

Draft Executive Summary

The Juneau Tourism Plan development process was undertaken by Egret Communications and ARA Consulting in April 2001, under contract with the City and Borough of Juneau, Alaska. This planning process was initiated in response to community concerns about rapid cruise tourism growth, but has focused on managing the success and impacts of both cruise tourism and destination travel.

The project, from the beginning, has employed sustainable development philosophy and criteria to the development of a plan that is designed to work for both community and tourism industry. This plan, from inception, has focused on reducing impacts, creating a more supportive tourism business environment, improving product quality and visitor experience, and developing a partnership between residents and local businesses to manage for success.

The planning process has actively sought input from both the community and the tourism industry. Public processes, including web polling, have been aimed at seeing past the ongoing public discussion and taking the pulse of the broader community. Local input has been balanced with technical expertise brought to this project by the team, and by comparing tourism performance and trends in similar situations around the world. The changing environment for tourism, resulting from recent terrorism events, has been taken into account in both planning and forecasting.

The following sections capture an abbreviated look at key parts of Juneau's new tourism management plan.

Juneau's Intentions in Tourism:

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.

Vision:

“A healthy and vibrant tourism sector generating business opportunities and employment for Juneau citizens, protecting Juneau’s heritage and cultural values¹ and its natural resources, and making a positive contribution to the community’s quality of life.”

Guiding Principles

This plan is based on:

- A partnership between the community of Juneau, its tourism industry, and the cruise tourism industry
- Tourism management that is sustainable economically, socially, and environmentally

Strategic Positioning

- Juneau intends to succeed at both cruise tourism and destination travel.
- Juneau will work proactively to grow the destination travel component of the local economy, setting out to become a premier destination, attract high value customers, and focus on guided experiences.
- Juneau will strengthen and maintain its strong position in the cruise tourism marketplace, including small ship cruising, building on the mix of experiences now offered and improving the downtown business experience.
- Juneau will position itself as a small meetings and conference host serving regional and niche markets.

Modernizing Juneau’s Tourism Management

- Juneau will take a more proactive approach to tourism, guiding the future with a plan and developing an organization to foster the evolution of tourism in Juneau.
- Roles for the CBJ and JCVB will undergo some modification to better enable management of tourism resources, management of impacts, and performance-based marketing.

¹ 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.

The Juneau Tourism Partnership (JTP)

The JTP will become the venue for collaborative discussion and cooperative action among the many stakeholders in Juneau's tourism picture. The JTP will guide the implementation of the plan, and work with all sectors to coordinate and facilitate cooperative solutions to issues and responses to opportunities. The JTP will pull representatives of all key stakeholders groups into the discussion through the extensive use of working groups and committees. The JTP will encourage community-wide input on tourism topics that have social implications and will work to achieve consensus when community/business issues need to be addressed. Solutions that require public sector action will be presented by the JTP to the Assembly.

- Will serve as the coordinating organization for tourism collaboration, cooperation, and discussion in Juneau
- Non-profit organization built with a balance of community tourism business leaders and community members
- Staffed with an executive director and support staff
- Will serve as point of contact for queries, issues, etc. in Juneau
- Will oversee the implementation of the Juneau Tourism Plan
- Will monitor and manage impacts arising from tourism
- Will guide tourism development to enhance the community's quality of life
- Will provide a venue for collaborative and cooperative planning
- Will guide and oversee marketing and public relations

JTP Roles and Functions

- Oversee and manage JCVB in performing Juneau's destination marketing and convention marketing, and collaborate with cruise industry on marketing
- Lead tourism product development as guided by the Juneau Tourism Plan
- Centralize monitoring and performance information
- Lead the discussion about impacts
- Advise the Assembly on actions that will improve tourism and tourism's performance in relationship to impacts and benefits for Juneau
- Facilitate the fall tourism forum - a yearly discussion in Juneau that reviews performance, analyzes impacts and community relationships, and plans for the future
- Update and evolve the Juneau Tourism Plan
- Sponsor training to upgrade current products and facilitate development of products that attract destination travelers

Managing impacts

- The JTP will hold a major annual tourism forum to facilitate community-wide tourism discussion on impacts, benefits, performance
- The JTP will work with the industry to assist with Best Management Practices and field community response to operations issues
- The CBJ will work with operators and community segments to implement a phased development of alternate heliports for flightseeing

