

# Planning Commission Staff Report & Finding of Fact

Meeting Date: June 10, 2025

APPLICANT/AGENT:

American Cruise Lines

OWNER(S), IF DIFFERENT:

Petersburg Borough

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

PTN of ATS 9

LOT AREA:

22,000 sf

LOCATION:

End of Port Dock

SURROUNDING ZONING:

North: Unzoned

South: Industrial, MIO

East: Industrial, MIO

West: Industrial, MIO

ZONING:

UNZONED

PID:

01-008-099

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE:

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## I. APPLICANT REQUEST

The applicant requests to lease borough-owned tidelands/submerged lands.

## II. APPLICABLE CODE

16.16 TIDELANDS

## III. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Application Request: The applicant has submitted a request to lease borough-owned submerged lands. The purpose of this lease is for the construction of a mooring float.
2. Location and Proposed Use: The subject parcel is located on submerged lands at the end of Dock Street, within the Petersburg Harbor system. The proposed use for this parcel is a surface-only mooring facility.
3. Site and Surrounding Uses: The parcel is identified as suitable for use as a mooring site. Adjacent submerged lands are currently utilized for mooring purposes. There are limited alternative uses for this specific site and it would be inappropriate to convert the site to a non-marine use, such as residential.
4. Harbor Capacity: The applicant currently moors vessels at the Port Dock, adjacent to the subject property. The applicant anticipates an increase in the number of port calls in the coming years. Options for mooring additional vessels within the existing harbor system are limited.
5. Harbor Operational Considerations: The current Port Dock configuration presents challenges for simultaneously accommodating small cruise ships and allowing Petro Marine to bring in fuel barges and provide fuel to larger vessels. The proposed mooring facility is designed to address these operational considerations.
6. Public Input: On February 10, 2025, the Borough Assembly held a town hall meeting to discuss the applicant's proposal. Nearly all public comments were supportive of the proposed project.
7. Harbor Board Review: On April 3, 2025, the Harbors and Ports Advisory Board recommended "the Assembly move forward with Concept 7 for development of the proposed multi-purpose

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small cruise ship dock partnership with American Cruise Lines and recommends following the Visitor Industry Management Plan's outlined Quality of Life goals. Motion carried 7-0."

8. Assembly Review: On May 5, 2025, the Borough Assembly reviewed ACL's application and approved referring to the Planning Commission and Harbor Board.
9. Zoning: Although the subject parcel is not zoned, the proposed use is consistent with waterfront uses allowed within the Marine Industrial Overlay (MIO) zone, which is designed to preserve waterfront areas for water-dependent uses, including passenger moorage facilities. The proposed mooring float aligns with the intent of the MIO.
10. Comprehensive Plan: The proposal is consistent with the goals of the Land Use section of the borough's Comprehensive Plan to "Manage the use of the waterfront Borough-wide to maximize the value of this scarce resource for business, residents and visitors, and specifically to integrate and balance the need to support a range of waterfront uses."
11. Visitor Industry Management Plan: The recently approved Visitor Industry Management Plan states "Petersburg has limited infrastructure to accommodate the visitor industry, particularly larger groups of visitors arriving via cruise ships. The existing infrastructure is designed to accommodate a small resident population, and existing marine infrastructure is used at capacity during the summer season and must be shared with a dynamic commercial fishing fleet. Focus on maximizing the benefits and minimizing user conflict of our existing marine infrastructure, finding cost effective alternatives to existing infrastructure, and providing infrastructure that benefits both the local populace and visitor population were deemed the priorities." Goal E.2. recommends installing a mooring dolphin at the Port Dock to address congestion at that location.
12. Environmental Review: Applicant identifies necessary environmental reviews and permits necessary prior to construction of the project.
13. Economic Considerations: Facilitating increased port calls by cruise ships has a direct economic impact through passenger spending on retail, meals, and local services. Improved harbor efficiency for fuel barges and other larger vessels supports the broader marine industrial sector, which is a foundational element of Petersburg's economy. The project contributes to the overall viability and competitiveness of Petersburg as a port of call and a marine service hub.

## IV. PUBLIC NOTICE

The borough provided public notice of the hearing. Notice was mailed by first class mail to the owner of record of the property within six hundred feet of the exterior boundary of the property that is the subject of the application.

## V. APPLICATION REVIEW

Criteria –

Per 16.16.050 (B), Tidelands and submerged lands owned by the borough may be leased for surface use only.

Per 16.16.050 C, an application to lease tidelands must demonstrate: 1. The proposed use of the nominated tideland or submerged land is a beneficial use in terms of highest and best use; and 2. That it is in the borough's interest to lease the nominated tideland or submerged land.

# Planning Commission Staff Report & Finding of Fact

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## VI. ACTION

**Proposed motion:** I move to recommend to the Borough Assembly that the subject property located at the end of Dock St be approved for lease for the purposes of constructing a mooring float along with findings of fact as presented.

**Based on the preceding findings of fact, the Petersburg Planning Commission makes the following report to the Borough Assembly:**

1. The Planning Commission finds the proposed use is consistent with the borough's Comprehensive Plan and Visitor Industry Management Plan. The proposed use of the submerged lands is a beneficial use and the highest and best use for the subject property.
2. The Planning Commission finds that the proposed use's economic benefits to the community and operational benefits to the harbor are in the borough's best interest.
3. The Planning Commission recommends that once there is a legal parcel the property be rezoned to industrial and included in the Marine Industrial Overlay.
4. The Planning Commission recommends the Borough Assembly approve the subject parcel for lease for construction of a mooring float.

## EXHIBITS

- A. Applicant materials
- B. Vicinity & Detail Maps
- C. Public Hearing Mailout
- D. Harbor Board Minutes
- E. Excerpts from Comprehensive Plan and Visitor Plan
- F. Concept 7 Drawing
- G. Public Comments

EXHIBIT A: APPLICANT MATERIALS



Petersburg Borough, Alaska

Land Disposal Application

(\$500.00 non-refundable filing fee required)

Form must be completed in its entirety to be considered

Office Use:

Rec'd. by: DKT

Fee: \$ 500.00

Date Rec'd:

2.10.2025

Date: 4/18/2025

This is a request for land disposal via:

☒ Lease

☐ Exchange

☐ Purchase

☐ Other

(Describe)

Parcel ID #(s) of Subject Property:

Southwest of 01-008-220

Per City Planner no Parcel Number

Proposed term of lease: 50 years

(total years)

Legal Description(s) of Property:

Water - Wrangell Narrows

Current Zoning of Property:

Commercial

Is the Applicant applying to purchase under Petersburg Municipal Code Section 16.12.030 as one of the following? If yes, check approximate box below:

☐ State of Federal Agency

☐ Federally Recognized Tribe

☐ Nonprofit Entity

☐ Applying to Purchase for a Public Benefit Purpose per PMC 16.12.030

Applicant Name: Charles B. Robertson

Applicant Mailing Address: 741 Boston Post Road Guilford, CT 06437

Applicant Contact Info:  
(telephone and email)

203-453-6800

cbrobertson@americancruiselines.com

1. Size of Area requested (identify the minimum area necessary in square feet): 22,000 sq ft.
2. Attach a map showing the location of the parcel(s) requested. Map must show surrounding area with the land requested clearly marked with bolded borders or highlighted color.

