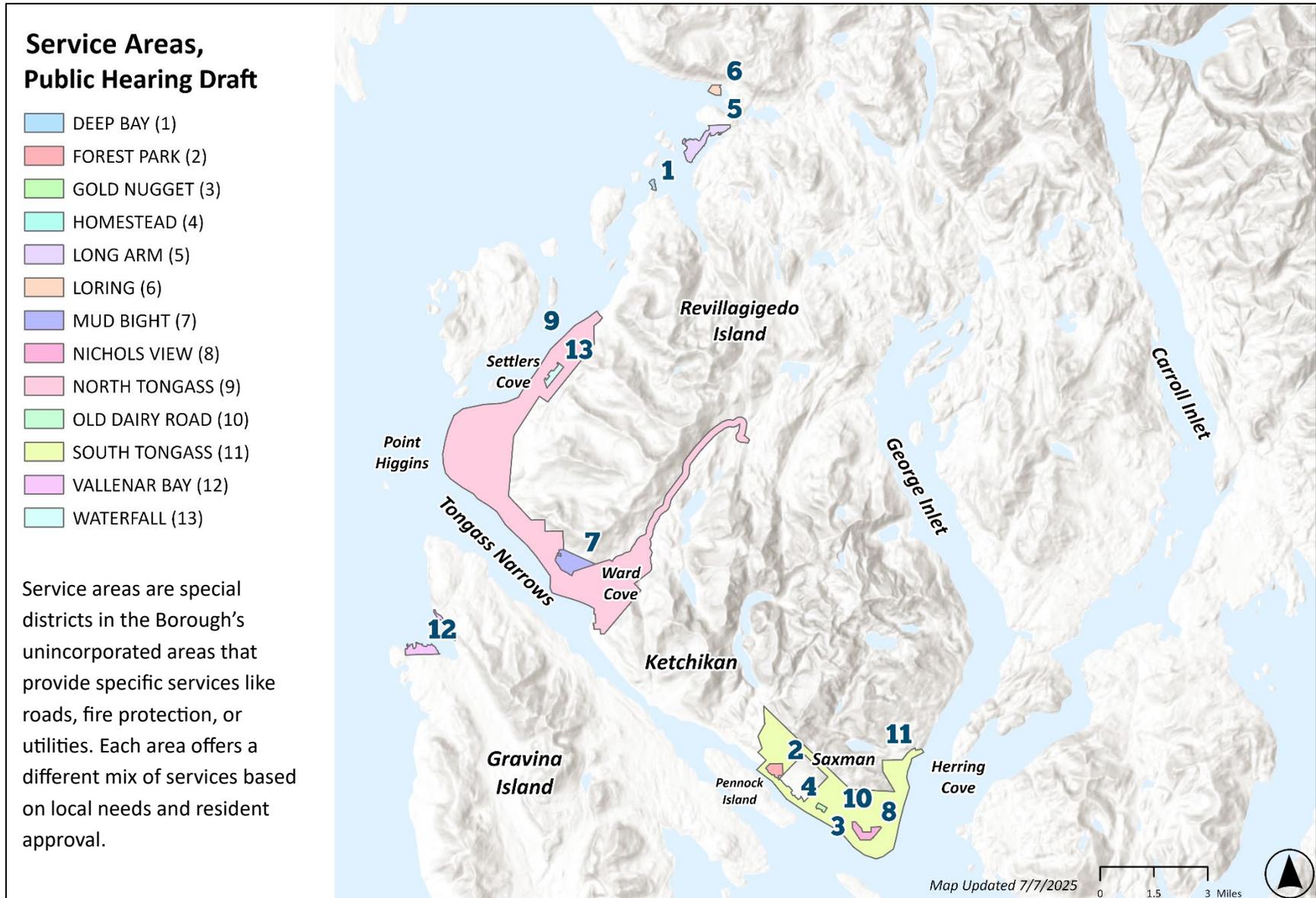
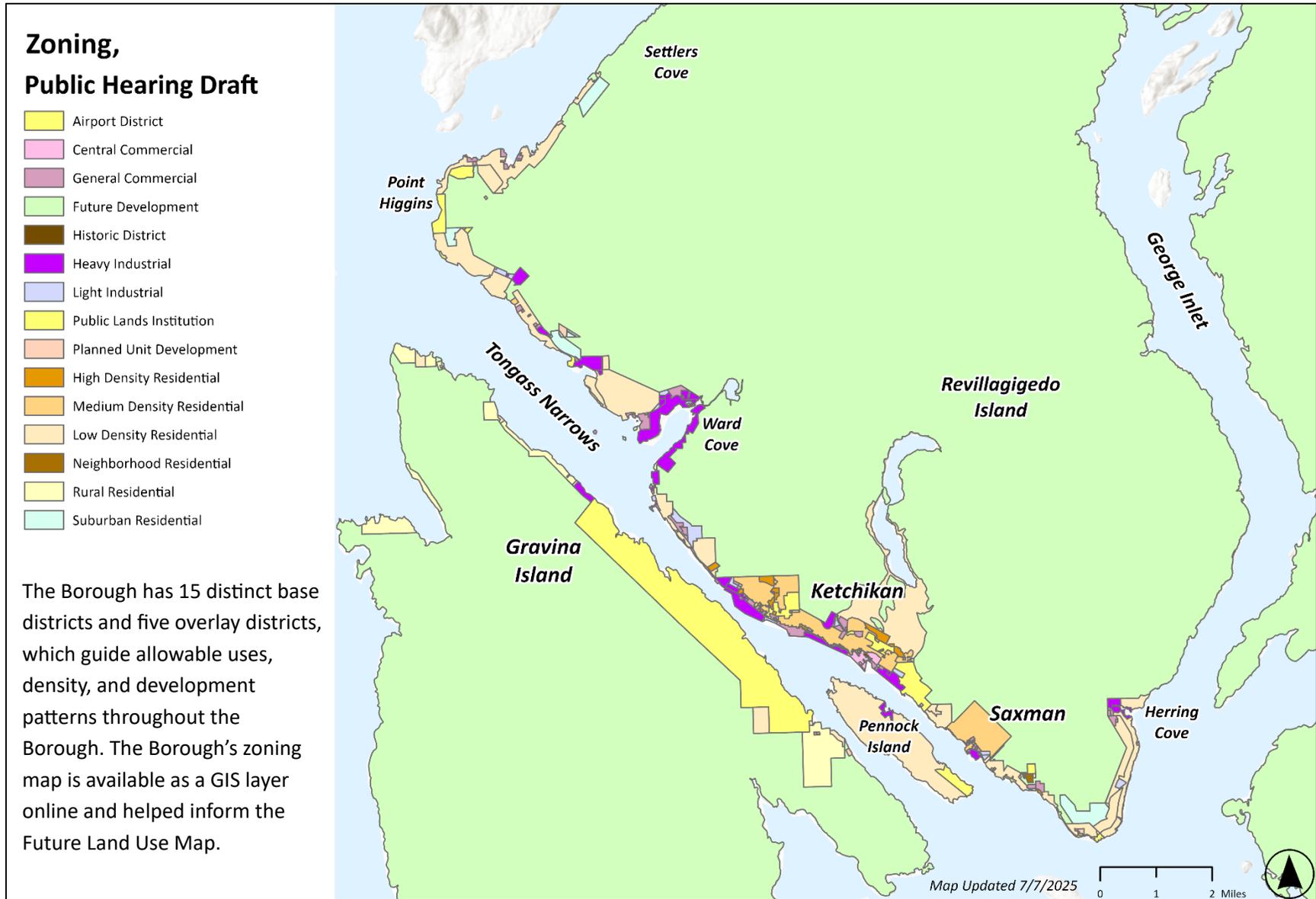
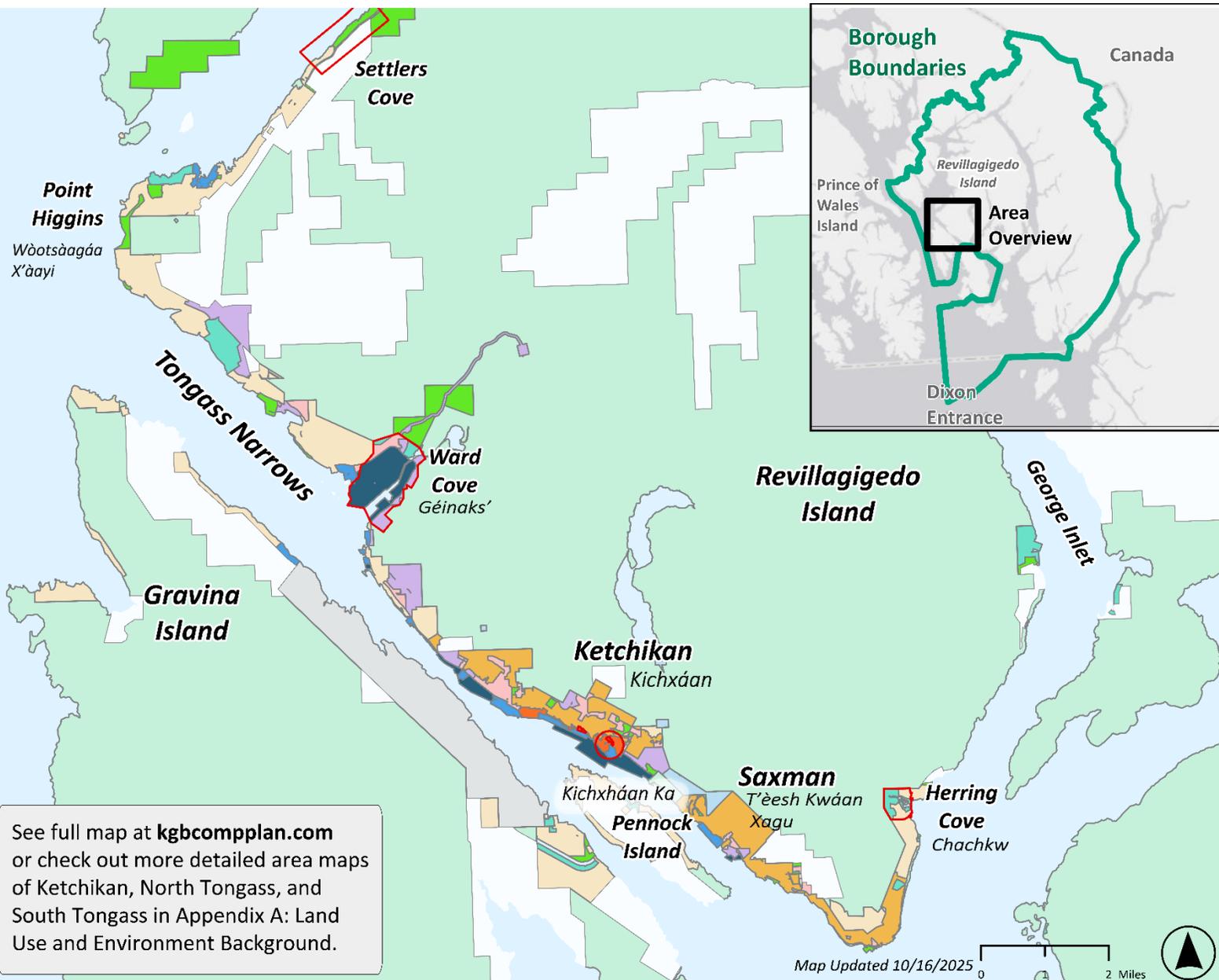


Figure A-7: Ketchikan Gateway Borough Zoning, Public Hearing Draft





## Future Land Use Map, Public Hearing Draft Area Overview

Prepared by Agnew::Beck, October 2025



### Base Designation

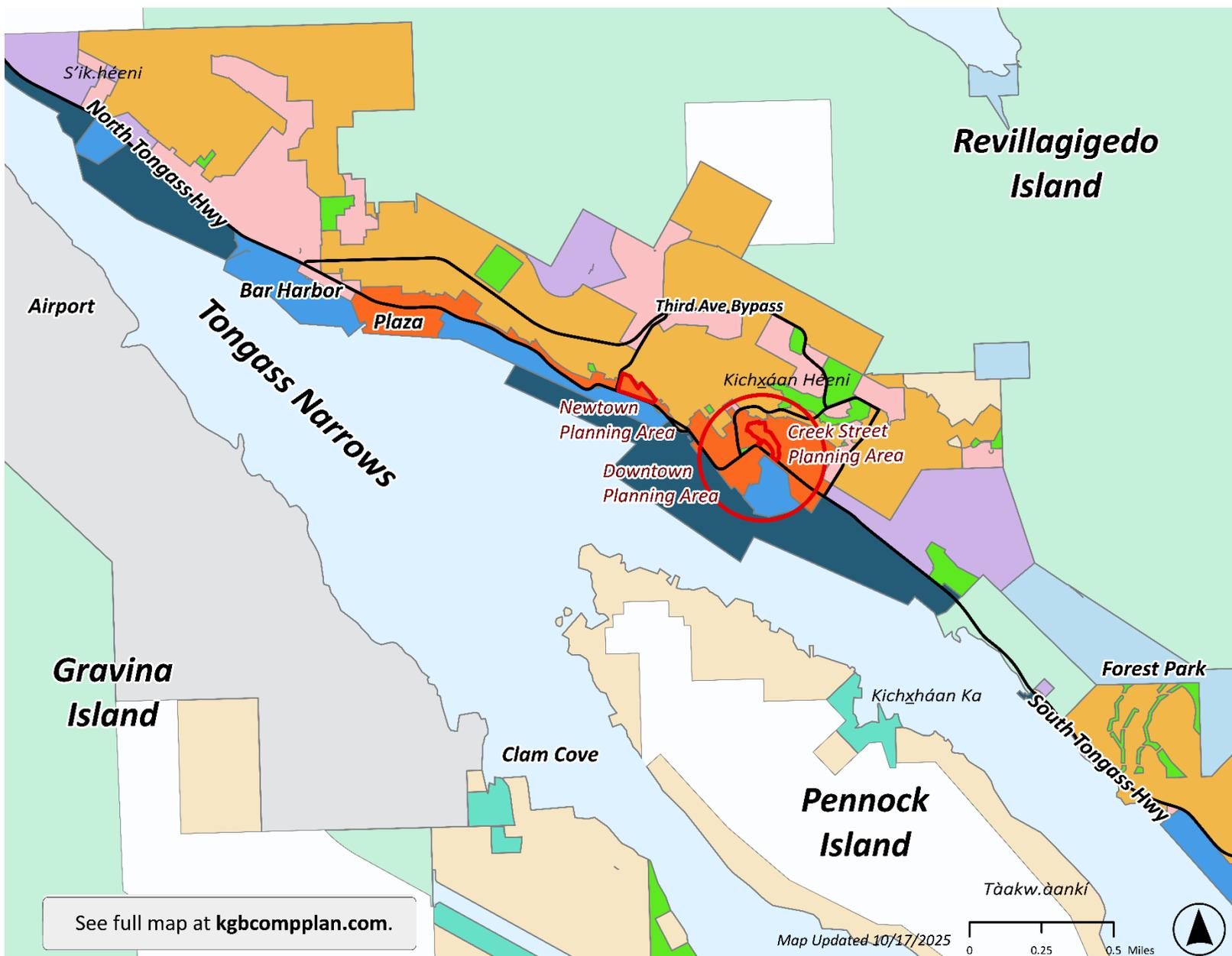
- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Downtown Core         |  Industrial Waterfront     |
|  Urban Residential     |  Airport                   |
|  Rural Residential     |  Institutional             |
|  Rural Mixed Use       |  Recreation and Open Space |
|  Commercial            |  Public Management         |
|  Industrial            |  Unspecified Future Use    |
|  Commercial Waterfront |  Area Planning Overlay     |

### What is a Future Land Use Map?

Future land use maps anticipate development needs and constraints, identify suitable types of development, and establish policies to guide development. They do not act as regulatory zoning documents or make changes to existing code.

This map incorporates information from Haa Léelk'u Has Aaní Saax'ú Kúdzitee (Saanyaa & Taant'a Place Names), a community-based project mapping traditional Tlingit placenames and territories. It is shared here for reference only. For the full map and source context, please visit: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1CgaYbgGaeojaYXZ-slmsWfSiw1VUuYKM&ll=57.96967367810878%2C-137.96079835078123&z=6>

Figure A-8: Future Land Use Map, Public Hearing Draft – Area Overview



# Future Land Use Map, Public Hearing Draft City of Ketchikan

## Base Designation

Downtown Core	Industrial	Recreation and Open Space
Urban Residential	Commercial Waterfront	Public Management
Rural Residential	Industrial Waterfront	Unspecified Future Use
Rural Mixed Use	Airport	Area Planning Overlay
Commercial	Institutional	

This map incorporates information from Haa Léelk'u Has Aaní Saax'ú Kudzitee (Saanyaa & Taant'a Place Names), a community-based project mapping traditional Tlingit placenames and territories. It is shared here for reference only. For the full map and source context, please visit: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1CgaYbgGaeojaYXZ-slmsWfSiW1VUuYKM&ll=57.96967367810878%2C-137.96079835078123&z=6>

Prepared by Agnew::Beck, October 2025

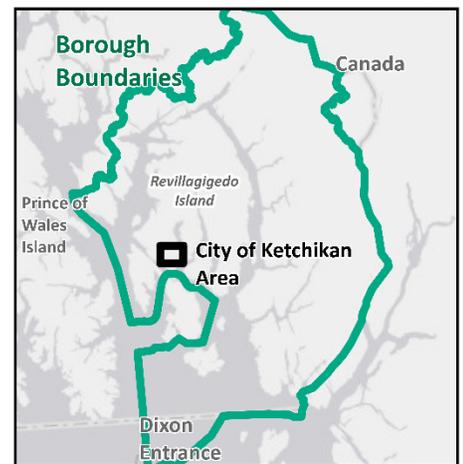
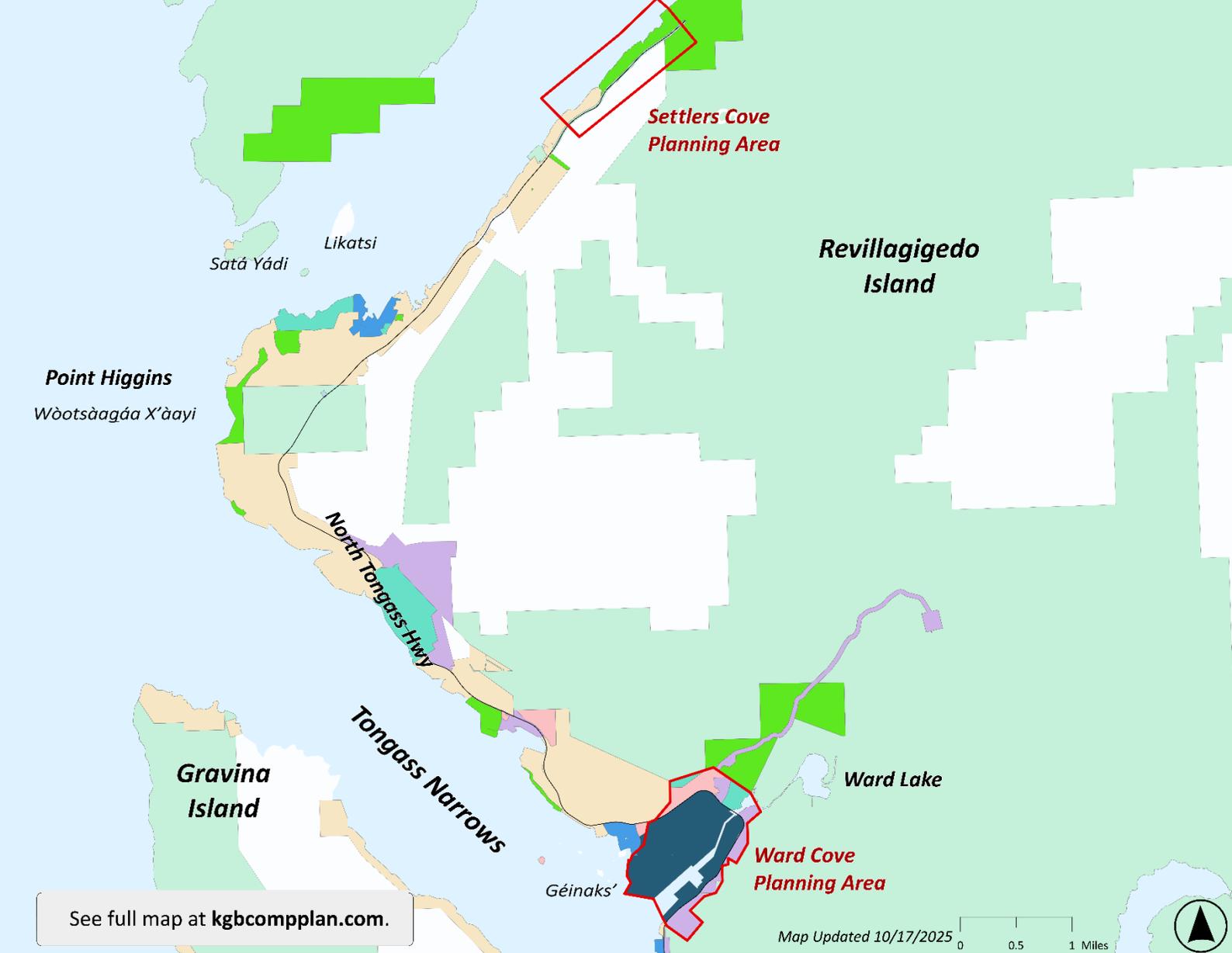


Figure A-9: Future Land Use Map, Public Hearing Draft - City of Ketchikan



See full map at [kgbcompplan.com](http://kgbcompplan.com).

## Future Land Use Map, Public Hearing Draft North Tongass Area

### Base Designation

- |                   |                       |                           |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Downtown Core     | Industrial            | Recreation and Open Space |
| Urban Residential | Commercial Waterfront | Public Management         |
| Rural Residential | Industrial Waterfront | Unspecified Future Use    |
| Rural Mixed Use   | Airport               | Area Planning Overlay     |
| Commercial        | Institutional         |                           |

This map incorporates information from Haa Léelk'u Has Aani Saax'ú Kudzitee (Saanyaa & Taant'a Place Names), a community-based project mapping traditional Tlingit placenames and territories. It is shared here for reference only. For the full map and source context, please visit: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1CgaYbgGaeojaYXZ-simsWfsIW1VUuYKM&ll=57.96967367810878%2C-137.96079835078123&z=6>

Prepared by Agnew::Beck, October 2025

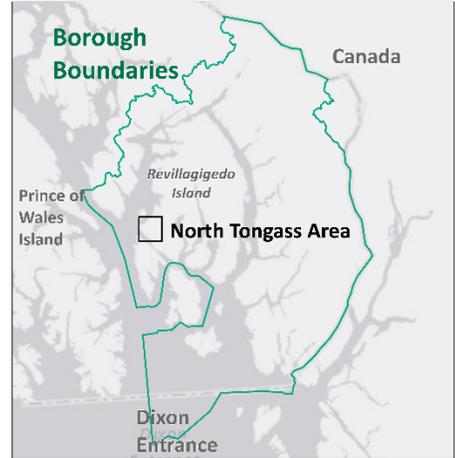
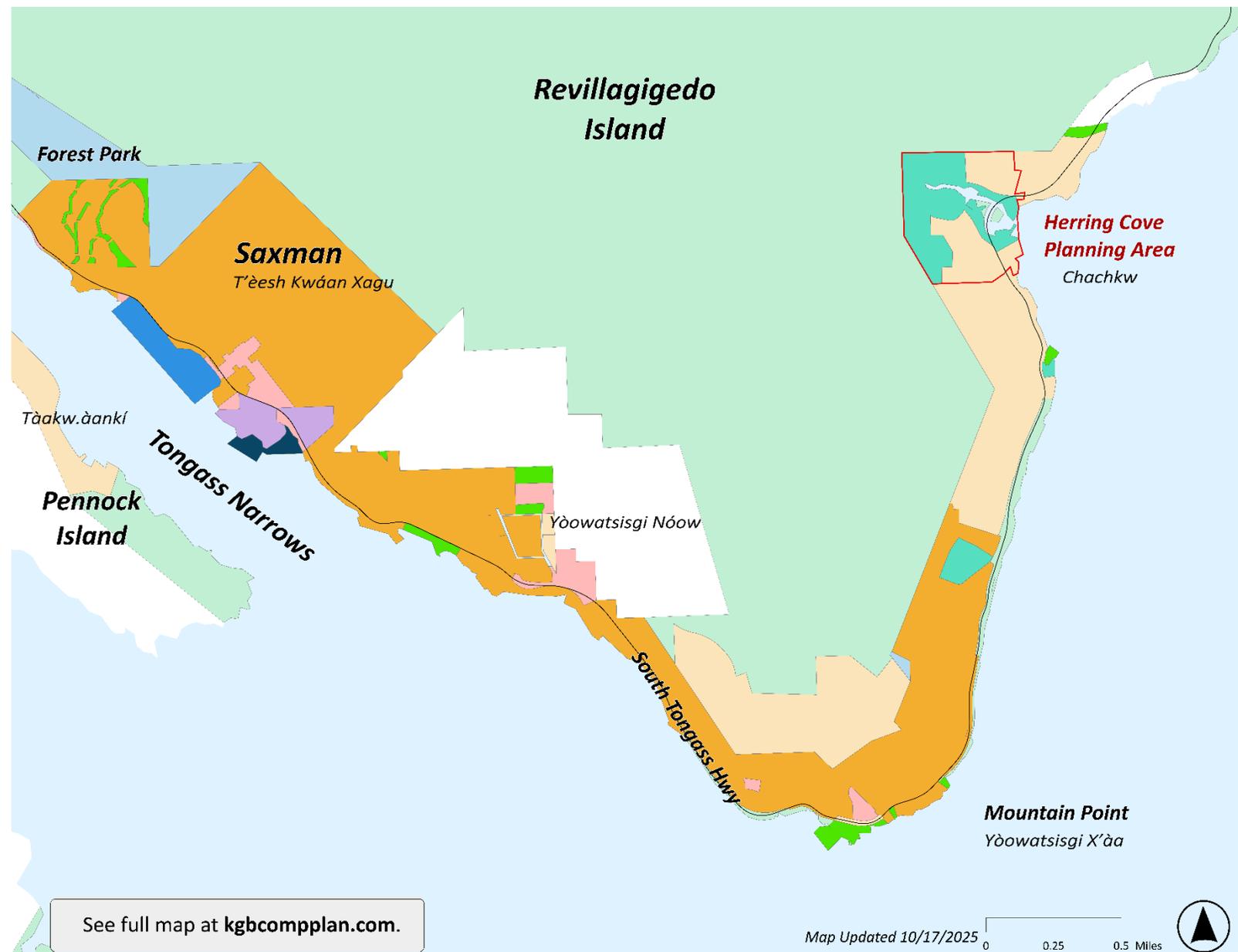


Figure A-10: Future Land Use Map, Public Hearing Draft - North Tongass



## Future Land Use Map, Public Hearing Draft South Tongass Area

### Base Designation

Downtown Core	Industrial	Recreation and Open Space
Urban Residential	Commercial Waterfront	Public Management
Rural Residential	Industrial Waterfront	Unspecified Future Use
Rural Mixed Use	Airport	Area Planning Overlay
Commercial	Institutional	

This map incorporates information from Haa Léelk'u Has Aani Saax'ú Kudzitee (Saanyaa & Taant'a Place Names), a community-based project mapping traditional Tlingit placenames and territories. It is shared here for reference only. For the full map and source context, please visit: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1CgaYbgGaeojaYXZ-simsWfSiW1VUuYKM&ll=57.96967367810878%2C-137.96079835078123&z=6>

Prepared by Agnew::Beck, October 2025

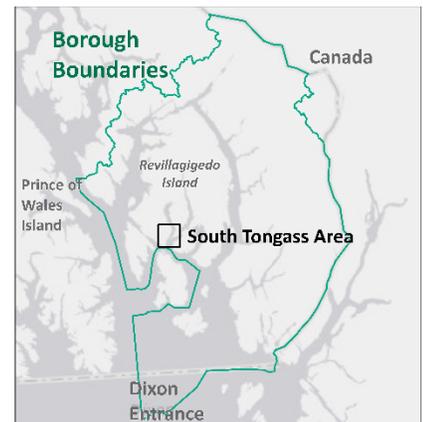
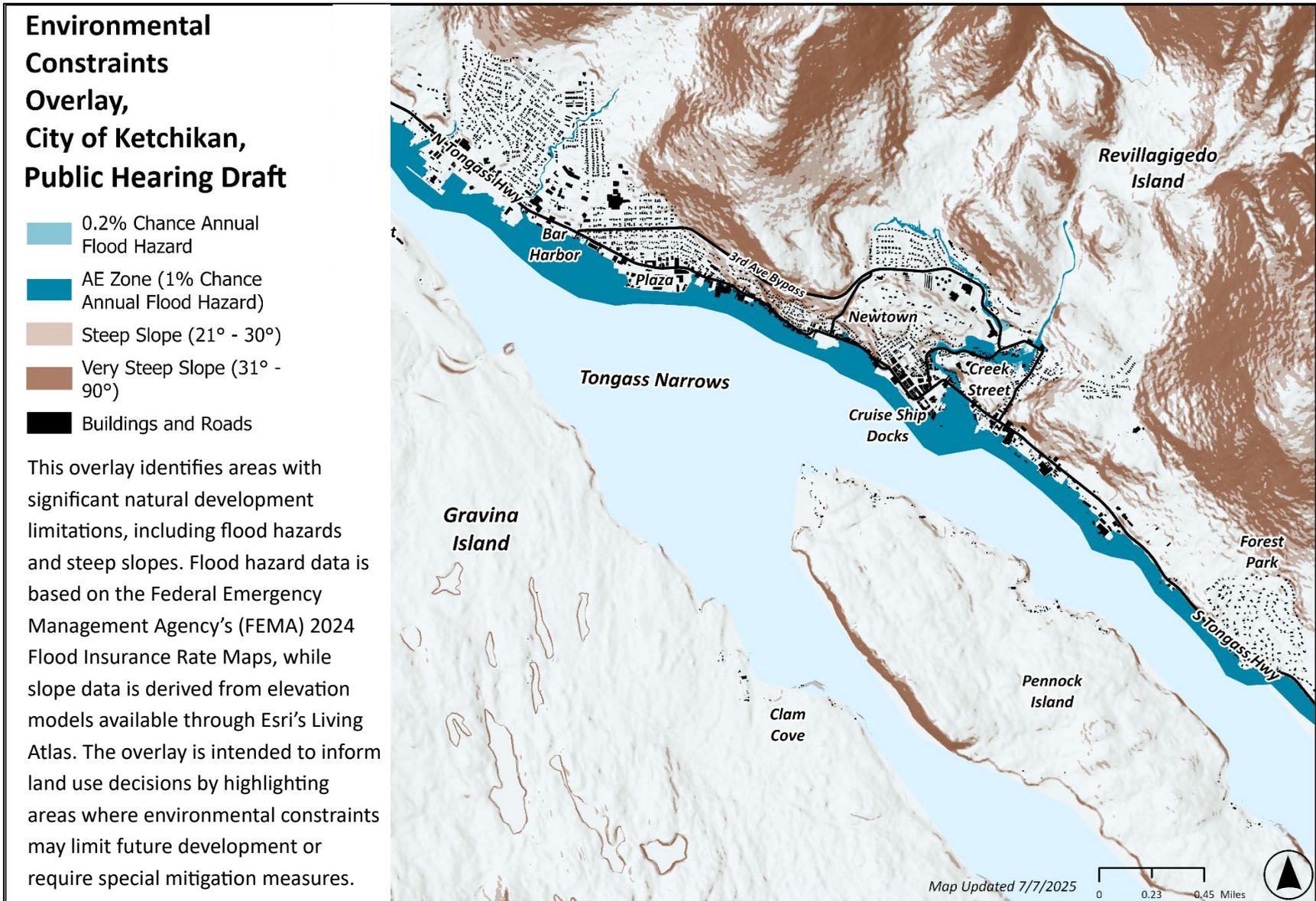


Figure A-11: Future Land Use Map, Public Hearing Draft - South Tongass

Figure A-12: Environmental Constraints Overlay, Public Hearing Draft - City of Ketchikan



# Appendix B

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## Background

- Background Research and Data Analysis
- Literature Review

# Background Research and Data Analysis

For Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update

*October 13, 2025 (updated)*

*Researched and prepared by*



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## Methodology

This background document draws from a variety of data sources to analyze demographic, economic, housing, and workforce trends in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB). Key sources include the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD), the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District, the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, and the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA). Data from 2013 to 2024 were used to examine historical patterns and forecast future trends. Population projections, labor force statistics, income and housing metrics, and visitor data were analyzed to identify key challenges and opportunities facing the borough. Quantitative data were supported by contextual interpretation and local insight to inform conclusions relevant to the Comprehensive Plan update. Where applicable, charts and tables illustrate trends over time and comparisons to other Southeast Alaska communities.

## Ketchikan at a Glance



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 percent from 2023 to 2050. Nearly 15 percent of the population identifies as Alaska Native/American Indian and nearly 10 percent 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*

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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 due to Ketchikan households having fewer earners than the statewide average. It also reflects that more Ketchikan residents work in higher-paying seasonal jobs than the statewide average. From 2013 to 2024, the KGB often had higher rates of unemployment during the winter than Alaska as a whole and lower rates of unemployment during the summer, also due to the amount of seasonal jobs. Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

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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*

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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 percent less than 2014. From 2014 to 2023, the percentage of permit holders who fished has decreased from 69 to 58 percent. 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*

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Ketchikan is the **second most visited destination in Alaska**, with 47 percent 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*

## Introduction

Ketchikan Gateway Borough is a coastal community shaped by its people, its natural setting, cultural diversity, and strong ties to seasonal industries like tourism and fishing. As the borough looks forward, several demographic and economic trends are expected to have a lasting impact on community life, services, and local planning priorities.

Like many Southeast Alaska communities, Ketchikan is projected to experience a gradual but notable population decline over the coming decades. Between 2023 and 2050, the borough's population is expected to decrease by approximately 20 percent. This mirrors broader regional trends, with Southeast Alaska projected to see a 17 percent population decline, significantly greater than the 2 percent decline forecasted for the state overall for the same time period.

