

**Economic Development Board
Annual Planning Work Session
Saturday, January 20th, 2024
9:00 AM – 12:00PM
AGENDA**

1. Review of agenda and purpose of the work session (Kate)
2. Board member introductions and purpose (Bob)
3. Staff report on annual accomplishments of the department and associated boards and commissions (Kate and Matt)
4. General presentation of department wide strategic goals and workplan
 - a. Introduction of plan (Kate and Matt)
 - b. Questions & Answers (Board)
 - c. Input on priorities of actionable tasks and projects (Board)
 - d. Proposed revisions to the plan (Board)
5. Identify priority topics from the plan for work sessions throughout the year

BOARD AND COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

❖ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

- Held meetings in January, March, April, May, June, September, November and December.
- Hosted Governor Frank Murkowski (Mill Property and Tourism)
- Hosted Julie Decker (Mariculture)
- Hosted PhD Student Raylor Naylor (Tourism Research Project)
- Hosted the US Forest Service (update on projects and programs)
- Reviewed one proposal and presentation for the hospital property
- Codified the Economic Development Board
- Approved the Board's workplan
- Attended parliamentary procedures training
- Conducted a public survey on developments at the Six-Mile-Deep Water Port
- Expressed support for the Saint Frances Animal Shelter lease agreement
- Reviewed and approved a funding package in support of the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce
- Conducted two public surveys on the methods of sale for Alder Top Village
- Planned and facilitated a public workshop on the methods of Sale for Alder Top Village
- Approved the methods of Sale for Alder Top Village
- Bid farewell to Anne Morrison
- Welcomed new member Jillian Privett

❖ WRANGELL CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

- Held meetings in April, May, September, and November.
- Supported design development of the new street banners for downtown
- Sought support from native elders on utilization of art for design
- Approved final design of street banners
- Approved funding and implementation of digital mapping software
- Review and approved budget for the Transient Tax and Commercial Passenger Vessel funds
- Review prompts and provided input on visitor survey
- Reviewed and provided feedback for revisions of the Tourism Marketing Plan and Design Standards
- Approved 2024 Marketing Plan, Projects and Media outlets
- Reviewed the Global Sustainable Tourism Council criteria for tourism management
- Began planning for the development of the Tourism Management Plan and public engagement
- Reviewed the Cruise Ship and discussed logistics and planning issues
- Review and approval of the Tourism Best Management Practices

❖ PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

- Held meetings for all months except November.
- Reviewed and acted upon 33 planning and zoning issues ranging from new plats and subdivisions to variances and conditional use permits to code development and petitions to rezone an area of land.
- Developed and approved code for Accessory Dwelling Units.
- Reviewed one proposal and presentation for the hospital property

DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS BY DIVISION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ Media development for deep water port with video package
- ❖ Attended the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation annual meeting
- ❖ Attended Symposium with the Department of Transportation in Washington DC
- ❖ Director facilitated over 100 logged public inquiries that required mild to considerable follow up
- ❖ Attended open house with Stik Built Homes
- ❖ Began planning for the Home Builders and Financial Literacy symposium
- ❖ Attended semi monthly meeting with the Wrangell Cooperative Association
- ❖ Planning, facilitation and implementation of Alder Top Land Sale
- ❖ Peltola, Murkowski and Dunleavy meeting preparation and participation
- ❖ Participation in the criteria rating for the Hospital Contract for Broker Services
- ❖ Facilitated presentation on Deep Water Port at the Pentagon

PLANNING AND ZONING

- ❖ Review of the Hazard Mitigation Plan and developed plans for annual and 5-year renewal
- ❖ Issued 3 apparent code violations and resolved 2 of them. One is still pending.
- ❖ Study of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code
- ❖ Saint Frances Animal Shelter lease negotiation, development and implementation
- ❖ Wrangell Airport and Muskeg Meadows prime and sublease negotiations, development and implementation
- ❖ Assisted with EMS and SAR during Landslide
- ❖ Manager support during Landslide
- ❖ Cooperation with Geologist during and after landslide
- ❖ Update of Permit Forms, and Online submission
- ❖ Revision, review, approval and implementation of the Accessory Dwelling Unit code
- ❖ State follow up and management of Borough Entitlement Lands patents status