If applicant is applying to purchase property under PMC 16.12.030 for a public benefit purpose, the application must include, at a minimum, the following:

- a) a conceptual plan;
- b) a financial plan; and
- c) a development timeline

3. Narrative on use of property: Explain proposed use of land and when use is expected to begin and end. Include any planned new construction or renovation, including time-frame when construction or renovation will be completed and type of materials to be used. Provide the estimated dollar value of proposed improvements. Explain the value of the proposal to the economy of the borough and any other information you feel should be considered. (attached additional sheet if necessary)

See Attached

4. Name and address of all adjacent land owners or lessees, including upland owner(s) if applicable: (attach additional sheet if necessary)

Petro 49 INC 119 Dock Street LOTS 01-008-220, 221, 222,230

US Coast Guard 117 Dock Street LOTS 01-008-20

US Forest Service 115 Dock Street LOTS 01-008-260

Rocky's Marine Inc. 113 Dock Street LOTS 001-008-250

US Coast Guard 107 Dock Street LOTS 01-008-240,241

5. Are there any existing permits or leases covering any part of the land applied for?

☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, please check one: ☐ Lease ☐ Permit

Describe the type of permit or lease, if applicable, and the name and last known address of the permittee or lessee: \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

6. What local, state or federal permits are required for the proposed use? (list all)

See Attached



7. If applicant is a corporation, provide the following information:

A. Name, address and place of incorporation:

741 Boston Post Road Guilford, CT 06437

Place of Incorporation - Delaware

B. Is the corporation qualified to do business in Alaska?: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Name and address of registered agent:

Eagle Raven Global - Tonya Tisher

1900 Crest Street Juneau, AK 99801

8. Why should the Planning Commission recommend Assembly approval of this request?

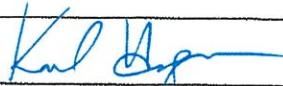
See Attached

9. How is this request consistent with the Borough's comprehensive plan?

See Attached

10. Prior to submitting this application, please verify with pertinent Borough Departments that the land requested for lease, purchase, exchange or other disposal is not needed for a public purpose by speaking with the appropriate personnel in the Electric, Water, Wastewater, Community Development, Harbor or Public Works Departments and obtain their comments and signatures below. (attach additional sheet if necessary):

Department Comments: PMPL has no need for this area.



Signature of Department Commenter

Department Comments: Subject property is not needed for a public purpose.

Liz Cabrera, Community Development

Signature of Department Commenter

Department Comments: Harbor Department - see attached

Glo Wollen - see attached

Signature of Department Commenter

Department Comments: Public Works - see attached

Chris Cotta - see attached

Signature of Department Commenter

**NOTICE TO APPLICANT(s):**

Application must be submitted to the Borough with a non-refundable filing fee of \$500. If the application moves forward, the applicant will be required to deposit with the Borough payment for other costs. See, PMC 16.12.030C(2)(a), 16.12.090, and 16.16.070A, as applicable.

I hereby certify that I have received and reviewed a copy of Petersburg Municipal Code Chapters 16.12 and 16.16 (as they may pertain to my particular application) and understand the Code requirements. I further certify I am authorized to sign this application on behalf of the applicant.

Please sign application in the presence of a Notary Public.

Charles B. Robertson

Applicant/Applicant's Representative Signature

Charles B. Robertson

Printed Name

Subscribed and sworn to by Charles B. Robertson, who personally appeared  
before me this 18<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2025.

Melissa J. Boczar  
Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska, Connecticut  
My Commission Expires: 05/31/2025

MELISSA J. BOCZAR  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES MAY 31, 2025

### **Harbor Department Comments**

Wednesday, April 30, 2025 12:36 PM

The Harbor Department remains supportive of the Borough working with American Cruise Lines to develop this piece of waterfront. Their proposed project fits well within the layout of the Petersburg waterfront for highest and best uses of Borough owned tidelands. The Harbor does not have immediate plans for these tidelands.

The Harbor appreciates that the ACL application mentions a partnership with the Borough that includes possible off season use by the Harbor Department. The application letter indicates that ACL will construct a 24' x 120' moorage float facility with an 8' x 100' aluminum gangway that is consistent with the joint uses identified in the Concept 7 design. The Concept 7 was jointly funded by ACL and the Borough with a design that includes plans for electrical and potable water/fire chase ways and an area for a sewer lift station that will render the facility usable in the future by the public. If ACL builds the facility with a future utility component design include, then the Harbor Department would see benefit from off season use. If the design does not allow for future utility placement then the Harbor Department may not benefit from using the facility in the off-season.

Moving forward with ACL application for building and maintaining their own facility will result in an estimated annual loss of \$30,000 in revenue (\$600 x 50 estimated stops) but would benefit harbor operations by reducing ACL needs for moorage on C-Float and at the Drive Down during peak fishing and transient visitor season.

Glo Wollen  
Harbormaster

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### **Public Works Comments**

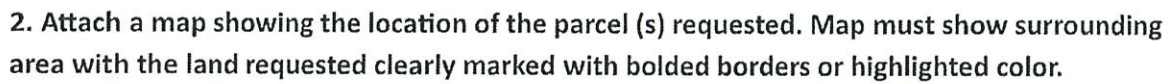
Public Works has no need for the subject parcel as outlined in red in the attachment.

Water and wastewater connections are potentially available if ACL moves forward with this project. Water goes all the way to the end of the existing dock and the wastewater line stops near the Coast Guard float, but could potentially be extended to serve the proposed cruise ship dock.

