

WATERFRONT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PLAN - COMMENTS FOR COUNCIL REVIEW
09.23.2025

COMMENT 1 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM GIRDWOOD)

Please keep public access intact at the head of the bay. Please provide dedicated paddle craft and small hand carry boat launch facilities in all new development plans. Whittier has limited public lands access that does not require fees. Head of the Bay Area is the last of this type of public access in Whittier and must be left intact for public recreation and fishing access.

COMMENT 2 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WHITTIER)

Page 16 “Find a location for kayak launch and storage” not “better” There is no designated spot. This looks like a Page 16, 17 Does the “old day cruise” dock have potential opportunities? Page 19 I have always heard this dock referred to as the “passenger dock” is this a mistake or has the name been changed? Page 19 In the pictures are two privately funded projects to augment kayak launching and loading of kayaks on to water taxis. There is a need and businesses have made attempts in this area. While kayaks and their related infrastructure has been touted as an inconvenience to harbor and boat operations. Perhaps we need to flip the perspective and see how motor boats and their operation may be an inconvenience to kayakers. There is a demand for kayak infrastructure in the harbor loop area whether it be the passenger (or transient floating) dock, the city dock, or something entirely new. People from around the world come to paddle in Prince William Sound. It is a sleeping economic engine Page 26 Waste bins are not “installed”. They are just placed on the ground. They still need to be affixed to some sort of base or they will be tipped over by bears or the wind. Bike racks are not mentioned. They serve to encourage alternatives to vehicles, thus helping to alleviate parking, provide transportation options for boaters to transit to further parking lots. They also need to eventually need to be affixed to a concrete foundation like the waste bins Page 30 “Portage Glacier Trailhead” I think the official name is “Portage Pass” Page 34. For opportunities, on the West side of the old tank farm lot is a large waterfall that has potential as a scenic attraction in Whittier. Page 41 Shortcut trail from Smitty’s Cove to Lu-Young Park or Shotgun Cove Road. Bear resistant trash cans, bike racks, kayak racks need proper concrete pads to be installed upon. Smitty’s Cove/Whittier/PWS could benefit from a “paddle/small craft/aquatics community center. A small building for classes, storage, bathrooms, etc Page 54 Landscaping – Use of Alaska native trees, shrubs, and other plants should be required Page 57 Where’s the kayak infrastructure??

COMMENT 3 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WASILLA)

I appreciate the extensive information provided, it was very well thought out and very informative. I would like to weigh in on a couple things, mainly the Whittier Coast guard Caboose as it is my main passion as a member of the Whittier Flotilla. I appreciate the care and consideration that was made to keep the Caboose as part of the Whittier landscape, having it stay near the harbor office is I think the best spot as we are there for the community to promote boating safety and community involvement with events like Harbor clean up (both in the winter and spring) and the 4th of July events among others including a meeting spot for safety patrols and Search and Rescue activity. I enjoyed looking at all of the other improvements that are proposed and support them as well. In regards to the Head of the bay I would put the proposed camp ground be along the beach (like in seaward) and put the boat parking behind that, giving campers more water access and great views instead of a view across the parking lot. I have frequented Whittier since approx. 2010 when I started working security for the cruise ship terminal with Securitas and soon after joined the Whittier Flotilla. I was also instrumental in the complete interior remodel and drying in of the caboose a number of years ago where we grinded and resealed the roof and replaced all of the water damage inside and upgraded our facilities to better serve the Whittier community. Jared Nelson

COMMENT 4 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WHITTIER)

I would like to reiterate the importance of Smitty's Cove for commercial use. Our company Dojer Services, a ARRC lease holder for commercial use, has used Smitty's Ramp for the past 33 years. We supply fuel and freight to two substantial villages, - Tatitlek and Chenega Village, along with their SOA DOT airports, and the two Chugach School District remote schools. Other sites of importance would include Coast Guard radar sites, cell repeater sites, four fish hatcheries, environmental clean up sites, and a hand full of summer lodge owners in Prince William Sound. It is vital for several local business's like ours, including Lazy Otter and Custom Marine, along side of local business's there are several others with need for the ramp at Smitty's for Landing craft use, including Prince William Sound Aquaculture, Chenega Corp, Harris Sand and Gravel, and other occasional vessels. We all pay our dues for the use of the ramp. This is absolutely the only ramp in Whittier for Landing Craft use to access Prince William Sound.

COMMENT 5 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM GIRDWOOD)

Having space for truly Alaskan local artists to grow and thrive in retail spaces will give beauty and groundedness to the hustle and bustle of the project and help keep funds in Alaska.