At the same time, Ketchikan's population is aging. The median age in the borough is currently 40.8, higher than the state average of 36.5. The share of older adults continues to grow, while younger residents and families make up a decreasing portion of the population. School enrollment data reflects this shift, with student counts declining over the past decade and expected to continue declining in the years ahead. These trends raise important considerations for local education, workforce planning, and elder care services.

Economically, the borough remains relatively strong. Ketchikan residents earn comparable incomes to those across Alaska, with per capita income slightly higher and median household income slightly lower. From 2013 to 2022, income in Ketchikan increased at a faster rate than the statewide average, even after adjusting for inflation. Housing costs in the borough are similar to other Southeast communities, but affordability challenges remain, particularly for renters and younger households.

Ketchikan's economy is seasonal, driven by a combination of government employment and summer peaks in tourism and commercial fishing. In 2023, the borough's largest employment sectors included government (26 percent), trade, transportation and utilities (24 percent), leisure and hospitality (14 percent), and educational and health services (14 percent). Average monthly wages were \$4,964 across all sectors, with construction and manufacturing offering the highest-paying jobs.

These demographic and economic trends provide context for the Comprehensive Plan update. They underscore the need to plan for a smaller and older population, support for local workforce development, addressing housing challenges, and strengthening and diversifying the year-round economy.

# Our People

## *Current Population*

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB) is home to roughly 13,475 residents as of 2023, with about 7,800 living in the City of Ketchikan boundaries. This year-round population has remained around the mid-13,000s for much of the past decade. It fluctuates in the summer with an influx of seasonal workers. However, Ketchikan's population has recently begun to ebb, and demographers expect a significant decline in the coming decades.

## *Projected Decline by 2050*

Like many Southeast Alaska communities, Ketchikan's population is forecast to shrink substantially over the next 25 years. According to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the KGB's population is projected to drop by about 20 percent between 2023 and 2050, falling to approximately 10,790 residents by 2050. Southeast Alaska as a whole is expected to lose around 17 percent of its population by 2050. For context, while Alaska is forecast to decline slightly by 2 percent, Southeast Alaska will account for most of that loss.

## *Comparisons in the Region*

Within Southeast Alaska, Ketchikan's anticipated 20 percent decline is significant but not unique. Smaller rural boroughs are bracing for even sharper drops. For instance, Wrangell is projected to lose about one-third of its population. Sitka may see roughly a 24 percent decline and Juneau is expected to shrink by about 9 percent.

## *Why Is the Population Declining?*

Several demographic forces are driving Ketchikan's population decline:

- **An Aging Population:** The median age in the borough is about 40.8 years, compared to 36.5 statewide. Natural decrease is occurring as deaths now outnumber births.
- **Low Birth Rates:** Alaska's fertility rate has been below replacement level since 2017, and Southeast Alaska has the lowest birth rates in the state.
- **Outmigration of Young Adults:** Many young people leave Ketchikan for school, jobs, or more affordable living. High housing costs and limited job opportunities drive steady outmigration.

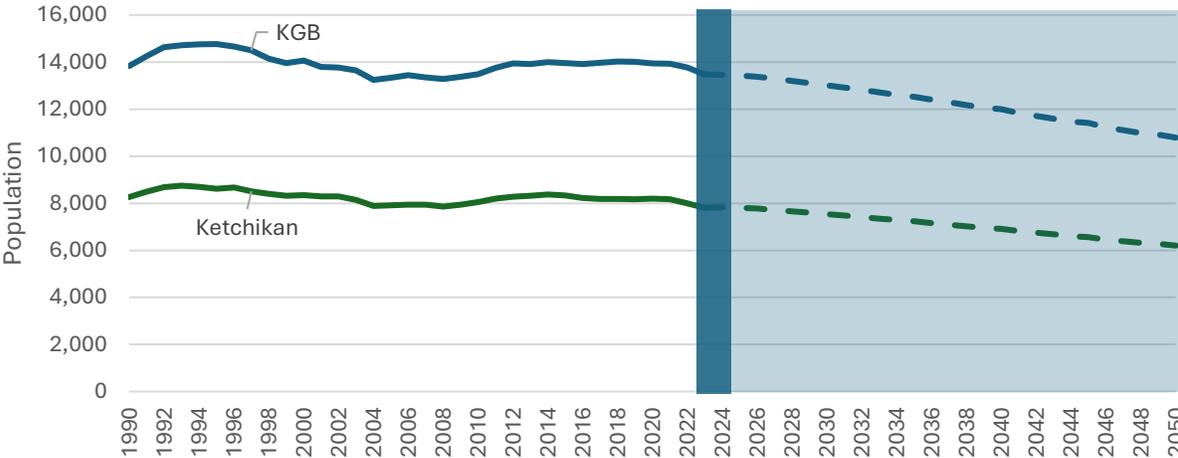
### *Implications for the Community*

A shrinking and aging population impacts several aspects of community life:

- **Schools and Youth:** School enrollment dropped from 2,474 in 2014-15 to 2,095 in 2023-24, with further declines expected.
- **Workforce and Economy:** A smaller labor pool could strain local businesses and public services. Retaining working-age adults is becoming critical.
- **Housing and Community Life:** Despite the population decline, housing shortages remain due to aging in place and low turnover.
- **Services for an Aging Population:** More seniors mean increased need for health care, elder care, and accessible infrastructure.

The figures and charts on the following pages illustrate the data and trends with additional detail.

**Figure 1. Historical and Forecasted Populations for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and Ketchikan (1990–2050)**



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Northern Economics analysis

**Figure 1** shows past and projected population trends for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and the City of Ketchikan. While the borough’s population has fluctuated over the years, it has generally stayed around 14,000 residents. However, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD) projects that the population will decline in the coming decades. By 2050, the KGB population is expected to drop to about 10,790 - a decrease of roughly 20 percent from 2023. This decline is expected to be spread evenly across the borough, with all areas projected to lose about the same percentage of their population. On average, the borough and the city are forecast to lose about 0.8 percent of their population each year. At the statewide level, ADOLWD is also projecting a population decline. This is mainly due to an aging population - there are more people over age 65 and fewer people under 65. The working-age population (ages 20 to 64) is expected to shrink by about 2 percent due to people moving out of the state, which will likely lead to fewer births and a smaller population of children and teens (ages 0 to 19). For the population to naturally replace itself, the total fertility rate (TFR) needs to be about 2.1 children per woman. But since 2017, Alaska’s TFR has been below that level, and it’s not expected to rise. Although Alaska’s TFR is still higher than the national average, the combination of fewer births and more deaths - due to a growing senior population - is driving the projected population decline across communities, including Ketchikan.

**Table 1. Southeast Region Average Annual Projected Components of Population Change, 2023-2050 (ADOLWD)**

Time Period	Births	Deaths	Net Migration	Population Change	Growth Rate
2023-2025	624	648	-85	-108	-0.2percent
2025-2030	604	692	-254	-342	-0.5percent
2030-2035	582	758	-252	-428	-0.6percent
2035-2040	566	812	-240	-486	-0.7percent
2040-2045	530	838	-226	-534	-0.8percent
2045-2050	476	818	-218	-560	-0.9percent

Source: ADOLWD

**Table 1** highlights the components of population change in Southeast Alaska. The main driver of death rates is the ratio of senior citizens to the overall population, and Alaska’s population is generally aging over the projected period which will likely increase death rates across the state.

**Table 2. Ketchikan Gateway Borough Components of Population Change, 2013–2023**

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Population	13,919	13,998	13,957	13,919	13,974	14,026	14,004	13,948	13,946	13,937	13,776
percent Growth	0.18percent	0.57percent	0.29percent	0.27percent	0.39percent	0.37percent	0.16percent	0.53percent	0.06percent	0.06percent	1.16percent
Natural Increase	89	88	64	79	44	54	38	7	4	43	-25
Net Migration	-114	-9	-105	-117	11	-2	-60	-63	-6	-52	-136

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

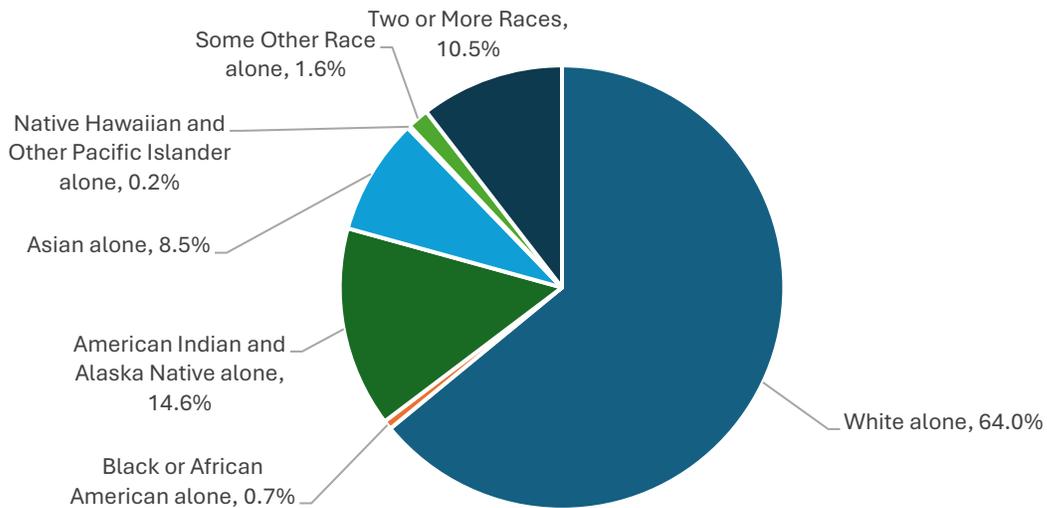
**Table 2. Ketchikan Gateway Borough Average Annual Projected Components of Population Change, 2023-2050 (ADOLWD)**

Time Period	Births	Deaths	Net Migration	Population Change	Growth Rate
2023-2025	121	117	-30	-26	-0.2percent
2025-2030	116	128	-71	-83	-0.6percent
2030-2035	110	139	-68	-97	-0.8percent
2035-2040	102	147	-61	-106	-0.9percent
2040-2045	90	151	-56	-117	-1.0percent
2045-2050	75	148	-51	-124	-1.1percent

Source: ADOLWD

**Tables 2 and 3** shows projected population changes for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. Like the rest of Southeast Alaska, Ketchikan is expected to see low birth rates and a growing number of deaths as the population ages. The most uncertain part of these projections is net migration, since Alaska has experienced large shifts in the number of people moving in and out. Job opportunities are a major factor in migration trends, but unemployment and how many people are active in the workforce also play a role.

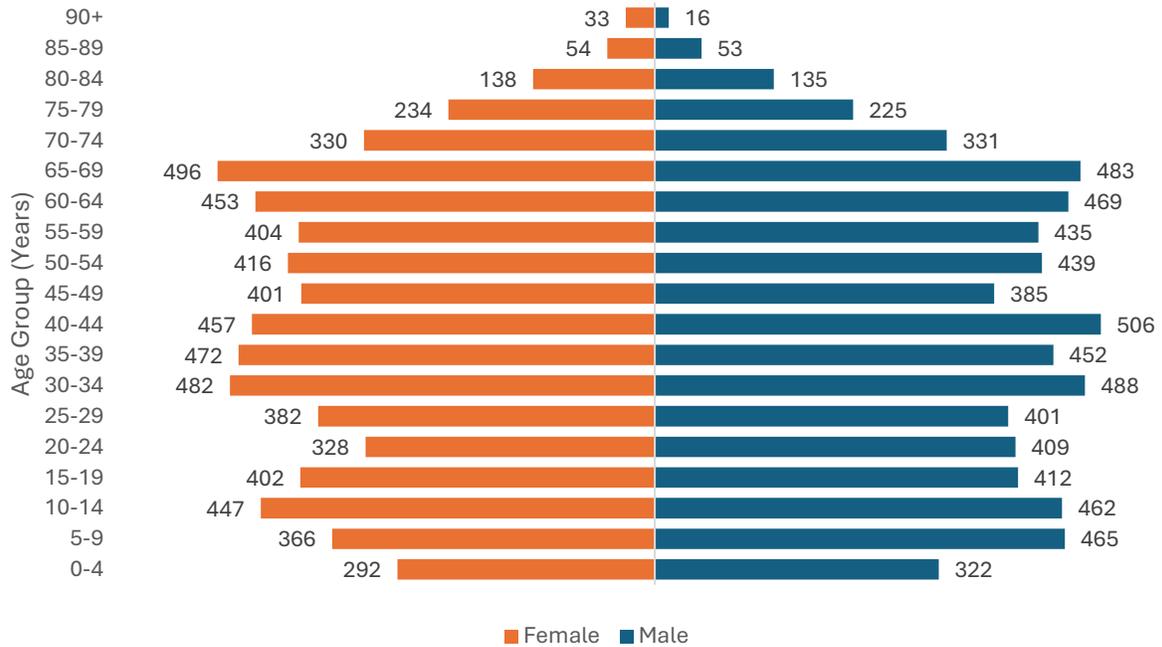
**Figure 2. Race of Ketchikan Gateway Borough Population, 2022 (5-Year Average)**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 2** illustrates that the majority of people in the borough identify as white, making up 64 percent of the population - a slightly higher percentage than the state overall, where 61 percent identify as white alone. Around 90 percent of the borough's population identifies as one race, while about 10 percent identify as two or more races. Approximately 15 percent of residents identify as American Indian or Alaska Native alone, which is similar to the statewide proportion. About 9 percent of the Ketchikan population identifies as Asian alone.

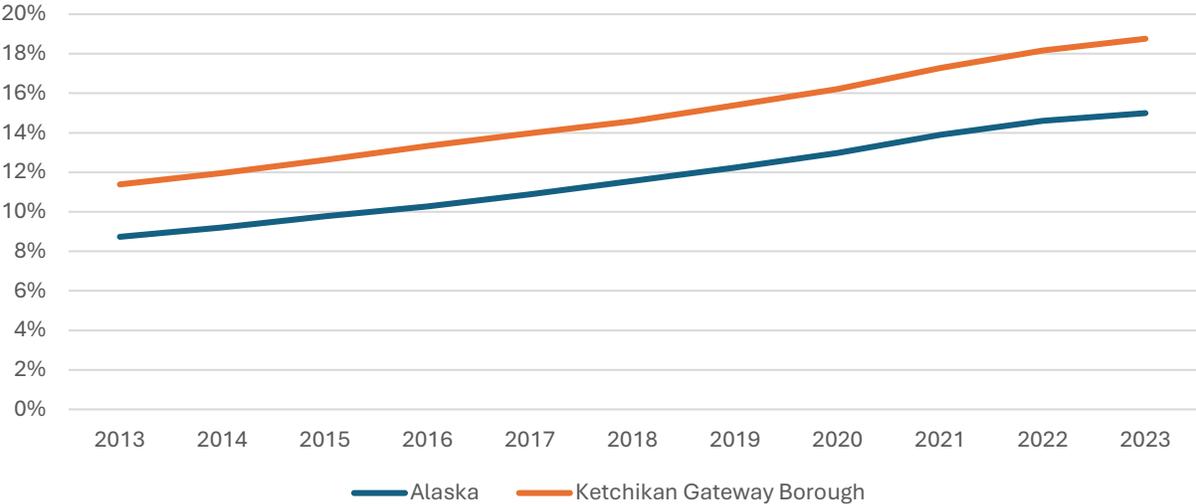
**Figure 3. Age and Sex of Ketchikan Gateway Borough Population, July 2023 Estimate**



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

**Figure 3** shows the age and gender breakdown of Ketchikan Gateway Borough residents as of July 2023. The median age in the KGB is 40.8 years, which is older than the statewide median of 36.5 years. Like the rest of Alaska, there are slightly more men than women in the borough. The sex ratio is 104.6, meaning there are about 105 men for every 100 women.

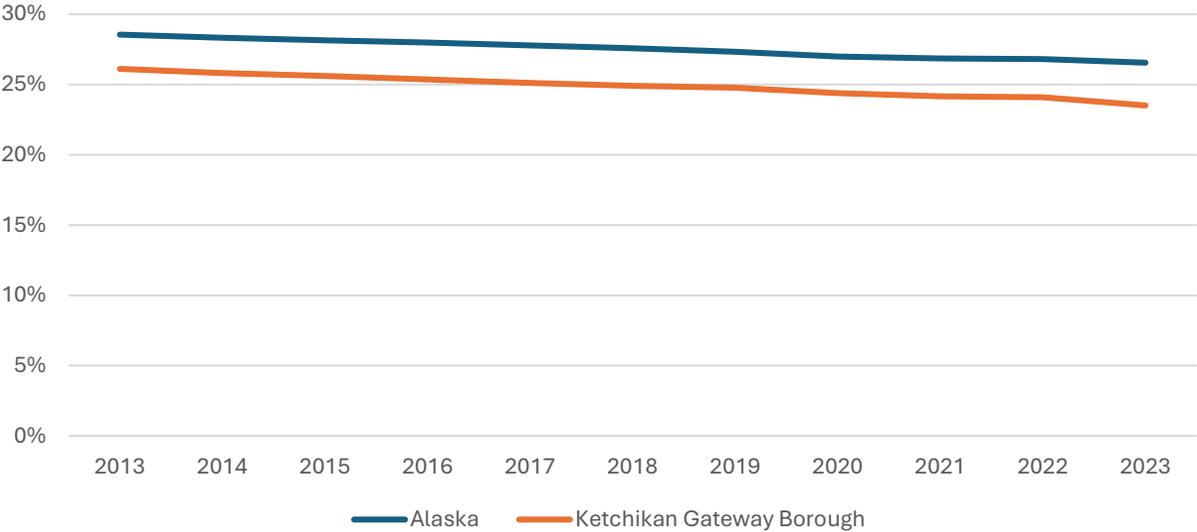
**Figure 4. Senior Population (65+) Change Over Time in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and Alaska, 2013–2023**



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

**Figure 4** shows that the Ketchikan Gateway Borough has a large and growing senior population. Over the past 10 years, the senior population in the borough has steadily increased, following a similar trend seen across Alaska. However, seniors have consistently made up a larger share of the population in the borough compared to the state, largely due to the aging of the baby boomer generation.

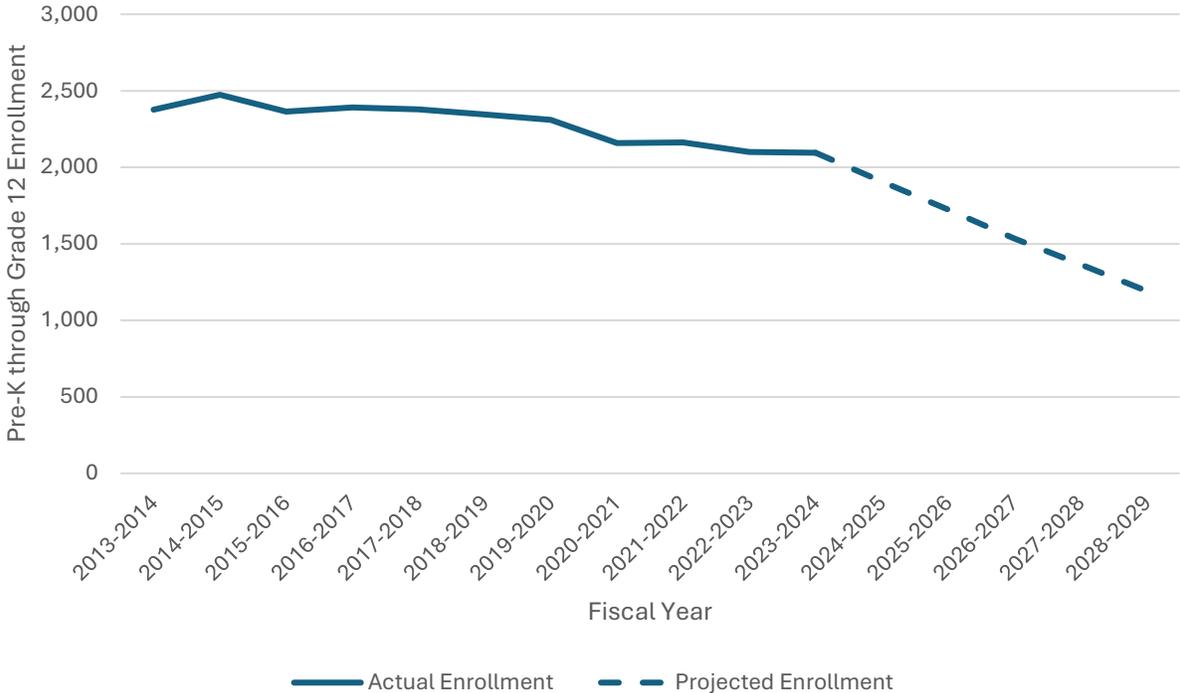
**Figure 5. Youth Population (Under 19) Change Over Time in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and Alaska, 2013–2023**



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

**Figure 5** shows how the youth population (under age 19) has changed over time in both the borough and the state of Alaska. In 2023, youth made up 24 percent of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough’s population, compared to 27 percent for Alaska overall. From 2013 to 2023, the share of youth in both the borough and the state declined by 2 percent. This drop is likely due to lower birth rates and an aging population, with more adults past childbearing age. Throughout this period, the borough has consistently had a slightly smaller proportion of youth than the state. Data from the Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) also indicate that people aged 15 to 24 are the most likely to move away, typically in pursuit of college or employment opportunities elsewhere.

**Figure 6. Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District Enrollment, Pre-Kindergarten to 12th Grade, 2013–2014 School Year to 2028–2029 School Year**



Source: Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District

**Figure 6** shows student enrollment in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District (KGBSD) from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade over the past 10 years, along with projected enrollment through the 2028-2029 school year. Enrollment peaked in 2014-2015 with 2,474 students but has steadily declined since then. By the 2023-2024 school year, enrollment had dropped to 2,095 students, the lowest point in the last decade. A noticeable decline occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and enrollment has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. The pandemic may have worsened trends that were already causing enrollment to fall, such as declining birth rates and a shrinking youth population. Looking ahead, KGBSD projects a significant decrease in student numbers through the 2028-2029 school year.

# Our Economy

## *Ketchikan's Economy and Who Keeps It Running*

Ketchikan's economy is shaped by its location and seasons. The summer months bring in cruise ships, tourists, and commercial fishing activity, while the winters tend to be quieter and reliant on year-round services. In 2023, about 6,883 people were in the borough's labor force, with employment spread across many sectors. The biggest employers are government (26 percent of jobs), trade and transportation (24 percent), leisure and hospitality (14 percent), and education and health services (14 percent).

Some of these jobs, especially in construction and manufacturing, come with high wages. But others, like those in food service or tourism, tend to pay less. One important trend: the labor force has been shrinking over time. This is partly because fewer young people are staying or moving to Ketchikan, and partly because the population is aging and retiring.

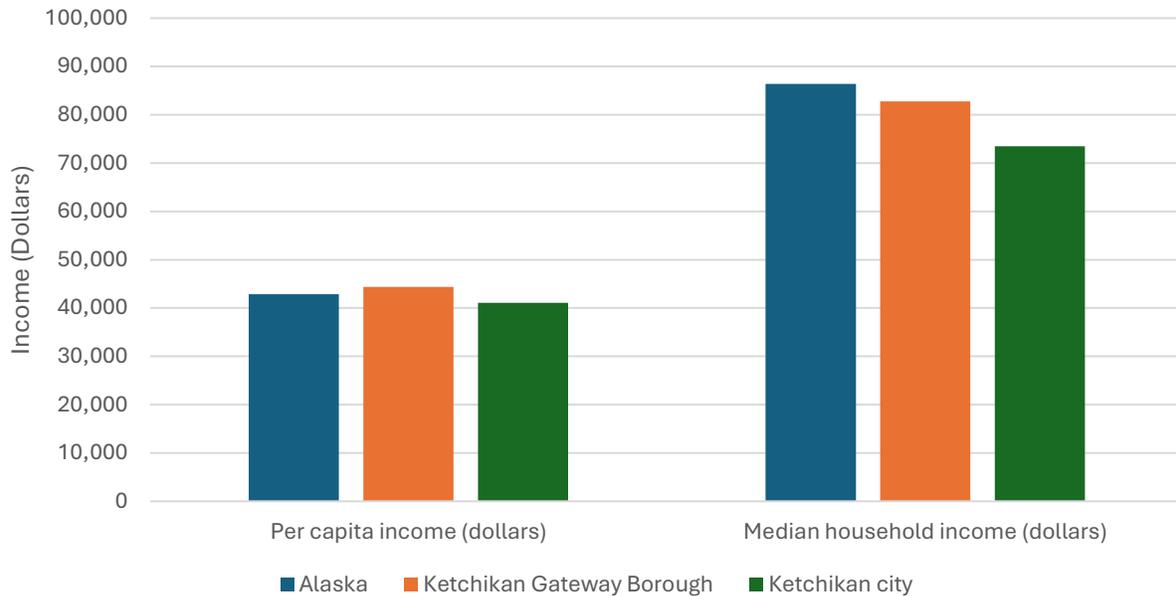
## *Income, Housing, and the Cost of Living*

Ketchikan residents earn about as much as Alaskans elsewhere with a median household income in the borough around \$86,000. However, residents still find it challenging to keep up with a high cost of living. About two-thirds of residents own their homes, and the average home value is \$379,000. That's more expensive than the state average, but still lower than in places like Sitka or Juneau.

Even though Ketchikan's housing vacancy rate is modest at 16 percent, the housing market is still challenging. Many houses are older or located away from the city center and services. Renters in Ketchikan are more likely than many other Southeast Alaska communities to be 'cost burdened,' meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

## Household Income

**Figure 7. Income in Ketchikan, Ketchikan Gateway Borough, and Alaska, (2018–2022 5-Year Average)**



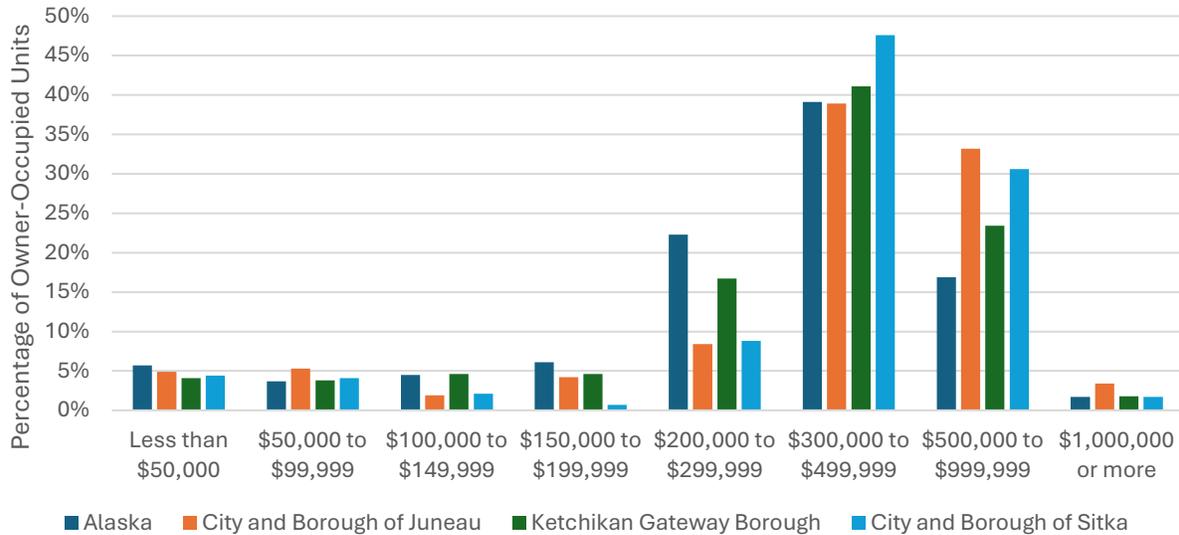
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

**Figure 7** compares income levels in the borough, the City of Ketchikan, and Alaska as a whole. Residents of the borough earn incomes similar to the statewide average in Alaska. Per capita income in the borough is slightly higher than the state average, while median household income is slightly lower - falling within \$2,000 and \$5,000 of Alaska's figures, respectively. One possible reason for this is that households in Ketchikan tend to be smaller, which may mean fewer income earners per household. Also, per capita income reflects the average income, which can be skewed by very high or very low earners, while median household income reflects the middle point.

Between 2013 and 2022, Ketchikan saw the largest inflation-adjusted gains in both per capita and household income, outpacing the growth seen statewide.

## Housing

**Figure 8. Value of Owner-Occupied Units in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough and Comparison Communities, 2019–2023 5-Year Estimate**

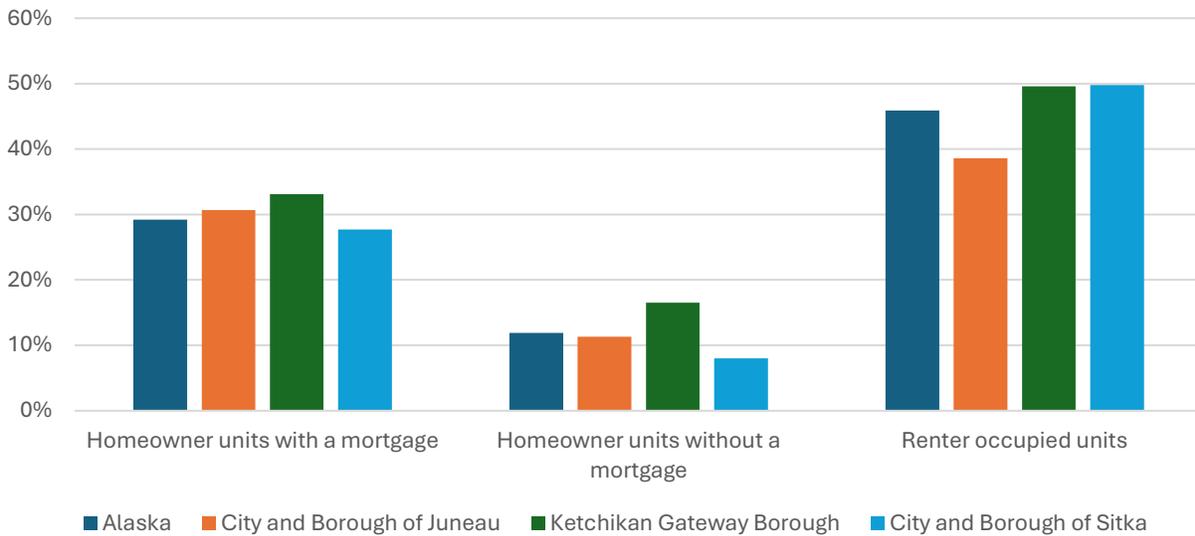


Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

**Figure 8** compares home values across comparison communities. In the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, about 16 percent of housing units are vacant, a rate similar to Sitka and slightly below the statewide vacancy rate of 18 percent. Juneau has the lowest vacancy rate among comparison communities at just 7 percent.

Homeownership rates are consistent across communities, with 62 percent to 67 percent of residents owning their homes, including in Ketchikan. From 2019 to 2023, the median value of owner-occupied homes in the borough was \$379,000. This is higher than the statewide median of \$333,300 but lower than Juneau (\$432,500) and Sitka (\$442,100).

**Figure 2. Share of Cost-Burdened Households by Ownership Type, 2019–2023 5-Year Estimate**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

**Figure 9** shows the percentage of cost-burdened households by ownership type. The median monthly cost for homeowners with a mortgage in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough is \$2,116, the lowest among the comparison communities. Sitka has the highest median monthly owner cost at \$2,539. For homeowners without a mortgage, monthly costs are much lower in all areas, ranging from \$674 in Alaska to \$843 in Juneau.

Rental costs are more consistent across communities, with median rents ranging from \$1,350 in Sitka to \$1,462 in Juneau.

To understand housing affordability, it’s helpful to look at housing costs as a percentage of household income. If a household spends more than 30 percent of its income on rent or mortgage costs, it is considered "cost burdened." Renters are more likely to be cost burdened than homeowners. However, in the borough, a slightly higher share of homeowners, regardless of whether they have a mortgage, are cost burdened compared to homeowners in other communities.

## Employment & Workforce

In 2023, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough's labor force included 6,883 people, with a labor force participation rate of about 60 percent. While the size of the labor force changes from year to year, it has slowly declined over time, from 7,956 people in 2005 to 6,883 in 2023. This drop is likely due to a combination of factors, including population decline and an aging workforce.

Using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), the top employment sectors in Ketchikan are:

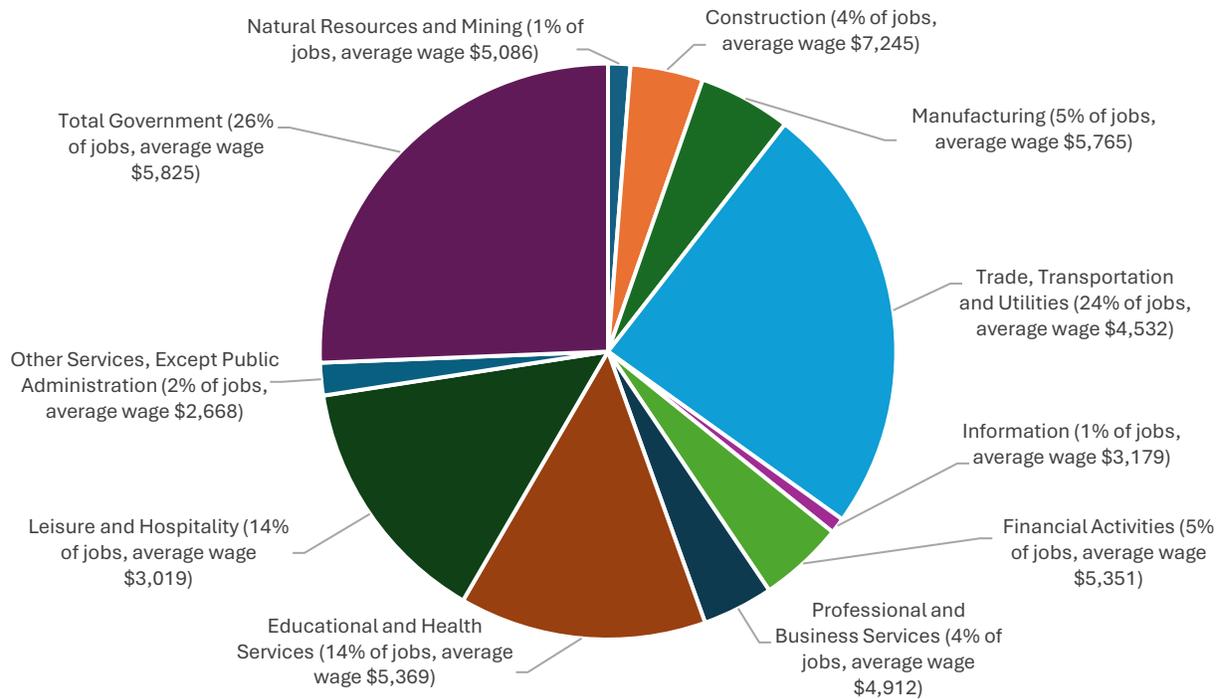
- Government (26 percent of all jobs)
- Trade, transportation, and utilities (24 percent)
- Leisure and hospitality (14 percent)
- Education and health services (14 percent)

Compared to 2013, government jobs have slightly declined (from 28 percent), while other sectors, especially leisure and hospitality, have grown.