Chris Cotta  
Public Works Director



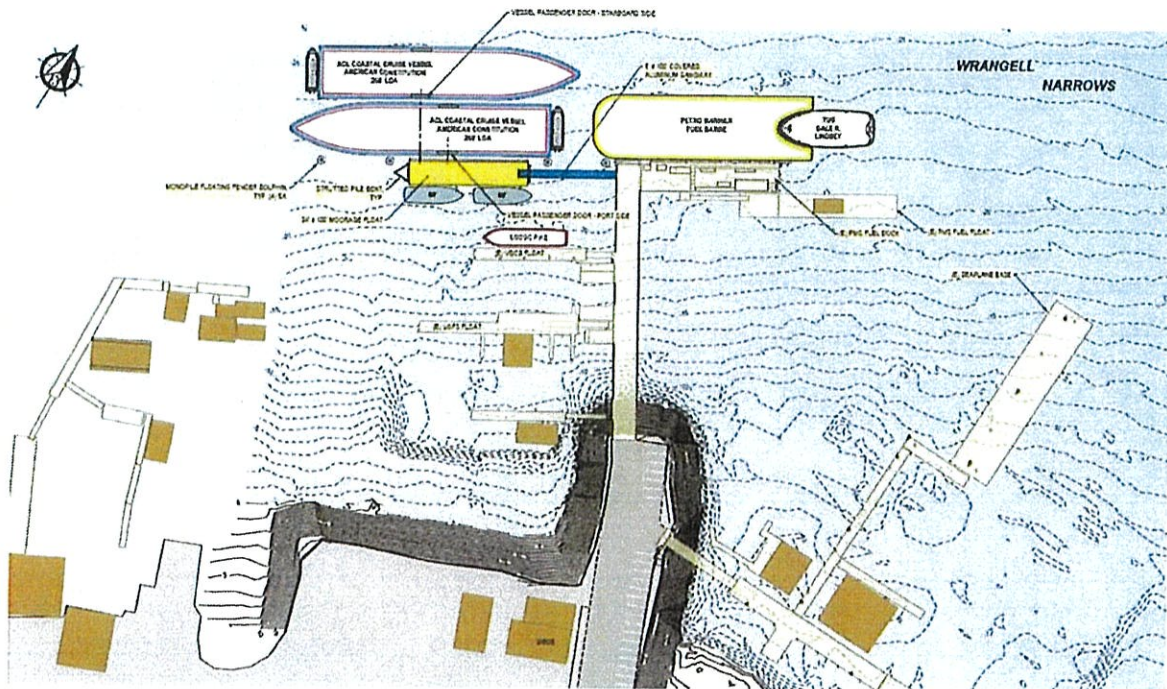
**Applicant: American Cruise Lines**



### 3. Narrative on Use of Property:

The property would be utilized to construct a new dock, roughly as shown below. The project would consist of a gangway and moorage float extending to the SW of parcel 01-008-220 \* 119 DOCK STREET \* PETRO 49 INC, LESSEE and PETERSBURG BOROUGH LESSOR. This project would include an approximately 8' x 100' aluminum gangway extending to a 24' x 120' moorage float. This design would allow American Cruise Lines vessels to dock either port or starboard side to the dock enhancing vessels safety depending on current and weather factors. Included in the scope of this project are monopiles equipped with floating fenders which will be used by vessels for mooring lines. It is estimated that this project will cost approximately \$3 million dollars.

Construction of this project will allow small overnight cruise vessels to operate with a consistent schedule which in turn will contribute to the local economy as guests aboard are able to explore the Borough of Petersburg.





**6. What local, state or federal permits are required for the proposal use?**

- USACE DA Individual Permit including Practicable Alternatives Analysis and Biological Assessment
- Incidental Harassment Authorization with formal NMFS consultation and Marine Mammal Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (4MP).
- Compensatory Mitigation for unavoidable impacts due to intertidal fill discharges associated with the proposed parking area, if it is to be constructed.
- ADEC 401 Water Quality Certification.
- ADEC Plan Review and Approval to Operate for water and sewer systems
- ADEC Stormwater Plan Review and Letter of Concurrence for runoff in the proposed parking lot, if constructed.
- Sunflower Sea Star Harassment Authorization with formal NMFS consultation.
- Local Building Permits possibly.

**8. Why should the Planning Commission recommend Assembly approval of this request?**

The overarching goal of the Borough's February 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update identified in Chapter 5 is to improve the diverse transportation system that links Petersburg to the outside world. As a part of this goal, promoting a growing economy in the commercial fish processing and tourism are identified as key components. Planning Commission approval of this request would allow for consistent, sustainable tourism and economic benefit during scheduled dockings of American Cruise Lines vessels each summer.

**9. How is this request consistent with the Borough's comprehensive plan?**

The Borough's February 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update identifies objectives for the waterfront lands in Petersburg. One of those objectives is to utilize good planning to support a diverse use of the waterfront. The concept plan proposed by American Cruise Lines allows for dock development in a location which would not impede other area users including federal agencies, marine business and a commercial fueling operation serving the vital fishing community.



741 Boston Post Road, Suite 200, Guilford, CT 06437 • (203) 453-6800

April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Ms. Glorianne Wollen  
Harbor Master  
Borough of Petersburg  
223 Harbor Way  
Petersburg, AK 99833

Dear Ms. Wollen:

We appreciate the collaboration over the last nine months as we work to structure a long-term partnership with the Borough. Thank you for organizing the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting with the leadership team of the Borough.

We understand the funding concerns through the previously proposed public-private partnership. In light of this, American Cruise Lines believes the most efficient path forward is to modify our Land Disposal Application to lease the property from the borough and fund the new dock through its own efforts.

In the spirit of partnership, we would be happy to incorporate the following into a lease agreement with the Borough:

- ACL will design, permit, fund and build the new dock extension
- ACL will have a (50) fifty-year lease as stated on the Land Use Application
- ACL to pay annual standard lease fee and property tax as any other lease holder within the Borough
- In the spirit of partnership and sustainable tourism, ACL agrees to only allow small overnight passenger vessels with a passenger capacity under 250 to dock for the entire duration of the Lease. ACL will not accept reservations from other overnight passenger vessels unless referred from the Petersburg Harbor Department.
- ACL will maintain the dock, will manage the schedule, and will retain all revenue associated with other uses its schedules at the dock.
- If it chooses, the Borough may take over management and scheduling of the dock from September 30 to May 1 in each year. If the Borough chooses this, it will make no payment to ACL, but will take the full maintenance cost of the dock (except for damage caused by ACL) and will split the revenue it derives from the dock 50/50 with ACL.

We look forward to the continued partnership with the Borough of Petersburg and are happy to discuss this updated proposal at any time.