COMMENT 6 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WHITTIER)

Things that resonate with/stand out to me: **lost revenue due to unpaid boat launches and uncited parking violations **harbor leased lots that are not being leased at market rate, terms of leases are not being met, leased lots are not being used for businesses as stated in the lease (old liquor store location for example) **new concrete sidewalk along the east side of the harbor along with new benches and trash cans changes the entire feel of that side of the harbor! **some sort of standard for the upkeep/appearance of harborfront businesses **new dumpsters and trash cans seem to have had a tremendous positive impact this year! **the pavillion is not what it could be--a partially enclosed pavillion like in Seward would be such an asset to our town! **removing the broken binoculars adjacent to the pavillion would be less confusing for tourists **preserving access to Smitty's Cove is important to me **updating the DeLong Dock and the Ocean Dock along with rate increases to make them competitive in the market seem like they would be beneficial to the city **head of the bay development should not take up all of the waterfront--some must be set aside to enjoy! **development of land at the head of the bay should be paid for by the land users, not the city of Whittier **need better signage all over town, especially in the harbor **need better pedestrian access coming out of the pedestrian tunnel on the harbor end **

COMMENT 7 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM GIRDWOOD)

Thank you for soliciting Comments on the draft Waterfront and Economic Development Plan. There are some elements of this plan that are spectacular, such as increased pedestrian connectivity, improved park space along the harbor, and increased interpretive signage. These are exciting prospects for the community. That said, I do have significant concerns, particularly regarding the proposed redevelopment of Head of the Bay. Head of the Bay is a spectacular recreational site for Whittier residents and visitors, and the cornerstone of this plan requires destroying it as it is today. Head of the Bay is a beach area that extends hundreds of feet long, providing space for walking, beachcombing, picnicking, and enjoying the spectacular views of Passage Canal. When you stand at Head of the Bay and look out from the edge of Prince William Sound, there is an entire world of marine opportunity at your fingertips. The large Sound makes a human feel small, and it inspires a sense of wonder and awe. The plan's proposal to replace this area with a boat ramp and parking lot would result in the loss of these recreational and environmental benefits. On page 34, the plan lists preservation of the environment as a "challenge," but does not list the natural beauty of Head of the Bay as an "opportunity." This omission feels significant. Even if one assumes the city wishes to prioritize economic development over preservation, it remains unclear whether the proposed use would deliver meaningful economic benefit.

Economic Development Page 2 of the plan acknowledges Whittier's reliance on tourism for local businesses," yet the proposed location of the new boating facility—near the tunnel entrance—creates a risk that visitors will bypass local businesses altogether. Under the current concept, many visitors would drive directly through the tunnel, launch their boats, return, and leave without engaging with Whittier's shops or residents. This limits the potential for local economic benefit. While page 88 mentions possible business opportunities at Head of the Bay, these are not reflected in the maps or drawings raising questions about how seriously those opportunities are being considered.

Whittier Airport The plan proposes relocating the campground closer to the Whittier Airport. While aviation is a valued part of Alaska life, proximity to airport operations could negatively affect the camping experience. The plan also references the possible decommissioning of the Whittier Airport, but it is unclear whether this is a realistic option. Has the Alaska Department of Transportation or the FAA provided any guidance on this? The airport may have important roles in emergency response, medevac, or tunnel-closure scenarios, and more clarity would be valuable.

Smitty's Cove The plan indicates that almost all waterfront recreational activity should be moved from Head of the Bay to Smitty's Cove. I agree with the plan's characterization of Smitty's Cove as "a gem." However, its limited size, proximity to maritime industrial activity, and potential future changes to adjacent Alaska Railroad facilities raise concerns

about relying on it as Whittier's primary recreational waterfront. I do not believe the plan does a sufficient job of explaining how user conflicts will be avoided at Smitty's. With these unknowns about the future of Smitty's, it is not a good time to rely on Smitty's as the only maritime recreation site in the waterfront. Suggestions To strengthen the plan, I respectfully suggest the following:

- Explore opportunities for multi-story, mixed-use buildings along the waterfront to maximize limited land while still preserving open space. Whittier has limited footprint for development, and it may be worth considering building up instead of out. (Yes, I recommend the irony of suggesting this for Whittier when it is well-known for the Begich Tower.)
- If redevelopment of Head of the Bay proceeds, consider renaming Tank Farm Road to something more welcoming to visitors.
- Incorporate smart streetlighting with variable brightness settings. For example, the streetlights may shine at 75% of their maximum brightness from dusk until 11PM, then they can dim to 50% from 11PM-1AM, then shine at 25% from 1AM-5AM, and then brighten back to 75% from 5AM-dawn. If there is an evening event or activity the timing could be changed, and if there is an emergency the lights could be brightened to 100% to assist with emergency services. This not only reduces electricity costs, but it provides light at the most relevant times and reduces light pollution and light impacts at times that they are least likely to be needed. The new NCL cruise dock is lit in a way that creates new light impacts from the Harbor Management Area, and it would be good to minimize that in the future.

Thank you again for considering these Comments. Whittier has extraordinary potential, and I look forward to seeing how the city balances economic development with the preservation of its natural treasures.

COMMENT 8 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM GIRDWOOD)

The draft plan brings some nice improvements for pedestrians in Whittier, which will improve their experience and roadway safety. I like the many spaces for public education--the kiosks, interpretive signage, etc. The availability of public restrooms will improve everyone's experience as well. I am hesitant to see so much development at the Head of the Bay. The beach there is a popular place for visitors and locals alike, and there's not much coastline elsewhere in Whittier that is easily accessed by the public. As the plan notes, Smitty's is a popular recreation spot (a gem!), but it is much smaller with heavy use already--and with its proximity to the port, it already has quite an industrial feel.