TOURISM MANAGEMENT

- ❖ Welcome new cruise line to Wrangell in 2024 and 2025
- ❖ Began negotiations and terms on scheduling cruise vessels
- ❖ Implementation of Tourism Best Management Practices
- ❖ Managed the planning and site furnishings for the Downtown Bathroom installation
- ❖ Coordination of the Visitor Industry Economic Report
- ❖ Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska Meeting
- ❖ Cruise Line International Association Meeting
- ❖ Regional Destination Managers meeting
- ❖ Petroglyph Beach Site Agreement review and planning for renewal
- ❖ Alaska Waters trip to Anan and Bus tour in town
- ❖ Plaque exchange with Seabourn Venture
- ❖ Two Operator Meetings
- ❖ Consistent face to face time with tourism throughout the season
- ❖ Community Collaborations

MARKETING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ Planned and executed industry conference for the Alaska Recreation & Parks Association conference
- ❖ Planning for 2024 Bird Fest
- ❖ Facilitate and management of Bearfest photo contest
- ❖ Assisted with Public Information publication during Landslide

- ❖ Planned the City Holiday Party
- ❖ Facilitated staff work anniversary cards for all Borough staff
- ❖ Initiated a Chugach Ranger Boat project review and partner meeting with CBW and USFS staff
- ❖ Drafted, approved and began implementation of the Marketing Plan
- ❖ Street banners design
- ❖ Developed promotional Parks and Rec Video
- ❖ Miles Partnership Media Day and associative assets gained
- ❖ Frazer Leal assets
- ❖ GA4 Transition
- ❖ Marine Expo haul out data collection raffle
- ❖ Ports and Harbors Expo design and materials
- ❖ New Travel Wrangell website
- ❖ Onboard digital software with Wander Maps
- ❖ Established QR codes for everything
- ❖ Travel Wrangell brand deployment (expo backdrop)
- ❖ Digital Asset acquisition (new camera)
- ❖ Implement Lobby Monitors for Borough departments with front facing public services
- ❖ Worked with Upward Bound Students (Nikolai)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

- ❖ Southeast Conference
- ❖ DMA West Tech Summit
- ❖ DMA Leadership Training
- ❖ ESRI ArcGIS Pro Workflow Essentials training
- ❖ ESRI ArcGIS Pro Online training
- ❖ Market Research Trip throughout SE

GRANT MANAGEMENT

- ❖ Bird Fest Reports for 2022 and 2023 Grants
- ❖ Thriving Communities Grant
- ❖ PIDP Grant award
- ❖ RAISE Grant application preparation for 2024 application
- ❖ SHSP Grant award and obligation

Economic Development Department
Strategic goals, objectives and workplan
2024-2027

DEPARTMENT SUMMARY

The Community and Economic Development Department is responsible for the Planning and Zoning aspects of the community; provides visitor industry coordination, staff support to the Wrangell Convention and Visitor Bureau and implements all tourism advertising and promotional activities; provides economic development support and development opportunities for individuals and businesses; provides grant application and implementation assistance; and assists with public communications to and from all Departments.

The mission of the department is to foster a sustainable and vibrant community, deeply rooted in strategic planning and public engagement. Staff are committed to guiding the development of industry growth, comprehensive land use and organizational policies that align with the goals and objectives of the Borough. Through collaborative efforts, staff aim to enhance the health, safety, comfort, and welfare of our residents, ensuring a thriving, well-balanced community that serves the interests and well-being of all.

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES BY DIVISION

Economic Development

Mission: To develop and strengthen a resilient and varied economy, sustained by a dependable tax base to maintain, and enhance public facilities and infrastructure, and to preserve the town's unique natural beauty, historical heritage, maritime environment, and cultural diversity.