Sincerely,

Charles B. Robertson  
President & CEO

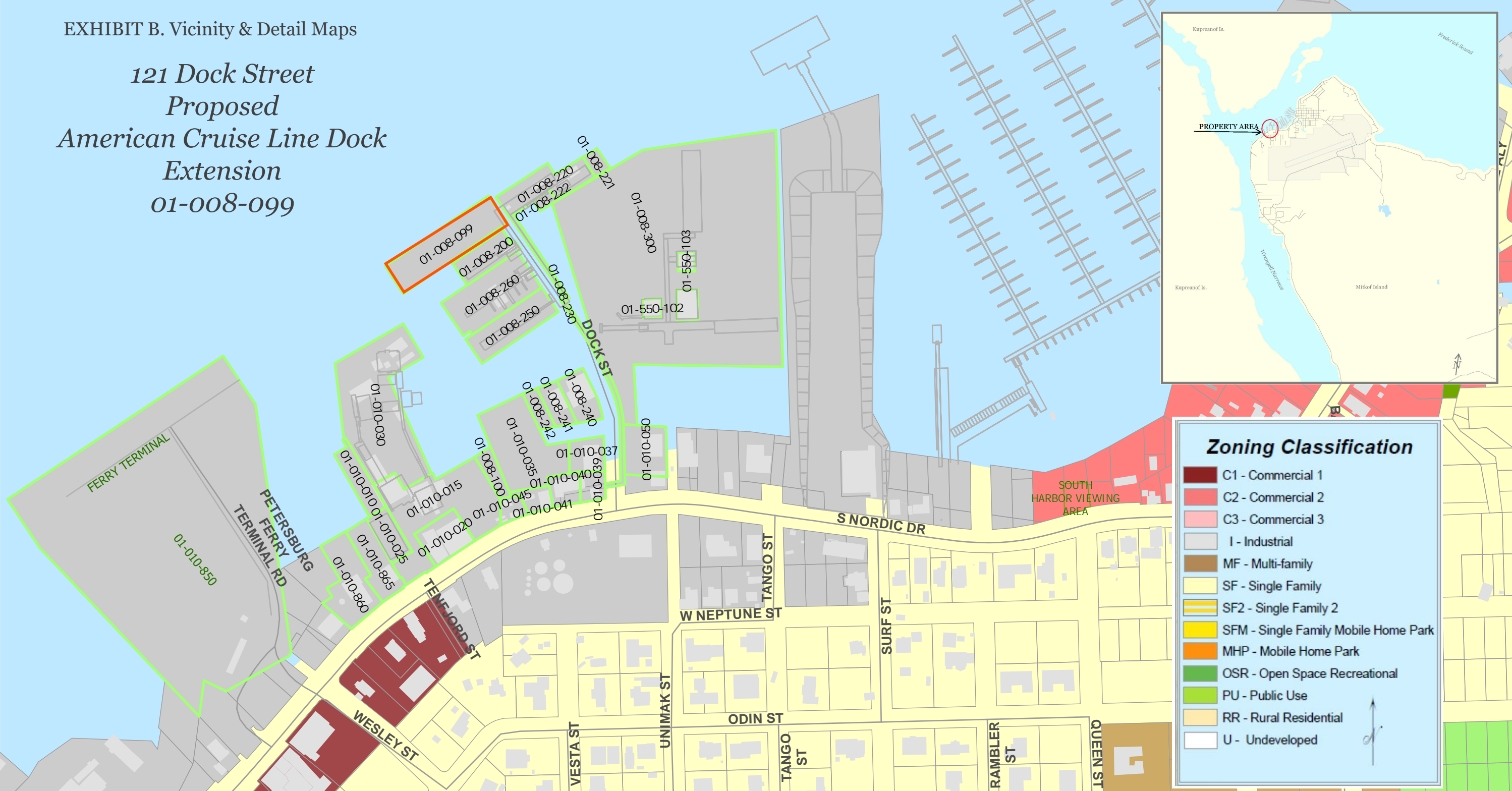
Kristin Meira  
Director of Government  
Affairs

Eric Dussault  
Director of Port Development  
and Construction



EXHIBIT B. Vicinity & Detail Maps

121 Dock Street  
Proposed  
American Cruise Line Dock  
Extension  
01-008-099



**Zoning Classification**

	C1 - Commercial 1
	C2 - Commercial 2
	C3 - Commercial 3
	I - Industrial
	MF - Multi-family
	SF - Single Family
	SF2 - Single Family 2
	SFM - Single Family Mobile Home Park
	MHP - Mobile Home Park
	OSR - Open Space Recreational
	PU - Public Use
	RR - Rural Residential
	U - Undeveloped

# EXHIBIT C. PUBLIC HEARING MAILOUT



May 23, 2025

**RUTHERFORD ANDREW**  
**PO BOX 190498**  
**ANCHORAGE, AK 99519-0498**

## NOTICE OF SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Petersburg Borough Planning Commission has scheduled a public hearing to consider:

**Recommendation to the Borough Assembly regarding an application from American Cruise Lines to lease approximately 22,000 sf of borough tidelands for the purpose of constructing a mooring float at the end of Dock St (temp PID: 01-008-099).**

The public hearing and consideration of the application will be held:	<b>Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 12:00 PM</b> Assembly Chambers, Municipal Building 12 South Nordic Drive, Petersburg, Alaska.
The meeting is open to the public. To attend via <b>ZOOM</b> , please contact Anna Caulum at 907-772-5409.	

Interested persons desiring to present their views on the applications, either in writing or verbally, will be given the opportunity to be heard during the above-mentioned hearing. Said hearing may be continued from time to time as necessary. If the Planning Commission is unable to meet at the date and time stated above, this application will be considered at a future meeting with no further notice provided except for the general notice provided to the public.

TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION	
By Mail:	PO Box 329, Petersburg, Alaska 99833
By Email:	<a href="mailto:acaulum@petersburgak.gov">acaulum@petersburgak.gov</a>
Hand-Deliver:	Petersburg Municipal Building, 12 S. Nordic Dr.

The Petersburg Municipal Code (PMC) provides for an appeal of a Planning Commission decision to the Borough Assembly by the property owner or a governmental agency, or any property owner within 600' of the applicant property and requires that such an appeal be filed within 10 consecutive calendar days of the date the decision is made. For more information regarding appeal requirements, please see PMC Chapter 19.92.

Sincerely,

Liz Cabrera  
Community & Economic Development Department

Name1	Name2	Address1	City	State	Zip
CHRIS FRY		PO BOX 1440	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1440
HEATHER O'NEIL		PO BOX 1083	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1083
JIM FLOYD		PO BOX 281	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-0281
JOHN JENSEN		PO BOX 681	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-0681
PHIL MEEKS		PO BOX 1514	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1514
MARIETTA DAVIS		PO BOX 673	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-0673
DONALD SPERL		PO BOX 1407	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1407
AMERICAN CRUISE LINES	CHARLES B ROBERTSON	741 BOSTON POST ROAD	GUILFORD	CT	06437
ALASKA COMMERCIAL ELECTRONICS LLC		PO BOX 1144	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1144
ALASKA STATE OF		550 W 7TH AVE STE 1050A	ANCHORAGE	AK	99501-3579
BIRCHELL PROPERTIES LLC		PO BOX 12	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-0012
ISLAND REFRIGERATION LLC		PO BOX 2185	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-2185
PARKER SAMUELLE MAE		PO BOX 1364	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1364
PETERSBURG FLYING SERVICES LLC		PO BOX 1348	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1348
PETRO 49 INC		PO BOX 389	SEWARD	AK	99664
PISTON AND RUDDER SERVICE INC.		PO BOX 1308	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1308
ROCKY'S MARINE INC.		PO BOX 690	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-0690
ROSVOLD ERIC		PO BOX 1144	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1144
RUTHERFORD ANDREW		PO BOX 190498	ANCHORAGE	AK	99519-0498
STROMDAHL KIMBERLY		PO BOX 523	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-0523
US COAST GUARD		PO BOX 1290	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-1290
WIKAN JOHN B WIKAN SHERI L	WIKAN ENTERPRISES INC	PO BOX 929	PETERSBURG	AK	99833-0929
ALASKA DOT & PF		PO BOX 112505	JUNEAU	AK	99811-2505



## Petersburg Borough

12 South Nordic Drive  
Petersburg, AK 99833

### Meeting Minutes Harbors and Ports Advisory Board

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Thursday, April 03, 2025

6:30 PM

Assembly Chambers

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#### 1. Call to Order / Roll Call

##### PRESENT

Board Chair Bob Martin  
Board Member Daniel Cardenas  
Board Member Casey Knight  
Board Member John Murgas  
Board Member Joel Randrup  
Board Member Scott Roberge  
Board Member Don Spigelmyre

Assembly Liaison Scott Newman was present.