COMMENT 9 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback! In reviewing the plan, we did note one area to clarify in the ownership description of Smitty's Cove: - Page 32 correctly states 'ARRC holds the title to the uplands in this area, with agreements in place for access to the City of Whittier-owned marine infrastructure and public access to Smitty's Cove.' - However, the maps provided on Pages 31 and 33 incorrectly denote the area as 'City of Whittier - Owned Land.' Additionally, the area indicated on the maps encompasses a larger area than is under permitting. I don't see the option to attach a map through this form, but would be happy to provide that information upon request - if that is of interest, please let me know the appropriate contact email to submit a map to supplement this comment. THANK YOU!

COMMENT 10 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WHITTIER)

Sept 9, 2025 To Whom it May Concern: Here are my Comments concerning the Waterfront Economic Plan for Whittier. There are two outstanding themes I read several times in this plan that bother me most. 1.) "Leases are below market value" So often the administration compares Whittier to other communities (Seward, Valdez, Kodiak, Juneau) when justifying an increase in taxes, fees, moorage (other means to charge business and users more). We find these comparisons aggressive. Whittier lease holders have 5 -6 months to create revenue. Those other communities have year round revenue opportunities. It is difficult (at best) to try to operate a business year round. a.) We can not keep water utilities on year round (most of the leases say the the building needs to be skid-able making insulating impossible) b.) road access by DOT is poor and low priority so can be dangerous and intimidating for people to access town. c.) The wind blows 40-50 knots for days on end making it impossible for outdoor recreation and not inviting for people to visit. So there are REAL barriers to operating year round. So it is disingenuous to use these comparisons. 2.) The two statements about non residents causing an inequity or resources.. "only 3 locals residents have fishing vessels" "95% non-residents are harbor users causing competing interest with residents and users" "the City and residents are subsidizing non residents." This is completely incorrect. The residents of Whittier rely completely on the harbor and the businesses who pay for nearly everything. There would be basically no town without the tax revenue from the business and the harbor. This is a maritime town. Most people access Whittier to get out on Prince William Sound. Case in point; the new year-round tax discussion at the August City Council meeting explained that nearly all of the sales tax revenue that has been collected was from "non residents." It makes me angry when it is not recognized that the "residents" of Whittier do not pay for themselves. Every opportunity to tax/fee/charge visitors is exploited. I believe Whittier should decide

how much more we want to grow. How much more vessel traffic do we want into Prince William Sound. Much of the Sound around Whittier is designated Wilderness area. Seward's proximity to the National Park seems like a similar scenario, but the National Park controls protections for the area, whereas the Wilderness area doesn't have as strong protections, so increased pressure from recreational boats and cruise ships may have a much bigger impact. Places like Seward, Juneau, Sitka have so many tour boats and operators they have to take turns viewing wildlife. Is this what we want for Whittier and our scenic waters. Some of the cruise lines have expressed they like Whittier's "working town" charm that it is more authentic. It is agreed that there is a lot of room for better development, and for the harbor area to be cleaned up. Many of the lots could be developed better to have more shops or restaurants but that land is being used for operations or storage. Our local businesses have no where to move their storage, or places to work on their vessels. The lack of services, property, facilities is a huge problem. So they end up taking up space in the "Harbor View" area. Having a place to move "operations" would free up land for more businesses. The plan to make more green spaces, parks, visitor contact impressions would be welcome. There is space it just needs to be managed. There is also a lot of references about moving the launch ramp to the head of the bay. This plan sound like you want to move the "business" side of Whittier to the head of the bay and develop the waterfront into shops. Many of us businesses in the Harbor have a lot of capital in infrastructure in the harbor and rely on all types of customers, not just tourists. 1/3 of our café business is directly related to the east boat ramp and harbor users. How will you replace those customers? Whittier has an actual hurdle to access our town and a true capacity issue with the Anton Anderson Tunnel, so gaining new visitors will take much time and marketing dollars. Agreed wayfinding is essential and would help solve many of the existing problems and very anxious to see this come to fruition. Harbor Masters office is a bit of an embarrassment, it is old, smells and is worn out. This would be a good start to replace and be a good location for a visitor center. Seems that the DeLong Dock should be a priority so more income revenue can be realized from fishing. Put some energy into re-establishing Whittier as a viable fishing port and encourage fisheries. Take some revenue pressure off tourism. Absolutely NOT in favor of sheet piling along the harbor to make more shops. We can't fill the buildings we have. If we manage those leases – encourage with incentives rather than finding new ways to charge more from the businesses - many of the lots would fill/rehabilitate their lots on open new business. Manage the assets we have! Not in favor of closing off the triangle to vehicles. We need to find ways to encourage movement to the triangle, not strangle it. If we turned our attention to managing our challenges i.e. the traffic, leases, signage, boat launch, land use, we could open up many opportunities. It is less expensive to try to find solutions and manage the problems than to build over it. Again, the administration should

concentrate on ways to encourage and incentivize business, rather than continually looking for ways for, the few, businesses to pay more. Managed growth is good, and we should expect it. But maybe we just don't want to be Seward, Valdez, Juneau. Maybe we want to be quaint Whittier. Kelly Bender lazyottr@mtaonline.net 907-529-0235 resident, business owner, Chamber of Commerce officer, and PWS recreationalist