The average monthly wage across all sectors is \$4,964. This translates to about \$69,900 annually for a full-time worker in government. The highest-paying sectors in the borough are construction (\$7,245/month), government (\$5,825/month), and manufacturing (\$5,765/month).

It's important to note that commercial fishing, which is a significant part of the local economy, is often undercounted in employment data because most fishermen are self-employed or work as independent contractors rather than traditional employees.

**Figure 10. Percentage of Ketchikan Gateway Borough Workforce by Sector and Monthly Wages, 2023**



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

**Figure 10** gives a detailed look at employment sectors and wages in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. Like much of Alaska, Ketchikan has a seasonal economy - unemployment is typically lowest in the summer and highest in the winter. From 2022 to 2024, unemployment rates in both Ketchikan and Alaska were lower than they had been in the previous decade. In 2023, the annual unemployment rate was 3.7 percent in Ketchikan and 4.2 percent statewide, the lowest rates recorded since 1990.

### Government Sector

As of 2023, government jobs make up 26 percent of all employment in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, and average wages in this sector are higher than the overall average across all sectors.

Average monthly wages by government level:

- Local government: \$5,283
- State government: \$6,050
- Federal government: \$8,149

Local government provides most government jobs at about 62 percent of the total. The City of Ketchikan is the largest local government employer, estimated to have between 250 and 499 employees.

State government makes up 27 percent of government jobs in the borough. The Ketchikan Pioneer Home is the largest state employer, with 50-99 employees. Several other state agencies employ between 20 and 49 people each.

Federal government accounts for the remaining 11 percent of government jobs. The U.S. Forest Service is the largest federal employer in the borough, with 50-99 employees.

### *Trade, Transportation, and Utilities*

This sector makes up 24 percent of the jobs in the borough. Wages vary within the sector and are generally just below the average for all jobs.

**Retail trade** is the largest part of the sector, accounting for 53 percent of jobs.

- Average monthly wage: \$3,387
- Largest employers: Safeway and Tongass Trading Co. (50-99 employees each)

**Transportation and warehousing** makes up 41 percent of jobs in this sector.

- Average monthly wage: \$5,801 (above the KGB average)
- Largest employers: Boyer Towing Inc. and Discover Alaska Tours (50-99 employees each)

**Wholesale trade and utilities** make up the remaining 6 percent.

- Individual wage data is not available due to the small number of employers.
- The largest employer is Trident Seafoods, with 250-499 employees. This high number reflects seasonal employment that is averaged over the year.

### *Leisure and Hospitality*

Leisure and hospitality account for 14 percent of jobs in the borough. Wages in this sector are lower than the borough-wide average.

**Accommodation and food services** make up 78 percent of jobs in this sector.

- Average monthly wage: \$3,075
- The largest employers categorized in this section is: McDonald’s and The Landing Hotel (50-99 employees each)

**Arts, entertainment, and recreation** make up the remaining 22 percent.

- Wages are also below the borough average.
- The largest employer categorized in this sector is The Great Alaskan Lumberjack Show, with 20-49 employees.

### *Educational and Health Services*

Nearly all jobs in this sector – 98 percent - are in health care and social assistance, with wages generally higher than the borough-wide average.

- The largest employer in this category is PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center, which employs between 250 and 499 people.

The remaining 2 percent of jobs are in educational services, which include positions at local schools and the University of Alaska Southeast—the primary employers in this category.

### *Commercial Fishing*

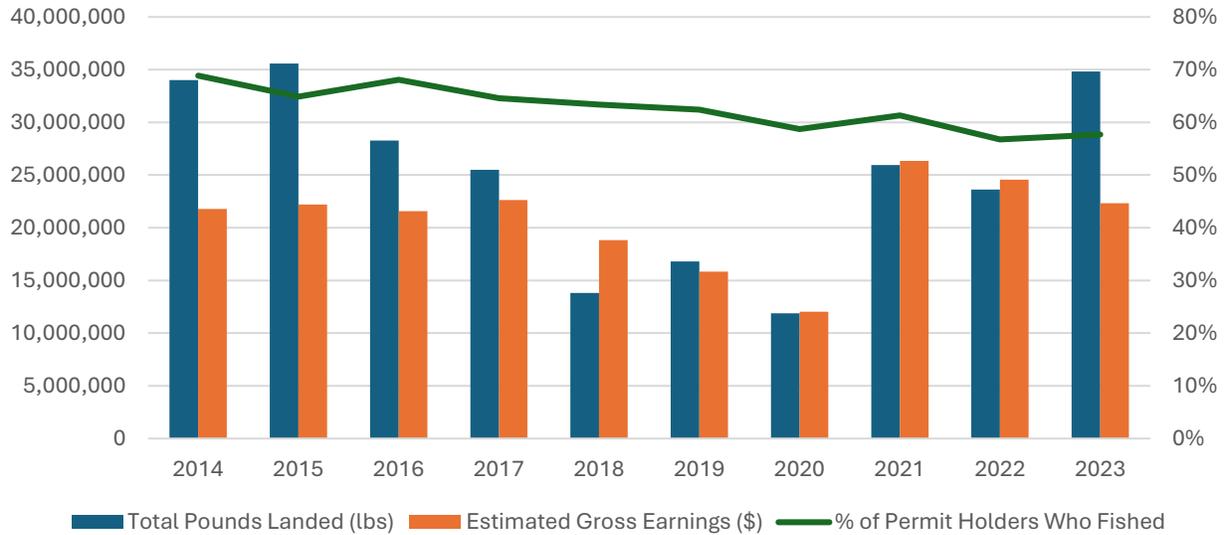
Commercial fishing is a major industry in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. Salmon fisheries (all gear and permit types) is the largest contributor, making up 85 percent of the total pounds landed and 55 percent of total earnings across all fisheries.

Over the past decade, the highest number of active commercial fishermen was in 2016, with 243 participants. The number of permit holders has varied but declined by about 4 percent in 2020 and has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. In 2023, there were about 7 percent fewer permit holders than in 2014. Additionally, the percentage of permit holders who fished dropped from 69 percent in 2014 to 58 percent in 2023. Despite this, total pounds landed and gross earnings in 2023 were similar to those in 2014.

Seafood processing is also a key part of the commercial fishing economy in Ketchikan. Trident Seafoods is one of the borough’s largest employers in this sector. According to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, an estimated 582 seafood processing workers were employed in the borough in 2023. However, about 75 percent of

these workers were non-residents. Total wages paid in seafood processing were \$15.7 million, with \$6.4 million going to local residents.

**Figure 11. Commercial Fishing Participation and Earnings, (2014–2023)**



Source: Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission and Northern Economics analysis

**Figure 11** shows commercial fishing participation and earnings from 2014 to 2023. In 2023, KGB residents landed nearly 35 million pounds of fish, with estimated gross earnings of \$22.3 million. That year, 188 residents held 282 fishing permits.

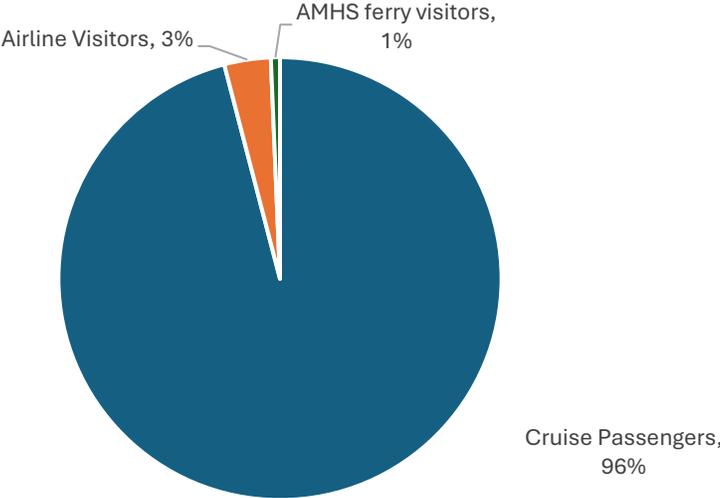
### Tourism

Tourism is a major part of the Ketchikan economy, though it spans multiple sectors rather than being its own category. It includes:

- **Trade, transportation, and utilities** (e.g., cruises, retail shops, and local tours)
- **Professional and business services** (e.g., travel agencies, tour operators, event planners)
- **Leisure and hospitality** (e.g., recreation, entertainment, lodging, restaurants)

Ketchikan is the tourism hub of the borough and is a key stop on Alaska’s cruise ship circuit. It features four berths for large cruise ships downtown and two more at the Mill at Ward Cove, located just north of the city. Ships docking at Ward Cove are still counted in Ketchikan’s overall cruise traffic.

**Figure 12. Share of Total Ketchikan Visitors by Traveler Type, 2018**



Source: Visit Ketchikan

**Figure 12** shows the share of total visitors by traveler type for Ketchikan in 2018. As seen in the figure, cruise ship passengers are the primary traveler type visiting Ketchikan by a substantial margin.

**Visitor Trends and Cruise Tourism**

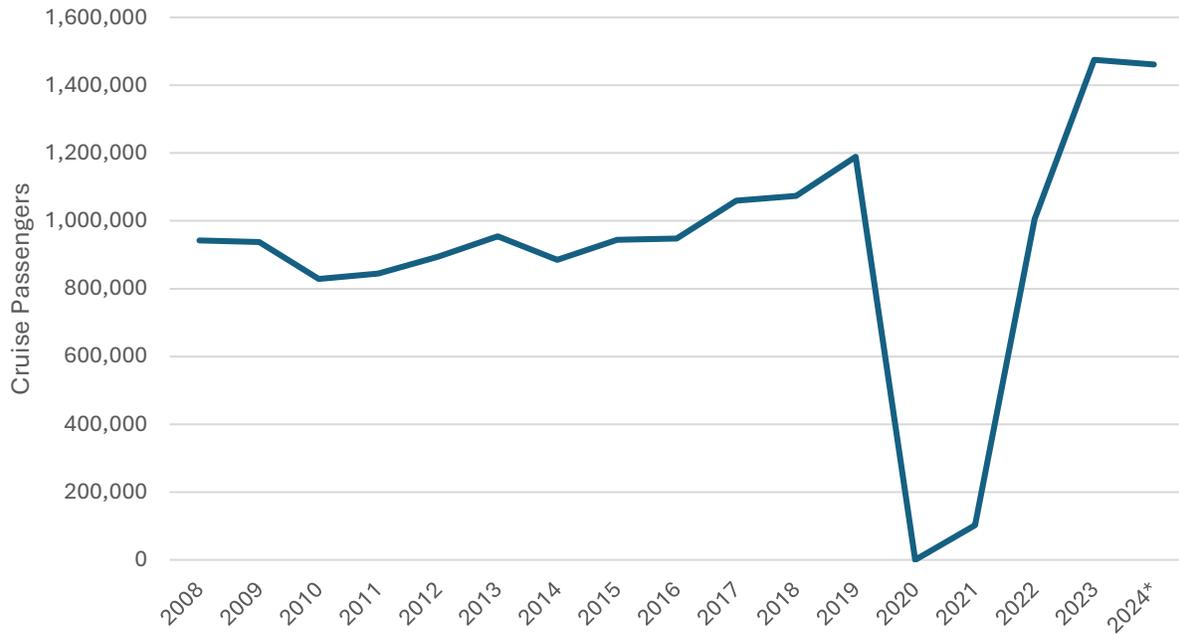
According to the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA), Ketchikan is the second most visited community in Alaska, with 47 percent of visitors stopping there—just behind Juneau at 49 percent. In fact, 100 percent of cruise ship travelers surveyed visited Ketchikan, making it a key entry point into the state.

In 2018, the most recent year with complete data across all travel types:

- Cruise ship passengers made up the vast majority of visitors
- Airline passengers accounted for just 3 percent
- Alaska Marine Highway System ferry riders made up 1 percent

In 2023, Ketchikan hosted 674 cruise ship calls, just behind Juneau, which had over 700. Since 2017 (except during the pandemic), Ketchikan has welcomed over 1 million cruise passengers per year. The 2023 season was a record-breaking year, with nearly 1.5 million cruise passengers. Projections suggested another strong season in 2024.

**Figure 133. Annual Cruise Ship Passengers Arriving in Ketchikan, 2008-2024**



*\*Note: 2024 has an asterisk because the data used for this figure are the projected passengers for 2024, however, the actual numbers have not been published yet.*

*Source: Visit Ketchikan*

**Figure 13** shows the combined number of cruise ship passengers arriving in Ketchikan and Ward Cove (since opening in 2021) each year from 2008 through 2023, and the projected visitors for 2024.

## Cruise Passenger Spending

ATIA provides insights into cruise passenger behavior:

- Most cruise travelers (67 percent) come with a partner; others travel with children, friends, or extended family.
- The average party size is 2.4 people, and they spend an average of \$401 per day while in port.
- Spending breakdown per party:
  - Shopping: \$104
  - Food and dining: \$102
  - Outdoor recreation: \$81
  - Transportation and gas: \$47
  - Lodging: \$28 (paid to the cruise line)

Using these averages, cruise visitors spent an estimated \$180 million in Ketchikan in 2023, directly supporting local businesses.

**Table 3. Estimated Amount Spent by Cruise Passengers in Ketchikan in 2023**

Spending by Type	Amount Spent
Shopping	\$63,914,283.30
Food and Dining	\$62,685,162.50
Outdoor Recreation	\$24,889,696.90
Transportation and Gas	\$28,884,339.60
<b>Total 2023 Cruise Visitor Spend</b>	<b>\$180,373,482.30</b>

Source: Alaska Travel Industry Association, Visit Ketchikan, and Northern Economics analysis

Table 2 shows the estimated amount spent by cruise ship passengers in Ketchikan in 2023 by spending category and total spending amount. In 2023, cruise passengers spent an estimated \$180 million in Ketchikan supporting local businesses. Our assumptions in generating the table were as follows:

- Using the reported number of visitors in 2023 and the average cruise party size of 2.4, there are approximately 614,560 parties that visited Ketchikan in 2023.
- Lodging costs were paid to the cruise line.
- Half of the outdoor recreation costs were paid to cruise ship-arranged activities.
- Each party spent one day in Ketchikan.
- Transportation related costs were spent on local taxis and rideshares, not on the cruise line.
- Food and drink expenses were those spent locally while off the ship for the day.

## Nonprofits in the Ketchikan Community

Nonprofits in Alaska communities engage in various sectors and they offer a wide variety of essential services like early childcare, housing, food security, and firefighting. They also partner with and contribute to the vitality of commercial enterprises. Nonprofits contribute to both employment and community services that are otherwise limited in government functions. According to the 2024 “Alaska's Nonprofit Sector; Generating Economic Impact” report from The Foraker Group, 134 nonprofit organizations in Ketchikan accounted for 7 percent of total employment and 5 percent in total wages.

The Ketchikan arts and culture sector illustrates these impacts. The Ketchikan Area Arts and Humanities Council estimates that approximately 40,000 people participated in nonprofit arts programming and events during the FY25 season, (not including activities hosted by museums, libraries, Tribal organizations or private businesses, like galleries.) Beyond the direct economic contributions of event spending and employment, these activities draw visitors, support local businesses, and expand opportunities for residents. Combined with the broader roles of nonprofits in housing, food security, childcare, and volunteer-driven services, the sector represents a steady but sometimes hard-to-measure component of Ketchikan’s overall economic system.

# Literature Review

For Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update

*October 13, 2025 (updated)*

*Researched and prepared by*



## Purpose

This plan review was conducted as part of the Background Research and Analysis Task for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough (“KGB”) Comprehensive Plan Update. Documents reviewed were developed by local, borough, and state entities and will serve to inform the Comprehensive Plan Update alongside public outreach, mapping, and other data collection efforts.

This Plan and Document Review primarily focuses on key takeaways from each plan. These will aid in the development of the comprehensive plan by allowing the project team to review the key summaries to understand if that document should be reviewed in full to assist in developing key focus areas of the comprehensive plan.

### **A few notes about this plan and document review:**

- Unless otherwise noted, each plan in the table below was reviewed. Once recommended policies are drafted for the comprehensive plan, those will then be checked against the entire plans and documents for consistency, alignment, or conflicts.
- Some of the plans are relevant and detailed to the point that their entire contents must be considered in drafting recommended policy updates for the comprehensive plan. For example, only a general overview of the 2023 Ketchikan Tourism Strategy was included here because so much of this plan is relevant in drafting the comprehensive plan.
- This review focuses on plans published after the 2010-2020 Comprehensive Plan. A separate review of the 2010-2020 Comprehensive Plan is being conducted.
- Some passages under “Key Takeaways” are direct or indirect language from the plan and cited with page number. Other passages are a summary of findings and may not have a page number associated with them.

## Documents Reviewed

Additional documents and research not listed here may have been referenced in the process and cited in the final comprehensive plan. Documents that can be accessed are online hyperlinked in blue (*hyperlinks were active and accurate as of October 13, 2025.*)

<b>Title (Source)</b>	<b>Author/Source</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>
<a href="#">Alaska 2022-2023 Visitor Profile Report</a>	Alaska Travel Industry Assoc.	February 2025
<a href="#">DRAFT Ketchikan Gateway Borough Master Trails Plan</a> *	KGB	January 2025
<a href="#">Senior Snapshot 2024</a>	Alaska Commission on Aging	2024
<a href="#">2024 – 2027 State Transportation Improvement Plan</a> (Amendment #1 as approved)	DOT&PF	August 2024
<a href="#">Southeast Alaska by the Numbers 2024</a>	Southeast Conference	September 2024

<b>Title (Source)</b>	<b>Author/Source</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>
<a href="#"><u>Economic Impact of USDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investment Spending</u></a>	Southeast Conference	July 2024
<a href="#"><u>Southeast Alaska Business Climate Survey 2024</u></a>	Southeast Conference	May 2024
<a href="#"><u>Southeast Alaska 2025 Economic Plan</u></a> (2024 Update)	Southeast Conference	April 2024
<a href="#"><u>Multi-Jurisdictional Emergency Operations Plan</u></a>	Greater Ketchikan Area (KGB, CoK, City of Saxman [CoS])	April 2024
<a href="#"><u>Housing Market Analysis for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough</u></a> (and other housing presentations to the Assembly, studies & reports)	Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB)	March 2024
<a href="#"><u>Ketchikan Cruise Ship Rate Study</u></a> *	CoK	January 2024
<a href="#"><u>FY2024-2028 Strategic Plan Update No. 1</u></a> (Update in progress)	Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB)	2024
<a href="#"><u>2024 - 2028 Ketchikan Public Utilities Capital Improvement Program</u></a>	City of Ketchikan (CoK)	2024 Budget
<a href="#"><u>Ketchikan Gateway Borough FY2024 – 2028 Strategic Plan</u></a>	KGB	June 2023
<a href="#"><u>Parks and Playground Master Plan</u></a>	KGB Public Works Dept.	Feb 2023
<a href="#"><u>2023 Hopkins Alley/Newtown: A Framework for Revitalization</u></a>	KGB Department of Planning and Community Development	Sept 2023
<a href="#"><u>Policy Issues and Capital Priority Projects FY2025</u></a>	Community of Ketchikan (KGB, CoK, (CoS))	Sept 2023
<a href="#"><u>Ketchikan Tourism Strategy</u></a>	KGB Department of Planning and Community Development	2023
<a href="#"><u>Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan</u></a>	State of Alaska	January 2023
<a href="#"><u>2022 – 2026 General Government Capital Improvement Program</u></a>	CoK	2022 Budget
<a href="#"><u>Clam Cove Hamlet Neighborhood Plan</u></a>	KGB Department of Planning and Community Development	Aug 2022
<a href="#"><u>Ketchikan Coordinated Transportation Plan</u></a>	KGB Transit Department	2021 Update
<a href="#"><u>Ketchikan Terminal Area Plan Preferred Terminal Concept</u></a>	KGB International Airport	July 2020
<a href="#"><u>Greater Ketchikan Area Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan</u></a> *	Community of Ketchikan (KGB, CoK, (CoS))	October 2016

\*Not included in Individual Plan Summaries and Key Takeaways Section

# Individual Plan Summaries and Key Takeaways

## *Alaska 2022-2023 Visitor Profile Report (2023)*

This report, created by the Alaska Travel Industry Association, summarizes data regarding tourism in Alaska for the summer 2022 and winter 2022-23 seasons. This includes tourist demographics, trip purpose and details, and tourist satisfaction.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Ketchikan is the second most visited area in the state, behind Juneau. (Pg. 32)
- Ketchikan receives 47% of all visitors to the state. (Pg. 33)

## *2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (2024)*

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) is the State of Alaska's four-year funding plan for transportation projects.

### **Key Takeaways**

*(Relevant Ketchikan items in the STIP)*

- Ketchikan Ferry Terminal Improvements [Stage 2]: This project will remedy structural and operational deficiencies at the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) Ketchikan Ferry Terminal. This project will replace and refurbish existing vessel mooring and berthing structures, provide a new mooring dolphin structure and construct upland access and terminal building improvements. (pg. 88)
- Revilla New Ferry Berth and Upland Improvements: Construct new ferry terminal berthing facility for the airport ferry in Ketchikan. Reconstruct the existing airport ferry terminal on Revilla Island. (Pg. 121)
- Herring Cove Bridge Rehabilitation: Replace the Herring Cove Bridge #253 in Ketchikan to include pedestrian facilities and improve the intersection of South Tongass and Powerhouse Road and the intersection of South Tongass and Wood Road. (Pg. 78)
- Sayles and Gorge Street Viaduct Improvements: This viaduct improvement in Ketchikan is focused on the improvement of the existing 'L' shaped trestle at the intersection of Sayles and Gorge Streets. This will involve replacing the trestle with a new 'L' shaped concrete deck bridge, underpinned by a steel frame substructure and associated concrete supports. Improvements will extend to the surrounding area, with a new pedestrian staircase constructed from near the Sayles/Gorge intersection to Water Street below. Additional activities include replacing utilities, modifying drainage, altering adjacent retaining walls, and enhancing other pedestrian facilities as required. (Pg. 132)
- South Tongass Ferry Terminal: The terminal construction project, located in Saxman along South Tongass, is designed to enhance the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS). The aim is to construct a new ferry terminal for the M/V Lituya, which operates between Metlakatla and Ketchikan. By shortening the vessel's route, the terminal

will facilitate more frequent service, thus improving connectivity and efficiency. This project is not expected to have new activity in 2024-2027 but is included in the 2024-2027 STIP to obligate funds on advance construction. (Pg. 146)

- South Tongass Highway and Water Street Viaduct Improvements: Rehabilitate pavement and make improvements to the Tongass Avenue and Water Street Viaduct structures (Bridges #997 and #797) and the South Tongass Highway Tunnel Bridge #1130 in Ketchikan. This project will address the substructure, and rehabilitate existing roadways, ADA facilities, drainage facilities, and traffic appurtenances. (Pg. 147)
- South Tongass Highway Deermount to Saxman Reconstruction: Reconstruct South Tongass Highway in Ketchikan from Deermount Street to Saxman. Reconstruct bicycle/pedestrian facilities, parking, drainage improvements, and roadside hardware. (Pg. 150)
- South Tongass Highway Hoadley Creek Bridge Replacement: Replace Hoadley Creek Bridge #725 on South Tongass Highway in Ketchikan. (Pg. 151)
- South Tongass Highway Improvements: Resurface pavement and construct improvements along South Tongass Highway between Hoadley Creek Bridge and the Tongass Avenue Viaduct in the vicinity of Elliot Street. (Pg. 152)
- South Tongass Highway Saxman to Surf Street Reconstruction: Reconstruct South Tongass Highway in Ketchikan from Saxman to Surf Street. Construct bicycle/pedestrian facilities, parking, drainage improvements and roadside hardware. (Pg. 153)
- Spruce Mill Promenade: Construct a pedestrian walkway that will connect to existing pathways on either end of The Great Alaskan Lumberjack Show Pavilion. Work includes driven steel pipe pile foundations for a concrete retaining wall, shot-rock borrow backfill with riprap erosion protection along the base of the wall, and base course supporting a timber promenade decking surface - with steel safety handrailing along the seaward edge of the walkway. Also includes various landscaping features and electrical/lighting improvements. This project was selected in the 2023 DOT&PF Transportation Alternatives Program solicitation. (Pg. 154)
- Ward Creek Bridge Replacement: Replace the existing Ward Creek Bridge #747 in Ketchikan. Work will also include associated approach roadway reconstruction, embankment and riprap repair, and new approach guardrail. (Pg. 176)

## *Southeast Alaska by the Numbers 2024*

"Southeast by the Numbers" is an annual report produced by the Southeast Conference that provides an in-depth economic overview of Southeast Alaska, including key statistics and trends in areas like jobs, wages, tourism, fishing, and more.

## Key Takeaways

- The average value of a single-family home for Ketchikan (July 2024 values): \$427,383 (Pg. 6)
- Rental Housing: The average adjusted rent in Southeast Alaska was \$1,392 in 2023, a 6.8% increase over 2022; Ketchikan had the highest increase in rent of Southeast community's researched at an increase of 9.4%. (Pg. 6)
- Ketchikan Gateway Borough received the second highest amount of project funding for Southeast communities through the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act at \$18.2 million. (Pg. 7)
- K-12 enrollment was down by 1% (across Southeast Alaska), as school numbers fell by 122 students in 2022. Losses were experienced across the region, but Ketchikan elementary student declines accounted for more than half of the total reduction (-67). (Pg. 15)

## *Economic Impact of USDA Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy Investment Spending*

This economic impact analysis of the USDA's Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS) investment funding in calendar year 2023 was performed by Southeast Conference.

## Key Takeaways

- SASS investment projects in Ketchikan reporting SASS spending in 2023: Regional Biomass Strategy and Pellet Mill. (Pg.10)
- In 2023, the Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition helped support several tribal- and community-led stewardship crews around the region. SASS funding played a major role in supporting several of these crews. Alternative funding also played a role. Work in 2023 included supporting a five-person indigenous-led natural resource stewardship crew in partnership with the Ketchikan Indian Community and Ketchikan Ranger District. Work included stream restoration, riparian thinning, and watershed assessment. (Pg. 21)
- In February 2023, Spruce Root secured a contract with Red Hummingbird Media Corporation to facilitate stakeholder collaboration around community forests and economic opportunities on Prince of Wales Island, including stakeholders from Ketchikan. (Pg. 21)

## *Southeast Alaska Business Climate Survey 2024*

Southeast Conference, in partnership with organizations across the region, conducts an annual Southeast Alaska Business Climate Survey. Rain Coast Data designs and conducts the business confidence analysis. A total of 440 Southeast Alaska business owners and top managers, representing a combined staff of approximately 11,000 workers, responded to the survey in April 2024.

## Key Takeaways

- Housing, Workforce, Transportation Challenges: Southeast business leaders continue to identify housing as the top obstacle to economic development and critical for creating a vibrant business climate in the region, with 61% of business leaders saying it is critically important to focus on housing over the next five years. Half of regional business leaders say that finding better ways to attract and retain workforce-aged residents to the region is critically important. This is most strongly expressed by Juneau, Wrangell, Petersburg, and Ketchikan businesses leaders, where three-fifths of respondents say the need to attract young professionals over the next five years is critical. (Pg. 3)
- The communities with the most positive economic outlook for their business or industry over the next 12 months are Hoonah, Skagway, and Ketchikan. (Pg. 4)
- *Several quotes from Ketchikan survey participants are included on pages 52-70.*

## *Southeast Alaska 2025 Economic Plan (2024 Update)*

As the region's EDD, Southeast Conference is responsible for developing an Economic Plan or Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Southeast Alaska that is designed to identify regional priorities for economic and community development. The CEDS is a strategy-driven plan developed by a diverse workgroup of local representatives from private, public, and nonprofit sectors.

## Key Takeaways

- Maritime Industrial Support Sector: Objective #1: Increase employment and training opportunities for Southeast Alaska residents in the Marine Industrial Support Sector. Support development of school and university programs and curricula focused on industrial knowledge, skills, and experience transferable to Marine Industrial Support employment opportunities, i.e. UAS Ketchikan Maritime and Multi-Skilled Worker Program. (Pg. 27)
- Southeast Conference has identified sustaining and supporting the Alaska Marine Highway System and promoting beneficial electrification as priority infrastructure strategies. Related strategies include: (Pg. 23)
  - Sustain and support the Alaska Marine Highway System
  - Develop a long-term, strategic, multi-modal, regional transportation plan
  - Move freight to and from markets more efficiently
  - Ports and harbors infrastructure improvements
  - Road development
- *Detailed priorities and projects outlined in pages 19-46 of the Economic Plan.*

# Greater Ketchikan Multi-Jurisdictional Emergency Operations Plan

The GKA MJEOP is a comprehensive framework for emergency preparedness and response in the Greater Ketchikan Area. It outlines procedures, organizational structures, and responsibilities for managing various emergencies and disasters, including natural disasters, public health crises, industrial accidents and terrorist or man-made disasters. The document is maintained in the Clerk's Office and the GKA Emergency Operations Center.

## Key Takeaways

- The plan emphasizes collaborative emergency management across government levels and private sector providers through the NIMS Incident Command System. (Pg. 8)
- A comprehensive review of the plan should occur at least every five years. (Pg. 14)
- The MJEOP is centered around the concept of "whole community," emphasizing the involvement of the entire community in disaster planning and response. The approach goes beyond traditional first responders to include nontraditional partners like volunteers, faith-based organizations, and private businesses. It stresses the importance of considering all community members, including those with disabilities and access needs, in all disaster phases. (Pg. 20-21)
- Residents are encouraged to take individual responsibilities in disaster preparedness by being aware of hazards, mitigating risks, and preparing for personal and family safety. The public should recognize that disasters can disrupt infrastructure and resources for an extended period, requiring individuals to be self-sufficient for at least 7 days. (Pg. 21)
- The plan includes an assessment of the Greater Ketchikan Area's geography and socio-economic factors, along with a hazard and threat analysis specific to the region. Key points include:
  - Geographic Assessment: Discusses the geographical characteristics of the Greater Ketchikan Area, providing insights into its terrain, natural features, and vulnerabilities.
  - Socio-Economic Assessment: Analyzes the socio-economic aspects of the area, including population demographics, infrastructure, economic activities, and any potential challenges or strengths. (Pg. 22-23)

### Socio-Economic Analysis & Demographics

The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), managed by the CDC, highlights medium to high vulnerability in the Greater Ketchikan Area.

### Demographics:

- Older Population (65+): 16%
- Children Under 18: 21.7%
- Average Family Size: 2.99
- Educational Attainment: 26.4% have a bachelor's degree or higher
- Median Household Income: \$77,820

- Median Gross Rent: \$1,235
  - Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units: \$315,200
  - Residents Below Poverty Line: 9.4%
  - Disability Rate: 15%
- Hazard and Threat Analysis: Focuses on identifying potential hazards and threats that the Greater Ketchikan Area may face, such as natural disasters, industrial risks, or other security concerns.
  - Planning Assumptions: Outlines the foundational assumptions used in developing the Multi-Jurisdictional Emergency Operations Plan (MJEOP), which serve as the basis for emergency preparedness and response strategies.
  - Data Sources: Utilizes data from various sources, including risk assessments, past incidents, and current threat evaluations, to create a comprehensive overview of the situation in the Greater Ketchikan Area.

## *Housing Market Analysis for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough (and other housing presentations to the Assembly, studies & reports)*

### **Key Takeaways**

The collection of Housing presentations to the assembly and housing studies and report are available at the borough website at: <https://kqbak.us/1058/Housing-Studies-Reports-Presentations>

All reports and presentations will be reviewed and considered in development of the Housing goals, objectives, and actions for the comprehensive plan.

## *FY2024-2028 Strategic Plan Update No. 1 (Update in progress)*

The strategic plan outlines an approach to foster economic growth, enhancing transportation infrastructure, improving quality of life, and promoting organizational excellence within the community. The plan sets a roadmap for the Borough's development over the next five years.

### **Key Takeaways**

#### **Focus areas:**

- Community Health and Safety: Promote a clean and safe environment.
- Vibrant Economy: Foster a diverse economy.
- Transportation: Deliver a seamless transportation network for resident and non-resident air travelers and transit patrons.
- Quality of Life: Provide programming and services that support a high quality of life, including but not limited to culture, recreation, and education.

- Organizational Excellence: Provide high quality, responsive, transparent, and innovative services in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

*(The entirety of the strategic plan is relevant to the development of the comprehensive plan and should be reviewed in full by all team members to identify cross-over.)*

## *2024 - 2028 Ketchikan Public Utilities Capital Improvement Program*

The plan discusses various capital projects aimed at enhancing infrastructure across different divisions, including telecommunications, electric, and water. It highlights funding allocations for projects such as the installation of flow meters, upgrades to feeder protective relays, and improvements to the municipal water system. The focus is on ensuring reliable services to underserved areas through the expansion of power facilities and the maintenance of existing systems. The projects prioritize the use of advanced technologies, including wireless and fiber, to improve service delivery and operational efficiency.