American Cruise Lines Representative, Mark Freeman present online.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

##### October 16, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

The minutes of October 16, 2024, regular meeting were unanimously approved as written.

Motion made by Board Member Randrup, Seconded by Board Member Knight.  
Voting Yea: Board Chair Martin, Board Member Cardenas, Board Member Knight, Board Member Murgas, Board Member Randrup, Board Member Roberge, Board Member Spigelmyre

#### 3. Amendment and Approval of Meeting Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved as written.

Motion made by Board Member Knight, Seconded by Board Member Randrup.  
Voting Yea: Board Chair Martin, Board Member Cardenas, Board Member Knight, Board Member Murgas, Board Member Randrup, Board Member Roberge, Board Member Spigelmyre



#### **4. Persons to be Heard Related to the Agenda**

No views were shared.

#### **5. Persons to be Heard Unrelated to the Agenda**

No views were shared.

#### **6. Harbormaster Report**

##### **A. 2025 Spring Harbormaster Report**

Harbormaster Wollen read the report into the record.

##### **B. Port Calls List**

Harbormaster Wollen presented the Port Calls List from 2003 to March 2025.

#### **7. Unfinished Business**

##### **A. FY2026 Budget**

A motion was made to recommend the assembly adopt the proposed FY2026 Harbor Enterprise Budget. The board unanimously approved 7 - 0.

Motion made by Board Member Spigelmyre, Seconded by Board Member Randrup. Voting Yea: Board Chair Martin, Board Member Cardenas, Board Member Knight, Board Member Murgas, Board Member Randrup, Board Member Roberge, Board Member Spigelmyre

##### **B. American Cruise Lines Multi-Purpose Small Cruise Ship Dock**

The Harbor Board recommends the Assembly move forward with Concept 7 for development of the proposed multi-purpose small cruise ship dock partnership with American Cruise Lines and recommends following the Visitor Industry Management Plan's outlined Quality of Life goals. Motion carried 7-0

Motion made by Board Member Spigelmyre, Seconded by Board Member Knight. Voting Yea: Board Chair Martin, Board Member Cardenas, Board Member Knight, Board Member Murgas, Board Member Randrup, Board Member Roberge, Board Member Spigelmyre

#### **8. New Business**

There was no new business.

#### **9. Communication**

There were no communications.

## **10. Discussion Items**

### **Update on PEDC Scow Bay Boat Yard Project funding and timeline.**

Harbormaster Wollen gave a brief outline on the state of the recent Federal spending freeze on the funding package for the Scow Bay Project. She also updated the Board on the desire of PEDC to encourage future growth by expanding the design to include a wider ramp to allow for an amphibious 150 ton travel lift.

Chairman Martin invited members to participate in the upcoming Assembly meeting to address the need for Marine Industrial Overlay (MIO) of Borough owned and formally owned Port and Scow Bay properties.

## **11. Adjourn**

The board unanimously adjourned at 8:13 pm.

## CHAPTER 3: LAND USE + ENVIRONMENT

**Overarching Goal:** Encourage and guide growth to make Petersburg town and Borough an increasingly dynamic, successful and attractive place to live, work, invest and visit.

This chapter outlines land use and environmental policies, beginning with an overview of relevant goals and strategies, followed by a more detailed explanation of strategies and potential actions. The chapter concludes with an overview of the background and context that have informed land use policy recommendations.

### GOALS + STRATEGIES

1. **Goal: Support Development.** Actively work to reduce barriers to private development.
  - a. Take steps to reduce the delay, cost and uncertainty associated with compliance with the Army Corps of Engineers 404 wetlands fill permit, required of all development projects in the Borough. Reserve Borough lands as a wetlands mitigation pool; consider taking over local management of discharge of fill into wetlands within the Petersburg Borough boundaries
  - b. Investigate options for the Borough to facilitate the extension of power to homes in rural subdivisions.
  - c. The Borough administration should include a development advocate function. This position would work with projects that could bring significant public benefits, but which need assistance to move quickly through the review and approval process.
2. **Goal: Encourage and Guide Growth.** Create an improved, Borough-wide system of land use tools to help carry out goals and strategies in this chapter and the Plan as a whole.
  - a. Extend subdivision authority to the entire Borough; apply different subdivision standards outside of Service Area One to reflect the unique characteristics and needs of these areas.
  - b. Develop a new Borough-wide, generalized land use map. Within Service Area One this will be a translation and update of current zoning; outside of Service Area One this will be based on the very different scale and style of development in these areas. See proposed land use map legend tables on pages 40 and 41 and accompanying draft generalized land use maps in Appendix B.
  - c. Develop appropriate land use codes to be used to implement the generalized land use map, recognizing the different characteristics and needs of different locations.
  - d. Establish an improved system for selecting, inventorying and managing Borough-owned land.



3. **Goal: Quality.** Adopt policies that encourage high quality buildings and site development practices that reflect Petersburg’s history and setting. *(Note: this goal focuses on Service Area One).*
- a. Identify priorities and set objectives for improving the current Service Area One zoning code.
  - b. Identify priorities and set objectives for improving the current subdivision code and how it is applied in Service Area One.
  - c. Establish guidelines that allow for and encourage higher density housing while ensuring quality of neighborhoods and individual structures.
4. **Goal: Downtown.** Help make Petersburg’s downtown is a good place to start or run a business, by taking actions so downtown is lively, attractive, walkable and inviting for residents and visitors.
- a. Develop and adopt policies that encourage more downtown private development and redevelopment.
  - b. Evaluate options and develop strategies to respond to fire hazards.
  - c. Develop a comprehensive strategy to balance the need to provide adequate downtown and waterfront parking, with the need to maintain a compact, walkable downtown.
  - d. Increase the amount of residential, office and other uses within walking distance of downtown.
  - e. Improve circulation for vehicles, bikes and pedestrians. *See Chapter 5: Transportation for more information on roads and sidewalks.*
5. **Goal: Waterfront.** Manage the use of the waterfront Borough-wide to maximize the value of this scarce resource for business, residents and visitors.
- a. Integrate and balance the need to support a range of waterfront uses.

6. **Goal: Environment.** Maintain the overall quality of the Petersburg Borough natural environment; protect “environmental services” like watersheds and drainage ways as well as preserving the aesthetic beauty of the community.
- a. Inventory and identify important and potentially vulnerable environmental assets, including streams, watersheds, flood plains, fish and wildlife habitat.
  - b. Work with public and private landowners to identify strategies to protect important natural resource values.