COMMENT 11 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

Hi, Thanks for the opportunity to Comment. On pages 13 and 35 you reference developing day-use cabins. I would recommend changing that to public use cabins, as the proposed cabin at Trinity Point will be for overnight use and reservable on recreation.gov. Thanks, Jesse

COMMENT 12 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WHITTIER)

There is not enough emphasis on what we offer for our visitors in our advertising and ways of getting around our entire city. Waterfront our whole city faces the water. We are divided by rail and the shuttles are not really helping to give the fact we have the historical values of our Museum. Waterfront businesses need to clean up yards to show we care. Some do and some are shabby. Piles of tires and debris is not showing any pride. The benches are very popular. We need more flower pots. Signage for shuttle services especially people coming in by rail. There is nothing telling the passengers that it is a Rail Stop Station. Parking and long term parking is not posted. Fee stations and locations are not posted. The shop descriptions are bland. Whittier Inn & Hotel, Bar, 27 Rooms. it just says Whittier Inn. The Name is the "Inn at Whittier". There is a lot of tax payers that are not getting the service and promotion needed for our small city. We need more Whittier Pride from everyone.

COMMENT 13 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

A significant obstacle to development in Whittier is harbor parking. Charter boat operators can be constrained by their clients simply not having a place to park. A significant improvement to the harbor's tidal grid would be access that doesn't involve scrambling up and down the rocks. Vehicle access to the grid should be preserved. The pedestrian walkway on the south side of the harbor is dangerous in places. The USCG Aux caboose simply takes up space that could be better used. There is rarely anyone there. Much of the Whittier harbor area and along Whittier Street is, to put it mildly, not very pretty. Clean it up. If Whittier is to be "A Destination", it needs to look the part. I was happy to see several references to preserving the environment. There should be more stress on this. The "carrying capacity" concept the forest service uses could be helpful. It rains a lot in

Whittier. Consider covering the new visitor attractions. It also snows a lot; snow loading considerations are important. This looks to be very expensive. Please remember that the ROI must be achieved in only 3 months of the year while the debt service obligation is year-round. ----- The Comments below refer to the Northern Economics Report. While any one of them is minor, the effect of all of them is to minimize the credibility of the entire Development Plan. P.1, Figure 1 shows the population of Whittier falling by 125 people when the road opened. Even if correct, it should be explained. P.2, Figure 3 shows there are about thirty-five 25-29 year-old women in Whittier, but there are only two 20-24 year olds. Where did the 25-year-old women come from? Many age groupings are represented by almost all one gender. This deserves an explanation; it is a truly odd population pyramid. P.3 This description says there is a housing shortage. It goes on to say that 55% of Whittier housing is vacant. Both statements cannot be true. P. 7, Figure 6 shows wages by industry for the Chugach Census Area. The area includes Valdez and Cordova. It is probably not representative of Whittier. Many charts and discussions refer to the Chugach Census Area and may not reflect conditions in Whittier. P. 12: The discussion of differences among Alaska harbors should have addressed the sources of funding for the harbors. Whittier is still primarily funded through moorage rates; other harbors are more diverse. Diversification of Whittier harbor funding should continue. 20 years ago, almost 90% of Whittier harbor funding was from moorage. P. 13: Nearly everything in the discussion of Cliffside Marina is incorrect. The numbers were a spur-of-the-moment guess by the former Cliffside Marina manager and bear little relationship to reality. Predicting the inelasticity of demand for WSBH slips on this analysis is folly. P. 19: Stating that Whittier has a small number of commercial fishing users ignores the annual influx from Cordova. It is true that few Whittier residents own fishing vessels. The Industry Overview also ignores the Cordova fleet. P. 25: Figure 25 Shows there were 700 Civil Aviation flights a year at the Whittier strip, then zero. This deserves an explanation, even if just to say the data is unreliable. P. 27 & 31, Figures 27 & 34: Figure 27 would indicate the harbor was nearly empty in 2020, the COVID year. It wasn't. It's particularly unlikely that preferential berths would be empty. I must admit to being a bit fuzzy about a "stall year". 2023 also looks odd. Figure 34 shows that operating revenues spiked in 2020 when Figure 27 shows the harbor empty. Odd. Figure 34 also shows the harbor with a \$250k profit in 2023. Unlikely. P. 33: Again, the discussion about Cliffside is mostly incorrect. P. 35: There are several statements here that deserve explanation. Claiming that "non-residents have a louder voice than residents have a louder when discussing rates" is false. If 95% of harbor users are non-residents, maybe they should have a louder voice. The paragraph that states the city subsidizes people who do not live in the community clearly reflects misunderstanding of Whittier's Enterprise Fund structure. Stating that this results in a financial loss for the city without an

attempt to quantify it is just plain sloppy. This statement also occurs in the Economic Opportunities and Challenges section of the document. It also adds to the “us versus them” attitude. NE should have addressed what Whittier would be like without the harbor. The Project Context section of the plan refers to Whittier’s reliance on tourism, charter fishing, etc. Stating that the city subsidizes the harbor and incurs a financial loss ignores the fact that no one would visit Whittier if not for the harbor.

