

## 3. Strategic Framework for Tourism Management

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Juneau needs a vision and framework for carrying out tourism. The vision defines what Juneau wants to achieve from the tourism sector and the framework specifies how, when and where the various professional and community discussions and actions about tourism take place. The framework also needs to define roles among the various public and private sector entities involved in tourism. It needs to lay out where tourism is going so that both businesses and residents can make plans with a common understanding of direction and scale. And it needs to prescribe the actions that move Juneau toward its tourism goals.

When building a new strategic framework, which is happening through the adoption and implementation of this plan, transitions must be incorporated into the planning process. Roles need to be handed off at appropriate times, dictated either by funding cycles or tourism seasons.

### 3.1 Vision and Objectives

Juneau intends to succeed at both cruise tourism and destination travel - with success being defined on Juneau's terms. That success entails maximizing the benefits of tourism in Juneau, while minimizing the costs and impacts. Juneau looks to tourism, expecting social, economic, and environmental benefits. Juneau seeks a more positive image among its neighbors in Alaska, and with its visitors and travel industry partners. Juneau intends tourism to help create a more diverse economic base. To that end, Juneau will work to create a positive atmosphere for business investment and operations, especially those businesses that are locally owned and operated. Juneau wants, through tourism, to bolster its commitment to its heritage and cultural values. Juneau intends to be a high quality destination, providing rich and positive experiences for its visitors. It intends to make those visitors feel warmly welcomed.

Accordingly, the vision for tourism is:

***“A healthy and vibrant tourism sector generating business opportunities and employment for Juneau citizens, protecting Juneau’s heritage and cultural values<sup>15</sup> and its natural resources, and making a positive contribution to the community’s quality of life.”***

## **3.2 Overall Guiding Principles for the Tourism Plan**

This tourism plan is based on the development and management of a partnership between the people of Juneau, local tourism businesses, and the international cruise tourism industry. In the sections that follow, relationships of that partnership are described, responsibilities outlined, and venues for working out issues among the partners are laid out in considerable detail.

In a partnership approach, all partners invest to achieve results that cannot be achieved outside that partnership. In this case, investment ranges from financial, to time, to energy, to the sharing of Juneau with outsiders. A true partnership plan recognizes and values all these levels of investment.

This plan is based on the principles of sustainable tourism development. That means that social, economic, and environmental resources must be utilized in such a way that they keep their integrity, and at such a pace that they can withstand the impacts of use. Our guideline in building this plan is to assume that at the start of each season social, economic, and environmental resources should be in as good or better shape than at the start of the previous season.

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**<sup>15</sup> Note from the planning team:**

A place (a community, a region, a nation) owes its character to the people, the way of making a living, the geography and climate, and the history that has brought it to the present. Each area has practices, events, cultural ways that are uniquely important to it that have been shaped in the process of weaving together time, culture, geography, and lifestyle. Tourism can be managed to reinforce those values – or, as in such places as Disneyland or Las Vegas, tourism can proceed on its own course, developing in such a way that ignores (and sometimes even overwhelms or compromises) the culture of the region and the relationship between its people, their history, and the natural world.

Additionally, tourism research indicates that visitors are, increasingly, seeking legitimate cultural and heritage experiences and that they value knowing that the destination they visit is actively working to protect those values.

“Protecting, enhancing, preserving, and/or building on cultural and heritage values” is standard tourism planning terminology, recognized and used around the world. Peoples from all corners of the planet have come to understand these terms and hold this concept as an important consideration in managing and developing tourism.

### 3.3 Strategic Directions - Tourism Positioning

The market and product analysis conducted as part of this tourism management planning process revealed that Juneau has a superb opportunity to strengthen its destination tourism sector. The combination of an outstanding natural resource base, diverse history and culture, and coastal community location make it attractive to the growing nature, adventure, heritage, and ecotourism travelers. This potential notwithstanding, it is clear that Juneau will have to establish leadership in realizing this potential. Industry cannot make Juneau a successful destination by itself - it needs a partnership with government, particularly in marketing and training areas.

Juneau's competitive position in the Alaska cruise market is already strong. The cruise industry indicates its continued desire to bring its customers to Juneau. There is general agreement that the volume of visitors (about 700,000 in 2001) represents a near-capacity situation for Juneau harbor. Industry advises that they will be allocating an additional ten percent capacity for 2002, although there is no guarantee they will be able to fill that capacity with customers given the September terrorism events. Beyond that, they expect growth to settle down to about four percent per year. The most appropriate course of action for Juneau to assume in the cruise sector involves maintenance of its current competitive position, but to prepare for the possibility of continued vigorous growth.