### **Key Takeaways**

- It emphasizes the importance of upgrading aging equipment to maintain operational efficiency and safety.
- The implementation of advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) is highlighted, which facilitates automated billing and improves metering accuracy.
- Overall, the recommendations outline a strategic approach to resource allocation that prioritizes essential upgrades and maintenance to ensure reliable service delivery to underserved areas.

## *Parks and Playground Master Plan*

The plan discusses the development and improvement of parks and recreational facilities within a Borough, emphasizing the need for accessible trails and community parks. It highlights opportunities for creating new recreational spaces, such as pocket parks and natural day-use areas, while ensuring they are connected to existing facilities. The plan also addresses maintenance considerations and funding requirements for park improvements.

### **Key Takeaways**

*See “1.2 Summary of Recommendations” on page 5-6 of the plan.*

- Assessment-Based Recommendations: The recommendations are based on an inventory and assessment of existing park and playground facilities, which included a level of service analysis and public input. This ensures that the suggestions are grounded in actual community needs and best management practices for parks and playgrounds.
- Policy Direction: The recommendations provide policy direction for future planning decisions. This includes identifying priority improvements that the Public Works

Department should focus on to enhance the quality and accessibility of parks and playgrounds in the Borough. (Pg.77)

- Community Engagement: The recommendations reflect the input gathered from nearly 300 respondents through a Recreation Master Plan Survey. This survey highlighted community needs, such as the desire for new parks and playgrounds, and the necessity to replace aging equipment and facilities. (Pg. 11)
- Strategic Framework: The Master Plan serves as a strategic framework for future decisions regarding the Borough's parks and playgrounds. It sets priorities for capital projects and aims to address the gaps in service, particularly in neighborhoods that are currently underserved. (Pg. 1)
- Long-Term Vision: The recommendations include a long-term vision for designating parks, such as transitioning certain areas from neighborhood to community parks. This reflects a commitment to expanding recreational opportunities and improving service levels across the Borough.
- Focus on Under-Served Areas: Specific attention is given to neighborhoods that lack adequate park facilities, such as Newtown and Westend. The recommendations emphasize the need for new neighborhood parks and playgrounds in these areas to better serve the community.

## *2023 Hopkins Alley/Newtown: A Framework for Revitalization*

The plan provides a framework for revitalizing the Hopkins Alley neighborhood, offering recommendations and resources for property owners and business operators. It serves as a manual for enhancing properties and encourages collaboration among local stakeholders for long-term redevelopment strategies. The framework includes insights into economic aspects of historic preservation, highlighting financial advantages and the significance of heritage tourism. It also addresses building codes and potential exceptions, which are important for property owners considering renovations or restorations.

### **Key Takeaways**

- The plan highlights the potential economic benefits of revitalization, including increased property values and rental income. (Pg. 2)
- It underscores the significance of using historic materials in renovations, which, while requiring investment, can yield long-term benefits for property owners. (Pg. 3)
- The plan outlines Planning, Zoning, and Building Code issues in the Hopkins Alley/Newtown area. (Pgs. 16-28)
- Appendix C of the plan outline Recommendation and proposed projects. Some of the issues identified include (Pgs. 53-56):
  - Access to/from the waterfront and downtown
  - Historic significance of the Newtown/Hopkins Alley neighborhood is not conspicuous
  - Access from the sea walk is irregular, circuitous, and includes hazards to pedestrians and vehicles
  - The tunnel is an unattractive access to/from the downtown and berths 1 & 2

- Recommended waterfront and downtown access improvement projects include (Pg. 58):
  - Hopkins Alley South Entrance Gateway
  - Marine Bar Area Gateway and Sea Walk Connections
  - Bauer Way Gateway
  - Interpretive Signage
  - Self-Guided Walking Tour Brochure and Interactive Signage
  - Paint-Up/Fix-Up Program
  - Access Improvements North of Tunnel
  - Tunnel Enhancements
  - Tidelands Cleanup

## *Policy Issues and Capital Priority Projects FY2025*

This paper outlines Ketchikan's strategic focus for the fiscal year 2025 in a series of policy issue requests for state administrative or legislative action alongside priority infrastructure capital project requests for funding.

### **Key Takeaways**

Fiscal Year 2025 Community of Ketchikan list of capital project priority requests for State funding:

- Ketchikan Airport Ferry Improvements
- Park Avenue and Harris St. Road, Sewer, and Water
- Saxman Water Line Replacement

Fiscal Year 2025 Community of Ketchikan list of priority policy issues for State consideration:

- Opposing actions by the state of Alaska to Shift the costs of its constitutional obligation to maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State.
- Urging continuance of funding for the Alaska Marine Highway System.
- Encouraging continuance of the current arrangement for sharing of the State excise tax on commercial passenger vessels.
- Urging the State to transfer into Borough ownership certain parcels of land owned by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to facilitate the development of housing.
- Urging the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to implement pedestrian safety improvements along Tongass Avenue.

## *Ketchikan Tourism Strategy*

The 2023 Tourism Strategy has several sections that will be reviewed throughout the development of the comprehensive plan because of their relevancy, especially for economic development strategies. Focus areas and “Stewardship Goals” from the plan include (those with particular relevance to the comprehensive plan are bolded): Visitor Management, Year-Round Visitation, Communications & Engagement, **Workforce Shortages, Transportation & Traffic Congestion, Workforce Housing**, Monitoring and Reporting, and Governance.

## Key Takeaways

- The Ketchikan Tourism Strategy aims to enhance tourism's long-term competitiveness while minimizing negative impacts on the community and environment.
- The strategy focuses on improving quality of life, economy, visitor experience, and natural environment.
- Community sentiment about tourism is mixed, with significant concerns about its impact on residents' quality of life.
- The growing reliance on cruise tourism presents challenges such as traffic congestion and workforce shortages.
- The plan emphasizes the need for planned and controlled tourism development to balance economic benefits and community well-being.

## *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2023-2027 (2023)*

This plan from the State of Alaska identifies trends in outdoor recreation in Alaska, summarizes outdoor recreation by region, and provides seven statewide outdoor recreation goals.

## Key Takeaways

- Totem Bight State Historical Park is typically listed as a top destination for travelers to Ketchikan. The park is also used by Ketchikan residents in every season, as shown by spikes in use as late as September. (Pg. 73)
- Four of the top five most visited destinations in Alaska are Southeast cruise destinations: Juneau, Ketchikan, Skagway, and Glacier Bay. (Pg.125)
- *The description of Southeast Alaska is provided in Section B6 of Chapter 3 (page 29).*

## *2022 – 2026 General Government Capital Improvement Program*

The plan outlines various infrastructure projects aimed at replacing outdated systems and equipment to enhance the efficiency and reliability of public services. It details funding allocations for various projects. It also mentions funding for the replacement of aging vehicles and infrastructure improvements, such as corrosion protection for hospital culverts and extending the life of harbor pilings. The plan emphasizes the importance of maintaining and upgrading municipal infrastructure to ensure efficient service delivery.

## Key Takeaways

- *The plan is outlined by project and funding and will be checked against draft goals and objectives in the comprehensive plan for consistency, alignment, or conflicts.*

## *Clam Cove Hamlet Neighborhood Plan*

The Clam Cove neighborhood was defined for the first time in 2005 with the adoption of the Gravina Island Plan, Clam Cove and Blank Inlet Area. The 2005 Plan identified the boundaries for the Clam Cove hamlet as extending from the waterfront to the boundaries of the Gravina Island Highway. The 2005 Plan dictated that before any additional land use zone changes were to occur, a master plan for the Clam Cove area was to be developed to guide development of the area. The intent was to develop the master plan shortly after the 2005 Plan was completed, however, due to changes in development plans for Gravina Island, the master plan for Clam Cove remained dormant for over ten years. In 2018, a rezone request spurred the Department of Planning and Community Development to begin development of this Clam Cove Neighborhood Plan.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Infrastructure in Clam Cove hamlet is limited, with private water and septic systems. Some residents draw water from neighboring lakes and ponds. (Pg. 17)
- There are no developed interior roads connecting to the Gravina Island Highway, although there are platted road systems that provide potential for public access. (Pg. 17)
- Residents expressed concerns that as development occurs, septic systems and docks may become a nuisance. There is a general agreement that public docks may be necessary in the future to protect the scenic view of the waterfront. Additionally, there are concerns about potential contamination of drinking water from increased lot development. (Pg. 17)
- Currently, emergency services are provided by the U.S. Coast Guard through beach access, which is not ideal due to shallow waters. As development progresses, there may be a need to create a service area for fire and emergency medical services. (Pg. 17)

## *Ketchikan Coordinated Transportation Plan*

The plan presents an update on the Ketchikan Coordinated Transportation Final Report, focusing on improving public transportation for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and those with limited income. It outlines strategies for enhancing service delivery, including adding bus stops and shelters, and sharing specialized equipment among agencies. It suggests the re-evaluation of fare structures and eligibility criteria to alleviate financial burdens on the transportation network. The plan advocates for enhanced coordination among transportation providers to share resources and improve service efficiency, particularly for paratransit services. It also calls for the establishment of a centralized information source for transit services to aid users in navigating available options.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Ketchikan is a regional transportation hub; its international airport, with 84,934 enplanements in 2014, ranks fifth among 300 airports in Alaska. Ketchikan's local

floatplane airport is its harbor, with an estimated 40,000 enplanements a year. Ketchikan Harbor is one of the largest U.S. centers of commercial floatplane enplanements. (Pg. 4)

- Ketchikan International Airport is located on Gravina Island, approximately one-half mile across Tongass Narrows from the Borough's population center on Revillagigedo Island. The connecting ferry, operated by Ketchikan Gateway Borough, carried 388,264 passengers and 102,399 vehicles in 2019. (Pg. 4)
- Ketchikan is served by the Alaska Marine Highway's coastal passenger/vehicle ferries, to/from highway termini at Haines and Skagway, Prince Rupert, B.C., and Bellingham, Washington, as well as Alaskan ports from Metlakatla to Unalaska; 65,432 passengers embarked and disembarked on these services in 2014. The Inter-island Ferry Authority operates passenger/vehicle ferry service between Ketchikan and Prince of Wales Island, carrying an average of 52,000 passengers annually as of 2014. (Pg. 4)
- Ketchikan's municipal port received 504 calls by cruise ships in 2018, with 1,073,923 passengers. These vessels dock at four "Panamax"-capable berths in the Downtown/Newtown business district. Ketchikan's public small boat harbors accommodate 1,045 vessels from 20 to 125 foot length, including large fleets of commercial fishing and sport fishing charter vessels. (Pg. 4)
- This intensive transportation activity on Ketchikan's waterfront creates heavy demand for related shore-side transportation services. A fixed route public transit service is provided by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. The Borough Bus system has three lines, designated Green, Silver (north and south) and downtown shuttle serving the Borough's population and tourists alike. Each of these three lines, except the downtown shuttle, operates year-around, with full service seven days a week and reduced service on Sundays and extended evening service on Friday and Saturday. (Pg. 4)
- A set of data pulled together by the Ketchikan Wellness Coalition in their Community Needs Survey showed a very high incidence of households with no vehicle access at all. This number for Ketchikan is 16.3% which is nearly double the national average of 8.6% according to the US Census Bureau. This number indicates a higher-than-normal need for transportation and transportation options in Ketchikan. (Pg. 8)
- Since the publishing of the 2015 plan, significant strides have been taken in the continuous improvement of Ketchikan's transportation network. To highlight the work of the RCTC Agencies a short list of the gaps and strategies that have been addressed is included. (Detailed in section 4 of plan starting on Pg 15).
- Current airport transportation services for seniors and ADA eligible riders: Southeast Senior Services offers pre-scheduled rides to and from the airport in one of their wheelchair lift- equipped cutaway buses to individuals over 60 or those with disabilities who have ADA eligibility. The vehicle must arrive early to meet the ferry, be loaded on the city side, then disembark and pay fees on the airport side, then must wait for the returning ferry, be reloaded onto the ferry, pay an airport fee, drive off on the city side, and then finally proceed to the next location. Providing a ride to the airport takes a Southeast Senior Services van and a driver out of rotation for 1-3 hours, often for only one rider. SESS provided an estimated 592 airport rides last year and each trip cost them \$26 for the ferry in addition to their \$32.13 cost per trip. (Pg. 16)

- Given that Southeast Senior Services ridership has increased 25% in the last three years, the airport service significantly taxes their vehicular and personnel resources. The RCTC group is concerned about the sustainability of this arrangement and the lack of airport transportation services for the public. (Pg. 16)
- There have also been many requests to improve access to local recreational areas such as trailheads. For example, the need to improve pedestrian access to the 3rd Avenue / Rain Bird Trail Bus stop when accessed off of Gorge St. in order to reinstate bus stop at the Rain Bird trail head. (Pg. 21)
- There is an unmet need for lift-equipped taxi service for mobility-limited individuals in Ketchikan. (Pg. 23)

### *Ketchikan Terminal Area Plan Preferred Terminal Concept*

The 4-page plan outlines the need for a detailed review of the terminal area layout and configuration at Ketchikan International Airport. It highlights the necessity for flexible, cost-effective, and financially feasible development that can be implemented in phases to accommodate future aviation demands. The implications also include considerations for environmental impacts, community disruption, and the need for fair treatment of affected populations during project implementation.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Ketchikan International Airport serves is a regional asset, supporting various aircraft and promoting local economic growth.
- The airport is operated by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough under a lease expiring in 2027
- The Study Committee selected Terminal Building Concept 3 as the most favorable long-term development concept for the KTN terminal building. An updated terminal area conceptual development plan is included on pages 3-4.

# Appendix C

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## Public Outreach Materials

- Outreach Activities Overview table
- 2025 Community Survey Summary
- February 2025 Open House Notes
- April 2025 Partner Discussion Notes
- Working Group Notes

# Outreach Activities Overview

This plan was developed with input from residents, stakeholders, and regional partners, gathered through the activities described below.

Outreach Activities	
<b>Working Group</b>	The Working group met three times (through March 2025) during the duration of the project and assisted in the development of the comprehensive plan. The committee also communicated as a group during the drafting and review phase in May and June 2025. The ten-member committee is comprised of three Borough assembly members, three Borough planning commissioners, a representative from the City of Saxman, a representative from Ketchikan Indian Community, the assistant manager from the City of Ketchikan, and a representative of the Filipino community. The Working Group meeting agendas, presentations, and notes are posted on the project website.
<b>Borough Meetings</b>	The project team held a Joint Work Session with the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly and Planning Commission to kick off the project in December 2024.
<b>Open House</b>	The project team hosted an open house in February 2025 at the Kay-Hi Commons where the community shared emerging vision, values, priorities, and policies in each of the focus areas in the plan.
<b>Interviews and Partner Discussions</b>	The project team conducted more than two dozen interviews with planning commissioners, assembly members, business leaders, community leaders, and community organizations to learn about community challenges, priorities and collect suggestions for the plan. The team hosted a series of topic-specific Partner Discussions in April 2025.
Surveys	
<b>Community Survey</b>	The 2025 Community Survey was aimed at engaging residents and gathering feedback. The survey was open from Tuesday, February 18, through Sunday, March 23, 2025 and received 470 responses. The survey was distributed via Facebook, radio announcements, and distributed by email through community partner networks. QR codes with access to the survey link were printed on flyers and placed at the Ketchikan Public Library, Borough Offices, and the Gateway Recreational Center.
<b>Youth Survey</b>	Staff from the KGB Planning Department visited the Ketchikan High School (KHS)'s American Government class, comprised of KHS students. After a brief presentation about the Comprehensive Planning Process, seniors were asked to complete a short 7-question survey, which asked different questions from the Community Survey. The 2025 Youth Survey remained open for an additional week to allow other students to participate. There were 80 survey responses.
<b>Interactive Map</b>	The Interactive Comment Map was aimed at soliciting location-based input on community priorities. It was open March 17th and disabled on April 27th, 2025, and received 109 responses.

Outreach and Media	
<b>Project Website</b>	The project website provided a place for residents to easily find background information about the project, downloads of past presentations and draft files, announcements of upcoming meetings, and links to project surveys. <a href="https://kgbcompplan.com/">https://kgbcompplan.com/</a>
<b>Social Media</b>	The project team announced project updates on social media, through the Ketchikan Gateway Borough's Facebook page that has 6,200 followers.
<b>Newspaper and Radio</b>	Ads announcing public events were published throughout the project in the Ketchikan Daily News and newspaper staff covered some community events. Public Service Announcements and interviews with project staff announcing events aired on radio station KRBD.
Research Tasks	
<b>Mapping</b>	The project team developed land use and other relevant maps to use as decision-making tools and guide future development.
<b>Secondary Research</b>	The project team collected information from local, state and federal sources to tell the story of Ketchikan: how it is changing and how the population, housing, economy and land use characteristics compare to other Southeast Alaska communities.
<b>Plan Review</b>	The project team reviewed past and existing community, regional and other relevant plans and reports, including the 2020 Comprehensive Plan.





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# Process Overview

## Community Survey Process and Response

- **Timing and Promotion:** The Ketchikan Gateway Borough (KGB) Comprehensive Plan Update Community Survey was open for approximately four weeks, from Tuesday, February 18, through Sunday, March 23, 2025. The survey was available online via SurveyMonkey and promoted via Facebook, radio announcements, and distributed by email through community partner networks. QR codes with access to the survey link were printed on flyers and placed at the Ketchikan Public Library, Planning Department Offices, and the Gateway Recreational Center.
- **Response:** There are 470 survey responses, which account for about 3.5% of the 2023 KGB population (13,475).
  - 95% of participants live in the KGB for 11 – 12 months of the year.
  - 48% of participants have lived in the KGB for more than 10 years.
  - 28% of participants identify as male and 64% identify as female.
  - Less than half (42%) of survey participants report they live in the City of Ketchikan, with the majority living in other locations within the KGB.
  - 16% of participants are under 35, 41% are between 35 and 54, and 39% are 55 or older.

## Youth Survey Process and Response

- **Timing and Promotion:** Staff from the KGB Planning Department visited the Ketchikan High School (KHS)'s American Government class, comprised of KHS students. After a brief presentation about the Comprehensive Planning Process, seniors were asked to complete a short 7-question survey, which asked different questions from the Community Survey. The survey remained open for an additional week to allow other students to participate.
- **Response:** There were 80 survey responses. Student participants were not asked about demographic information.

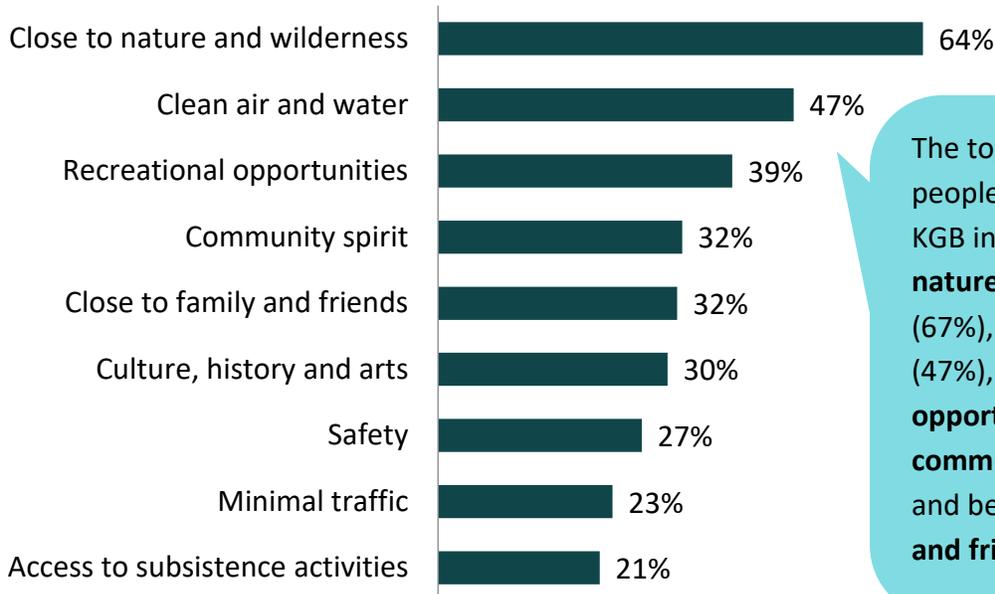
## Comment Map Process and Response

- **Timing and Promotion:** The interactive comment map was launched on March 17th and disabled on April 27th, 2025, but results remain live and can be viewed [here](#). The comment map was promoted via Facebook, the project website, and distributed by email through community partner networks.
- **Response:** The map received 109 responses on location-based topics, primarily focused on transportation (55 comments) and recreation (30 comments).

# Community Survey Results

## Question #1, What do you value most about living in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough?

N = 466. Participants selected up to five options from a list of values. <sup>1</sup>



The top five reasons people value living in the KGB include being **close to nature and wilderness** (67%), **clean air and water** (47%), **recreational opportunities** (39%), **community spirit** (32%), and being **close to family and friends** (32%).

### Responses less than 20%

Quality of schools (15%), Low taxes (15%), Climate (13%), Close to work (13%), Access to community facilities and services (13%), Housing availability and affordability (12%), Access into or out of the community (11%), Access to quality healthcare (11%), Job opportunities (10%), Food costs and availability (10%), Low cost of living (8%), Entertainment and social life (6%), Internet access (6%), Other (see below) (6%), Access to shopping and amenities (3%).

### Themes of “other” responses (6%) (# of responses)

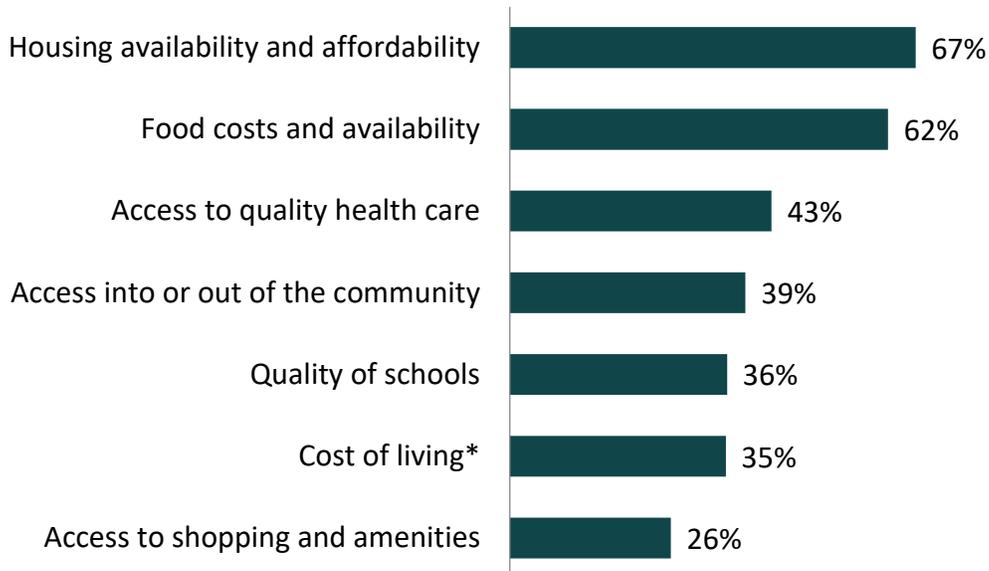
Indigenous community (3); grew up in Ketchikan (3); many reasons (2); business opportunities (2); freedom (2) remoteness and low population (2); quality of roads and infrastructure (2); and miscellaneous (10).

<sup>1</sup> For participants who chose “Other” but their written response was one of the listed options, that response was removed from “Other” and recategorized to the listed option (e.g., someone who selected “Other” and wrote “Fishing” was recategorized to “Recreational Opportunities.”)

## Question #2, What is most challenging about living in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough?

N = 466. Participants selected up to five options from a list of challenges. <sup>2 3</sup>

Over 60% of participants say that **housing availability and affordability** (67%) and **food costs and availability** (62%) are challenges to living in the KGB.



### Responses less than 20%

Other (see below) (16%), Entertainment and social life (15%), Climate (15%), Job opportunities (15%), Taxes\* (14%), Safety and crime\* (9%), Recreational opportunities (8%), Traffic\* (8%), Close to family and friends (5%), Access to community facilities and services (6%), Internet access (5%), Access to subsistence activities (5%), Clean air and water (4%), Community spirit (4%), Culture, history and arts (2%), Close to nature and wilderness (2%), Close to work (1%).

### Themes of “other” responses (16%) (# of responses)

Deteriorating or lack of infrastructure (e.g., roads, sidewalks) (17); volume of tourists/cruise ships in summer months (16); substance/drug use (9); miscellaneous (9) Services for the unhoused (8); size of government/government regulations (4); access to workforce (3); senior services (3); no challenges (3); access for people with disabilities (2).

<sup>2</sup> For participants who chose “Other” but their written response was one of the listed options, that response was removed from “Other” and recategorized to the listed option (e.g., someone who selected “Other” and wrote “High costs” was recategorized to “Cost of Living.”)

<sup>3</sup> Qualifiers of “low,” “minimal” and “quality of” were removed from the listed options for ease of understanding (i.e., “low taxes” became “taxes;” “minimal traffic” became “traffic;” “low cost of living” became “cost of living,” and “quality of schools” became “schools”).

**Question #3**, In one word or phrase, how would you describe Ketchikan’s character, people, and/or attributes?

N = 390.

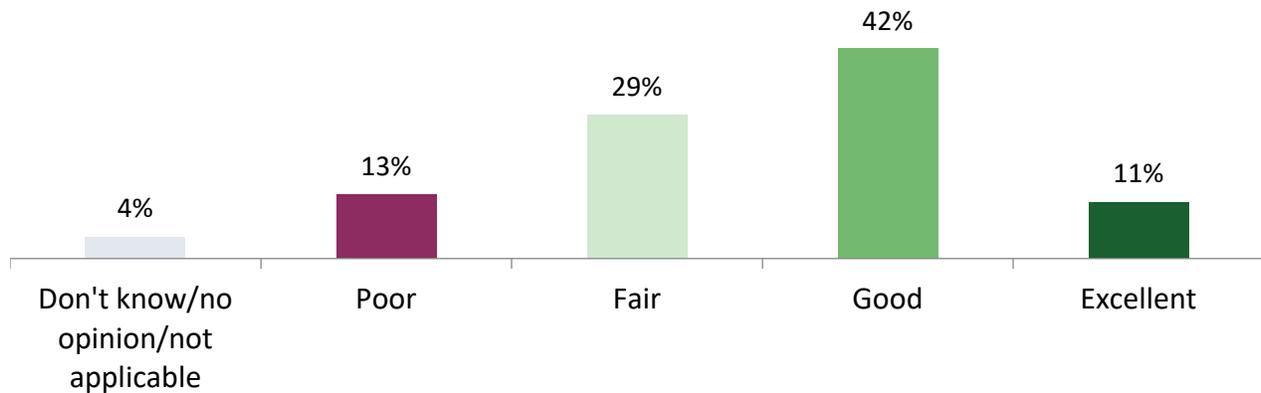


*This word cloud was generated using combined comments to the question, “In one word or phrase, how would you describe Ketchikan’s character, people, and/or attributes?” The size of a word in the cloud is based on the frequency each word was mentioned in survey responses; largest words were mentioned most frequently. Words with two or greater responses included. Word cloud created at: <https://www.wordclouds.com>*

Youth Survey participants frequently mentioned “Community,” “People,” “Small,” “Nature,” and “Scenery” for “What do you like most about living in Ketchikan?” (see Youth Survey Q2).

## Question #4, How would you rate Ketchikan as a place to raise a family?

N = 466. Participants were asked to choose and explain their selection.

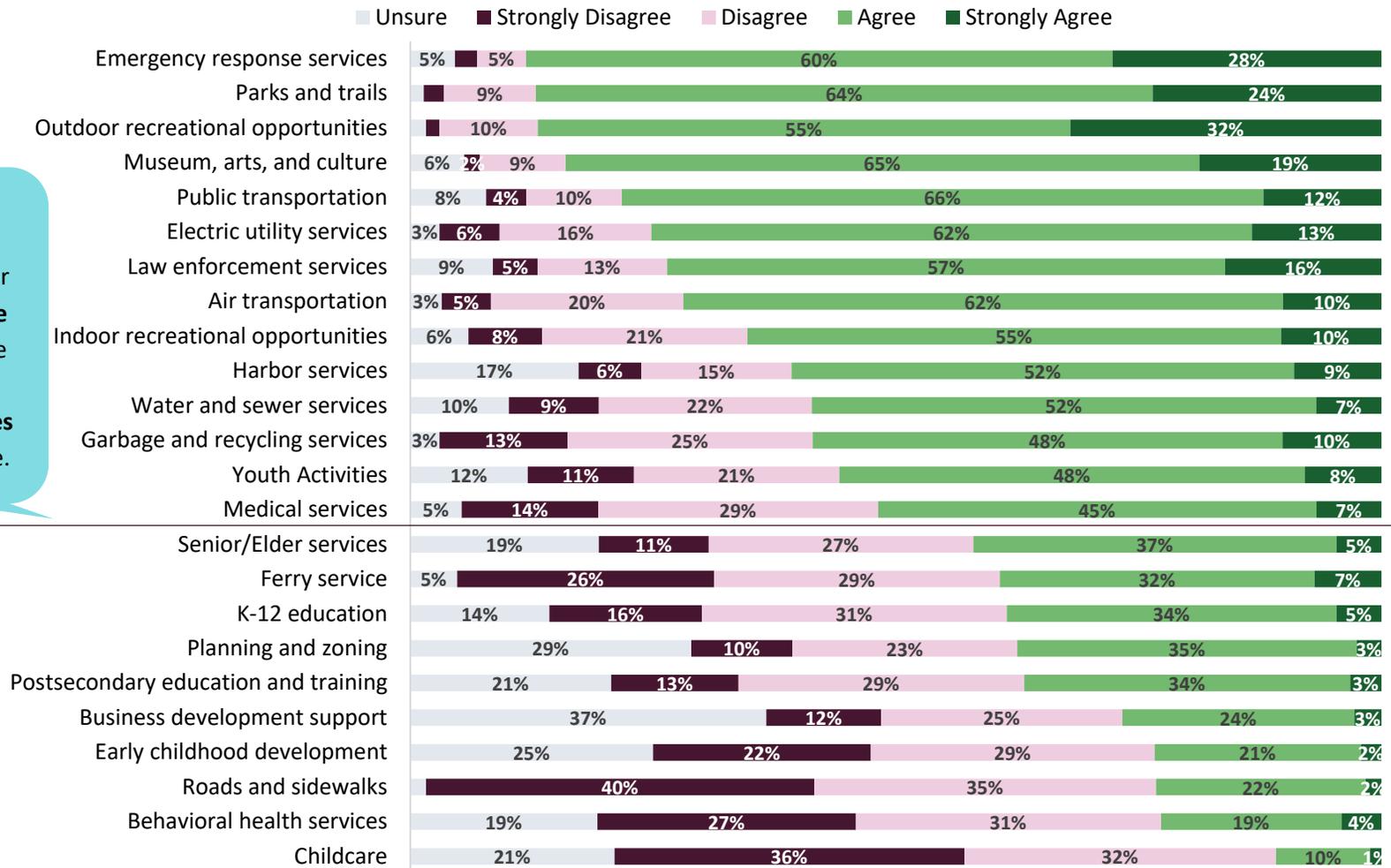


Rating	"Please tell us more about your choice."
<b>Excellent (11%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Still one of the safest cities for children and elders.</li> <li>• Small town feel and reminded us of the town we grew up in that no longer exists in the lower 48.</li> <li>• Proximity to nature and wilderness is superior.</li> </ul>
<b>Good (42%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a lot of opportunities in sports, education, arts.</li> <li>• On the positive side, the community provides substantial opportunities for recreation for its youth - sports leagues, high school athletics, and recreation facilities are common. The area also has excellent outdoor recreation.</li> <li>• Mostly excellent, but we need some affordable land available for young couples to buy and develop because of the high cost of housing here.</li> </ul>
<b>Fair (29%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools are extremely underfunded, healthcare is hard to get without travel, and the cost of living is very high.</li> <li>• Housing is a challenge, and well as quality education given the current state of the school district. I would have recommended the schools years ago but can't now.</li> <li>• The 8% sales tax for locals in summer is out of control.</li> </ul>
<b>Poor (13%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Losing our school system, our values, and affordable living.</li> <li>• Our schools are being gutted. Our only industry that we put effort into is tourism.</li> <li>• The town values tourism more than people, and we feel it.</li> </ul>
<b>Don't know/no opinion/not applicable (4%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't know because I'm not raising a family, but based on the cost of sports, degrading school system, lack of structured summer activities, and high cost of living, all the parents I know seem incredibly stressed.</li> </ul>

**Question #5, How accurately does the following describe Ketchikan community services? “Borough residents have access to quality……”**

N = 437. Participants were asked to explain their choices for “disagree” and “strongly disagree.” Services are listed in order by the combined number of “agree” and “strongly agree” responses (green bars).