COMMENT 14 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANC)

I don’t think that the Harbor loop should be limited to just buses. There are several retail operations there that regular folks use - to pickup foods to go, snag some fresh fish from the seafood store, etc. Walking there across the launch lanes can be something else when it’s busy And it is a long walk for customers and can be pretty wet if it’s raining hard. Please leave some short term parking for regular folks to support the retail operations in the loop. Thanks, Joe Banta

COMMENT 15 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WHITTIER)

Luggage: A lot of thought has gone into providing for increased visitors and cruise ship guests. But that also means a significant amount of luggage pre & post cruise. It is an increasing burden on service providers to accommodate the enormous volume of luggage associated. While many providers can and do accommodate guest luggage, it naturally means more time, crew, and space. Each year the demand increases. Some type of storage locker facility would free up guests to avail themselves of the town and amenities without having to drag all that luggage around or leave it with a provider only to have to drag it to the next location to repeat the process. Car rental: Transportation to and from Whittier is complex and challenging. There has been an increased presence of Alaska Auto Rental cars. It looks like that might be mostly one way. Frequently there are 1 or even 2 car haulers parked along Whittier Street in the pedestrian walk way. Generally this is around cruise ship days which means significantly increased foot traffic. With the car haulers taking up the “side walk”, that means pedestrians must walk in the traffic lanes. Tourists are famous for lack of awareness and forcing them into lanes of traffic is a dangerous plan. Not only should there be a designated area for such activity, enforcement of “no parking” in pedestrian walkways needs to be prioritized. Parking: Parking is a huge issue. Several things need to work together. Cliffside lot is the first one that comes into view and fills up fast. Guests sometimes park along the railroad which is needed for buses and staff (railroad, cruise lines, long shoremen) There is no signage telling them that. On busy weekends all the lots have been full or nearly so. A parking lot at the head of the bay would be helpful, but would require a regular and reliable shuttle. Pedestrian Safety: Rail passengers & tour busses off load guest and passengers then cross the often busy

highway. Most traffic does not stop or even slow for the pedestrians near the Cliffside Marina. A cross walk would be helpful but some seasonal speed bumps would insure traffic slow in this area during the busy summer tourist season. Beautification: Whittier has a rustic charm. However that is somewhat over played. Many of the structures are run down or in disrepair or abandoned looking with excessive weeds. It would be great to have some kind of encouragement or requirement to upkeep properties, clean out weeds, etc. Many areas of Alaska have beautiful plants & flowers. Whittier is challenging but it is possible. Look at the gardens at the Manor and the garden box at Alaska Jet-ski Tours. There are some planter boxes around town that are empty. In one case, someone at the USFS told someone in Whittier NOT to use as they planned to replace all soil to avoid some invasive plants. That never happened and discouraged any progress. Some kind of a plan or incentive, perhaps a contest, to beautify would be helpful. Shuttle: With the new cruise dock at the head of the bay, guest movement is an even more critical issue. There is a shuttle with limited service on days that ships dock at the new facility, but it has some restrictions. I am told they only pick up at the dock and drop off or pick up at 2 locations in town and only if they have paid upon first pick up. There is no provision for guests that arrive a day early and need to get to the new dock to depart. There is no provision for rail passengers to get around town or to the ferry dock. There is no provision for guests that are not able to walk distances. A regular shuttle should be part of the plan. It could be funded by a small fee and by the cruise and rail providers as well as the city.

COMMENT 16 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WHITTIER)

Housing: The current Waterfront and Economic Development Plan contains some thoughtful ideas and designs. One key ingredient seems to be missing. More growth and economic development means more staff, workers and visitors. Where will they live or stay? Housing needs to be a fundamental component of any plan. Lodging for visitors is critically limited. With planned economic growth, more workers, staff, crew will be inevitable. While the BTI has served Whittier for many years, she is getting tired. The antiquated elevator system is operating at 50% on good days. The electrical and water systems are shut down periodically for upgrades or repairs. Years ago, the campground and adjacent area was housing. It could be the site again for a multistory residential building on high ground on the west side of Glacier Ave. There can not be a viable economy and sustainable growth without housing and lodging. It must be more than a brief mention, it must be an integral part of the planning.