1. Encourage industry and business development in order to diversify the economy
2. Promote and fund infrastructure projects that enables economic growth
3. Strengthen the economy by bolstering workforce development initiatives
4. Establish and strengthen private and public partnerships
5. Actively support local business by providing resources, guidance, and networking opportunities

Planning & Zoning

Mission: To responsibly guide the development and growth of Wrangell through thoughtful planning and effective zoning, balancing community needs, environmental stewardship, and sustainable development to ensure a well-planned and vibrant community for current and future generations.

1. Effectively plan for and prioritize public safety and emergency response
2. Support increased transportation access to Wrangell
3. Plan and execute zoning and land developments for productive and/or private use
4. Assess and update policies to ensure modern standards are met and upheld
5. Routinely and prudently address apparent and legitimate zoning code violations
6. Proactively management land-related concerns that may impact development prospects

Tourism Management

Mission: To sustainably develop and promote our picturesque coastal town through thoughtful management and community collaboration, while maintaining the small-town quality of life for residents.

1. Establish policies that support sustainable growth
2. Maintain strong public relations and increase industry awareness
3. Increase independent and business travel to the island
4. Maximize local benefits
5. Create a quality experience for visitors
6. Effectively plan for and prioritize infrastructure needs

Marketing

Purpose: To promote the community as an authentic Alaska town with a variety of recreation opportunities for independent travelers that offers unique experiences unable to be obtained anywhere else in the world.

1. Fuel the visitor economy
2. Drive consistent year-round demand for the destination
3. Improve visitor experience in market
4. Foster brand awareness, trust and loyalty
5. Differentiate Wrangell from other Alaska destinations

BOROUGH MANAGER PRIORITIES

Among the goals mentioned earlier, the Borough Manager and the Economic Development Director have placed a high priority on certain initiatives. These initiatives, although intricate and multifaceted, have a direct impact on the department's goals and objectives. The actionable tasks serve as essential building blocks that contribute to the successful realization of these initiatives.

1. Wrangell Medical Center (old hospital) sale
2. Tourism management and growth
3. Alder Top Village land sale and development
4. Wrangell Cooperative Association – “Health and Safety”-trails, tourism, and transportation
5. Deep Water Port development and funding
6. Capital project grant and funding strategy
7. Borough Entitlement Lands

ACTIONABLE TASKS BY DIVISION

Economic Development

- Prepare and publish Annual Report for the Department
- Provide data for Wrangell’s Economic Report
- Develop a solicitation packet for proposals for productive use of the old hospital
- Promote economic opportunities for new industry at the old mill site
- Build on the MOU with Wrangell Cooperative Association by establishing a joint-annual workplan
- Plan and facilitate Home Buyers/Builders and Financial Literacy Symposium
- Research Carbon Off Set programs
- Establish MOU with UFSF and procure funding for Chugach shelter and interpretive site
- Participate in USFS issues Great American Outdoors Act, SASS Cabin locations, Construction of the Emergency Access Road, Middle Ridge Cabin Access or Relocation
- Develop, implement and manage a grant and project funding strategy

- Source and develop systems for data collection that aid in grant funding applications
- Work with Borough Manager and Capital Facilities Direction to prioritize and identify funding for the capital projects

Planning & Zoning

- Respond to agency, public and permitting requests
- Maintain catalog and files of permits and planning issues
- 10 Year update to Comprehensive Plan
- Annual update to Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 5 Year update to Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Support Emergency Operations Plan comprehensive update
- Mapping updates and transition to ArcGIS Pro
 - Import Lidar data for entire Island
 - Update licenses
 - Update parcel information from newly recorded plats
- Create Applications for all Zoning related items
- Establish online process for permitting
- Amend fee schedule for Zoning permits
- Conduct an audit of the Zoning Code
 - Revise and update Subdivision Code
 - Establish a Planned Unit Development code
 - Develop zoning code for Entitlement Lands
- Review allowable and permitted use for Entitlement Lands
- Survey priority entitlement land areas for disposition
- Complete paperwork with EDA for MSC Plat; Final Replat of MSC
- Facilitate and complete the Community Addressing project
 - Data review
 - Support the development of a Request for Qualifications
 - Solicitation of Bids
 - Plan, Engage, Implement
 - Additional funding may be needed