View from the Petersburg waterfront



## A. QUALITY OF LIFE

GOAL: SUSTAIN A REASONABLE BALANCE BETWEEN VISITOR INDUSTRY AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

Protecting the residential quality of life is a prerequisite for the continued vibrancy of the visitor industry and sustaining the many economic benefits it brings. This goal, of maintaining livability in the face of ever-growing visitor industry seen throughout the region, is present in one way or another in every recommendation in this plan. Community residents have witnessed the impacts of increased visitor traffic on the quality of life in nearby communities. The sheer number of visitors has changed the character of neighborhoods, the make-up of downtown business districts, exacerbated traffic, and congestion and generated noise, trash, and pollution. Managing the visitor industry requires ongoing monitoring of the benefits and impacts as well as resident sentiment.

### 1. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO ASSESS COMMUNITY SENTIMENT FOR VISITOR INDUSTRY.

- Include visitor industry-related questions in future community surveys.

### 2. DEVELOP BASELINE INFORMATION AND MONITOR YEAR-TO-YEAR CHANGES, PARTICULARLY FOR CRUISE SHIPS.

- For example, numbers of port calls per year, visitors per season or visitors per day.

- Number of calls to the Chamber of Commerce's suggestion line per season.

### 3. CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A BOROUGH POLICY TO "TRIGGER" PUBLIC MEETING OR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORK GROUP OR PUBLIC PROCESS TO EVALUATE IMPACT OF VISITOR LEVELS AND DETERMINE IF CONTINUED GROWTH IS DESIRED. POSSIBLE TRIGGERS:

- Over 246 port calls in a season (15% growth from highest year - 2002).
- 18,000 passengers (20% growth from 2006) or \$90,000 in marine passenger fee revenue in one season.
- Significant increase in demand for EMS services.

### 4. CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A PLANNING PROCESS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS ALLOWING FOR LARGER SHIPS TO DOCK (280'-400') OR IMPROVEMENTS TO LITERING FACILITIES.

### 5. CONSIDER INVITING TOUR OPERATORS TO BECOME PART OF THE COMMUNITY.

- Send letter suggesting donations to the Community Foundation, purchasing memberships to visit Museum, etc.

### 6. CONSIDER PROVIDING A COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT TO THE VISITOR INDUSTRY/TOUR OPERATORS.

### 7. EXPLORE WAYS TO MITIGATE PEDESTRIAN CONGESTION IN DOWNTOWN, AS NEEDED.

- Stagger walking tours; allowing free time for exploring downtown

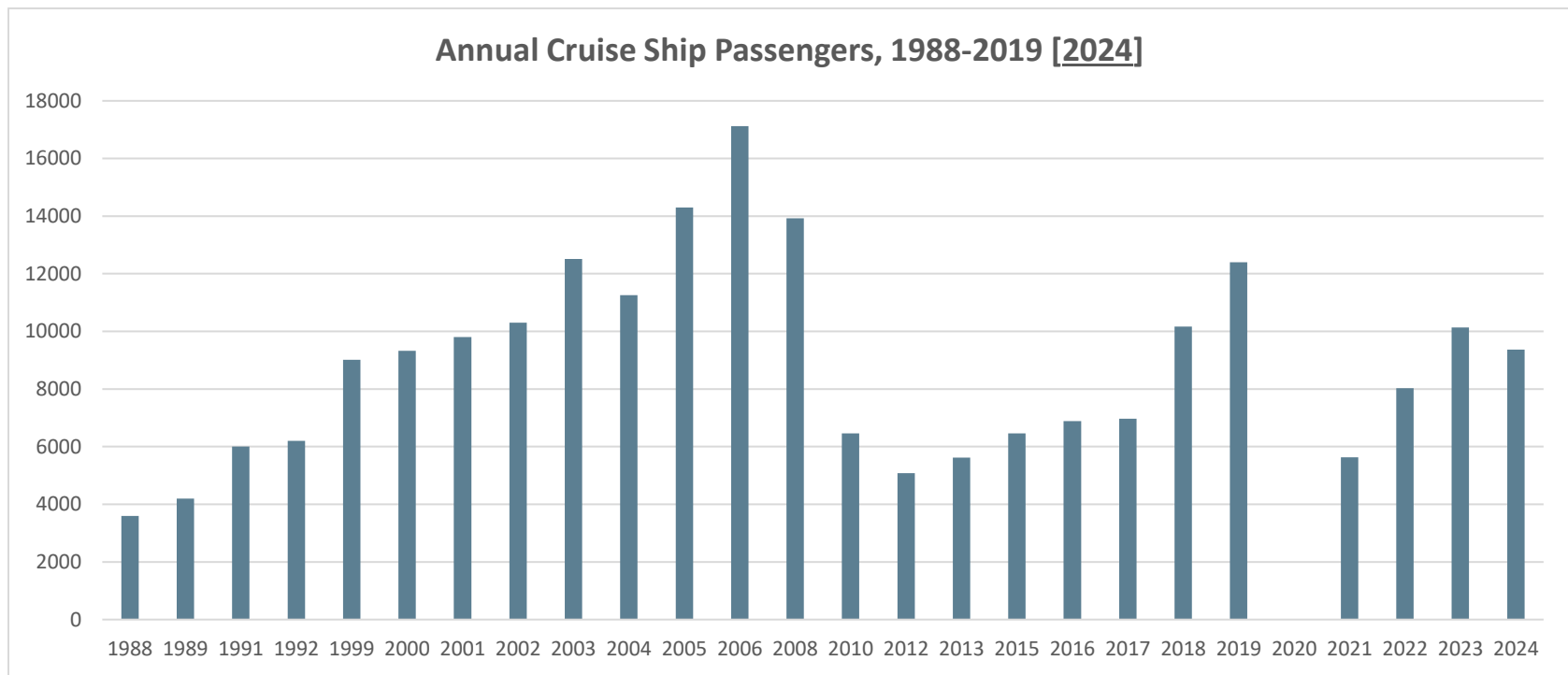
- Develop alternatives to being downtown; consider out the road options.

#### **8. ENSURE RECREATION FACILITIES/TRAILS ARE AVAILABLE FOR LOCAL USE**

- Identify which trails are better suited for visitors. Consider establishing local permitting system if visitor use is creating an impact.

#### **9. PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES RELATED TO LARGE-GROUP TOURISM SHOULD BE REFERRED TO APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATIONS OR COMMITTEES.**

- Planned response to health issues (norovirus, flu, novel viruses) related to large group travel should be prepared and implemented as needed.
- RVs parking on downtown streets.



## E. INFRASTRUCTURE & PLANNING

### GOAL: IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS.

Petersburg has limited infrastructure to accommodate the visitor industry, particularly larger groups of visitors arriving via cruise ships. The existing infrastructure is designed to accommodate a small resident population and existing marine infrastructure is used at capacity during the summer season and must be shared with a dynamic commercial fishing fleet. Focus on maximizing the benefits and minimizing user conflict of our existing marine infrastructure, finding cost-effective alternatives to existing infrastructure, and providing infrastructure that benefits both the local populace and visitor population were deemed the priorities. Cost estimates have been added where available.