COMMENT 17 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WHITTIER)

Thank you for such a thorough plan. I enjoyed the improved boat launch at the east ramp and the focus on signage, restrooms, play parks, art, and covered public spaces. I did feel that much of what was suggested did not consider the extreme weather that Whittier receives in the summer, as wind and rain, and in the winter, as snow, ice, and wind. Here they could be architectural inspiration drawn from other Northern communities and countries such as Iceland, Greenland, and Norway. I also felt that designing a "festival" or performance space could give Whittier a better chance at becoming a destination, rather than just a jumping-off point. I also felt that the effect of the one-way tunnel with its "annoying" but consequential fee and frustrating schedule is a huge barrier to entry for many people and commercial/businesses. Upgrading the tunnel reader board to give more information (arrival of trains, reason for delays) is a must. The current reader board has not been updated since 2000 when the tunnel opened. The tunnel operators should be held to a higher standard to allow greater dependability for those traveling to and from Whittier without trains, buses, and other non-emergency tunnel uses taking priority over scheduled openings. At least improving cell phone service in Bear Valley, an accurate tunnel operations app, and longer tunnel opening times -especially extending the hours, using automatic passes, removing on-site tellers in favor of widely used automatic toll stations. Removing fee structure for private persons would encourage visitation. Providing the option to set up temporary housing in a campground fashion, as seen in other seasonal communities with solid structures to attach mobile units, may increase housing options and could be a good option at the base of Portage Pass Trail. Adding a new waterfront in front of the existing one is my least favorite option as it penalizing waterfront business owners that have been there for decades working to improve Whittiers economic opportunities. Provide alternative high quality storage areas would alleviate the inconsistent lease use. The new head of the bay small boat launch is a good plan however many boat launch users in Whittier are inexperienced and operating "alone" (e.g., only one member of a part can operate vehicle and trailer and manuvuer the vessel) Therefore there is often a wait as that member runs between the different tasks. Providing a sizable vessel staging area would be appropriate as well as "practice areas". Setting up a webcam and improved visibility for new boat launchers would help alleviate this bottle neck.

COMMENT 18 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM EAGLE RIVER)

I have been a long time user of the harbor facilities and boat launch in Whittier. As you are well aware, there are parking and launching issues that have been exacerbated for the past few years by a greatly increased user base. It is good to see the number of users, especially young families, enjoying the Sound. But, as I recall, the early USACE proposal included a multi-lane boat launch at the head of the Bay, adjacent to the planned cruise ship docks as a given. This proposal (somewhat) includes expansion for recreational boat owners as a "potential" with heavy emphasis on adding uplands for adding businesses. Again, not bad, but I do not see guarantees to relieve the boating congestion in the existing public harbor. It is likely no one's loss but my own but I've virtually stopped going to Whittier due to launching and parking challenges unless I can go during the weekday. Am I missing something in the proposal?

COMMENT 19 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

LOVE the new boat launch at head of bay, however, needs more parking. Consider using the commercial lease lot for parking. Charge one fee for boat launch and parking for the weekend.

COMMENT 20 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

I am excited about the development plans for the City of Whittier. I believe those plans illustrate the proactive and forward thinking mindset of everyone involved. I am eagerly watching these developments. I personally visit and recreate in Whittier often and have some business ideas I have some personal business ideas I would hope to develop there some day. The Shotgun Cove road is a wonderful project. it will open up a lot more area for recreation. Expanding the small boat harbor would be wonderful, not only from the standpoint of providing more room for slip and mooring rental/lease but also in providing more room for businesses to open. There is a huge customer base that comes to town and there are many opportunities for business to develop there. in my mind there are 4 different potential customers that come to Whittier 1, Alaska residents coming to Whittier for fishing/boating, Most people I know in this category often go to Seward or Homer as well. expanding the small boat harbor and the services available for fishing/boating has the potential to keep many of those visitors in Whittier rather than going other places. Whittier needs to be and can be the preferred fishing/boating destination. 2, Cruise ship passengers. There are a significant number of passengers that come through town. Many of them immediately get on a train or bus to visit other parts of the state. The more we have for them to do in Whittier and the longer we can have them in town the more opportunities there are for local businesses. 3 Visitors from out of state who have heard of Whittier and

the tunnel and just want to see it. The more local activities there are the longer they stay in town and shop/dine. The shotgun cove road will give them a much expanded road system and more businesses along the waterfront will keep their attention longer. 4 visitors coming for outdoor recreation unrelated to fishing such as hiking, berry picking , glacier viewing, there are definitely opportunities to bring more of these visitors in and keep them longer. Something like a Berry festival similar to what Girdwood or Seldovia put on would go over well. I am excited about the development plan put forward and am looking forward to it being developed.

COMMENT 21 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

I've always wished there was a more developed wash down for boats

COMMENT 22 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM CHUGIAK)

Just want to share how disappointing it is to see all the new construction and plans in Whittier but the absolute refusal to build a bigger harbor with more slips. The sport fishing and commercial industry is what made Alaska. The army core of engineers did a study and made plans for a bigger harbor. Support local businesses

COMMENT 23 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM EAGLE RIVER)

I think the idea of building a second boat launch separate from the main harbor is an excellent idea that will enable downtown Whittier to be utilized more appropriately for tourism and dining, which will allow Whittier to grow economically and within the ranks of favored destinations within Alaska.