Tourism Management

- Provide data for Visitor Industry Economic Report
- Draft and approve Tourism Management Plan
 - Deploy public engagement process
- Review and update Tourism Best Management Practices annually
- Meet with industry stake-holders at the local level; retailers, accommodations, tour operators, restaurants, golf course
- Work with Agency partners on the scheduling of cruise ships
- Increase signage in the downtown area to improve visitor experience
- Build a pavilion for staging visitors after the disembark from the ship
- Source partners to drive independent and yacht travel
- Host and facilitation pre and post season meeting

- Establish Tourism Management Plan for Wrangell with comprehensive public engagement process
- Host a ceremony to honor the use of native art in the new Street Banners
- Plan and facilitate Annual Bird Festival
- Work with Wrangell Cooperative Association in support of cultural tourism
- Renew the site agreement with State Parks for the Petroglyph Beach viewing platform

Marketing & Communications

NOTE: The department has approved a Marketing Plan and a Communications Plan. Below are a list of tangibles that address the goals of the plan.

- Onboard and implement utilization of Customer Relationship Management system
- Deploy email marketing campaigns
- Promote visitor survey
- Promote community events
- Promote digital mapping
- Annual Audit digital Mapping software (WANDER)
- Publish updates to cruise ship schedule
- Photography/videography organization and acquisition for visitor industry
- Develop, implement and manage social media promotions
- Work with Alaska Airline and Wrangell Airport to install marketing material at points of arrival
- Work with third party agents to publish marketing material for Wrangell
- Audit Borough Website for current and accurate information, revise and update as needed
- Borough Brand development and Implementation
- Draft, approve and implement the Borough's communication plan to improve public relations
- Merge micro sites with Travel Wrangell or Borough Website
- Design map of downtown for visitors
- Provide marketing material to accommodations
- Redesign Wrangell Travel Guide in partnership with the CVB and Sentinel Newspaper
- Update or close Rainforest Islands joint website
- Support Port & Harbor in independent Yacht travel
- Prepare and publish data reports from Marketing efforts

Grants & Funding Strategy

- Maximize use of Thriving Communities capacity building team
- Funding for 10-year update to Comprehensive Plan
- Funding and/or technical Support for Hazard Mitigation Plan update (BRIC)
- Funding for Wrangell Harbor Basin planning, design, and construction (RAISE)
- Funding for the Chugach Ranger Boat
- Manage State Homeland Security Grant for Community Addressing project
- Manage MARAD Port Infrastructure Development Program grant (PIDP)
- Manage Recreation Advisory Committee Grant for Annual Bird Festival
- Apply for cyclical programs like SHSP, CDBG
- DEC Questionnaire for grant/loans

Professional Development

- Juneau Economic Development Summit (February 28-29)
- Floodplain Training in Anchorage (2/27-3/1)
- American Planning Association coursework (as time allows)
- ESRI User Conference (July 15-19)
- DMA West and Education Convention
- SE Conference Mid-Session (February 6-7)
- SE Conference Annual Meeting (TBD)

Regular Monthly/Annual Activities & Public Engagement

- Department Director meeting (monthly)
- Individual Manager meeting (weekly/as needed)
- Annual budget & workplan (annual)
- Grants.gov/Sam.gov updates (as required)
- Grants management and reporting (as required)
- CAPSIS (annual)
- Borough Assembly Meetings (2x month)
- School/Assembly work sessions
- Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau Meetings & Retreat (monthly)
- Planning and Zoning Meetings (monthly)
- Economic Development Board Meetings & Retreat (quarterly to semimonthly)
- Parliamentary & Open Meetings Act Training (annual)
- Stikine River Birding Festival (2022-2026)
- Bear festival (annual)
- Tourism Meeting (bi-annual)
- Seattle Boat Show (annual)
- Alaska Recreation and Parks Association Conference (2023 & 2024)