**50% or more participants either agree or strongly agree that they have access to quality services above this line.**



**Question #5 (cont.), How accurately does the following describe Ketchikan community services? “Borough residents have access to quality…….”**

**Top Five Most Agreeable Services**

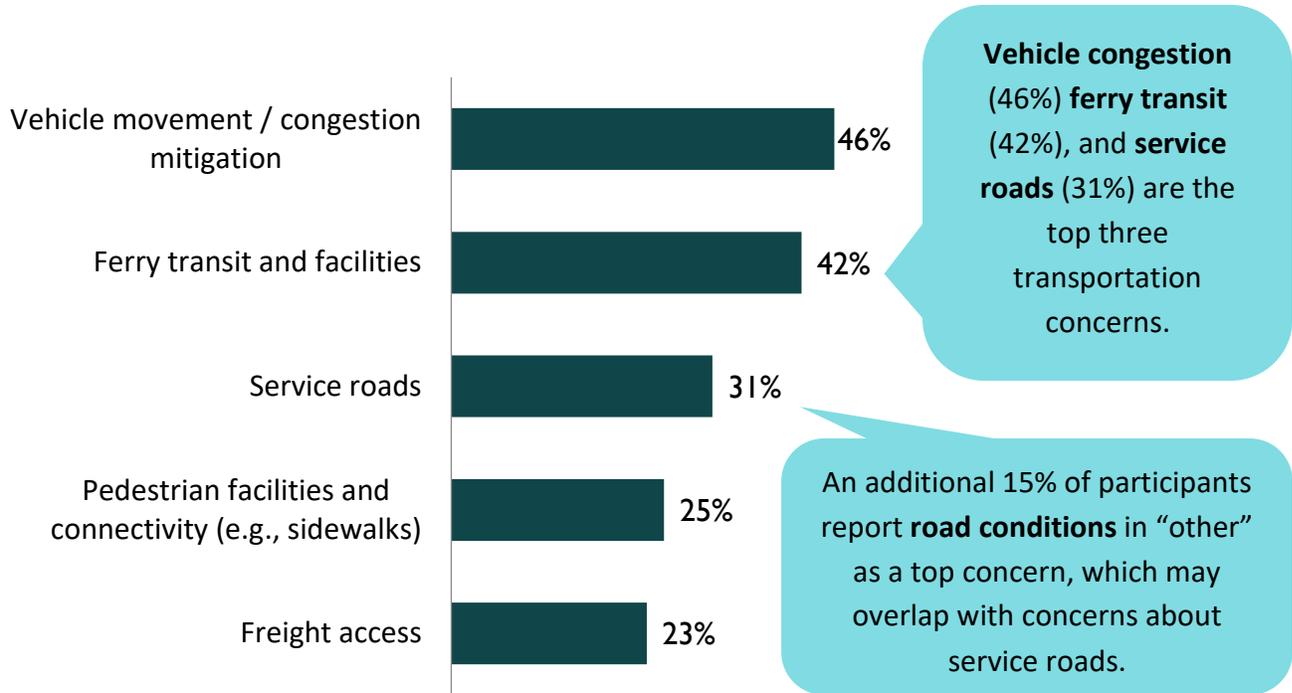
Community Service	Percent of “Agree” and “Strongly agree”
Emergency response services	88%
Outdoor recreational opportunities	87%
Parks and trails	87%
Museum, arts, and culture	84%
Public transportation	78%

**Top Five Most Disagreeable Services**

Community Service	Percent of “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree”	“Optional: For areas where you ‘Strongly disagree’ or ‘Disagree’ please explain.”
Roads and sidewalks	75%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roads and sidewalks are in poor condition. Not safe for pedestrians or cyclists.</li> <li>• Sidewalks are not ADA compliant.</li> <li>• Roads are terrible (I realize most are state highways but they still need to be maintained).</li> </ul>
Child care	68%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a serious lack of child care available. We have early childhood programs, but they’re usually so full.</li> <li>• Child care is almost nonexistent, and it’s not affordable.</li> <li>• People cannot work due to child care costs and quality.</li> </ul>
Behavioral health services	58%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavioral health professionals are needed.</li> <li>• We need adult mental health services, support for addiction, and homelessness.</li> </ul>
Ferry service	56%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ferry service is WAY too expensive for most people.</li> <li>• Our ferry services continue to get cut, primarily the ferry to Prince Rupert is a huge blow.</li> <li>• Please reinstate the ferry service, as it was in the 70s.</li> </ul>
Planning and zoning	52%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and zoning makes it harder on the developer and selectively enforces its own code.</li> <li>• Planning hasn’t taken into account downtown getting completely swamped by 10K+ tourists everyday during the peak season and keeps approving more ships.</li> </ul>

**Question #6, What are your biggest concerns related to transportation in Ketchikan?**

N = 433. Participants selected up to three options from a list of concerns.<sup>4</sup>



Responses less than 20%

Air transit and facilities (19%), Senior citizen transit support (15%), Other – “Road conditions” (15%), Bicycle facilities and connectivity (14%), Bus transit and facilities (9%), Other (see below) (8%), None of the above (3%).

Themes of “other” responses (8%) (# of responses)

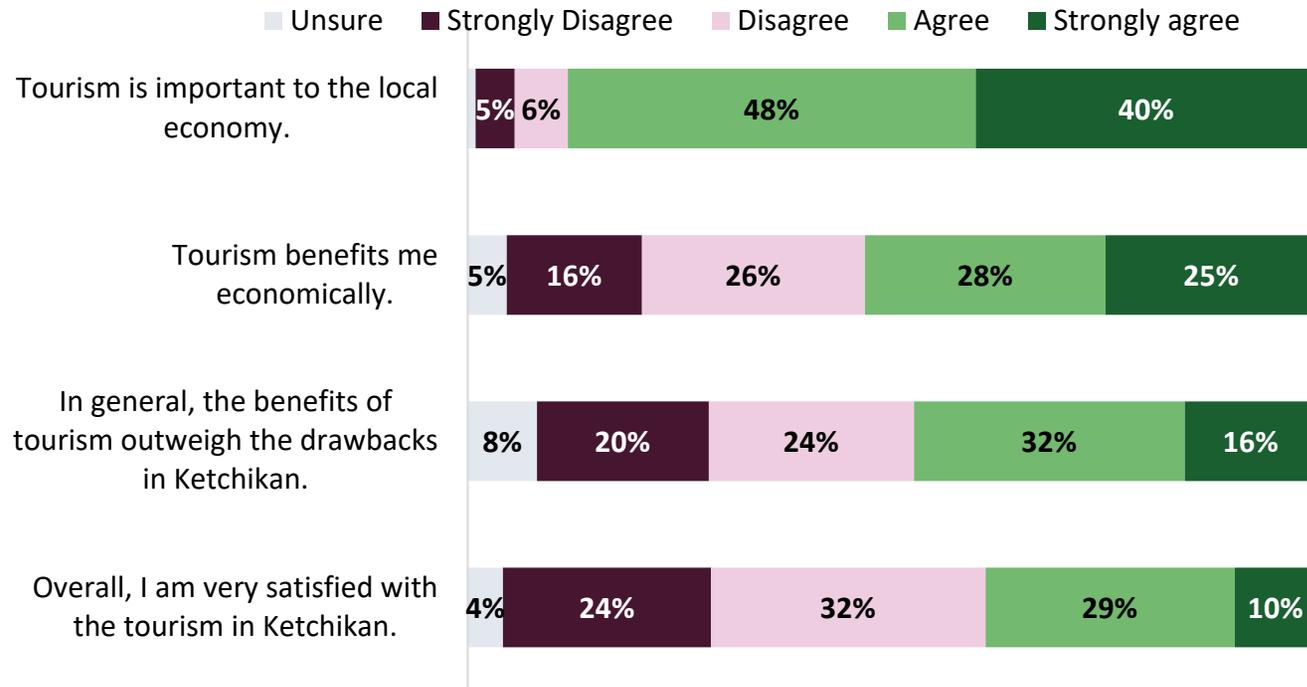
Miscellaneous (14), General costs of all transit (4), Tourism (4), Marine transportation (4), Parking (4), Disability support (3), General costs of all transit (3), Snow and ice removal (2).

**74% of student participants either rely on cars or wish there were more transportation options (see Youth Survey Q6).**

<sup>4</sup> For participants who chose “Other” but their written response was one of the listed options, that response was removed from “Other” and recategorized to the listed option (e.g., someone who selected “Other” and wrote “Ferry back to Rupert” was recategorized to “Ferry transit and facilities.”

**Question #7, Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about tourism in Ketchikan.**

N = 435. Participants were asked to explain statements with which they “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”



A combined **88%** of participants **agree** or **strongly agree** that **tourism is important** to the local economy.

Participants are **almost equally split, 48% vs. 44% respectively**, in their opinion about whether they combined agree or strongly agree or combined disagree or strongly disagree about **if benefits of tourism outweigh the drawbacks.**

**Quotes from Those Who Disagree or Strongly Disagree**

*“Downtown bus and traffic congestion needs a plan to support the growing industry.”*

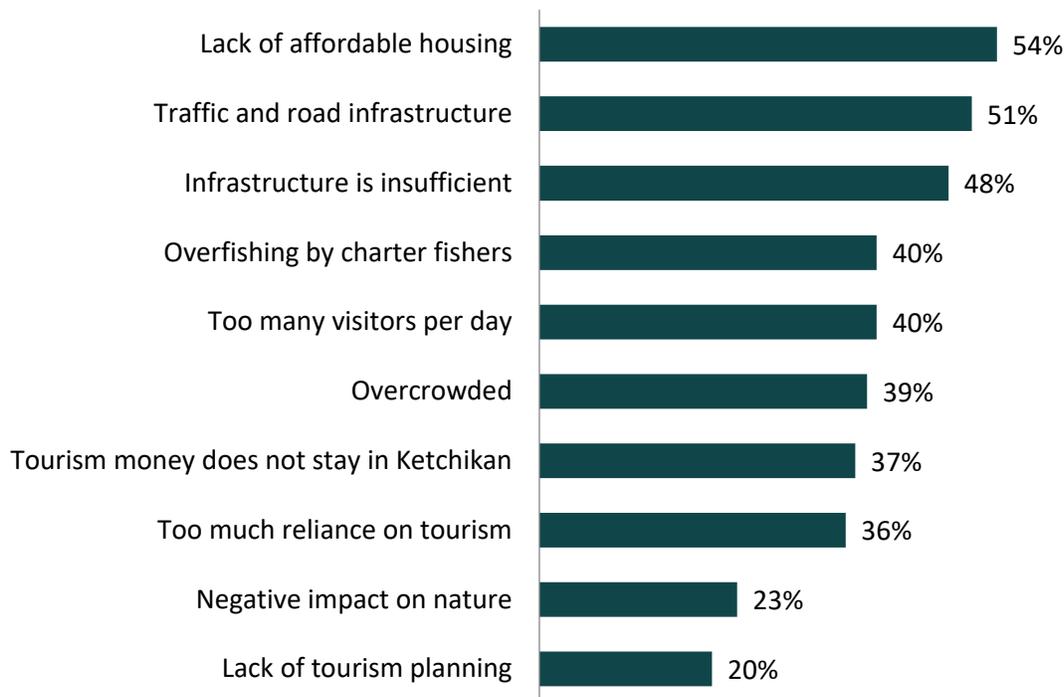
*“We suffer through the rainy days and cold winters and look forward to summer months, but not anymore.”*

*Start charging the tourists for coming to our town and/or the companies and cruise ships. Don't raise taxes on locals.*

## Question #8, What are your **biggest concerns** related to the **visitor industry** in Ketchikan?

N = 436. Participants selected up to three options from a list of concerns. <sup>5</sup>

**Lack of affordable housing (54%), traffic and road infrastructure (51%), and insufficient infrastructure (48%) are the top three concerns related to the visitor industry.**



### Responses less than 20%

Town has lost its character (19%), Trash/noise pollution (16%), Trails are too busy for locals to enjoy (15%), Other (see below) (12%), Over-management by government (7%), None of the above (0%).

### Themes of “other” responses (12%) (# of responses)

Miscellaneous (16), All of the above/more than three (13), Policy recommendations (10), Water and/or air pollution (4), Improving visitors' experience (3), Residents feeling pushed out (3), Taxes on residents (2).

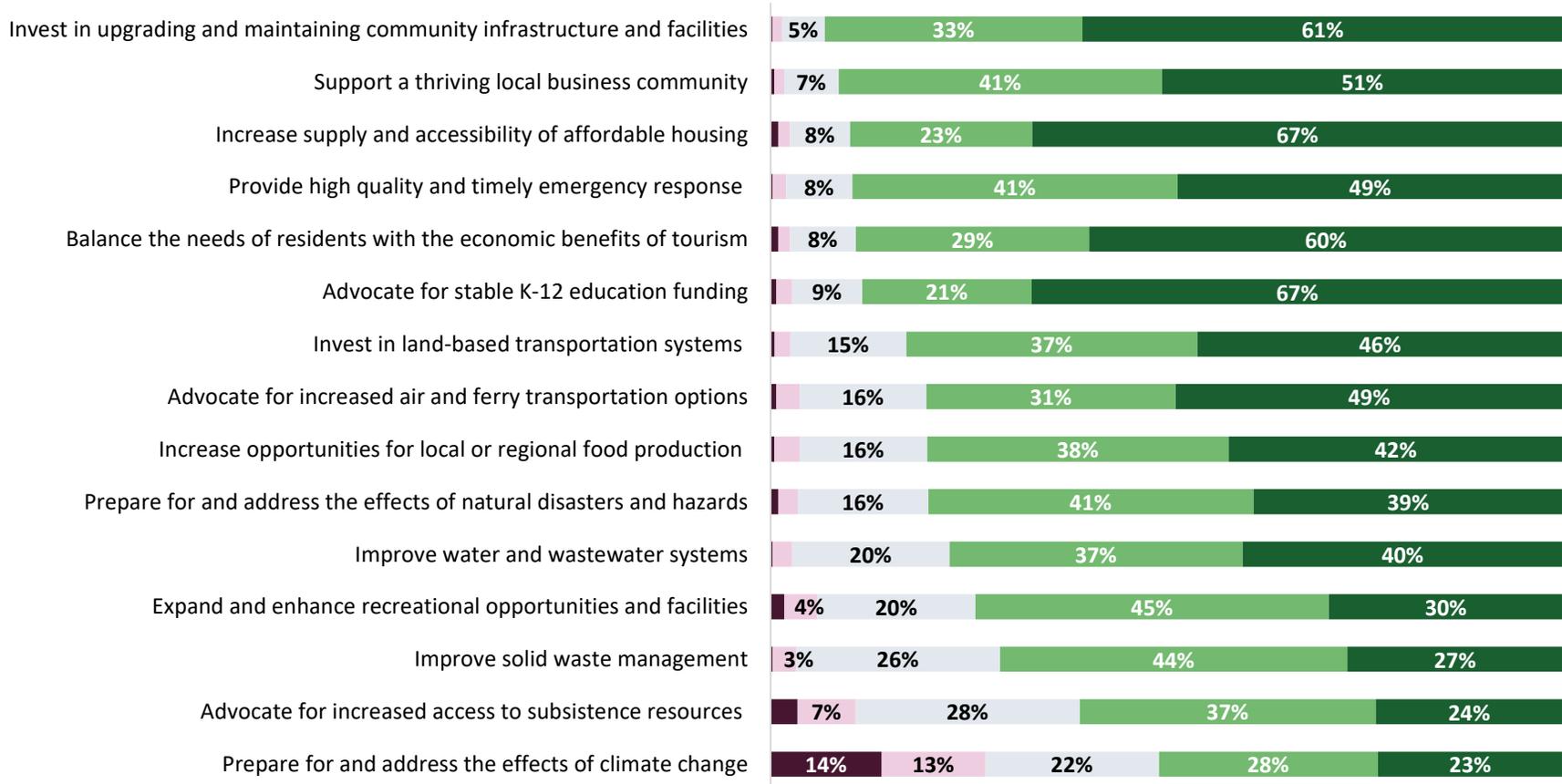
<sup>5</sup> For participants who chose “Other” but their written response was one of the listed options, that response was removed from “Other” and recategorized to the listed option (e.g., someone who selected “Other” and wrote “Each year our roads get worse” was recategorized to “Traffic and road infrastructure.”)

**Question #9,** Outlined below is a **list of potential priorities** that the Ketchikan community could work towards achieving **over the next 10 years**. For each potential priority, please indicate **how important you think the priority is for Ketchikan** by checking one option per row.

N = 411.

**More than 50% of participants indicate all priorities are either important or very important.**

Very Unimportant   Unimportant   Neither Important nor Unimportant/No Opinion   Important   Very Important



**Question #9 (cont.),** Outlined below is a **list of potential priorities** that the Ketchikan community could work towards achieving **over the next 10 years**. For each potential priority, please indicate **how important you think the priority is for Ketchikan** by checking one option per row.

**Top Community Priorities (Combined Important or Very Important Greater Than 80%)**

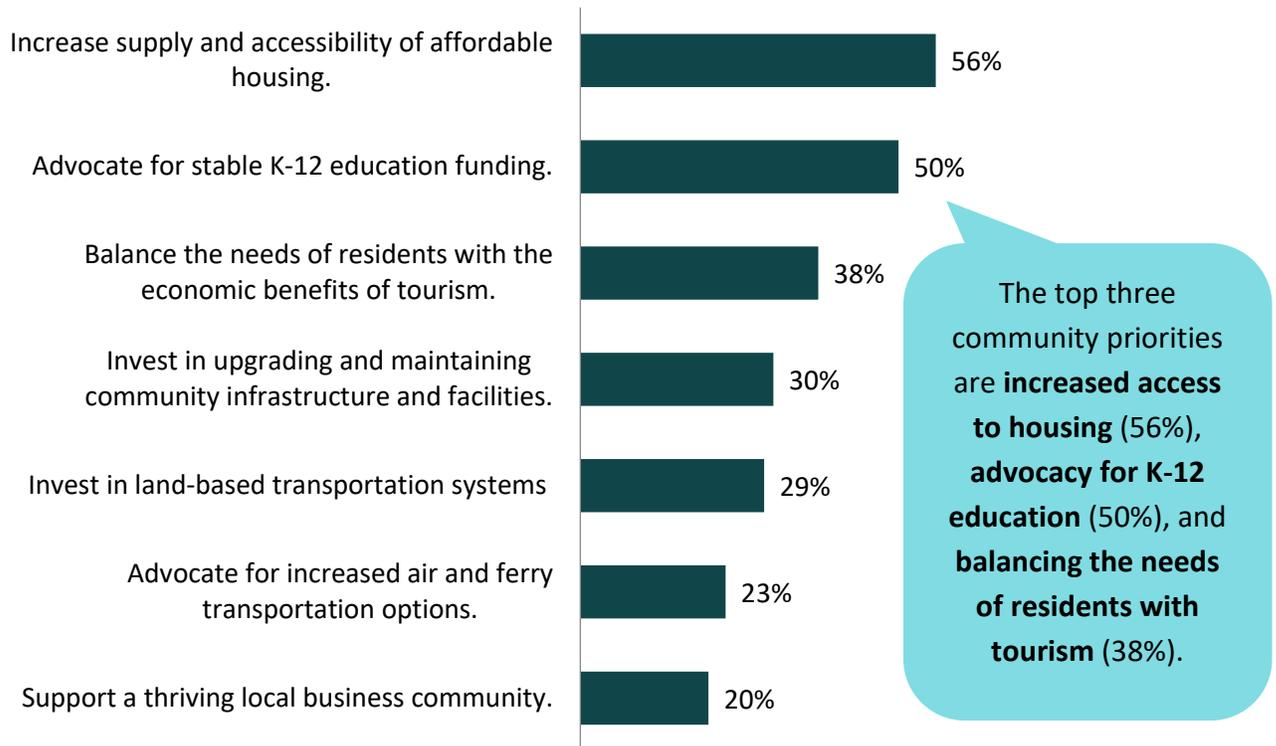
Community Service	Combined Percent of “Important” and “Very Important”
Invest in upgrading and maintaining <b>community infrastructure</b>	94%
Support a thriving <b>business community</b>	92%
Increase the supply of <b>affordable housing</b>	90%
Provide high quality and timely emergency response	90%
<b>Balance</b> the needs of residents with the economic benefits of <b>tourism</b>	89%
Advocate for stable <b>K-12 education funding</b>	88%
Invest in <b>land-based transportation</b> systems	83%
Advocate for increased <b>air and ferry transportation</b> options	80%
Increased opportunities for <b>local or regional food production</b>	80%
Prepare for and address the effects of <b>natural disasters and hazards</b>	80%

Responses from “Other priorities or projects not listed you think are ‘Very Important’ or ‘Important.’ (# of responses)

Miscellaneous (16), Other land-based initiatives (15), Other education-related initiatives (8), Social services support (e.g., behavioral health, homelessness, senior services) (8), Ferry-related initiatives (7), Tourism regulation (7), ADA Compliance (4), Other housing (4), Other recreational (4), Lower cost of living/freight (4), Other disaster planning (3), Docking infrastructure (3), Child care (3), Government collaboration (2), Electric grid (2).

## Question #10, If you were responsible for funding community priorities, which three priorities would you fund first?

N = 410. Participants were asked to select up to three options from a list of priorities.<sup>6</sup>



### Responses less than 20%

Improve water and wastewater systems (15%), Provide high quality and timely emergency response (i.e., police, EMS, fire) (12%), Expand and enhance recreational opportunities and facilities (11%), Prepare for and address the effects of climate change or natural disasters (10%), Other (see below) (7%), Improve solid waste management (3%).

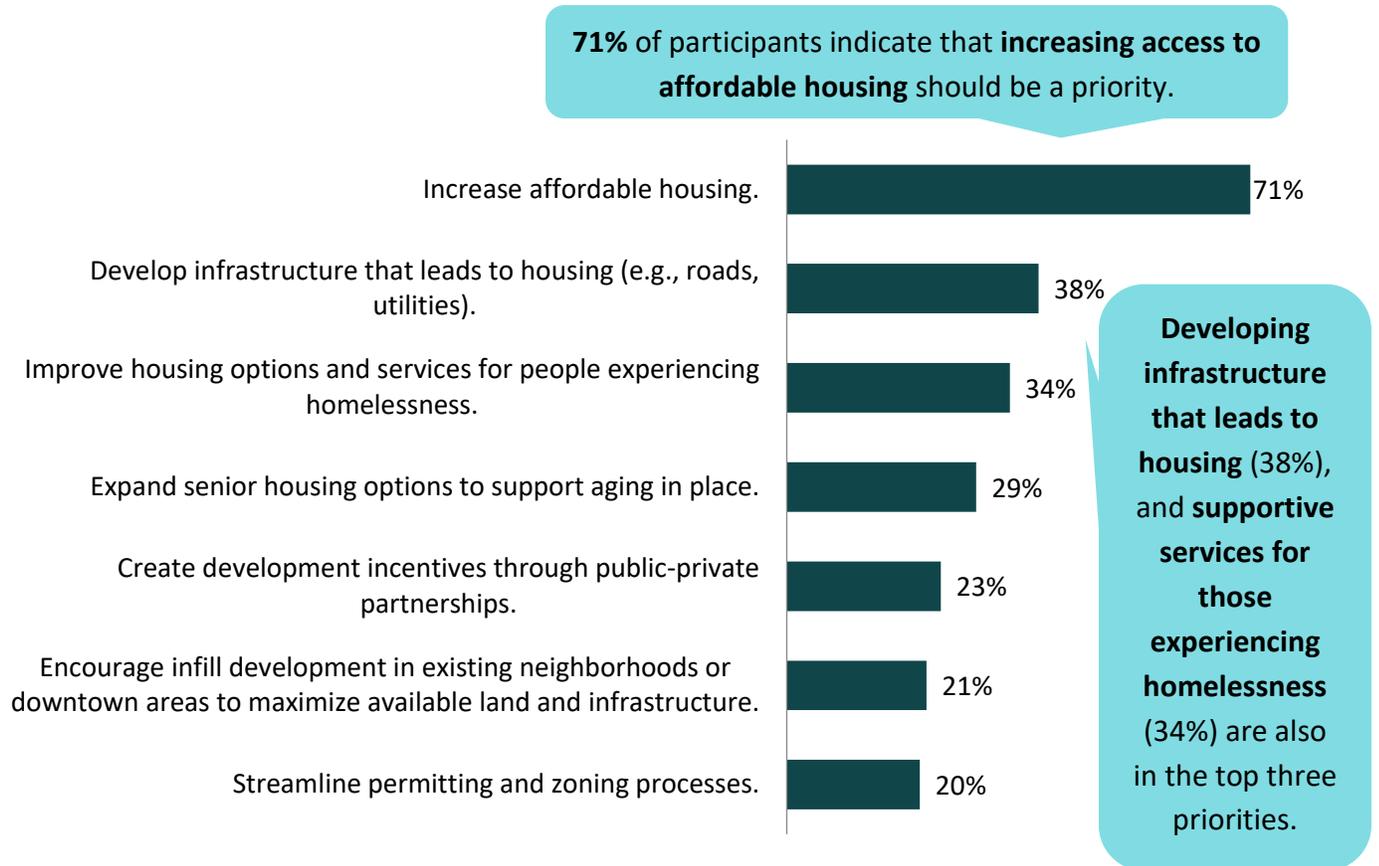
### Themes of “other” responses (7%) (# of responses)

Miscellaneous (23), Other school-related (5), Senior services (2).

<sup>6</sup> For participants who chose “Other” but their written response was one of the listed options, that response was removed from “Other” and recategorized to the listed option (e.g., someone who selected “Other” and wrote “Fix main roads in Ketchikan” was recategorized to “Invest in land-based transportation systems (e.g., roads, sidewalks, public transportation, bikeways).”

## Question #11, What are your **housing priorities** for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough over the next 10 years?

N = 409. Participants were asked to select up to three options from a list of priorities.<sup>7</sup>



### Responses less than 20%

Increase seasonal and workforce housing (17%), Other (see below) (13%), Assess growth of short-term rentals (10%), None of the above (1%).

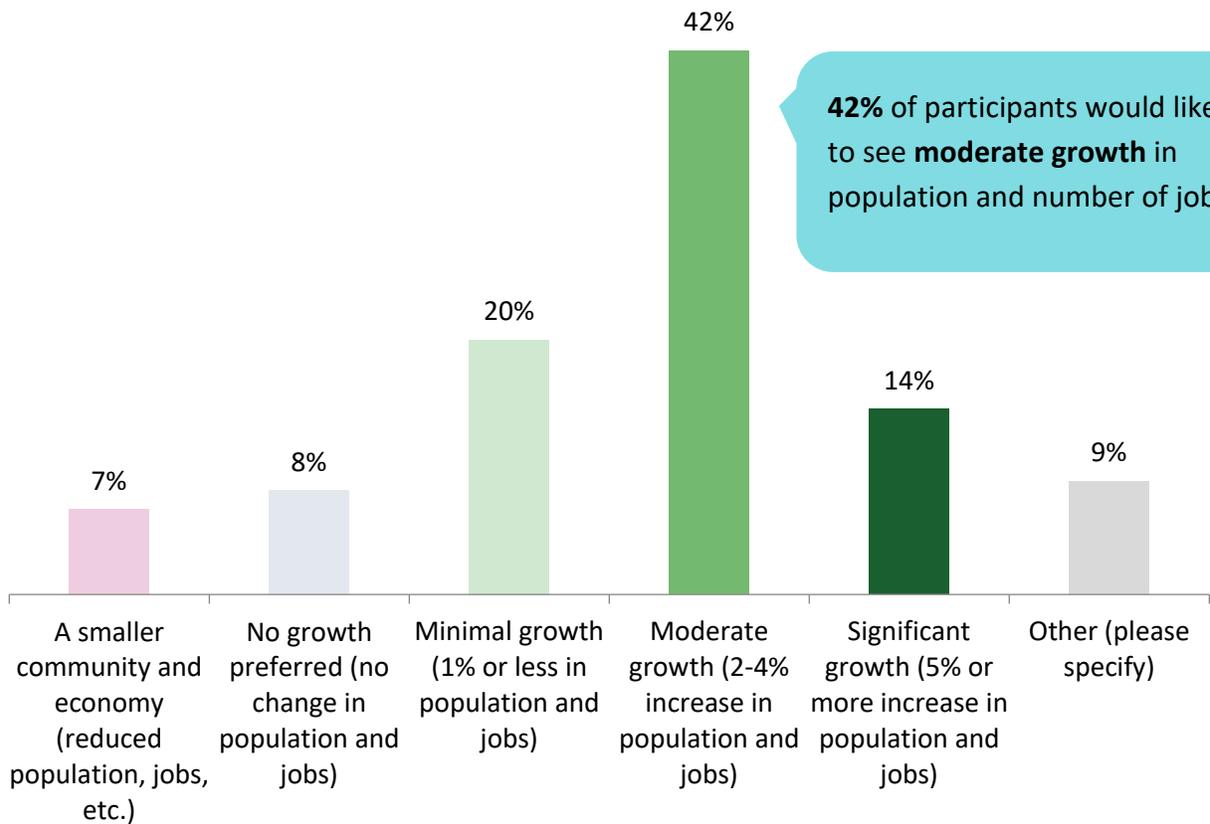
### Themes of “other” responses (13%) (# of responses)

Policies for Short-term rentals (12), Miscellaneous (12), Change other government policies and regulations (8), Improve affordability for all incomes, young families, and long-term residents (6), Increase access to lands for development (5), Minimize government involvement in housing (4), Policies that lower costs of materials (3), Other supportive housing for senior services and those with disabilities (3).

<sup>7</sup> For participants who chose “Other” but their written response was one of the listed options, that response was removed from “Other” and recategorized to the listed option (e.g., someone who selected “Other” and wrote “Expand water and sewer to the end of the road” was recategorized to “Develop infrastructure that leads to housing (e.g., roads, utilities).”

**Question #12, What is your preferred level of growth for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough over the next 10 years? Growth is defined as a combination of increased population and number of jobs in the borough.**

N = 409.



**Quotes From Those Who Selected “Other”**

*I believe before we try to get people to move here, we need to secure a community for current residents by providing affordable housing, fair wages, and a healthy lifestyle to prevent losing community members.*

*Need more jobs, not increase population.*

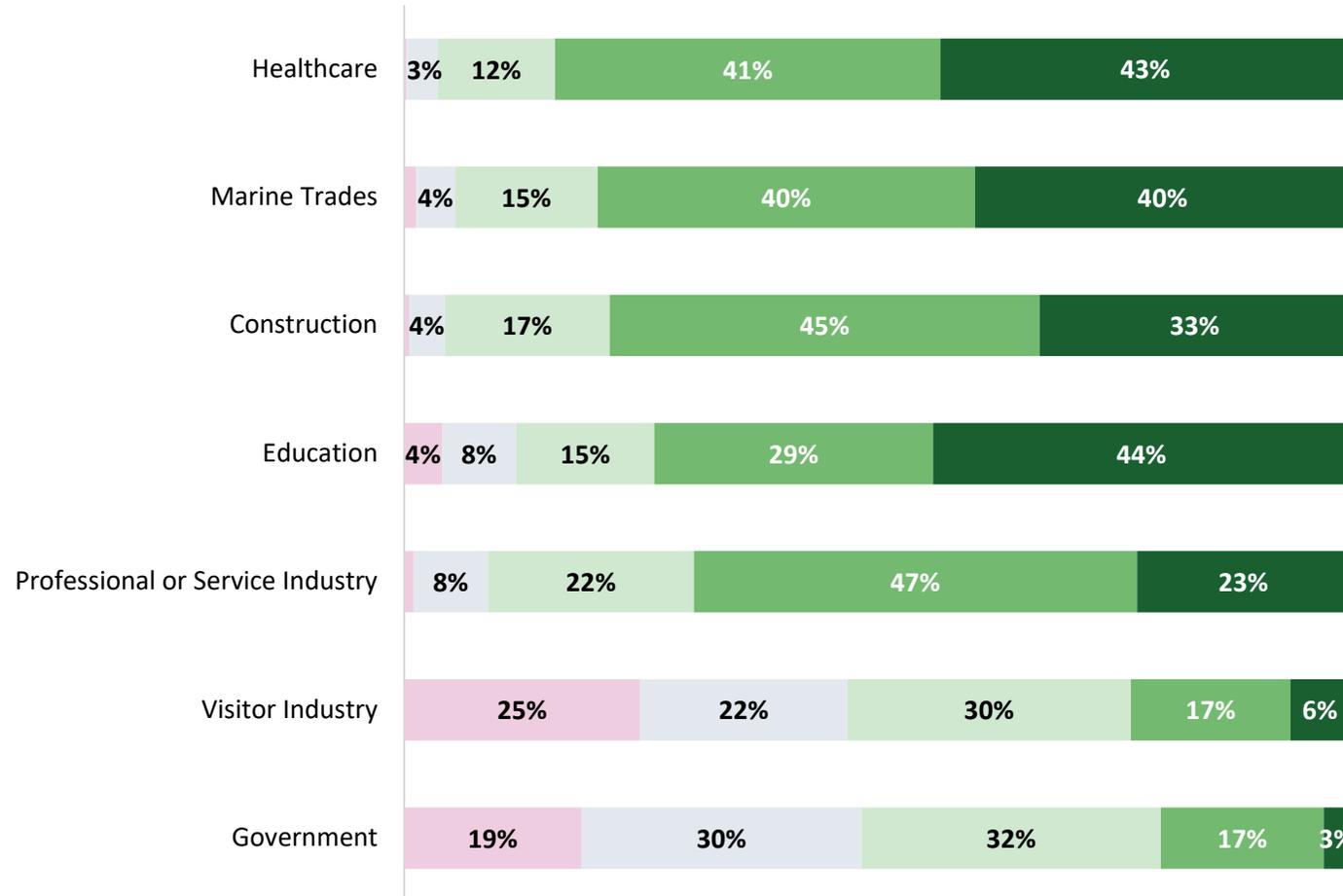
*Sustainable growth, for locals, not summer explosion and winter neglect.*

*I would like to see economic growth with minimal population growth. This means supporting our businesses that create value in the borough.*

**Question #13, Please indicate your preferred level of growth for the following key economic sectors over the next 10 years:**

N = 409.

Smaller than existing No growth Minimal growth (1%) Moderate growth (2-4%) Significant growth (5% or more)



Participants would like to see **moderate or significant growth** in **health care (84%), marine trades (80%), construction (78%), education (73%), and professional or service industries (70%)**.

Participants would like to see **no growth or reduced size of government (49%) and visitor industry (47%)**.

**Question #14, What other questions, comments, ideas, or concerns do you have about the future of Ketchikan, or about the comprehensive planning process?**

N = 150.