COMMENT 24 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WHITTIER)

Several comments that i hope will be addressed, and included in the waterfront and economic development plan... 1. Please be sure to include, and expand on, the tremendous opportunities afforded whittier by the water resource and development act of 2007 (wrda). Initially, much work went into utilization of this opportunity to develop a recreational-type harbor at the head of the bay (western shore of passage canal). Comprehensive plans, port and harbor (p&h) commission meetings, city council meetings, the city of whittier administration and the army corps of engineers were extensively involved. 3 options were presented. The gist of the funding essentially had the federal government pay 90% of the project, along with a 10% payback by the city of whittier over an undefined period of years. The project initially addressed construction of a breakwater and a turning basin for a harbor at the head of the bay. Work began with some dredging and other preliminary actions but then stopped when the then mayor and the city manager

went before the corps and changed direction to a very small project, based on their belief that whittier could not come up with the 10% initial match. This did not involve the p&h commission or stated preferences from the whittier comprehensive plan (result of community input). The city council input on this, too, was minimal. Essentially 2 people purported to represent the community and commission with no authority to do so. Hence, movement on the project halted when a following city manager intervened. The goal of the second harbor was to essentially segregate the seasonal boating community from the year 'round boating community (who required significantly more protection from the weather and attention in the winter). The parking lot at the head of the bay was originally intended to start the process of developing the head of the bay and was intended to provide trailer/parking storage for boats using the new, head of the bay facility. It is now used as mostly a camping area. I think utilizing this financial windfall is a unique opportunity to not only address current needs and long waitlists, but to establish a significant revenue stream to address perennial shortfalls in harbor mrrfs. Just recently, the city of whittier had to borrow \$4.5m in order to obtain a \$4.5m boating infrastructure grant from the state of alaska (which is not an easy or quick process). If the city had done its due diligence when the whittier harbor transitioned from the state to the city and established rates that would address both operational and mrrfs, significant monies would have been saved and long-term bond commitments unnecessary. A new harbor at the head of the bay would be new, hence maintenance and repair/replacement costs would be minimal (as compared with the current. Close to 50-year-old harbor. The staffing increase and operational equipment to operate this would be minimal and the facility would then merely be an extension of the current harbor...solving the need for space, the large disparity of user groups and, especially, a revenue stream that would be able to address future needs of both harbors. Best regards, david (dave) goldstein

COMMENT 25 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WASILLA)

I just wanted to provide input on the plans for the head of the bay. I think adding additional options for launching boats is a pretty critical part of the overall improvement plan since there is so much traffic congestion and delays in launching due to the location and limited space of the existing ramp. All of the head of the bay is contingent on the confirmation that the area isn't subject to localized liquefaction and tsunami damage like what occurred in Valdez and Chenega during the 64 quake. So if improvements at the head of the bay are not possible because of that, the installation of a new ramp with better parking needs to stay as a critical part of the improvement plan.

COMMENT 26 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM EAGLE RIVER)

Most of my complaints would be fixed by the head of the bay ramps and parking. The "development" of the other stuff in Whittier up to the cove is interesting. I think the planned curbs and stuff by the current boat ramp would make it very hard to launch my boat on those ramps after the development but I think that is the point. Oh and that was a long read.

COMMENT 27 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

In years of going in/out of Whittier, I fail to see much to complain about, really. A few goofy shenanigans at the boat launch, not the fault of anyone in Whittier nor its facilities, and I'm often single-handing - it's really not that hard. I've grown to almost enjoy the hike back and forth to the boat launch....sort of. Despite all the "horror stories" I have yet to have one. I see the new plan includes a future new ramp at the head of the bay, and it looks pretty well laid out. So after reading the plan with curiosity and interest, it seemed pretty solid and I'm inclined to shut up, as I don't live in Whittier and obviously those involved in the plan are showing a pretty steady hand. Thanks, and onward!

COMMENT 28 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM WASILLA)

just read through it, very informative. I like the idea of having the parking area next to the campground and the boat launch as well.

COMMENT 29 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM GIRDWOOD)

First off I think the plan is going in the right direction with a focus on pedestrian access along the waterfront for all of the new visitors that are coming through Whittier. Another excellent aspect of this plan is the fishing lagoon enhancement at Shakespeare Creek. The proposed boat launch at the head of the bay is another excellent use of newly acquired land and will improve the user experience in the harbor area. With regard to the parking area and campground as proposed at the head of the bay, it would be a much better experience for campers if they were located along the beach instead of behind a dusty parking lot. I am also a commercial fisherman and use the harbor seasonally. It was noted in the economic analysis that Whittier leads all other coastal facilities with the highest harbor rates. I see that the plan now focuses on increasing all harbor rates because there are very few Whittier residents who use it. I understand the need to make ends meet, but there's been more than one time where I've tripped on broken concrete, almost fell into the water, injured myself, or ended up pulling cleats out of the docks because they are failing. I know some of this is being addressed, however, it is also noted in the economic analysis that in order to charge higher rates the users must perceive a