#### 1. IMPROVE ACCESS/PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PUBLIC RESTROOMS\*

- Install "Public Rest Room" signs outside all buildings with public restrooms. Identify ADA restrooms, where appropriate.
- Add location of restrooms to all walking and event maps.
- Allow access to municipal building and police station restrooms during Little Norway Festival and Fourth of July.
- Purchase additional mobile seasonal restrooms that can be used anywhere and anytime there is a community event. (Cost estimate: \$40-50,000) [Completed in 2021]

#### 2. IDENTIFY CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS BENEFITING BOTH LOCAL AND VISITOR POPULATIONS

- Supply shore-side power at Drive Down Dock.

- Install Marine Pump-out station\* (Could be used as marketing tool) (Cost estimate: \$50-85,000, depending on location).
- Install ADA-compliant ramp at northern end of South Harbor (Cost estimate: \$1.7m with reconfigured approach).
- Install mooring dolphin at Port Dock (Cost estimate: \$371,000).
- Create multi-use covered area at Drive-down dock for activities include visitor staging, vendor stalls, and farmer's market. Area can be used to overhaul fishing gear during off-season.
- Improve general accessibility (ADA) throughout town.

#### 3. MAXIMIZE OUR EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND MINIMIZE CONFLICTS

- Parking areas around harbors are congested. Create staging area for shuttles.
- Consider repurposing shuttles for multiple uses and minimize the number of vehicles entering harbor area.
- Harbormaster's office continues to coordinate port call schedules with local fleet needs. (i.e. End of July/August are good times for cruise visits as harbor activity slowed down. Saturdays/Sundays also better).
- Establish "change fee" for tour ships changing scheduled port location.

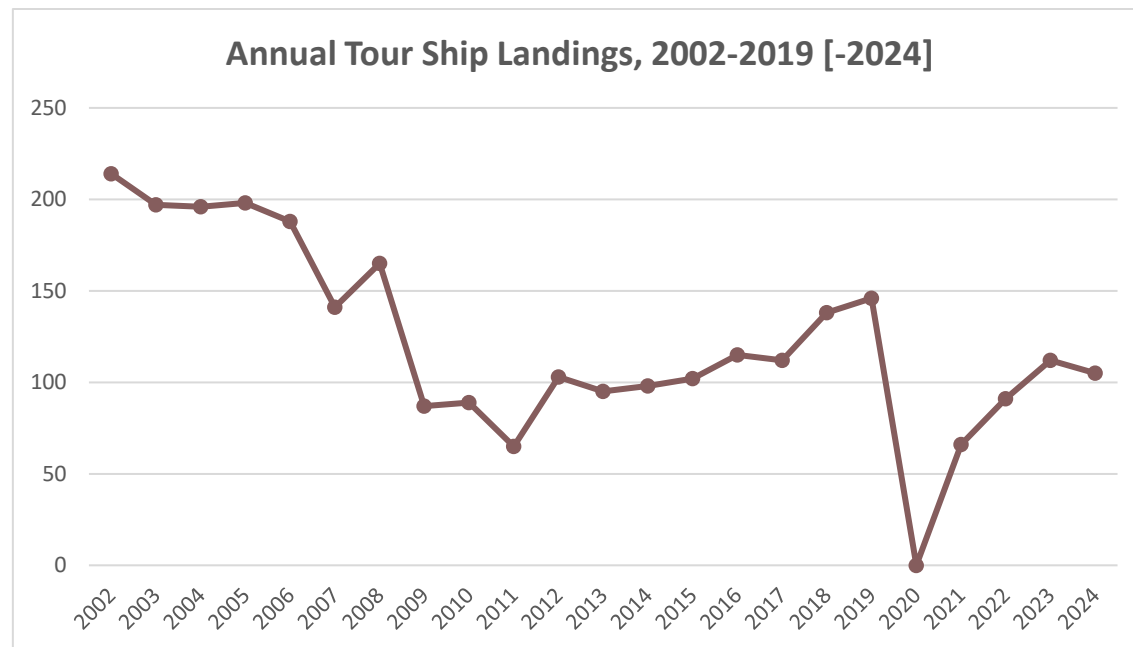
#### 4. CONSIDER OPTIONS FOR NEW INFRASTRUCTURE TO REDUCE CONGESTION IN HARBOR AND TO MAINTAIN CURRENT LEVEL

**OF VISITOR TRAFFIC FROM CRUISE SHIPS** (current trend in small cruise ships is slightly larger than we can accommodate within our harbor with LOA of 250' – 450' and passenger capacities ranging from 100 to 560.)

- Install a “Day Float” to facilitate liter operations. Possible locations: Outlook Park, Commercial Property at Frederick Pt, Banana Pt.
- Request use of existing ferry terminals for MV Columbia-size (400') tour ships, both Downtown and South Mitkof locations.
- See #3 under Quality of Life.

## 5. IMPROVE RECREATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Consider installing kayak floats and paddle board racks, and bike racks.
- Establish private-public partnership (similar to canned salmon label trash cans) for new benches.



**\*Port Dock:** Vessel up to 280 ft.

**Drive Down Float:** Vessel up to 220 ft.

**End of C Float:** Vessel up to 280 ft.

**\*South Harbor Loading Zone:** vessels up to 165 ft. & 2 (50 ft.) liters at a time If SOLAS; if not SOLAS, 4 liters at one time.  
(\*Areas authorized by US Department of Homeland Security for moorage of SOLAS vessels (vessels that come and go from foreign ports) and their liters.)

### How many port calls does Petersburg receive per year?

Port calls to Petersburg have ranged from a high of 214 (2002) to a low of 65 (2011). In 2019, Petersburg received 146 port calls from tour ships, including ships using liters.<sup>17</sup> Due to the global pandemic in 2020, there were no port calls from commercial passenger ships in 2020. Port calls for 2021 are uncertain at this time. [2024 saw 105 port calls.]