*Housing is #1, we literally cannot grow our community without it. The short-term rental market has taken dozens and dozens of former long-term rentals off the market.*

*Plan as though our grandchildren may live here.*

*My #1 concern is how young people and families cannot afford to live in Ketchikan. Our future absolutely depends on attracting and keeping young people and families.*

*Start showing locals that they matter and prioritize them above tourists.*

*Focus on basic needs of the roads, getting ferry to function (AMH), and help with strong safe utilities.*

*There is very little mention of accessibility for the elderly and disabled. In many areas of town are out of compliance with ADA.*

*More art - always.*

*Stop making residents pay 12% more in sales tax during the tourist season.*

*Fix our roads, support a ferry, get woke out of schools.*

*Please focus on caring for long term residents, improving access to mental health care, addressing upstream causes of homelessness and substance use disorders.*

*Remember who we are, this is Native lands, we as Natives can't even get our fish and there is pollution in our waters.*

*Huge concerns with governments (city, borough and school board) not listening to citizens' concerns, then going forward with the plans regardless of community concerns.*

*Have "tourist free" days.*

*Training for trades, a rec center that can support this size of a town.*

*Invest in schools to encourage growth in all areas of Ketchikan.*

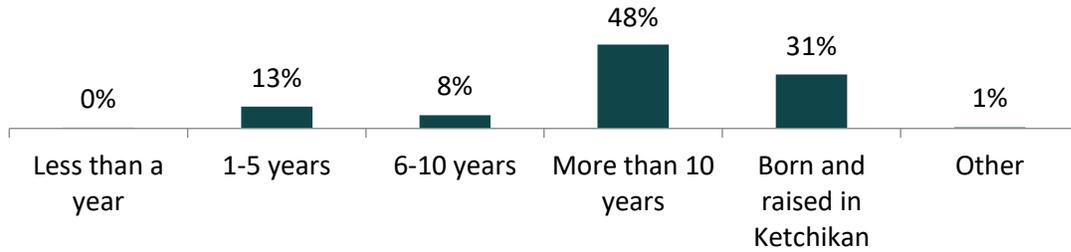
*We're in a tough spot, but we can overcome.*

*Diverse and resilient local economy based in responsible management of and value added to local resources. Pro-active management of tourism.*

## About the Survey Participants

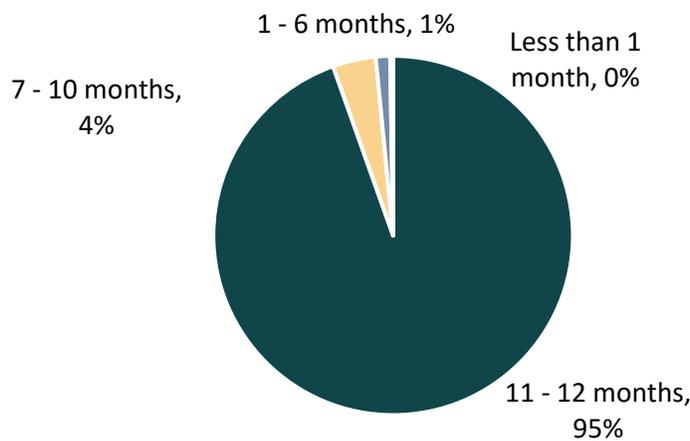
### Question #15, How long have you lived in the Ketchikan community?

N = 408.



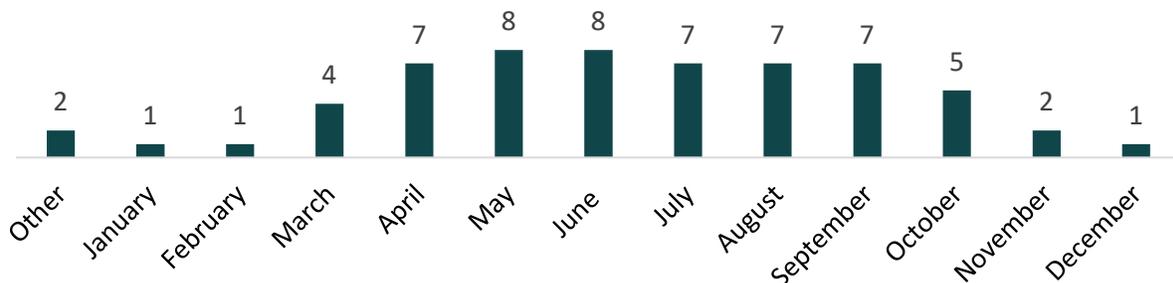
### Question #16, How many months of the year do you live in Ketchikan?

N = 393.



### Question #17, If you are a seasonal resident, which month(s) do you live in Ketchikan (e.g., May-September)?

N = 10.



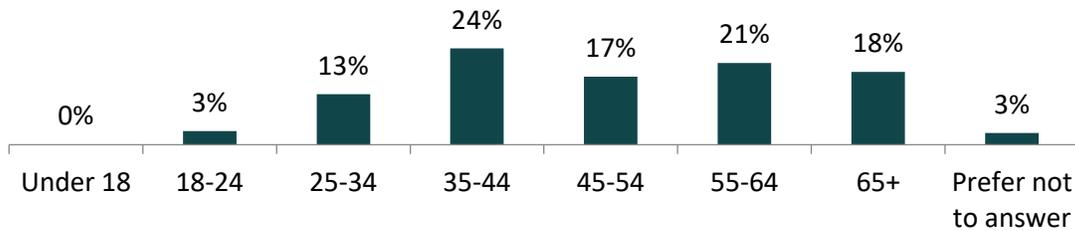
### Question #18, In what area of Ketchikan do you live?

N = 404.

Location	Percent of Responses
City of Ketchikan	42%
Knudson Cove/North Point Higgins	13%
Pond Reef/South Point Higgins	11%
Mountain Point	11%
Other	8%
Ward Cove/Mud Bight Area/Revilla Rd	6%
Waterfall Area/Further north	3%
Saxman	3%
Herring Cove	2%
Gravina Island	1%

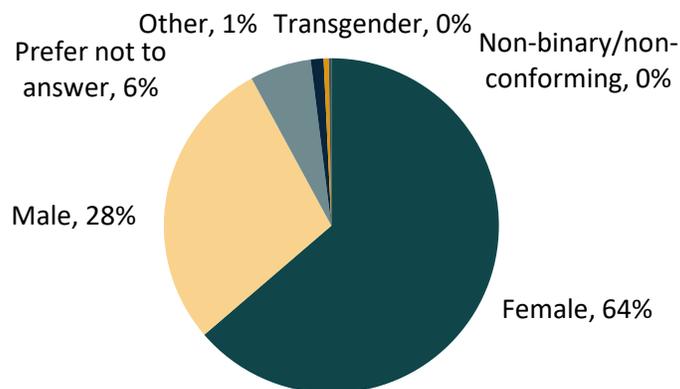
### Question #19, What is your age?

N = 406.



### Question #20, What is your gender?

N = 405.



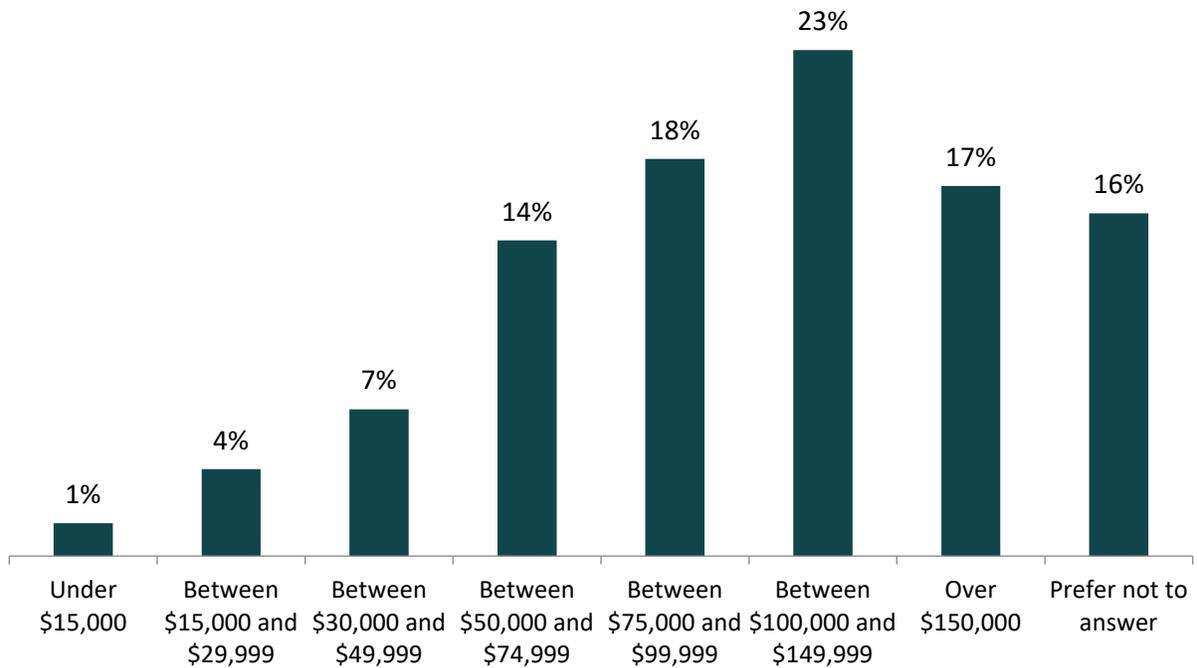
**Question #21, What is your race/ethnicity? Mark all that apply.**

N = 405.

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of Responses
White	76%
Alaska Native or American Indian	14%
Prefer not to answer	14%
Hispanic or Latino	3%
Other (please specify)	2%
Black or African American	1%
Filipino	1%
Asian or Asian American, not Filipino	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1%

**Question #22, What is your estimated household income from all sources?**

N = 404.

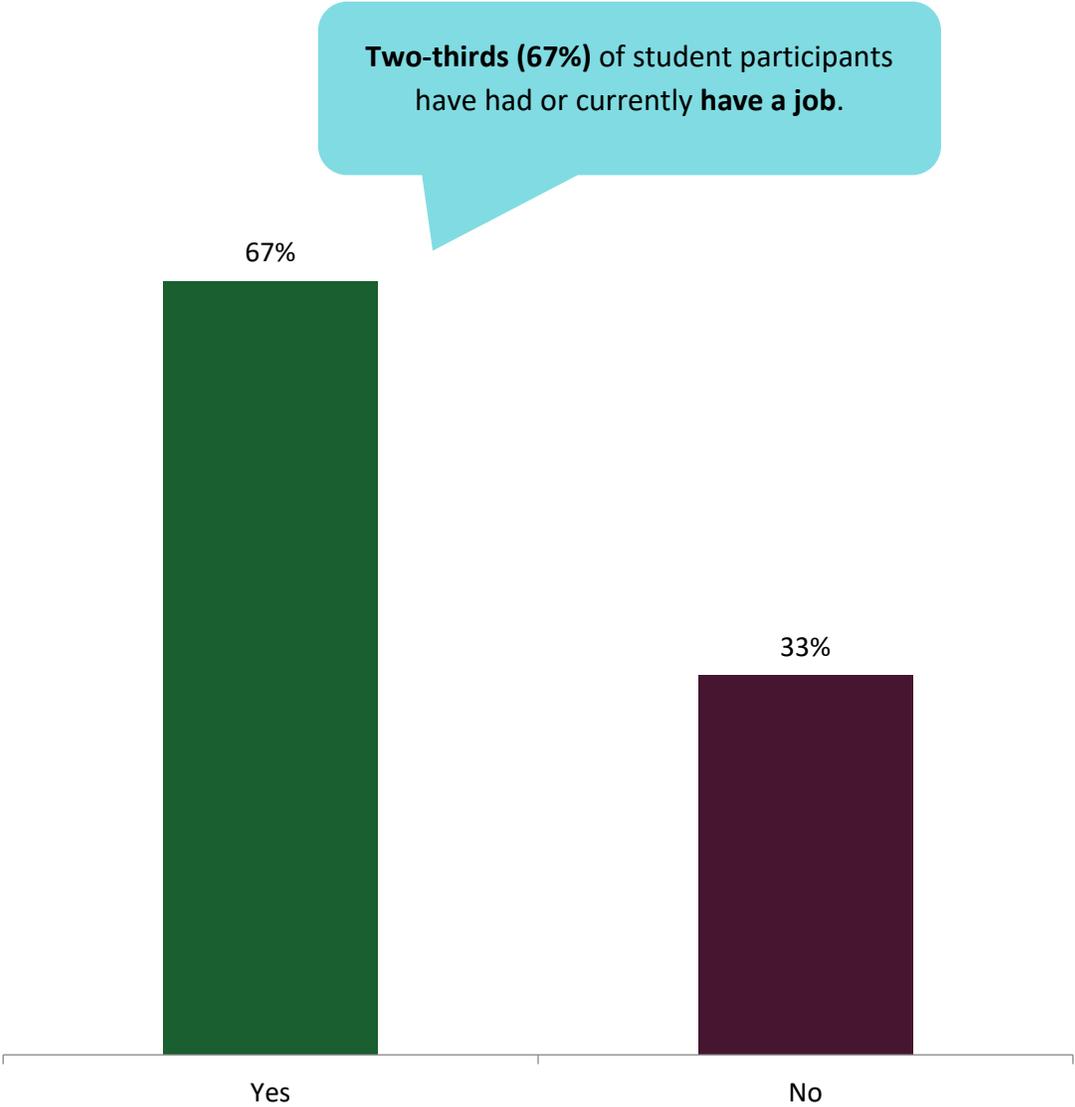


# Youth Survey Results

80 Ketchikan High School students responded to the Youth Survey. For ease of understanding, the results will refer to those who took the Youth Survey as “student participants”

**Question #1**, Have you ever **had a job** or currently have one?

N = 79.



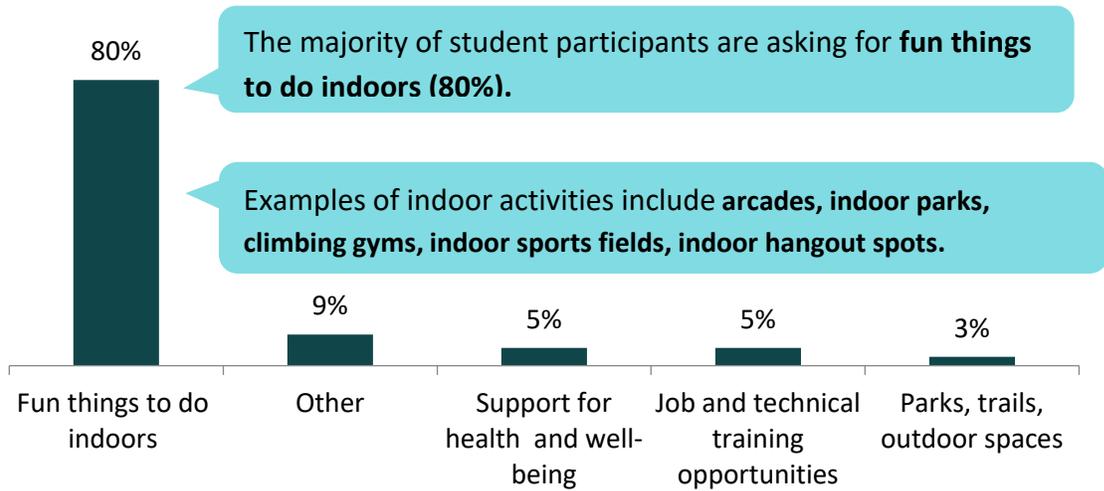
Question #2, What do you like most about living in Ketchikan?

N = 79.



### Question #3, What do you think is **missing** from Ketchikan?

N = 80. Some student participants gave multiple answers in “other;” therefore, total percentage is greater than 100%.

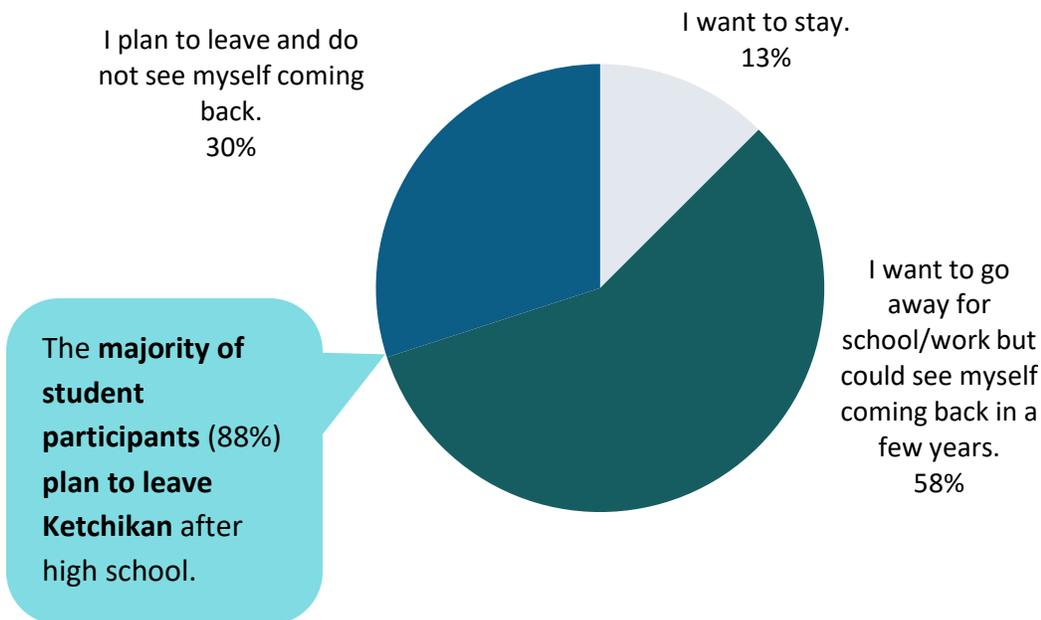


#### Themes of “other” responses (7) (# of responses)

Restaurants (4), Retail stores (2), Being Around Family and Friends (1)

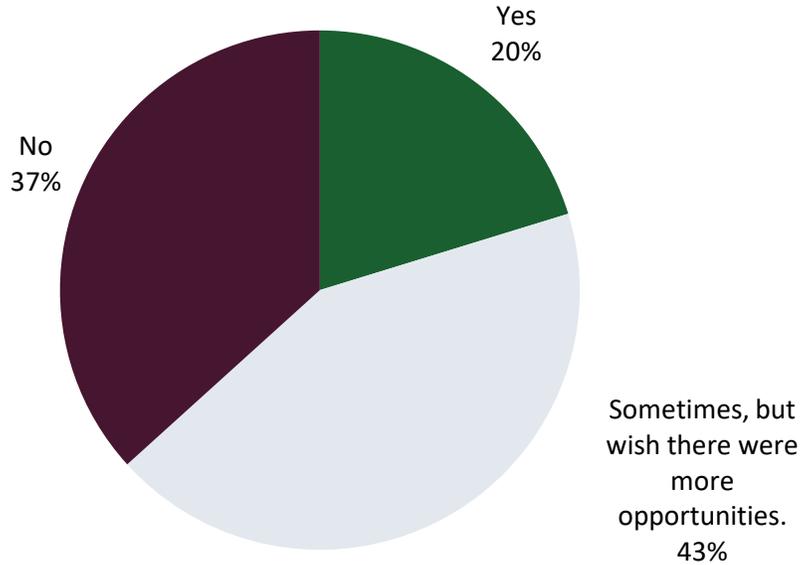
### Question #4, After high school do you plan to **stay in this community or move away?**

N = 80. Total percentage is greater than 100% due to rounding.



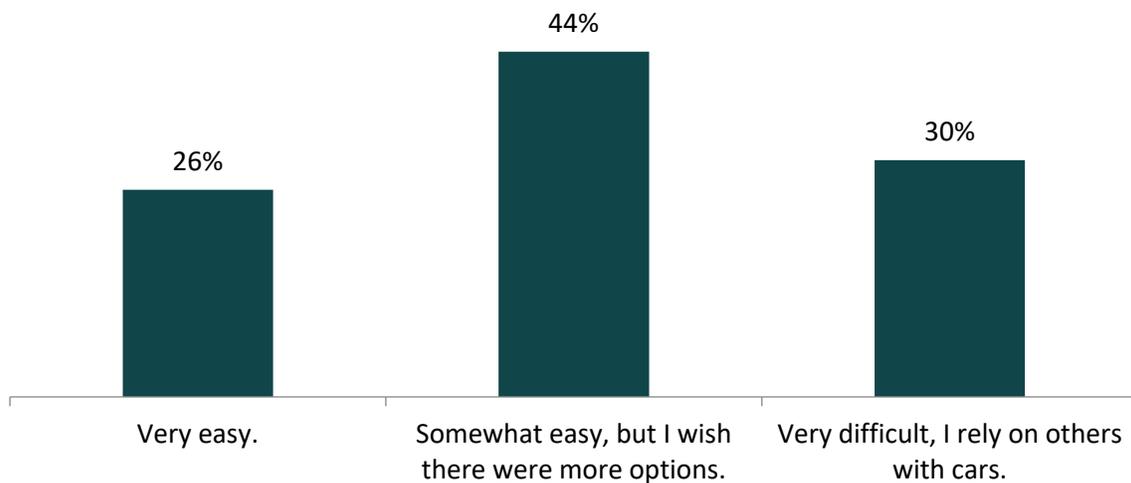
**Question #5, Do you feel like you have a voice when it comes to decisions about your community?**

N = 79.



**Question #6, How easy is it to get around without a car?**

N = 80.



**Question #7, Leave a comment** about anything Ketchikan related you think we missed! For instance, tell us what you would like to change about Ketchikan?

N = 57.

*The **tourists** make life here hard, everything opens up when they're here and we **don't have much food** to sustain ourselves because they take it all.*

*I want **more things for teenagers** to do.*

*If there's **more activities** available it could help keep teens away from drugs and alcohol.*

*I think **filling up the potholes** would be beneficial.*

*We need a **trampoline park** and **better food places** (Taco Bell, ice cream place).*

*Having **more activities for kids**. Ketchikan is mostly an elderly, adult town.*

*I'd like to add **more stores and fast food places**.*

*I love Ketchikan.*

*I want **more things to do** it's boring here.*

*We need **more school funding**.*

*It's very **difficult to get around without cars** because my parents are old, and we were a busy family.*

*We need to **expand the land and better paved roads**.*

*I **don't think we should change anything** about Ketchikan.*

*More stuff to do.*

*We can't ever change it but I want to **change the weather and not have landslides**.*

*Less tourists.*

*I think there just needs to be **more fun things to do**.*

*I think an **upgrade to the rec center gym** would be nice.*

***Taxes** as well as **utility prices**.*

***More people outdoors**, less indoor video games.*

***Bigger Weight room** at the gym.*

# Comment Map Results

The interactive comment map was active from March 17 to April 26, 2025 and received 109 comments, summarized by topic area below.

[See the Full Map](#)

To view all comments received during the survey period, go to <https://cutt.ly/orjEcUFS>

## Transportation (55 Comments)

Transportation comments support additional road connections, extending logging roads for public access, addressing dangerous curves and poor pedestrian safety, expanding parking near popular destinations, and adding traffic flow improvements such as new lights, pedestrian overpasses, and bike lanes.

## Hazards (7 Comments)

Comments focus on hazardous trees near roadways, risks of shoreline landslides, and the need for proactive landslide assessments and mitigation. They also flagged illegal dumping and abandoned vehicles as ongoing safety and environmental issues.

## Housing (3 Comments)

A few comments suggest developing new subdivisions near schools and encouraging the Borough to subdivide Borough-owned lands to support more affordable housing closer to town.

## Recreation (30 comments)

Comments focus on increasing outdoor fitness equipment, new and expanded trails (including for ATVs and bikes), additional cabins, campgrounds, fishing piers, and facilities like climbing gyms and sports fields. There is also strong support for enhancing accessibility to existing recreation areas and maintaining trail infrastructure.

## Land Use (5 comments)

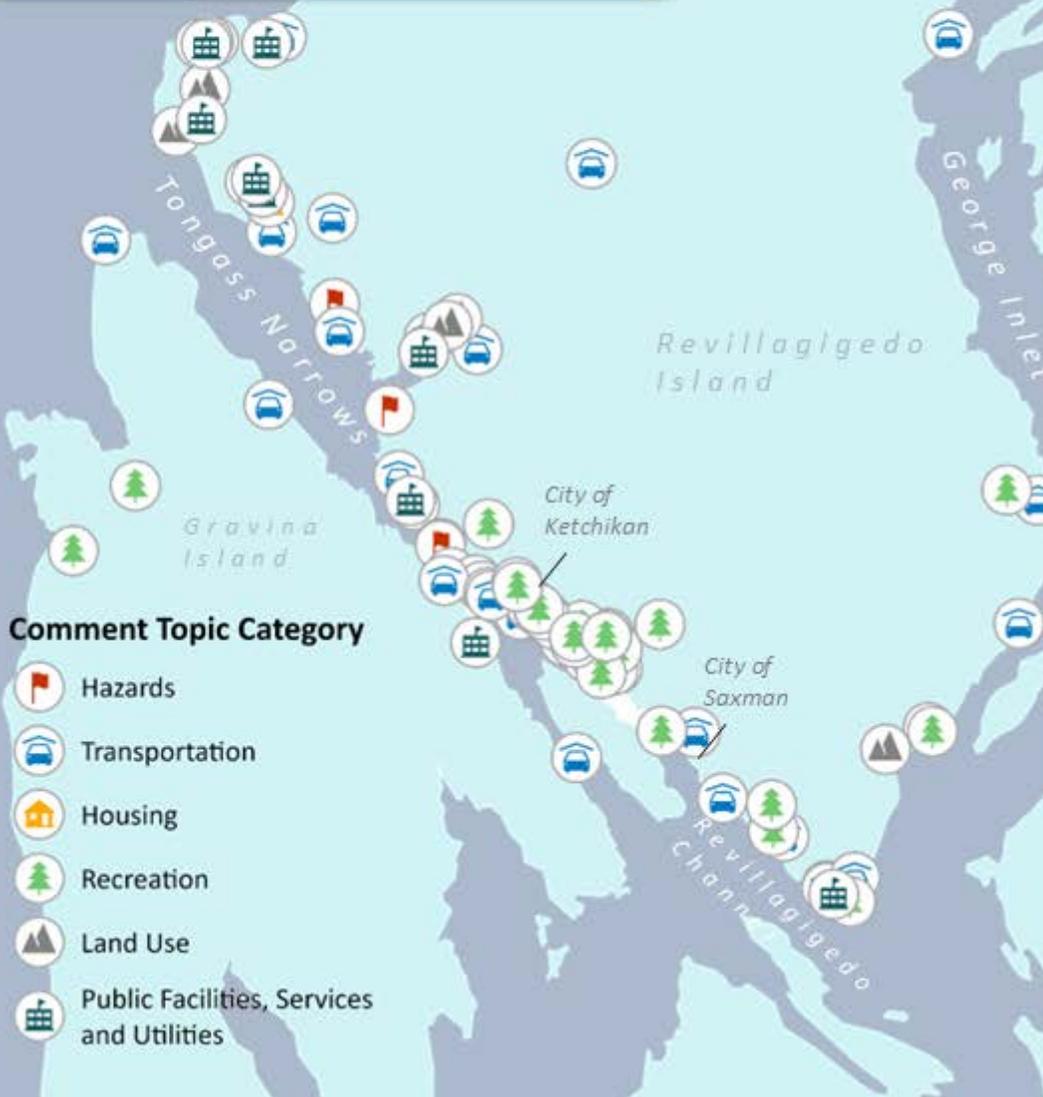
Some comments express support for expanding commercial and mixed-use zoning opportunities outside the downtown core, particularly in the Ward Cove area.

## Public Facilities, Services and Utilities (9 comments)

Comments call for expanded dock facilities, wastewater treatment infrastructure, extension of sewer and water service to underserved areas, improved enforcement tools like cameras to address illegal dumping.

### Comment Topic Category

-  Hazards
-  Transportation
-  Housing
-  Recreation
-  Land Use
-  Public Facilities, Services and Utilities



# Community Open House Notes – February 18, 2025

## 2035 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update

Tuesday, February 18; 4-6pm at the Kayhi Commons

### Description of Activity

The Planning Team held an open house for the Comprehensive Plan project on February 18<sup>th</sup> at the Ketchikan High School Commons (Kayhi Commons) from 4-6 PM. Approximately 40 attendees were present and were asked to provide their feedback on several focus area posters (see below for a list of responses). The team also answered questions about the Comprehensive Plan Update process, purpose, and timeline.



## Summary of Comments by Focus Area

Text in brackets [ ] are used to clarify or modify the original wording of a comment for context, grammar, or readability while maintaining the integrity of the quote. Text in green is used to note where a comment relates to more than one focus area. Check marks ✓ note where more than one individual agreed with a comment.

### 1. Health, Wellbeing, and Education

- Welcome private education.
- Expand fast track
- Develop certification tracks thru public school system.
- Focus education needed for local industry (construction, technology, indigenous trades, etc.).
- Expand recreation center!
- [We need] more [athletic] fields. They are always booked and it's difficult to get free time. If not involved in an organization, it's hard to get access.
- Separate bike trails / lanes from traffic. *Link with transportation.*
- A major hardship is waitlist for specialists. 10-18 months is killing us when we travel for care and try to find ADA rooms. Taxis or booked flights is a problem.
- How can we get SNAP for the farmers market here?
- Get rid of zoning rules for green houses if they are limited to 10 x 12 ft.
- Better accessible public spaces.
- Fitness trail.
- Indoor playground for children.
- Create stronger ties with and a platform for local labor groups. Unions already working to train specialized workforce (IBEW, etc.).
- Lack of access – The cost and lack of insurance and long waitlists for specialists.
- Address standard of living – Housing / childcare access / affordability / adequate pay. So many medical providers want to move here.
- More covered play places.
- Extend the bike path north and south. *Link with transportation.*
- Tax the tourists. *Link with fiscal considerations and economic development.*
- I think this goes back to standard of living. It is not going to matter if you have CTE if young people can't afford to live here.
- Support local community gardens, grocery delivery services, Ketchikan Evergreens, and start a fish donation service.
- Encourage more medical specialties (dermatologists, cancer treatments, audiology).
- Use knowledge of preventative care for suicide and substance abuse. It exists but how to access it?
- If we increase standards of living it would improve access. I would love an indoor facility like Juneau has that can host indoor sports and events.
- The proposals for rec center expansion would be amazing. If the rec center had more classroom type space it could possibly host a before and after school program for elementary students, which would help fill transportation gaps.

- If only there was an easy answer: I feel like education has been bogged down for a while. My child is dyslexic, and I pay an extra \$500 per month for private tutoring to get her to grade level. I'm hopeful that more teaming can occur for better support for teachers and students in larger class sizes.
- UAS gave a compelling presentation on classes that could support high school or college students. Many options like this would be helpful. Many amazing community partners would love to take on interns and if it could be paired with instruction, we might take some burden.
- Promote and support community gardens or food forests. School-based gardening programs would be so helpful. Most master gardeners are of an older age. The course is available through UAA; maybe promote more younger people to pursue this course.
- Playground indoors and outdoors for children!
- Need more activities – especially on the weekend – for working parents. Music classes, arts, and sports activities.
- An AED on wall is needed. Instructions for all to use facility.
- Active social worker at Peace Health required to assist people prior to discharge w/ info on providers and services who are available to assist with medical care paperwork.



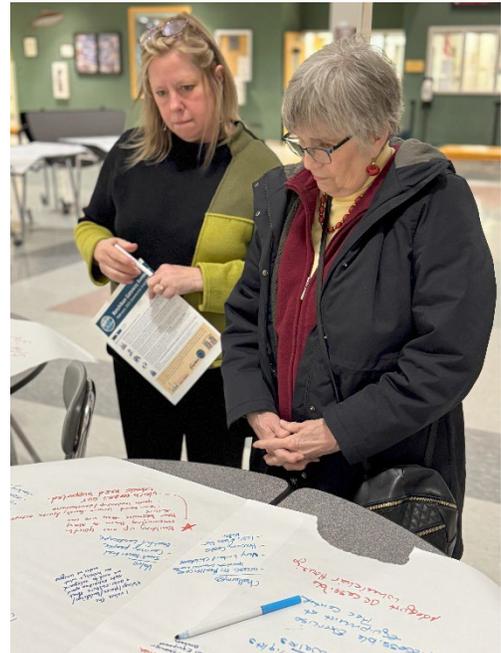
## 2. Visitor and Fishing Industries

- It is amazing when I stand at the airport for a few minutes and watch the amount of fish boxes leave our town – way more than anyone could eat in 10 years! Fish box tax?
- Fishing classes for all youth. Teach the kids who live here how to fish. Unless someone in the family teaches those skills, they are lost for the next generation.
- Encourage growth of mariculture industry (kelp, oysters, etc.) and associated products.
- Can we put a daily cap on the number of ships and tourists rather than letting the cruise industry dictate growth?
- Think about our disabled visitors who don't know about the hardships of visiting.
- Sustainable tourism rooted in safeguarding and celebrating the things/places that people value in Ketchikan.
- KAPA's. Work in creating commercial kitchen / packing resources for loads to be able to become bust sales/commerce.
- Have tourism approved zones; limit or prohibit commercial tour activities in residential zones and preserve recreational areas for non-commercial use. *Link with land use.*
- Have a tourism plan.

## 3. Economic Development and Jobs

- Encourage growth of mariculture industry (kelp, oysters). ✓
- Reimplement trade programs at the high school!! ✓
- Industries in farm and garden. Local agricultural has great potential for Ketchikan.
- Recycling local resources can provide the means for regenerative agriculture.
- Mandates w/ organics in the waste stream / provide infrastructure.

- Competing with corporations.
- Technology!
- Education!
- Medical restoration (addiction services, recovery, grief healing, senior services).
- Small mill operators.
- Why do you tax food? [Link with fiscal considerations.](#)
- Industries that support young families, like childcare, child attractions, academics.
- Freight/shipping competition.
- Shipbuilding.
- Manufactured home building.
- Modernize infrastructure.
- Expand internships and mentorships in trades.
- There is certainly lots of interest in this town with establishing a community-wide composting system.
- Programs and education for our youth that can show them what is viable.
- Support local agriculture like Ketchikan Evergreen and Outpost.
- Timber jobs and products.
- Tax breaks for the 100 plus people employed.
- I think that the community needs more trades. I also think that some licensing issues get in the way of behavioral health professionals. Make peer support specialists hold a stronger role to help fill faps.