Juneau has not realized success in the development of a meetings and convention market in southeast Alaska, in spite of its stature as a state capital. However, with general improvements in tourism product quality and greater attention to both destination and waterfront development, we believe that this situation can be reversed.

Based on the technical product and market analysis prepared for this tourism management plan, the recommended strategic directions for Juneau tourism are as follows:

1. Premier destination, combining nature, adventure, heritage, and cultural experiences
  - Attracting high value customers
  - Focusing on guided experiences
2. Maintain and strengthen Juneau's competitive position in the Alaska cruise tourism market
  - Build on current strong tour product mix
  - Significantly enhance visitor experience in downtown Juneau
3. Position Juneau as a small meetings and convention host in Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, and matched niche markets

### 3.4 Rationalize and Modernize Juneau’s Approach to Tourism

Unlike most communities throughout North America, Juneau experiences annual tourism visitation well in excess of its population. In 2001, Juneau hosted over 800,000 visitors, of which about 700,000 were cruise arrivals. The cruise industry is a major contributor to Juneau’s economy, generating estimated economic benefits in 1999 of about \$90 million and 750 jobs.<sup>16</sup> Clearly, Juneau is in the tourism business and must organize itself to respond to the opportunities, challenges and issues it faces in ensuring that tourism sector activities enhances, rather than comprises, the community’s quality of life.

#### 3.4.1 Current Management Approach

Juneau’s approach to tourism management has largely been delegated to semi-independent boards and agencies as shown below.

Agency	Role and Responsibility
Docks and Harbors Board	All matters related to Juneau’s port including primary interaction with the cruise ship industry
Juneau Convention and Visitor Bureau	Primarily focusing on destination marketing and responsible for attracting meetings and conventions to Juneau

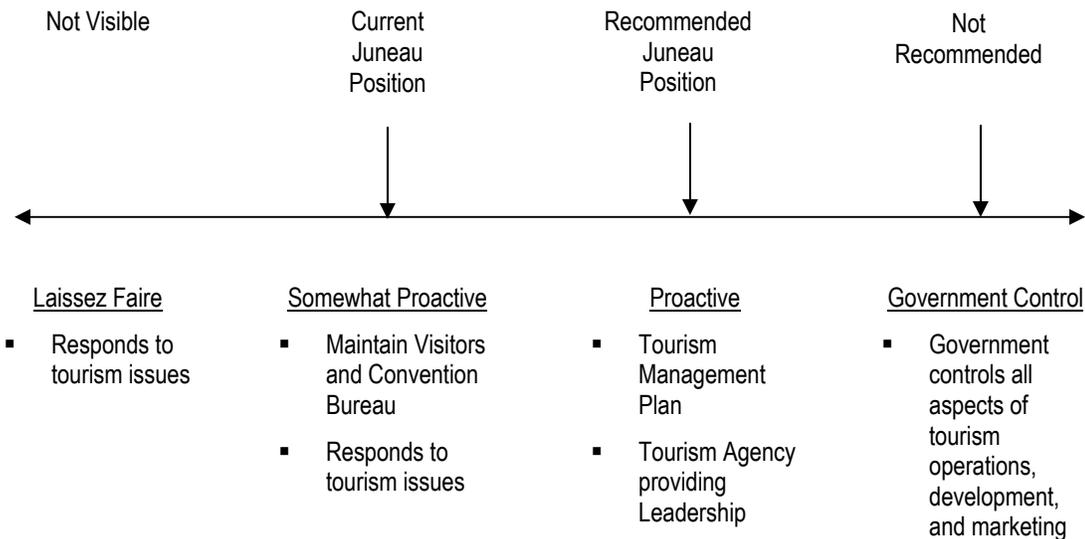
In 2000, Juneau created a Tourism Planning Manager position within the City staff organization, reporting to the Deputy City Manager. The primary purpose for this position was to respond to tourism issues raised by the community. Juneau also decided to proceed to prepare a tourism management plan to provide a blueprint for appropriate tourism sector management.