## Frequently Asked Question

### What size ships can navigate the Wrangell Narrows?

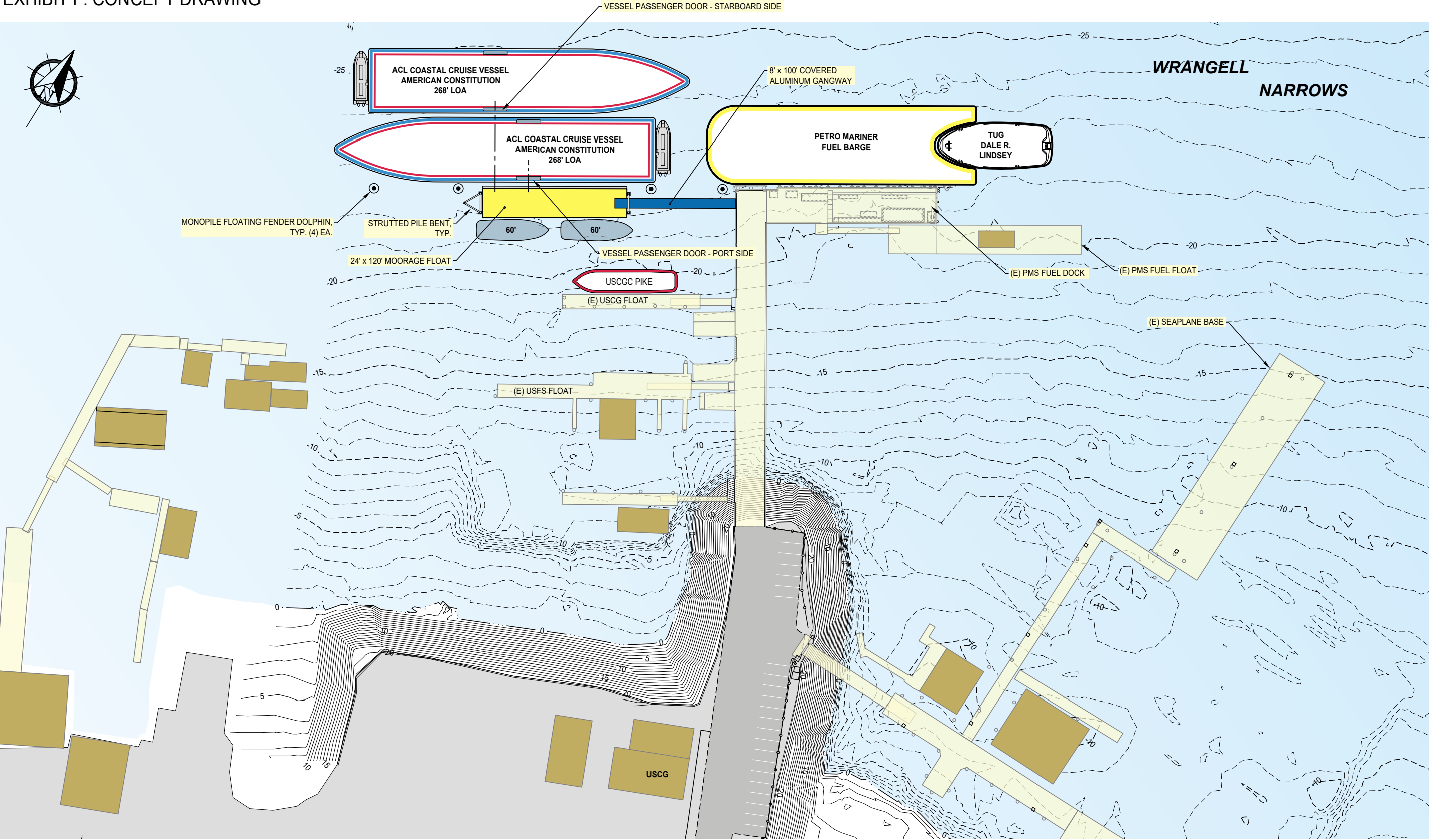
The MV Le Soleal (466' LOA; 59' wide; 16.4' draft) and the AMHS Ferry MV Columbia, (418' LOA; 85' wide; loaded draft 17'-6 1/8") are the largest vessels to navigate the Wrangell Narrows.

### What size ships can tie up at each berthing location within the harbor?

There are four locations within the Petersburg harbors where tour ships are moored and where ships may disembark passengers during litering operations:



EXHIBIT F. CONCEPT DRAWING



REVISIONS					
REV.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DWN.	CKD.	APP.

PND

ENGINEERS, INC.

9360 Glacier Highway Ste 100  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Phone: 907-586-2093  
www.pndengineers.com

DESIGN: CRS

CHECKED: JLD

SCALE: SCALE IN FEET

DRAWN: PJD

APPROVED: CRS

0 40 80 FT.

CONCEPT

DATE: 3/24/25

PETERSBURG BOROUGH  
AMERICAN CRUISE LINES  
SMALL CRUISE SHIP DOCK

SHEET TITLE: DOCK PLAN  
CONCEPT NO.7

PND PROJECT NO.: 242093 C.A.N. NO.: AECC250

## EXHIBIT G: PUBLIC COMMENTS



1813 E 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
907-562-5000  
[www.petromarineservices.com](http://www.petromarineservices.com)

March 5, 2025

Glorianne Wollen  
Harbor Master  
Petersburg Borough Port and Harbor Dept.  
PO Box 329  
Petersburg, AK 99833

Re: Fuel Dock Conflicts


Dear Ms. Wollen:

Both Petro 49 and the Petersburg Borough are parties to a 1987 Tideland/Submerged Lands Lease agreement that allows Petro 49 to operate a fuel dock in Petersburg.

As the number of cruise ship visits to Petersburg has increased, so have instances where a cruise ship tied up to the dock, for extended periods of time, blocks access to our fuel facility and interferes with our lease and ability to sell fuel to local customers.

Petro's terminal staff communicates and coordinates with the Harbor staff to minimize the impacts of cruise ship visits. But Petro believes the best long-term solution to address these issues is to expand the dock face. This expansion provides the cruise vessels with dedicated space for their needs while allowing Petro to provide uninterrupted service to our marine customers.

Regards,



Jason Werner  
C.F.O.



June 2, 2025

RE: American Cruise Lines Lease Application

To: Planning Commission

We are writing to express our strong support for the proposed construction of a small cruise ship dock at the end of Dock Street. This project presents a valuable opportunity to enhance our community and retain control of our marine infrastructure.

Establishing a dedicated dock would foster a long-term relationship with a cruise operator, making Petersburg a preferred port of call. This stability in annual visits would create a more predictable environment for local businesses. While it may result in modest increases in tourist traffic, the primary benefit lies in the increased certainty for shops, restaurants, tour operators, and other service providers, encouraging investment and job creation.

A dedicated dock would significantly improve the safety and efficiency of our marine infrastructure. Currently, the Port Dock's availability is restricted to accommodate fuel barges and commercial vessel fueling. Expanding the dock would allow simultaneous mooring for both a small cruise ship and the fuel barge. Further, the dock would be available for use by third parties during the off-season, maximizing its utility.

Lastly, this project provides a timely opportunity to incorporate a marine pump-out station, a long-discussed and prudent investment to protect our surrounding waters from wastewater discharge.

We acknowledge the need for careful planning and consideration of potential impacts for any development project. However, we are confident that with appropriate mitigation measures and a commitment to responsible development, the borough can minimize any adverse effects and maximize the benefits for our community. A well-designed small cruise ship dock can integrate harmoniously with our existing waterfront infrastructure, contributing positively to our local environment.

We strongly urge you to approve this project and commit to a collaborative approach with American Cruise Lines and the community to ensure its successful implementation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Casey Flint  
President, PEDC Board of Directors