#### 4. Housing

- Too many Airbnb's, short-term rentals, too few landlords allowing children, and housing costs in general are too high. ✓
- Low barrier homeless shelter! ✓
- Lack of qualified contractors. ✓
- 1600 square foot townhouse with four-foot setback with garage by Safeway.
- Homeowners don't want to rent parts of their home out and be left with damage from renters. Affordable rental insurance for tenants and protections of homeowners is needed.
- Tax short-term rentals at higher rates. Create better incentives for long-term rentals. [Link with fiscal considerations.](#)
- Make Airbnb's and short-term rentals register and monitor usage. Put a cap on how many [are allowed]. It impacts our community's ability to get housing.
- [Create] low-income housing/apartments.
- Rates of pay for most Ketchikan jobs can't cover rent.
- Low inventory [of housing].
- Lack of stable rental options, especially with pets.
- There's not a lot of help or standards in the home-buying process.
- [Create] fewer roadblocks to higher density or other zoning of housing.

- Ketchikan needs a disability priority list [from Alaska Housing Finance Corporation] like every other community in the state.
- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation needs to issue more vouchers.
- Rentals need to come up to code in order to become eligible for Alaska Housing Finance Corporation vouchers.
- [We need more] affordable 1-2 bed homes for single families under \$400K.
- There are way too many short-term rentals. When I am priced out of Ketchikan it will be tied to housing and rent. I have personally experienced a 48 percent increase in rent in the last five years.
- Less rules on zoning.
- Reduced minimum setbacks.
- Do the things suggested by the housing survey.
- We need accessible housing with zero steps [ADA compliant] and good parking with no age restrictions. Our young and disabled need help too!
- More tiny house developments.
- More multi-generational starter homes.
- More housing for elders to age-in-place and high-density multiplexes.
- Barriers to housing:
  - Shipping costs;
  - Unable to manufacture here;
  - Near impossible to even find a handy man;
  - Low inventory;
  - Low quality inventory;
  - Development costs; and
  - Supply costs.
- More mixed-use / commercial housing.



## 5. Transportation

- The lack of ferry services has completely changed our lives annually. Now it's hard/impossible to hunt, visit family, import goods without massive shipping costs. ✓✓✓✓
- [Poor] road quality! ✓✓✓✓
- The local trail from Frog Pond to the lake is dangerous with its icy slant. It hasn't been maintained since the Ward Cove Road was eliminated. ✓✓
- Make transit free for all youth and elders permanently – beyond the pilot program. ✓✓
- Clearly mark crosswalks and more pedestrian lights. ✓✓
- The ferry schedule is poor and the tickets are more expensive. The Borough could keep advocating for this resource. ✓
- Roads! The quality of roads is related to the costs of repairs and car maintenance from fixing struts, shanks, and driving systems and the time it takes to fix them.
- Prince Rupert has a larger community of SE Alaskans.
- From a 2023 study, 49 percent of food insecurities in Ketchikan are related to lack of transportation to get groceries and knowing how to cook.
- The transit schedule is so limited [one hour between buses]. We have free shuttles for tourists but not for locals. [Link with Fishing and Tourism Industry.](#)
- Build a tube to Gravina, a Bradford bridge to Canaoa, or a ferry to Hyder.
- Disability access! ADA code enforcement for sidewalks. There is maybe ONE accessible trail. Better signage. Get more input from others in the community on our needs. Don't assume people with no hardships can make plans that flow well.
- Non-commercial recreation sites that are for locals only. [Link with Fishing and Tourism Industry.](#)
- Add more blinking crossing signs at all crosswalks.
- Bring back water taxis.



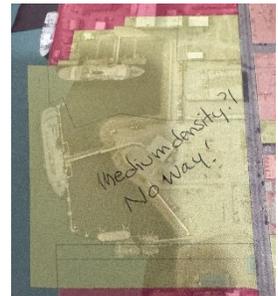
## 6. Public Infrastructure & Services

- Make MIH (Mobile Integrated Healthcare) services available island-wide. ✓✓✓
- Recycling: Target organics in the waste stream and repurpose for local agriculture. Begin replacing dumpsters with recyclers. Better recycling for more than just glass (cardboard, fishing nets, etc.) ✓✓✓
- All EMS need to be trained in communicating with individuals with autism or those who communicate differently. Use other types of communication like iPads. ✓
- If we add more housing north, we need a sewer system! Not just allowing it to overflow into the ocean. North End is the biggest sewer dropper into our ocean. ✓ [Link with Land Use.](#)
- Cleaner water / water filtration system. ✓
- Create emergency call lists for individuals with disabilities and elders who live alone to have support if a natural disaster occurs. [Link with Land Use.](#)

- There seems to be no oversight into private sewer systems in the Borough. Faulty systems run into neighboring properties, etc.
- Create a connected water and sewer system throughout the whole city.
- More water supply valves.
- I wish we could be self-contained: ✓
  - More sustainable;
  - Burn garbage for energy;
  - Working septic systems;
  - Access to mainland; and
  - Need education opportunities for our citizens to do the jobs we need.
- How about runoff pipes under roads instead of building lots. ✓

## 7. Land Use

- More island-wide interpretive signage.
- More opportunities for tandem parking.
- Ward Cove Area
  - This should be a park.
- Gravina & Pennock Island
  - No development without strong consideration of the Pennock/Gravina lifestyle.
- Waterfall/Mile 17
  - Retain beach for park.
  - Remain in the FD zone.
- City of Ketchikan: West End
  - Approve permit for a community garden next to Revilla.
  - Medium density? No way!
- Herring Cove
  - Make this area walking-only and build a pedestrian bridge [that connects with the existing west end pedestrian bridge / trail].
  - Create bus parking fees? *Link with Tourism Industry and Fiscal Considerations.*
- Mountain Point:
  - Create 3-story condos?
  - More flexibility in subdivision regulations. Developers don't want to subdivide because it creates higher property taxes and surveying costs are high. Consider a property tax abatement program linked to the average time it takes to sell smaller properties.





## Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update Land use Partners Discussion

1:00-3:00 PM, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Ketchikan Borough Offices, 1900 First Ave., Ste. 224 and  
via Zoom

**Attendees:** Jason Gubatayao (Sealaska), Cynna Gubatayao (KGB Assistant Borough Manager), Cathy Tighe (USFS), Morgan Barry (KGB Public Works Director), Seth Brakke (City of Ketchikan), Jeff Green (Alaska Mental Health Trust), Tony Keith (SOA Department of Natural Resources Division of Mining, Land, and Water), Mort Larsen (SOA DGGs), Richard Harney (Ketchikan Indian Community), Robb Arnold (KGB Planning Commission), Sharli Arntzen (KGB Assembly).

**Planning Team:** Frank Maloney and Talya Stek (Ketchikan Gateway Borough), Shelly Wade, Meg Friedenauer, and Holly Smith (Agnew::Beck).

### Purpose:

To convene local and other land use leaders and representatives to identify and discuss key trends, challenges, and opportunities in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. This input will inform updated land use goals, strategies, and actions in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update.

### Opening discussion:

Review of purpose of the Ketchikan Comprehensive Plan Update, What We've Learned So Far – Themes, Challenges, Opportunities for housing. Discussion included our starting point – 2009 Comprehensive Plan Goals – and other relevant data, plans, reports, studies, and feedback to date.

### Summary:

The meeting focused on long-range land use planning for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough, considering limited local land ownership, interagency coordination, and development barriers. Key topics included managing moderate growth, expanding housing, resolving land use conflicts, hazard mitigation, preserving natural resources, and promoting economic diversification.

### Agency Representative Updates:

#### U.S. Forest Service – Cathy Tighe

- Currently undergoing a major forest plan revision across the Tongass National Forest.
- The process includes resource-specific assessments, identification of special management areas, and a new zoning-like framework.
- Planning to host additional community meetings to receive feedback on proposed land designations and tribal/community priorities.
- Timeline aims for a finalized plan by late 2027, with input from local and regional agencies welcomed to inform land use decisions.

### **Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – Tony Keith**

- No current area plan specific to the Borough; the department’s focus is on maximizing sustainable use of state lands for economic and recreational purposes.
- The Prince of Wales Area Plan is currently under revision; other regional updates are on a rotation cycle.
- Open to future coordination or project-specific partnerships with the Borough and other stakeholders.

### **Sealaska Corporation – Jason Gubatayao**

- No long-term plans for mineral extraction on subsurface holdings in the Borough; short-term actions focus on opportunistic aggregate extraction if cost-effective.
- Cleveland Peninsula lands previously managed for timber are now prioritized for multiple uses, including wildlife habitat, carbon offset projects, and potential recreation use.
- Actively exploring transportation (logging road) planning and preservation-based land management strategies.

### **Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys – Mort Larsen**

- Leading efforts on landslide inventory and susceptibility mapping in Ketchikan following the recent Wolf Point landslide.
- Planning to use LIDAR data to develop non-regulatory hazard maps to support local land use decisions.
- Aims to partner with local governments on priority areas and apply similar approaches used in Haines post-2020 landslide disaster.

### **Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office – Jeff Green**

- Mission is to maximize revenue from land and non-cash assets while partnering with local governments when interests align.
- Actively pursuing timber harvest, development, and a large subdivision project near Whipple Creek.
- Recently completed Shelter Cove Road project in partnership with DOT (possible model example of multijurisdictional partnerships); aims to open new access points.
- Exploring future land use options including tourism and voluntary carbon markets. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Borough was recently approved.

### **Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC) – Richard Carney**

- Though a landless tribe, KIC owns and is developing land at Mud Bight and Jackson Street for housing and commercial use.
- Seeking infrastructure partnerships to support tribal housing and service development.
- The tribal housing authority manages ~50 units for tribal members and could expand access with additional funding and partnerships.
- Emphasized challenges aligning community-wide needs with tribal priorities and navigating funding delays for federal grants.

### **Ketchikan Gateway Borough – Cynna Gubatayao and Morgan Barry**

- Prioritizing making land available for housing, though most parcels face access or terrain challenges.
- Interested in improved policy guidance to evaluate unsolicited land purchase offers and strategic development.
- Working with partners like the Mental Health Trust to expand infrastructure access, including the Whipple Creek project.
- Reevaluating road standards to better fit remote and low-density development contexts.
- Exploring ways to increase recreational access on Gravina.

### **City of Ketchikan – Seth Brakke**

- Focused on expanding housing availability through redevelopment of vacant lots, tax foreclosures, and surplus public land.
- Exploring reduced development costs by prioritizing infill projects near transit and services; an inventory of areas is not yet complete.
- Managing aging infrastructure, especially the Ketchikan Lakes drinking water supply system. Seeking partnerships with the Forest Service, BLM, and State of Alaska to construct an alternative pipeline to allow inspection of historic tunnels.

## **Discussion Highlights:**

### **Land Ownership and Growth Capacity**

- Only 0.5% of borough land is locally controlled, while 96% is US Forest Service land.
- Survey Participants expressed a preference to manage moderate population growth (~2%) over the next decade, though most forecast models in the region predict a 2-5% decrease in population.
- Development constraints in Ketchikan include steep terrain, land access, high infrastructure costs, and limited land for housing expansion.

### **Partnerships and Shared Projects**

- The Shelter Cove Road Project and the Kluane Lake Agreement were cited as models for successful multi-entity collaborations that help decrease infrastructure costs.
- Tribal, borough and city partnerships around infrastructure were discussed, noting that Tribal Transportation Facility Bridge Program funds (TTFBP) can only be applied to Tribal lands.
- The Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC) is actively pursuing housing development but needs expanded funding.

### **Hazard Mitigation and Environmental Concerns**

- The borough faces landslide and flood risks, with a need for hazard mapping.
- Forest Service land includes vital infrastructure, such as Ketchikan’s drinking water source, which requires upgrades.

### **Private Land and Housing Development**

- High development costs and limited land within city limits constrain housing efforts.

- The Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Office owns 13,000 acres and aims to generate revenue through timber and land sales.
- Involving large private landowners is essential to address housing needs and align development goals.

**Questions raised that may need additional discussion or research:**

- What shifts in policies or zoning are needed to promote economic diversification?
- How can we leverage tideland leases?
- How can the borough and partners balance growth, development, and conservation?
- What structural or regulatory barriers are preventing alignment between Tribal, city, and borough development?

**Possible strategies and actions to consider for the Comprehensive Plan:**

*(Note: these are suggested strategies to consider from this discussion only, not considering other inputs at this time.)*

**Support Coordinated Land Use and Partnerships**

- Formalize strategic partnerships with KIC, City of Ketchikan, State of Alaska, and federal land agencies.
  - Encourage interagency agreements, like MOU's or Good Neighbor Agreements(e.g., for road access, infrastructure improvements, and hazard mitigation).
  - Promote Tribal participation in community development planning, especially in housing and transportation.
  - Set up regular meetings between jurisdictions to find common solutions to priorities.

**Address Housing Access and Land Constraints**

- Identify and zone land suitable for higher-density and workforce housing.
- Explore land swaps or easements to improve access to developable land.
- Include large private landowners in planning discussions to coordinate housing development.

**Advance Resilience and Environmental Stewardship**

- Develop and maintain landslide inventory and susceptibility maps.
- Integrate hazard mitigation and emergency planning into land use designations.
- Coordinate with federal partners to protect natural habitats and critical drinking water sources.

**Promote Economic Diversification**

- Identify land use changes needed to support new sectors like carbon markets, or tourism alternatives.
- Assess zoning and land policies that inhibit development or create unnecessary complexity for private and nonprofit development partners.

**Incorporate Cultural, Recreational, and Community Values**

- Encourage co-management models that preserve access to traditional and subsistence use areas.
- Support land-based recreation infrastructure planning in coordination with landowners.
- Recognize and plan for the importance of open space, cultural heritage, and resource access in land use decisions.

### Additional follow-up

- Develop landslide inventory and susceptibility maps to inform development decisions and mitigate hazards.
- Work with city to develop infill opportunity inventory.
- Explore partnership and cost-sharing opportunities for joint infrastructure and planning projects.
- Coordinate with the US Forest Service on the Ketchikan Lakes drinking water pipeline project.
- Monitor Forest Plan revision efforts and align borough priorities with federal land management goals.



## Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update **Transportation Partners Discussion**

10:00-11:30 AM, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Ketchikan Borough Offices, 1900 First Ave., Ste. 224 and  
via Zoom

**Attendees:** Craig Bisson (Alaska Marine Highway System), Dan Kelly (Alaska Marine Lines), Peter Amylon (KGB Economic Development Coordinator), Emily Loyd (SAIL), Kyan Reeve and Stephanie Bushong (KGB Transit Department), Kaitlyn Jared (Southeast Conference), Ron Curtis (Inter Island Ferry Authority), Christopher Goins, Kirk Miller, Jill Melcher, and Vicki Roberts, (AK DOT&PF), Seth Brakke (City of Ketchikan Public Works Director and Engineering Manager), James Wilson (City of Ketchikan Port and Harbor Department), Richard Harney and Myrna Chaney (Ketchikan Indian Community), Alex Perura (KGB Airport Manager), Ginger McCormick (City of Saxman), Lee Bethel (Allen Marine), Janalee Gage.

**Planning Team:** Frank Maloney and Talya Stek (Ketchikan Gateway Borough), Meg Friedenauer and Holly Smith (Agnew::Beck).

### **Purpose**

To convene local and other transportation leaders and representatives to identify and discuss key trends, challenges, and opportunities in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. This input will inform updated transportation goals, strategies, and actions in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update.

### **Opening discussion:**

Review of purpose of the Ketchikan Comprehensive Plan Update, What We've Learned So Far – Themes, Challenges, Opportunities for housing. Discussion included our starting point – 2009 Comprehensive Plan Goals – and other relevant data, plans, reports, studies, and feedback to date.

### **Summary:**

This meeting focused on transportation needs and priorities in Ketchikan as part of the comprehensive plan update. Participants discussed key infrastructure challenges including landslide risks, the aging downtown viaduct system, summer traffic congestion, improving accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and strengthening marine and road transportation systems. Collaboration, ADA compliance, and funding strategies were recurring themes in the discussion.

### **Discussion Highlights**

#### **Road and Emergency Infrastructure**

- Concerns over landslides (e.g., Wolf Point) cutting off road access and how to better respond and mitigate through more comprehensive emergency planning.
- Discussion about the Bradford Canal project and long-term funding needs.
- Interest in exploring bypass or alternate routes to reduce pinch points.

- The DOT will need Borough support and advocacy to fully fund the now partially funded Tongass Avenue & Water Street Viaducts Project. The estimated cost for this project is between \$50 million and \$60 million, making it one of the most substantial transportation projects in the region and will be executed in multiple phases over the next several years.

### **Marine Transportation**

- Challenges with aging marine vessels, staffing capacity, and docking infrastructure.
- Discussion on reactivating emergency water routes and ADA ferry services.
- Inner Island Ferry Authority’s role in regional emergency planning noted.
- High costs of marine shipping resulting primarily from lack of backhaul cargo out of Ketchikan.

### **ADA Accessibility**

- Ongoing issues with lack of ADA sidewalk accessibility and parking.
- Public transportation needs further improvements in accessibility services.
- Emergency Operations Planning for landslides must include considerations for ADA service.
- Praise for the high level of ADA compliance in ferry services.

### **Complete Streets & Community Design**

- Interest in implementing Complete Streets principles to serve all users—drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and those with disabilities.
- Emphasis on integrating trails, sidewalks, and safe pedestrian crossings into transportation planning.

### **Workforce Development & Planning Alignment**

- Need for a strong transportation workforce to maintain and operate infrastructure.
- Encouragement to align borough plans with state and federal transportation strategies.
- Importance of referencing existing studies to leverage previous investments.

### **Questions raised that need additional discussion or research:**

- How to encourage backhaul and collaborations to maximize barging and marine shipping opportunities and reduce costs?
- Will the viaduct expansion include sidewalk and accessibility upgrades? *Note: Only in areas that are currently up to ADA standards.*
- What are the state’s requirements or policies for ADA compliance and Complete Streets?
- How can the borough proactively plan around natural hazards like landslides?
- What’s the role of ADA tour agencies in bringing visitors to Ketchikan?
- How can transportation systems reflect the community’s identity and cultural values (e.g. street design and traditional marine routes)?
- How can jurisdictions (city, borough, state) leverage tourism revenues to fund road maintenance and improvements needed to support a year-round population of 13,700 and 1.5 million annual cruise visitors? *Note: In February 2025 KGB rescinded a sales tax exemption for cruise ships, allowing the city to collect a 2.5% sales tax on items sold onboard while docked. This policy change is expected to generate up to \$300,000 annually, contributing additional funds to address*

*the impacts of tourism on local infrastructure. See also: Cruise Passenger Volume Cost Analysis: City of Ketchikan, 2024.*

## Possible strategies and actions to consider for the Comprehensive Plan:

*(Note: these are suggested strategies to consider from this discussion only, not considering other inputs at this time.)*

### **Improve Infrastructure Resilience and Road Safety**

- Prioritize ongoing maintenance and improvements of current infrastructure.
- Identify and prioritize road and infrastructure projects that mitigate landslides, flooding, and other natural hazards.
- Map transportation needs across the borough to guide investment decisions and identify service gaps.
- Utilize utility data, traffic studies, and walkability assessments to monitor infrastructure performance and maintenance needs.
- Incorporate local cultural elements, such as Indigenous design and language, into signage and public infrastructure to reflect community identity and pride.

### **Enhance ADA Compliance and Universal Accessibility**

- Conduct a comprehensive ADA compliance review of all existing and planned transportation infrastructure.
- Upgrade sidewalks to include wider, smoother, and more accessible pathways for all users.
- Increase the number of ADA-accessible parking spaces beyond state minimum requirements, particularly near public facilities and commercial areas.
- Ensure all public transportation vehicles—including buses and ferries—are fully accessible to individuals with mobility challenges.
- Involve disability advocates and residents with lived experience in transportation planning and project design.

### **Expand and Adapt Public Transit Services**

- Continue and enhance Ketchikan’s advocacy for the Alaska Marine Highway service and funding with the state.
- Extend transit service boundaries for The Bus to serve more remote and underserved areas.
- Develop new fixed bus routes and improve service frequency in areas with limited or no current access to public transit.
- Provide more flexible, on-demand transportation options tailored for elderly, disabled, and low-income residents.
- Improve transit connectivity to key destinations such as housing developments, medical facilities, schools, shopping centers, and employment hubs.

### **Advance Multimodal and Emergency Transportation Options**

- Integrate Complete Streets principles into transportation planning and infrastructure design to support safe travel for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and motorists.

- Construct dedicated bike lanes and expand pedestrian-friendly infrastructure throughout the borough.
- Enhance emergency transportation capacity by developing alternative road and marine routes, especially in landslide- or flood-prone areas.

### **Strengthen Community Engagement and Planning Coordination**

- Conduct walkability and transportation equity assessments across different neighborhoods.
- Engage a broad spectrum of community members—including youth, elders, Tribal leaders, and persons with disabilities—to identify transportation needs and priorities.
- Coordinate with regional and state transportation agencies to align local plans with broader strategies and funding opportunities.

### **Secure Sustainable Funding and Build Strategic Partnerships**

- Pursue federal and state funding opportunities, including the Safe Streets for All grant (FY25 deadline: June).
- Partner with the Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC), Organized Village of Saxman, and other Tribal entities on shared transportation goals.
- Prioritize accessibility, multimodal integration, and hazard mitigation in all grant applications.
- Collaborate with local nonprofits, service providers, and businesses to pilot innovative and inclusive transportation solutions.

### **Additional follow-up**

- Safe Streets for All grant application due in June; staff to evaluate alignment with local needs.
- Holly may follow up individually with participants to expand on suggestions.

### **Post-Meeting Notes**

- Tribal governments can integrate marine transportation into their formal transportation systems through the TTP, but they must be focused on associated land-based facilities (boat landings, ferry terminals, etc.) rather than the water body itself. There’s a pathway through BIA TTP funding + potential Marine Highway grants + Tribal Transit grants to fund reactivating traditional marine routes. Potential funding sources:
  - BIA Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) Funds. Used for planning, design, construction, and maintenance of eligible facilities. Docks, marine access points, and boat ramps are eligible if they’re part of a transportation plan.
  - FHWA Tribal Transportation Safety Funds. If reactivating marine routes improves Tribal transportation safety, you could also tap safety-specific grants.
  - America’s Marine Highway Program Grants. Technically available if linked to recognized marine corridors.
  - Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Tribal Transit Program. Can fund ferry service planning and operations if proposed as public transit.



## Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update Economic Development Partners Discussion 10:00-11:30 AM, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Ketchikan Borough Offices, 1900 First Ave., Ste. 224 and via Zoom

**Attendees present:** Michelle O'Brien (Chamber of Commerce and Southern Southeast Alaska Building Industry Association), Rob Arnold (KGB Planning Commission), Peter Amylon (KGB Economic Development Coordinator), Deborah Hayden (Grow Ketchikan and Ketchikan Community Land Trust), Richard Harney (Ketchikan Indian Community), Kaitlyn Jared (Southeast Conference.)

**Planning Team:** Frank Maloney and Talya Stek (Ketchikan Gateway Borough), Meg Friedenauer and Maxine Lazlo (Agnew::Beck).

### Purpose

To convene local and other Economic Development leaders and representatives to identify and discuss key trends, challenges, and opportunities in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. This input will inform updated economic development goals, strategies, and actions in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update.

### Opening discussion:

Review of purpose of the Ketchikan Comprehensive Plan Update, What We've Learned So Far – Themes, Challenges, Opportunities for economic development. Discussion included our starting point – 2009 Comprehensive Plan Goals – and other relevant data, plans, reports, studies, and feedback to date.

### Summary:

The meeting focused on updating the Economic Development chapter of the Ketchikan Comprehensive Plan. Participants discussed key challenges such as high cost of living, housing shortages, workforce development limitations, and diversifying the economy with healthcare, marine trades, construction, small business, and value added local products identified as potential growth sectors. The role of tourism was discussed, highlighting a need to balance visitor-related revenue with local quality of life. Policy concerns such as the sales tax structure and seasonal housing practices were raised, and potential new industries like data centers were mentioned.

### Discussion Highlights

- **Cost of Living & Housing:** Rising costs for housing and essentials are significantly impacting residents and deterring workforce retention. Seasonal housing vacancies were noted as a key issue. High cost of living and unaffordable housing are top barriers to retaining workers and attracting new residents.
- **Population Decline:** Projected population and school enrollment declines could affect long-term community sustainability.

- **Economic Diversification:** Broad agreement on the need to move beyond tourism. Healthcare, construction, and marine trades were identified as top targets for growth, based on community survey results. There is interest in exploring high-tech and digital industries, including data centers, as long-term diversification options.
- **Tourism Debate:** Discussed the mixed community feedback about tourism; some residents want to see continued tourism development, while others emphasized the need to diversify to protect local quality of life.
- **Workforce Development:** Strong support for vocational and trades education. The lack of skilled workers was identified as a barrier to growth in key industries.
- **Sales Tax Concerns:** Discussed how the current cap structure places a disproportionate burden on lower-income residents.

### Questions raised that need additional discussion or research:

- How can local and regional entities support value-added mariculture and other small industries?
- Where do sales tax revenues go, and could the structure be made more equitable?
- What policies exist (or could be created) to keep seasonal housing open year-round?
- How can local government spur growth in existing or emerging industries, particularly for small businesses?

### Possible strategies and actions to consider for the Comprehensive Plan:

- Explore partnerships for workforce development (e.g., with UAS, Southeast Generations).  
*(Kaitlyn from Southeast Conference shared a partner list with Meg.)*
- Investigate policy changes around the sales tax cap to improve equity and cost of living.
- Identify and prioritize industries for economic diversification (e.g., data centers, marine trades, construction, value added local products, exporting more local manufacturing).

### Additional follow-up

- Survey findings and background data will be publicly released within 2–3 weeks.
- The Southeast Conference’s business climate survey remains open through late April/early May.



## Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update Housing Partners Discussion 10:00-11:30 AM, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Ketchikan Borough Offices, 1900 First Ave., Ste. 224 and via Zoom

**Attendees:** Michelle O'Brien (Chamber of Commerce and Southern Southeast Alaska Building Industry Association), Cathy Tighe (US Forest Service), Robb Arnold (KGB Planning Commission), Sharli Arntzen (KGB Assembly), Peter Amylon (KGB Economic Development Coordinator), Morgan Barry (KGB Public Works Director), John Thompson (Alpine Real Estate and KGB contractor), Deborah Hayden (Grow Ketchikan and Ketchikan Community Land Trust), Richard Harney (Ketchikan Indian Community), Ginger McCormick (City of Saxman).

**Planning Team:** Frank Maloney and Talya Stek (Ketchikan Gateway Borough), Meg Friedenauer and Holly Smith (Agnew::Beck).

### Purpose

To convene local and other housing leaders and representatives to identify and discuss key trends, challenges, and opportunities in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. This input will inform updated housing goals, strategies, and actions in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update.

### Opening discussion:

Review of purpose of the Ketchikan Comprehensive Plan Update, What We've Learned So Far – Themes, Challenges, Opportunities for housing. Discussion included our starting point – 2009 Comprehensive Plan Goals – and other relevant data, plans, reports, studies, and feedback to date.

### Summary:

The meeting centered on housing issues in Ketchikan, as part of the comprehensive plan update. Attendees emphasized the urgency of addressing the lack of affordable and available housing, the aging housing stock, and the impacts of short-term rentals. The importance of data collection, partnerships, homelessness concerns, tracking of derelict properties and strategic planning was also discussed, as well as exploring strategies like land trusts and Tribal collaboration.

### Discussion Highlights:

#### Housing Affordability & Supply

- Lack of affordable housing is the top concern of residents, based on the community survey results.
- Construction costs, land availability, and land prices hinder new development.
- There is a growing demand for multi-generational and workforce housing.

### **Short-Term Rentals**

- We discussed concerns about short-term rentals reducing long-term housing availability.
- Improved tracking and regulations for short-term rentals were discussed as a helpful tool in understanding the true impacts of short-term rentals.

### **Accessibility in Housing**

- In addition to discussion about a desire for multi-generational housing options, it was also noted that residents sometimes leave Ketchikan due to lack of accessible housing not just for seniors but also for people with disabilities.
- Considerations about access, mobility, and proximity to basic services are necessary when considering housing development.

### **Data Needs**

- There is insufficient data on housing vacancy, rental costs, building permits, short-term rentals, and housing condition trends.
- Suggestions included using utility disconnect data to identify derelict properties and conducting a housing needs assessment.

### **Homeless Services**

- There is a lack of emergency housing solutions and gaps for transitional housing services in Ketchikan.
- Some attendees raised concerns about attracting unhoused individuals from other areas of the state if services are overbuilt.
- The group discussed the need to balance social services with the sustainability of services.

### **Derelict Properties**

- Participants discussed using tax records and utility data to track units falling into disrepair.

### **Partnerships & Solutions**

- Potential for land trusts and partnerships with Tribal housing organizations and housing authorities was discussed.
- Discussion on the idea of “adaptive reuse” of existing structures and modular housing options.

### **Questions raised that need additional discussion or research:**

- How many housing units are needed to meet demand, and how do we get there?
- How can we define and measure “affordable” housing in the context of Ketchikan?
- What is a healthy vacancy rate, and how do we achieve it?
- How can the Borough gather better housing data?
- How often do properties transition to uninhabitable or derelict status?
- How can we keep better track of short-term rentals and their impact?

## Possible strategies and actions to consider for the Comprehensive Plan:

*(Note: these are suggested strategies to consider from this discussion only, not considering other inputs at this time.)*

### **Data Collection and Housing Market Assessment**

- Conduct a comprehensive housing needs assessment to identify current and projected housing demand, vacancy rates, affordability, and resident needs.
- Establish a centralized data repository to track housing inventory, trends in vacancy, rental and ownership costs, and building permits.
- Define clear, locally relevant metrics for “attainable” or affordable housing to guide planning and development decisions.
- Analyze derelict property trends using tools such as utility disconnect data to track properties transitioning from habitable to uninhabitable.

### **Multi-Generational and Flexible Housing Options**

- Review zoning codes to consider how and if code could be revised to allow for more types of flexible housing arrangements, such as duplexes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and shared living spaces.
- Encourage (consider incentives?) for housing designs that accommodate multiple generations, such as separate entrances, flexible layouts, and shared amenities.

### **Utility and Infrastructure Support**

- Develop utility relief programs or rebates for homes that add additional family units or affordable rentals.
- Coordinate with utility providers to upgrade infrastructure capacity in areas identified for housing expansion.
- Explore utility incentive programs (e.g., fee waivers, reduced connection costs) for developers building new housing, especially that include affordable units.

### **Partnerships and Housing Development**

- Partner with Tribal housing authorities and regional organizations (e.g., KIC, Saxman, Tlingit Haida, Southeast Conference) to co-develop housing solutions and leverage funding sources.
- Explore opportunities with the Ketchikan Community Land Trust to find developable land.
- Work with Rural CAP and other nonprofits to promote mutual self-help housing and homeownership programs.
- Incentivize employers to create or support workforce housing, especially in sectors with labor shortages.

### **Property Rehabilitation and Revitalization**

- Develop incentives and technical assistance programs to support the rehabilitation of aging or vacant housing.

- Establish demolition and disposal subsidies to reduce the burden of removing derelict structures and encourage new construction.
- Consider temporary assessment relief for homeowners making significant improvements to older or underutilized properties.

#### **Accessibility and Inclusive Housing**

- Ensure new housing developments include accessible units that meet or exceed ADA standards.
- Prioritize universal design and aging-in-place principles to support seniors and residents with disabilities in maintaining independence.
- Incorporate accessibility considerations into housing strategies and funding priorities to ensure the needs of all residents are met.

#### **Additional follow-up**

- Follow up with Richard from KIC to learn more about their housing initiatives and share resources.
- Continue discussions and research about homelessness, emergency, and transitional housing needs in the community.
- Continue discussions and research about short-term rentals effects on housing in the community.
- Send out meeting notes (Meg and Talia) and invite further input by email from attendees.



## Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update Health and Wellness Partners Discussion

1:00-2:30 PM, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Ketchikan Borough Offices, 1900 First Ave., Ste. 224 and  
via Zoom

**Attendees:** Jenny Gallegos and Angie Mataka (SAIL Ketchikan), Robb Arnold (KGB Planning Commission), Amber Williams-Baldwin, Brehanna Johnson (KIC), Kate Govaars and Sarah Cook (PeaceHealth), Michael Martin and Dustin Larna (Residential Youth Care), Peter Amylon (KGB Economic Development Coordinator), Alma Manabat Parker, Jackie Yates, and Lisa DeLaet (Ketchikan Wellness Coalition).

**Planning Team:** Frank Maloney and Talya Stek (Ketchikan Gateway Borough), Meg Friedenauer and Maxine Lazlo (Agnew::Beck).

### Purpose

To convene local and other health and wellness leaders and representatives to identify and discuss key trends, challenges, and opportunities in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. This input will inform updated health and wellness goals, strategies, and actions in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update.

### Summary:

The meeting focused on updating the health and wellness components of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan. Key issues included food insecurity, behavioral health access, workforce shortages, the need for more inclusive recreation and prevention programs, improving coordination among service providers, investing in early intervention, and identifying sustainable funding for community wellness. Participants also discussed the importance of integrating social services and creating more inclusive policies to address long-standing community needs.

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### Opening discussion:

Review of purpose of the Ketchikan Comprehensive Plan Update, What We've Learned So Far – Themes, Challenges, Opportunities for housing. Discussion included our starting point – 2009 Comprehensive Plan Goals – and other relevant data, plans, reports, studies, and feedback to date.

### Discussion Highlights:

#### Disability Awareness

- Some health care providers are requesting additional education about how to support individuals with disabilities and/or neurodivergence.

## Food Security

- Data shows nearly half of Ketchikan residents are food insecure.
- Participants stressed the need for sustainable funding for food programs and alignment between agencies.
  - Most funding is sporadic, making it difficult for long-term services.
  - Some agencies that currently provide emergency food services are Love Inc., Salvation Army, and the schools themselves through PTAs.
  - Other programs, like Recreational Youth Care, CAP, and WISH, provide food to their participants. Participants may go to one or two of these services, but more coordination and list sharing could help expand access.
- Community gardens and school-linked food education programs are expanding and seen as a promising strategy.
- The group discussed some of the challenges around food security including:
  - Inconsistent food availability: Grocery stores often run out of items quickly, particularly a few days after shipments, making it hard for people to purchase needed items.
  - Transportation issues: Difficulty getting to grocery stores, purchasing food, and bringing groceries home, especially for those who rely on public transportation.
  - Grocery Store storage capacity: With Ketchikan's seasonal population, grocery stores cannot always store enough food to meet demand, leading to rapid depletion of shelves.
  - High food costs: Rising prices make it difficult for residents to afford groceries.
  - Lack of sustainable funding: There's no consistent funding source to support food security initiatives.
  - Scattered resources: While various organizations offer food assistance, the organizations don't have the capacity or resources to coordinate food donations and distributions.
- For subsistence, the US Forest Service is open to hearing ideas for the forest plan revision if there are locations with desired uses for hunting and gathering that are not already being utilities.
- Access, preparation, and storage of cultural foods also positively contributes to positive mental and physical health. Some private providers are working to stock foods, but additional programming could be beneficial.