quality product worthy of the charge. As an example, one of the easiest solutions to the bear problem and property damage on the docks would be a simple gate installation at the top of the ramp, which happens to be adjacent to the dumpsters. It is issues like this, and the 5x premium rate for a seasonal parking pass, that lead to the perception that Whittier is extortionary when it comes to accessing Prince William Sound. I hope in your contemplation of using the harbor to increase general fund revenues and build a new non-revenue generating harbor office building that you consider these facts; there are very limited vessel services, maintenance areas, or chandlery. There is obviously a need for more moorage capacity, but leading with a new harbor office isn't going to get there. I think support for higher fees would follow if the harbor clients did not read the multiple statements about how because 95% of the users are not local, Whittier is subsidizing those harbor users because there is no economic benefit to that activity. I will just simply point out that this entire plan focuses on the harbor area. The walkways, the commerce, the eateries, the tour providers, the benches and the parks are all focused around the harbor infrastructure. That is a draw and is obviously valuable. If Whittier wants a thriving waterfront to include harbor infrastructure worthy of increased fees, I suggest customer service and quality product be placed at the top of list at the harbor office. Then, encourage an environment where all of this water recreation traffic coming into your town is willing to separate themselves from more of their money, not being forced to hand over more money just because they're from out of town. Just an FYI.

COMMENT 30 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

Over all a varying in depth and focussed plan for the city of Whittier. I believe that this is the right direction to take and using other Alaska harbor towns that are actually pleasing to visit and not just use as a gate way or pass through is great. Creating proper infrastructure to support all walks of life here is paramount. I have some concerns about bumping out the East bulkhead of the harbor causing a shrinking affect along the Z float section, if anything we need to find a way to expand this area and add another float similar to X float. I do agree with the ideas for the frontage in this area in terms of Public and business use but let's do it without making a small harbor even smaller. Moving the city dock over to better utilize the harbor area next to the fuel dock is a logical move. Somewhere in here though we need to establish a Vessel lift area for non trailerable boats either in the harbor or at the head of the bay. I think The head of the bay could be a better option for a lift considering it will help to open up space in the main harbor and by building a hoist dock at the head of the bay will allow for it to be much larger, potentially bringing in more revenue to the town. The Nearest harbor to pull medium to large vessels and still be able to drive to anchorage with in a remotely short time is Seward. If we can have a decent lift and work area for vessels at the head of the bay many vessel owners would easily choose Whittier to

haul out and perform maintenance due to the close proximity to such a large hub (Anchorage). While on the top of the head of the bay face one and two for the launch area is a great start but really could be owned better to suit the needs of mariners and pleasure boaters. Bumping out the East break wall slightly further to allow for a staging dock to help take the pressure off of the launch ramp would do wonder especially in phase 1. I am a little disappointed to not seeing larger vision for a bit more of a harbor to suit 50' and up vessels or 50' and under vessel either way it goes then the "old harbor" be retrofitted to better suit the latter size of vessels. The Prince William sound is a designated no dumping zone for sewage, The harbor of Whittier needs be able to accommodate dumping of black water. A sheet pile dock replacement for the Delong dock is well suited although the north face of the dock receives large amounts of wake from passing by vessel in the summer and large waves during the winter from east winds. I feel like a smaller floating dock up against the sheet pile dock is asking to get ripped off and also damage vessels moored to it. I would recommend adopting a dock style similar to Chignik dock but decrease the spacing between rendering this will suit larger vessels more that primarily utilize the dock on the north side. Then the south side where is it more protected should be built to suit the smaller floating dock to facilitate the lesser amount of small vessel offloading fish. Cleaning up Whittier water frontage, making the frontage more appealing and user friendly is what this town needs rather than looking like a dump of a ghost town. Making vessel facilities and water side and shoreside is what will make this down boom or bust it is a maritime time and that is why it exists. I like many others look forward to seeing Whittier grow into something we could only imagine. I have grown up in Whittier I have recreated in Whittier and I have worked in Whittier, I look forward to the future. Thank you to those pushing progression forward.

COMMENT 31 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

I am happy to see that Whittier is considering purchasing the area that is currently used for boat/trailer parking and wanted to reiterate my support for Whittier finding a way to take on management of that parking area. It is very frustrating paying exorbitant prices for boat parking compared to other harbors in the state, yet the harbor does not benefit from those high costs boaters pay. By taking ownership of the land they will get some amount of income from the lease but really I would like to see the city/harbor manage that parking area so that 100% of our parking costs go back to the harbor for maintenance and improvements.

COMMENT 32 - (COMMENT SUBMITTED FROM ANCHORAGE)

Thank you for your work on this draft plan. My use is recreational boating out of Whittier. It seems pretty obvious, but please strive to remove all pedestrian crossing traffic in the vicinity of any new boat launch facility. The current arrangement has way too many pedestrian/vehicle conflict points and I'm amazed that more people are not struck by boats being backed on trailers. Looks like there may be quite a bit more space at the head of the bay to separate the launch facility and make it a easier and safer to get in and out of there.