#### 3.4.2 Alternative Models for Tourism Management

There is a range of potential models the CBJ could implement for its tourism management function. Tourism management can take a laissez faire approach at one extreme, or it can extend to a full partnership approach with the tourism industry, guided by a tourism management plan. In some regions of the world, government assumes a more controlling role, directing the path and nature of tourism development and tightly holding access to operation, development, and marketing rights. In light of the scope and scale of Juneau’s tourism sector, the opportunity for growth in the destination market segment, and the need to better manage community impacts, we recommend a much more proactive approach to tourism sector management and Juneau’s current position. This is illustrated in the chart below.

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<sup>16</sup> McDowell Group, October 2000, The Economic Impacts of the Cruise Industry in Southeast Alaska.



The recommended position for Juneau in establishing itself as a full partner with the tourism sector is premised on two initiatives:

- This Tourism Management Plan, approved by the Assembly and establishing the framework for CBJ policy and program support for tourism.
- The creation of an appropriate agency or tourism entity - responsible for implementation of the Tourism Management Plan on behalf of the CBJ and all stakeholders.

### ***What Type of Tourism Agency?***

Most communities or municipalities throughout North America manage their relationship with the tourism sector based on the “somewhat proactive” position that Juneau has followed for a number of years. The sheer scale of the tourism sector in Juneau, however, requires an approach to tourism that is more akin to the traditional role of states and provinces. The traditional world model is one in which the country, state, or province assumes responsibility for marketing the tourism destination and a range of product development support programs. While this is not a typical role for communities, it is appropriate in the case of Juneau (and similar communities) where tourism activity dominates Juneau’s community life for several months of the year. It is also more common among destinations where tourism is a significant part of the economy.

The question of the type of tourism entity that should be established presents some challenges. The history of Juneau tourism is fraught with significant community debate and division over the impacts of tourism (both positive and negative). While one could consider delegation of the tourism function to an “authority”, we believe that this is not sufficient to overcome Juneau’s history. The authority model is typically dominated by the tourism industry and focuses on tourism marketing and

development. The matter of impacts and issues related to tourism tend to be left to other government processes. In the case of Juneau, a model based on the concept of a “true partnership” between the community and the tourism industry is recommended. The partnership model institutionalizes a venue in which the community and the tourism industry can together develop and promote the tourism sector in ways that always enhance the quality of life for the community.

### 3.5 Update the Comprehensive Plan

The CBJ adopted a position on tourism in its Comprehensive Plan to guide its actions related to the tourism sector. With the adoption of this Tourism Management Plan that position should be updated to achieve consistency.

The adopted tourism policy in the Comprehensive Plan CBJ is aimed at encouraging tourism in a collaborative manner:

*Policy 2.12. It is the policy of the CBJ to encourage tourism, convention and other visitor-related activities through the development of appropriate facilities and services, while protecting Juneau’s natural and cultural attractions for local citizens and visitors alike, and to participate in the accommodation of the future growth of tourism in a manner that addresses both community and industry concerns.*

Included in the plan are a number of implementing actions to carry out the intent of this policy. Both the policy and the implementing actions are now superceded by the formal development of a tourism management plan by the CBJ. Given the proposed adoption of this plan by the CBJ, the Comprehensive Plan will need to be updated accordingly. The recommended amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are structured to recognize the Tourism Management Plan as the mechanism by which the CBJ will promote and manage tourism. In this way the Comprehensive Plan recognizes by reference the (adopted) Tourism Management Plan as the “Implementing Actions” of the CBJ position on tourism.

The Comprehensive Plan amendments are recommended as follows:

Delete Policy 2.12 and the “Implementing Actions” pursuant to this policy and substitute the following amendments

1. Policy 2.12. The promotion and management of tourism by the CBJ shall be governed by the following vision for tourism:

***“A healthy and vibrant tourism sector generating business opportunities and employment for Juneau citizens, protecting Juneau’s heritage and cultural values<sup>17</sup> and its natural resources, and making a positive contribution to the community’s quality of life.”***

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<sup>17</sup> Note from the planning team:

***Implementing Actions:***

2. Policy 2.12.1 The CBJ shall encourage tourism in accordance with the Tourism Management Plan, adopted on [insert date] by the Assembly.
3. Policy 2.12.2 The CBJ shall re-confirm the Tourism Management Plan including any amendments consistent with the vision and objectives for tourism, annually, based on the recommendations of the Juneau Tourism Partnership and the CBJ staff.

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Additionally, tourism research indicates that visitors are, increasingly, seeking legitimate cultural and heritage experiences and that they value knowing that the destination they visit is actively working to protect those values.

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