## Behavioral and Specialized Health Care

- 58% of survey respondents reported dissatisfaction with behavioral health services.
  - Challenges include long wait times, lack of licensed and supervising clinicians, and difficulty recruiting providers due to high housing costs.
  - There are now two psychiatric doctors in the community, providing expanded availability. Their schedules are not fully, so PeaceHealth has been sending them to other communities during gaps in service needs. If individuals are dissatisfied with access to behavioral health services, there may be other factors at play (e.g., insurance, needing a therapist/counselor instead of a psychiatrist, knowledge of services).
  - There seems to be a growing community awareness about behavioral health, helping to reduce the stigma around seeing mental health resources, especially post-COVID.
- A new pediatric doctor is coming to PeaceHealth, expanding health access for children.

- Anecdotally, it's difficult to find services for patients with complex cases, leading some families to relocate from Ketchikan to find care.
  - Ketchikan has a high rate of specialized providers for an area of its size. May need to explore other reasons for long wait times, especially for neurology and endocrinology.
  - True North is establishing a crisis receiving center, opening this summer.
  - More services are being developed through Peace Health and other services; Wellness Coalition is focusing more on early prevention services.
- A major issue at PeaceHealth includes attracting and retaining a skilled health care workforce has been difficult due to community-wide challenges like the availability of housing, school system, infrastructure, and food security. Skilled professionals are choosing to not move to or leave Ketchikan because of these quality-of-life factors.
  - More organizations are employing licensed behavioral health staff.
  - Specialized rules for ABA Behavioral Health Specialties require working with a psychologist, which may impact the number of behavioral health specialists in the community.
  - Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC) and Ketchikan Tribal Business Corporation (KTBC) along with partners at SEARHC have opened comprehensive addiction services programming to Native and Non-Native Patients at the Ketchikan Recovery In SouthEast (RISE) Wellness Center (formerly known as the Gateway Center for Human Services). They are currently hiring an executive director.

### **Recreation and Wellness**

- Recreation is seen as essential for physical and mental wellness, but programs and infrastructure are often underfunded or inaccessible.
- Participants shared examples of local success (e.g., Sea Level Youth Center), but stressed the need for more affordable, inclusive, and youth-focused recreation options.
- Suggestions included improve indoor facilities, making the rec center more affordable for low-income residents, and strengthen community-based wellness programming.

### **System-Wide Challenges and Solutions**

- Discussions included the need to integrate social service delivery into borough planning and clarify policies that could support that integration. If there are ways around borough powers for roads and use of land trusts, there may be opportunities for coordinated social service administration.
- Participants expressed interest in data-sharing, policy review, and joint goal-setting to address root causes of health outcomes.
- Discussions about existing policies that could help address system-wide issues included evaluating the impacts of seasonal sales taxation along with other taxation structures, creating zoning policies that would lead to more food production, assessing impacts on housing that leads to homelessness and food insecurity, and looking into the logistics infrastructure that impacts food shipments and storage.
- Impacts of the rise of cost of living and impacts on families are impacting community-wide mental health. There are families, especially younger families feeling trapped in Ketchikan who can no longer afford to live in the KGB.

## Possible strategies and actions to consider for the Comprehensive Plan:

*(Note: these are suggested strategies to consider from this discussion only, not considering other inputs at this time.)*

### **Strengthen Food Security and Local Food Systems**

- Expand and support community gardens, especially through culturally appropriate programming (e.g., Alaska Native, Filipino, and traditional food access).
- Examine possible code or zoning barriers and permit requirements for small-scale greenhouse construction to increase homegrown food.
- Coordinate a centralized food recovery and distribution network to reduce waste and expand access to surplus food (e.g., “produce redistribution coordinator”).
- Improve local food storage and distribution infrastructure to address shortages caused by limited freight capacity and cold storage space, most especially at grocers and wholesalers.
- Explore taxation policies the city and borough to possibly reduce or exempt local food sales from sales tax.
- Establish sustainable local funding for emergency food access (e.g., pantries in schools and youth centers) and explore long-term partnerships with the Food Bank of Alaska.
- Improve public awareness of where and how to access food resources through a central communications hub or “food access map.”

### **Improve Access to Behavioral and Specialty Health Services**

- Recruit and retain behavioral health professionals by addressing housing costs and offering relocation and retention incentives.
- Expand awareness for complex mental health needs, including co-occurring developmental disabilities and neurodivergence.
- Increase the availability of licensed counselors, especially for youth, through workforce development and training pipelines.
- Encourage peer support specialist programs and explore local licensing support for paraprofessionals.
- Encourage integration of behavioral health across the care continuum, from primary care to community-based services to recreational opportunities.

### **Expand Recreation and Primary Prevention**

- Invest in youth-focused recreation as a key strategy for primary prevention and improved mental health (e.g., after-school programs, drop-in centers like Sea Level Youth Center).
- Expand year-round recreational infrastructure, including indoor turf or walking facilities modeled on Juneau’s or Anchorage’s systems.
- Integrate wellness and recreation in public spaces, especially those not centered around tourism, to enhance daily quality of life for residents.
- Promote structured leisure activities through initiatives like the Icelandic Prevention Model to reduce risk factors across multiple health domains.

### **Address Structural Barriers to Health Equity**

- Develop workforce housing to retain healthcare and social service professionals.

- Improve transportation access to health services, grocery stores, and recreational facilities, especially for older adults and people with disabilities.
- Incorporate design principles in public and housing developments to support aging in place and independent living.
- Clarify the Borough’s role or authority in delivering or supporting social services.

#### **Advance Data-Driven Decision Making**

- Incorporate survey data and epidemiology profiles (e.g., substance use risk/protective factors, behavioral surveys) into planning and policy.
- Encourage shared goals across borough, city, Tribal, and nonprofit partners to align efforts in health and wellness issues.
- Support community ownership of wellness planning, ensuring underrepresented groups—including disabled residents, youth, and caregivers—are central to strategy development.

#### **Additional follow-up**

- Jackie will share the epidemiology profile on substance abuse and risk/protective factors in Ketchikan and other Ketchikan Wellness Coalition survey data and reports. Jackie can also connect the team with Jessi Gunthri for her research on food security.
- Identify key policy and program recommendations from shared reports for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan.



## Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update Public Utilities Partners Discussion

1:00-2:30 PM, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Ketchikan Borough Offices, 1900 First Ave., Ste. 224 and  
via Zoom

**Attendees:** Kim Simpson Matt McLaren (KPU), Rob Arnold (KGB Planning Commission), Peter Amylon (KGB Economic Development Coordinator), Morgan Barry (KGB Public Works Director), Richard Harney (Ketchikan Indian Community), Kaitlyn Jared (Southeast Conference)/

**Planning Team:** Frank Maloney and Talya Stek (Ketchikan Gateway Borough), Meg Friedenauer and Maxine Lazlo (Agnew::Beck).

### Purpose

To convene local and other public utility leaders and representatives to identify and discuss key trends, challenges, and opportunities in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. This input will inform updated utility goals, strategies, and actions in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update.

### Summary:

This meeting focused on public utilities and infrastructure as part of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough's comprehensive plan update. Key topics included utility expansion to support housing development, the lack of clarity around responsibility for utility infrastructure in new developments, aging energy systems, water supply vulnerabilities, wastewater treatment challenges, the need for financial tools to incentivize development, strategic coordination across agencies, and improvements in public education around waste management. The conversation also explored long-term planning needs, renewable energy potential, and the limitations of current infrastructure due to steep terrain and financial constraints.

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### Opening discussion:

Review of purpose of the Ketchikan Comprehensive Plan Update, What We've Learned So Far – Themes, Challenges, Opportunities for housing. Discussion included our starting point – 2009 Comprehensive Plan Goals – and other relevant data, plans, reports, studies, and feedback to date.

### Discussion Highlights:

#### Utility Expansion and Development

- Lack of clarity on who pays for utility extensions in new developments was raised as a major barrier to housing growth.
- High costs associated with extending utilities in steep terrain and constructing new roads.
- Some participants proposed developer reimbursements for infrastructure investments, referencing Erickson as a model.
- Flexible road standards may help reduce upfront infrastructure costs in new subdivisions.

## **Water and Wastewater Systems**

- A key water valve near the main water source needs replacement; a bypass line is proposed to maintain reliability.
- Wastewater treatment is a critical constraint: Charcoal Point plant is nearing capacity and has limited room for expansion.
- Ketchikan lacks a long-term wastewater treatment plan due to financial limitations, constraining development in some areas.

## **Energy and Infrastructure Aging**

- Diesel generators are aging and will need to be dismantled and replaced within the next decade.
- Southeast Alaska’s energy systems are vulnerable due to aging equipment and a shrinking utility workforce.
- There is an interest in expanding renewable energy and port electrification, though infrastructure costs are high.

## **Solid Waste Management**

- Public feedback indicated the need for better waste disposal practices and education.
- Issues include lack of formal recycling programs and illegal dumping.
- The city's spring cleanup program and ideas like “bear-proof” containers were mentioned as solutions.

## **Planning and Coordination**

- There is no clear long-term wastewater strategy that sustainably addresses population needs.
- Participants emphasized the need to incorporate utility and energy resilience into comprehensive plan goals.
- Coordination with agencies like SEAPA and tribal utilities could expand capacity and access to funding.

## **Questions raised that need additional discussion or research:**

- How can the plan clarify responsibility for utility extensions in new housing developments?
- If cost weren’t a barrier, what would a complete wastewater solution look like?
- What are the current risks to the electrical system from landslides or other hazards?
- How can the borough incentivize infrastructure development in challenging areas?

## Possible strategies and actions to consider for the Comprehensive Plan:

*(Note: these are suggested strategies to consider from this discussion only, not considering other inputs at this time.)*

### **Define Clear Roles and Responsibilities for Utility Expansion**

- Remove language around "proportionate fair share assessment" to ensure developers and the public understand how infrastructure costs are allocated.
- Establish explicit guidelines that delineate when the Borough will invest in utility infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, electric) versus when costs are the responsibility of private developers.
- Develop a standardized framework for decision-making on utility investment that factors in development scale, community benefit, and long-term costs.

### **Incentivize Private Infrastructure Development**

- Adopt a development incentive model, such as Anchorage's partial reimbursement approach, where developers receive financial support for qualifying infrastructure investments.
- Identify targeted areas for utility expansion where incentives can stimulate new housing or mixed-use development.
- Promote phased development strategies that encourage early investment while spreading infrastructure costs over time.

### **Implement Flexible Infrastructure Standards**

- Introduce graduated standards for road development that allow for reduced specifications during early development stages, particularly in steep or high-cost terrain.
- Encourage pilot programs or demonstration projects to test flexible infrastructure design that supports affordable and sustainable growth.
- Consider alternative infrastructure solutions such as modular systems or decentralized utilities in hard-to-reach areas.

### **Plan Strategically Around Physical Constraints and Costs**

- Map areas with high development potential and significant infrastructure barriers, such as steep terrain, limited land, or high construction costs.
- Prioritize infrastructure investments in areas with the greatest housing need and cost-effective development potential.
- Support long-term upgrades to key systems (e.g., wastewater, energy, water lines) through capital planning and grant-seeking strategies.

### **Align Utilities Planning with Broader Development Goals**

- Ensure utility expansion supports housing, economic development, and hazard resilience goals.
- Integrate utility planning with land use, transportation, and climate adaptation strategies to support coordinated growth.
- Collaborate with partners (e.g., SEAPA, Tribal governments, KPU) to leverage funding and expertise for major infrastructure initiatives.

## Additional follow-up

- Follow up with Kim Simpson to gather more details on the city's spring cleanup program and public outreach on landfill use.
- Follow up with Morgan Berry for specific information about Borough operations and perspectives.
- Follow up with other utility providers (e.g., GCI, SEAPA) for additional information.
- Explore best practices from other communities on incentivizing utility infrastructure in private developments (e.g., reimbursement models).
- Incorporate utility infrastructure responsibilities and development incentives into the updated comprehensive plan language.

# Working Group Meeting Notes – January 28, 2025

## 2035 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update

Tuesday, January 28; 2-3:30 PM at Planning Department Conference Room and via WebEx

For questions about this meeting, contact: Talya Stek, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Associate Planner, (907) 228-6618 | talyas@kgbak.us

**NEXT MEETING DATE (TENTATIVE):** Wednesday, February 19<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM in Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning Conference Room and via WebEx (Virtual)

**TOPICS:** (1) Community Open House #1 Debrief; (2) Focus Group / Interview Participants and Timeline

**HOMEWORK:** (1) Review February 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting Slides and **provide recommendations** on any topic (but especially on additional partners or stakeholders that should be included in focus groups / interviews) to Margaret Friedenauer and Talya Stek; (2) **Promote the February 18<sup>th</sup> Community Meeting** to be held at **Kayhi Commons** from **4-6 PM**.

### Core Team Action Items

1. Talya to check the availability of different venues for February 18<sup>th</sup> public open house (Kayhi Commons, Library, Mall, Civic Center).
2. Staff to reach out to high school governance class as part of student engagement.
3. Meg to send working group members meeting notes, slides from this meeting and flyer for open house ad distribution with primary target of Facebook groups.
4. Core team to work on social media promotion video for project and/or open house.
5. Core team to reach out to working group members to participate in interviews.

### Discussion

See meeting slides for full review of discussion topics.

#### 1. Meeting Objectives

- Confirm the approach for the comprehensive planning process, schedule and roles.
- Share ideas about the public participation process, including the first community open house.
- Review the background information collected so far and identify knowledge gaps.

#### 2. Introductions / What Brings You to This Group:

- Previous or current experience in land use, planning, real estate.
- Keeping a pulse on community.
- Representation of Filipino Community, City of Saxman, City of Ketchikan, Ketchikan Indian Community.
- Need to improve the usability, relevance, vision of the comprehensive plan.
- Desire to improve cultural and youth engagement strategies.
- Interest in addressing tourism, housing, infrastructure, shipping costs, environmental stewardship, health care, education.

#### 3. Project Schedule (See slides)

#### **4. Roles & Communication**

- The planning commission recommends the draft comprehensive plan, the assembly adopts. The working group is an advisory group for public participation strategies and focus area topics and meets as needed throughout the project timeline.

#### **5. Public Participation**

- Public involvement and community engagement in the comprehensive plan process is a key part of the project.
- Recommendations:
  - i. Live stream the community events when possible.
  - ii. Use Facebook groups for outreach (Working group to provide ideas for which groups)
  - iii. Invite high school students to participate, esp. HS Governance
- Reviewed idea of conducting small group discussions and focus groups is introduced to gather more detailed input on specific focus.

#### **6. Background & Research / What We Know So Far**

- Themes presented from interviews conducted so far. Working group members will be invited to participate.
- Plan review conducted. This is an ongoing, working draft that will compile reports, plans, and other resources that will aid comprehensive plan drafting and development. Working group members' input is most appreciated.
- Demographics / Community Context is being reviewed by staff.
- All results and notes are posted to project website as they become available (<https://kgbcompplan.com/>).

#### **7. Next Steps and Closing Thoughts**

- The group tentatively agreed to hold the next working group meeting on February 19th from 2-3 PM.
- Explore alternative venues for the February 18th community meeting, such as the library or K-Hi Commons, instead of the assembly chambers.
- Create a promotion video for social media.
- Meg & Holly will be in town Monday, February 17 – Thursday, February 20.
- Recommendation that the history / explanation of what makes Ketchikan unique be included as part of the comp plan.
- Next meeting: Less slides, more group discussion. Topics to focus on open house debriefing and focus groups and interviews. Tentative date February 19<sup>th</sup>.

## Attendance

Name	Organization & Title
Alma Parker	Filipina Community Representative
Diane Gubatayao	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission
Ginger McCormick	City of Saxman, Clerk
Jaimie Palmer	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly
Lacey Simpson	City of Ketchikan, Assistant Manager
Michael Martin	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission Chair
Richard Harney	Ketchikan Indian Community, Tribal Planner
Rob Arnold	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission
Sharli Arntzen	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly
Frank Maloney	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Director
Talya Stek	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Associate Planner
Meg Friedenauer	Agnew::Beck Consulting, Project Manager
Holly Smith	Agnew::Beck Consulting, Associate

## Participants Invited

Name	Organization & Title
Kathy Bolling	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly
Jaimie Palmer	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly

**For questions about this meeting, contact:** Talya Stek, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Associate Planner, (907) 228-6618 | [talyas@kgbak.us](mailto:talyas@kgbak.us)

# Working Group Meeting Notes – February 19, 2025

## 2035 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update

Wednesday, February 19; 2-3:00 PM at Planning Department Conference Room and via Zoom.

For questions about this meeting, contact: Talya Stek, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Associate Planner, (907) 228-6618 | talyas@kgbak.us

### Discussion

#### 1. Community Open House Debrief and Survey Outreach

- About 30 people attended the open house on Feb.18; the Kayhi Commons was a good location for the meeting; Would be good to repeat the open house further along in the process.
- For survey outreach, Meg will talk with Kim Simpson at the city about the possibility of adding outreach to utility bills. It has been done before but is likely to be expensive.
- Ginger is helping with outreach in Saxman area.
- Meg will connect with Misha Chernick, Communications Director at KIC.
- Talya will be on KRBD talking about the comprehensive plan and survey; They will also run a PSA.
- Meg will forward a survey flyer to Working Group members when ready.
- Talya and Frank are visiting the high school to talk with students on Friday, Feb. 21.

#### 2. Focus groups and Interviews

- Additional stakeholders were added to the matrix of organizations to contact for specific focus groups and interviews (see below.) Working Group members are welcome to forward any additional thoughts and ideas about focus groups/interview participants to the project team.

#### 3. Environmental stewardship, Hazard mitigation

- Discussion about whether to combine or separate “environmental stewardship” and “hazard mitigation” topics in comprehensive plan. They will likely be separated into different chapters in the plan, but cross over with each other and other topics, like land use.

#### 4. Additional Discussion

- Ginger would like questions about Land Use to bring up with Saxman council’s strategic planning session next week.
- Holly is working on a comment map tool for the community to comment on specific areas and land use issues.
- Next Working Group meeting is Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup> at 10 am with a focus on Housing and possibly Economic Development.

### Participants Invited

Name	Organization & Title
Alma Parker	Filipina Community Representative
Diane Gubatayao	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission
Ginger McCormick	City of Saxman, Clerk
Jaimie Palmer	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly
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<b>Holly Smith</b>	Agnew::Beck Consulting, Associate

## Focus Area Small Group/Interview Suggestions

Working Draft updated 02-19-25 with Working Group

*Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update*

Focus Area	Partners
<p><b><u>Land Use</u></b></p> <p><b>Includes:</b> Landowners and managers</p>	<p><b>Partners/Stakeholders to interview and/or include in work sessions:</b> Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources, Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game, Alaska Division of Geological &amp; Geophysical Surveys, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, U.S. Forest Service, municipal and Tribal governments/organizations. USCG, SEAPA, UAS, private developers</p>
<p><b><u>Housing</u></b></p> <p><b>Includes:</b> New home construction, rental market, housing preservation and repurpose</p>	<p><b>Partners/Stakeholders:</b> Realtors, lenders, KICHA, Tlingit Haida HA, Alaska Housing Finance Corp., Grow Ketchikan, Southern SE Builders Assoc., Chamber</p>
<p><b><u>Public Services</u></b></p> <p><b>Includes:</b> Power, water, sewer, solid waste, internet</p>	<p><b>Partners/Stakeholders:</b> GCI, KPU, city and Borough, Petro Marine, propane suppliers, SEAPA, Alaska Waste for septic pump out (?)</p>
<p><b><u>Transportation</u></b></p> <p><b>Includes:</b> Roads, marine, airport, transit, trails</p>	<p><b>Partners/Stakeholders:</b> Ketchikan International, KGB Transit, Alaska Marine Lines, Alaska Marine Highway System, Inter-Island Ferry, cab companies,</p>

	SAIL, Alaska Logistics (freight shipping), AKDOT, cities, KIC, float plane companies, other freight
<p><b><u>Economic Development</u></b></p> <p><b>Includes:</b> Tourism, maritime, aquaculture, work force development, public support agencies, agriculture, fisheries</p>	<p><b>Partners/Stakeholders:</b> Allen Marine, Taquan Air, Ketchikan Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, Ward Cove Group, Sealaska, Southeast Conference (including mariculture alliance), KIC, Saxman, Tlingit Haida, Vigor, SpruceRoot, UAS, lenders, Cape Fox Corp., KTBC,</p>
<p><b><u>Health, Wellness, Education</u></b></p> <p><b>Includes:</b> Physical and Mental Health providers, food security</p>	<p><b>Partners/Stakeholders:</b> PeaceHealth (long term care/senior care) organizations of faith, KIC, Saxman, Ketchikan Wellness Coalition, Community Connections, WISH, RISE, Tlingit Haida, SEARHC, SAIL, KMA Love in Action, Salvation Army, True North, PATH, Pioneer Home, AARP</p>
<p><b><u>Environmental Resilience</u></b></p> <p><b>Includes:</b> Hazard Mitigation, environmental stewardship organizations</p>	<p><b>Partners/Stakeholders:</b> Alaska Division of Geological &amp; Geophysical Surveys, FEMA, KIC, Saxman, Tlingit Haida, engineers, city, AK DEC</p>
<p><b><u>Quality of Life</u></b></p> <p><b>Includes:</b> Education, Culture, Recreation</p>	<p><b>Partners/Stakeholders:</b> Tribal organizations, Arts Council, KGB public works, University of Alaska, Veterans, Nonprofit collaborative, arts council</p>
<p><b><u>Fiscal Considerations</u></b></p> <p><b>Includes:</b> Municipal finance department</p>	<p><b>Partners/Stakeholders:</b> City of Ketchikan, City of Saxman, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assessor</p>

# Working Group Notes – March 7, 2025

## 2035 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update

### Meeting Objectives and Agenda topics

1. Review survey outreach and milestones since last meeting
  - Survey
    - 123 responses as of March 7. Most people are completing the survey, although some are not answering demographic questions.
    - Outreach methods: Continuing to advertise over the next week via flyers, newsletters, (Chamber, Saxman, borough), social media, and radio announcements.
    - Frank and Talya visited high school Governance and US History classes. It was a mix of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors and 80 students completed a student survey.
    - Questions:
      - Diane followed up to ask if we were adding the survey to the utility bills. Lacey confirmed the contact is Kim Simpson, KPU Sales Marketing Division Manager –
        - Meg circling back to double check budget and timeline.
      - Diane asked if she could send them to the Rotary students? Yes, Frank will follow up with the link to the student survey.
  - Small Group Discussions
    - Going to do a series of small group discussions the week of April 7<sup>th</sup>. These will be hybrid discussions. Working group members are invited to attend any and all that they would like.
    - Questions
      - Diane would be willing to help facilitate a focus group. Meg will circle back to the group about how working group members can support the small group discussions.
2. Discuss emerging values, challenges, and priorities from research, interviews, and community meetings thus far:
  - **Housing and Public Services - some guiding discussion questions:**
    - The current survey results show that the availability and affordability of housing is emerging as a top priority and concern for survey participants.
    - Housing issues:
      - Challenges are roads and utilities.
      - New opportunities: DNR and land sale on the north end of island. They would put in the roads to put in to do the logging.
      - Workforce housing a concern
        - Frank
          - Where is mental health going to do housing? Bigger question about utilities, Borough is not intending to put funding into that, correct? Well, if the secondary concern is infrastructure, what is the Borough's appetite for talking about either self funding or finding money for infrastructure? How are we going to subsidize, promote, or incentivize infrastructure?
            - Strategies: Reduce cost of infrastructure
        - Kathy
          - No one wants the Borough doing housing, could offer low interest loans to build those roads.

- Message from recent DC visit is that Ketchikan Coast Guard station is far down the list for new USCG housing. NOAA may be interested, but current federal happenings make things a little confusing with federal agencies. USCG also adjusted their need from 85 to 40 units.
- **Strategies of Interest**
  - **Mobile integrated readiness training program.** Use an opportunity to teach military forces how to build roads to send different places. That's how the road to airport ferry on Annette was built.
  - **Tax abatement programs**
    - Not for tax deferment, but there are ways the borough could create policies to incentivize developers to minimize initial costs
  - Tiny houses
    - Nothing prohibiting tiny homes in code. Biggest issue is homeowners insurance. With City changing building codes, this will be a part of the conversation if people can do it in city limit.
    - The scale of tiny housing don't always save that much money.
    - Tiny homes vs small homes – Tiny are usually on a chasey under 400 rather than cottage under 800 on a foundation. What the community is really more interested in small homes. Division in code for residential to be developed on 10,000 sq ft to carve into multiple properties.
  - Infill
    - Frank- First street – burnt out houses will be infill. The market is looking at those as actual opportunities.
    - Lacey – Up to property owners what they want to do, but we don't have a way to incentivize. Speaking for the city, there aren't any available and attractive lots spoken for.
  - Utilities
    - Diane – We're almost maxed out on capacity, right? Lacey – are we talking about water/sewer or electricity. For residential, no. We continue to see the demand creep us as more people convert from oil to electric forms of heat. But it's not a spike, we aren't bumping up right now. We will in years to come, especially if we get a large customer like Metlaktala (Shore power) but we aren't limited right now residential for electricity, water, and sewer. For water and sewer, it's not a capacity thing, it's having utilities installed, which is a separate discussion. While water is always a concern when we hit our draught periods, we would need a lot more residents pulling on utilities. In this conversation we aren't talking about growing the market we're talking about providing for what we have.
  - Sharli
    - Tribal organizations are making efforts to facilitate infrastructure. Those partnerships are critical to addressing infrastructure needs.
    - Housing conversation is about a broader economic development discussion. But if we're talking about what we want the future to look like, how can we build what we want to happen?
- **Strategies off Table**
  - Coast Guard housing
  - Planning Commission Codes



- If money comes in we do a good job with it. We need to encourage single story accessible places so elders can age in place.
- Richard
  - Affordable housing construction costs is one piece. Respectably disagree with no such thing as affordable housing, there are ways the housing can be at an affordable rate? If economic development, if we only have tourism jobs that are low wage when you have to have a salary of 90K or above
  - When homes are on the market on large lots on waterfront, then we aren't helping because they are fair market value. But at the same time, people from out of town are buying second homes as vacation homes. We can look at other communities, maybe Hawaii and Jackson Hole WY for examples of ideas. As we talk about these things, can't just say infrastructure and construction of home defines it.
    - Regulating vacation rentals is a tool as a tact for affordable housing. It is a case study. Does it affect how you use property and infringe on freedom? Yes. But how serious as the community on how to address affordable housing? Do we want to see property values increase and property taxes increase? What Jackson Hole is close doing is almost like rent controlled, but it depends on how serious we are.
      - Someone is going to pay for incentivizing. Fiber, electrical, pipe is going to cost money. How do you get the biggest bang for money? Most homes are on property with lowest cost.
        - Demolition costs so much to take to dump. Really expensive to dispose of a home (\$40K). How serious are we about getting rid of them and who is going to foot the bill?
- Lacey
  - Limiting vacation rentals is absolutely a proven way to address affordable housing challenges, even if it's not popular
  - When we talk about utilities, it's a difficult discussion. You're asking all the other rate payers to support an individual or a small number of individuals that the Borough hasn't answered yet. "Ultimate philosophical questions." Right of individual or greater good of community. How do we provide individual rights with community needs? How serious is community? Is the community willing to give up a little to get a lot?
- Diane
  - Appreciate Richard's comments, and that's my take on situation. It will be interesting how we take and implement into comprehensive plan.
- Frank
  - How to pay to implement ideas is the challenge.
- Meg
  - Focus groups – look at policies and strategies where the people who were involved most reasonable and approachable way to determine.
  - Education piece during public review – community wants it, then may end up moving down priority list.

### 3. Wrap Up

- Set next meeting date, topic(s), and action items
- Two weeks, March 21<sup>st</sup>
- Keep updated about survey and focus groups

## Invited Participants

Name	Organization & Title	Attended
<b>Alma Parker</b>	Filipina Community Representative	
<b>Diane Gubatayao</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission	X
<b>Ginger McCormick</b>	City of Saxman, Clerk	
<b>Jaimie Palmer</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly	X
<b>Lacey Simpson</b>	City of Ketchikan, Assistant Manager	X
<b>Kathy Bolling</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly	X
<b>Michael Martin</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission Chair	
<b>Richard Harney</b>	Ketchikan Indian Community, Tribal Planner	
<b>Rob Arnold</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission	
<b>Sharli Arntzen</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly	
<b>Frank Maloney</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Director	X
<b>Talya Stek</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Associate Planner	X
<b>Meg Friedenauer</b>	Agnew::Beck Consulting, Project Manager	X
<b>Holly Smith</b>	Agnew::Beck Consulting, Associate	
<b>Maxine Laszlo</b>	Agnew::Beck Consulting, Senior Associate	X

# Working Group Agenda – March 21, 2025

## 2035 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Comprehensive Plan Update

### DRAFT STATEMENT ABOUT OPEN MEETINGS ACT

The State of Alaska's Open Meetings Act (AS 44.62.310-.312) requires that all meetings of a public entity's governing body be open to the public and that the body provide reasonable notice of its meetings. The Working Group is not a governing body; however, it becomes one IF more than three commissioners or more than three assembly members attend a working group meeting. Please contact Talya Stek prior to attending the meeting if you foresee a conflict with the Open Meetings Act.

**Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup>; 10:00-11:00 AM**

**In Person:** Planning Department Conference Room

**Virtual Link & Password:**

Join from the Zoom meeting link

<https://agnewbeck.zoom.us/j/86189378897?pwd=o4kg8LEz3OvRikZdo9o48R26lxOR4j.1>

**Join by meeting number:**

Meeting number (access code): 888 475 4499 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 861 8937 8897

Passcode: 894830

## Meeting Objectives and Agenda topics

**1. Introduction - Discussion Wolfe Point Landslide**

- Entire north end cut off beyond Walmart
- Elementary school is on the other side, which is why elementary school was canceled.

**2. Review survey outreach, comment map, and milestones since last meeting**

- Survey
  - Working Group asked if we were looking to extend the survey?
- Comment map
  - Easiest way to access is through the project website. Currently open through April 18<sup>th</sup>.
  - <https://kgbcompplan.com/>
  - Diane suggests we do more outreach on the comment map (e.g., local paper)

**3. Partner Discussions week of April 7<sup>th</sup>**

- Meg leading in person. Working Group sent calendar. Let the team know if you would like to attend any meeting.

**4. Discuss emerging values, challenges, and priorities from research, interviews, and community meetings thus far – Transportation :**

- What we know about Transportation in Ketchikan from data, preliminary survey results, and existing planning efforts

From the survey, the biggest transportation concern is with the Alaska Marine Highway ferry

- Ideas about hop-on and hop-off ferries
  - Jaimie had previously worked on mapping from a private sector lens in previous roles.
  - Jamie – Borough policy sessions, asked if we ever studied hop on and hop off ferries in unison with the bus system. In a landslide event that would already exist, and with DOT work. Diane said they looked at it a long time ago before the expansion of tourism, so the idea was shelved. May need to revisit.

## Water taxi

- Ginger – in the old villages, not everyone had a road. All the villagers would skiff or boat into town. If we can revitalize our highway system, including traditional routes, we could bring that back.

## Holly - Question about water routes: Can these be included in tribal transportation inventories?

- Richard doesn't think so, but unsure if we could push the issue
- Tribal Examples of Water Routes and Ferries
  - o Puyallup Tribe
  - o Chinook
  - o Warm springs has water routes
  - o Suquamish Tribe
- Localization of ferry system that could be self-funded

## Other transportation systems

- Robb Arnold
  - o George inlet opening land up that way
  - o Bradford canal – connect 37 and road to Canada

## Tunnel to Airport

- Boring company, a mile of road for \$10M, reopen conversation of tunnel to airport
- Mayor mentioned this may be something looking into in state of Borough address

## Jaimie

- Dream vision for Latuya dock in Saxman, then connecting Metlakatla to Saxman, then having another ferry terminal on the south end of Gravina

## Low Hanging Fruit

- Diane - Youth in buses
- Alaska Marine Highway system
  - Building partnership with the state (SE conference, state working hard to capture what the citizens want)
- Gravina Island Access Ferry
  - o That ferry is funded with federal dollars – purpose is to get to airport
    - Another access point, place for load and unload

## 5. Wrap Up (10 minutes)

- Next Meeting TBD

## Invited Participants

Name	Organization & Title	Attendees
<b>Alma Parker</b>	Filipina Community Representative	
<b>Diane Gubatayao</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission	X – In-person
<b>Ginger McCormick</b>	City of Saxman, Clerk	X - Online
<b>Jaimie Palmer</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly	X - Online
<b>Lacey Simpson</b>	City of Ketchikan, Assistant Manager	
<b>Kathy Bolling</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly	X - Online
<b>Michael Martin</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission Chair	
<b>Richard Harney</b>	Ketchikan Indian Community, Tribal Planner	X - Online
<b>Rob Arnold</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Commission	X - Online
<b>Sharli Arntzen</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Assembly	X - Online
<b>Frank Maloney</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Planning Director	X - Online
<b>Talya Stek</b>	Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Associate Planner	X – In-person
<b>Meg Friedenauer</b>	Agnew::Beck Consulting, Project Manager	
<b>Holly Smith</b>	Agnew::Beck Consulting, Associate	X - Online
<b>Maxine Laszlo</b>	Agnew::Beck Consulting, Senior Associate	X - Online