- The CBJ will work with Wings of Alaska to upgrade to quieter technology for float planes in the harbor, and then the JTP will work with Wings and the community to determine if further adjustments are necessary
- Downtown congestion will be improved by upgrading infrastructure and operations related to loading passengers on vehicles, by considering a park and ride approach to augment downtown parking, by addressing delivery timetables, by considering relocation of facilities that generate truck traffic through downtown, and by improving pedestrian crossings
- The JTP will monitor congestion issues outside the downtown area and work with operators to alleviate problems
- The JTP will host ongoing monitoring and discussion of congestion issues, will work with the CBJ, operators, and the community to identify and resolve issues proactively
- The JTP will review the various tourism related air and water quality monitoring programs by state and federal agencies, channel reports to the agencies, keep the community informed, host an annual discussion on the issues, and work proactively with all parties to accomplish needed improvements
- The Trails Working Group will continue to work on the commercial use of trails, but through the JTP
- The JTP will work with resource managers and the tourism industry to proactively encourage and report on monitoring programs and to facilitate changes needed to safeguard resources and species

Product Development

Product development will be led by the JTP and will focus on two key themes:

- Facilitating the product development and upgrading process to enable significant growth in the destination tourism sector
- Substantially enhancing the attractiveness of Juneau as a destination community

Hence, product development includes:

- The JTP will lead the process of developing standards for accommodations, guides and interpreters, attractions, restaurants, and the service sectors
- The JTP will sponsor training initiatives focusing on guide training and certification, tour operators, accommodation sector, and the restaurant sector
- The JTP will lead Juneau's effort to attract and promote investment in destination lodging facilities and upgrades to current operations and facilities
- The CBJ will amend the Comprehensive Plan to include provisions for a comprehensive waterfront plan, to reflect Juneau's tourism management objectives in various non-residential parts of the borough, and to support the siting of small lodging operations
- CBJ will undertake waterfront revitalization, in a manner that serves residents and visitors
- DBA and JTP will expand Juneau's events program for downtown, including events that draw locals into downtown, events that share downtown experiences with neighboring communities, and events that augment Juneau's tourism image or marketing efforts

- JTP and CBJ will explore a combination visitor center and performing arts center close to cruise ship docking, using this facility to enrich visitor experiences, court return visits, and refocus the community on downtown activities
- JTP will explore development of an outdoor (potentially including an indoor component) float plane museum that celebrates the importance of float planes in the development of Southeast Alaska and defines Juneau as the place to come learn about this exciting heritage
- As guided by this plan, Juneau will share its heritage and culture appropriately with visitors, as represented by the Alaska Capitol and Governor's Mansion, Tlingit and Haida Culture, gold mining history, and state and local museums
- As guided by this plan, Juneau will strengthen its position as the premier place in Southeast Alaska to access exciting natural resources, especially in a guided fashion, and will develop new appropriate ways to share exciting and enriching natural resource experiences with visitors. In particular, Juneau will focus on evolving more natural resource experiences for multi-day destination visitors who are targeted for their interest in and abilities to participate in outdoor experiences
- As guided by this plan, Juneau will continue to develop and improve its sport fishing product and work hard to strengthen its image in the marketplace

Marketing

- The JTP will take responsibility for marketing, developing the guiding marketing plan and contracting with JCVB for marketing specifics
- Marketing performance will be analyzed annually, and renewal of marketing contracts will be subject to satisfactory performance

Monitoring Plan Performance and Impacts

- Safety valve mechanisms are established in the plan; these are actions to go into effect if growth or impact parameters are exceeded, to protect community and business interests if growth or impacts approach or pass acceptable levels
- Separate safety valve mechanisms are established for cruise tourism and destination travel, and others can be developed
- Indicators are established (for both cruise tourism and destination travel) and a process is prescribed to activate triggering mechanisms
- The JTP is required, in the plan, to review indicators during each fall tourism forum, and to take community and industry input into that process
- Should the JTP activate a triggering mechanism, it is directed to work with the CBJ, the community, resource managers, and the industry to initiate safety valve mechanisms
- The JTP is directed to be proactive in updating indicators and mechanisms and to work with industry, the CBJ, resource managers, and the community to manage capacity and impact issues before they reach indicator levels

Plan Implementation

- Enabling Steps
 - Putting the enabling policy framework in place
 - Providing a budgetary framework for the JTP and priority projects
 - Establishing institutional framework for tourism management
 - Create the Juneau Tourism Partnership
 - Set up destination marketing structure
 - Set up performance monitoring system
 - Set up impact management structure
- Implementing the Plan
 - Priority Development Projects
 - Waterfront Plan
 - Events Development
 - Heritage and Cultural Interpretation
 - Destination Products
 - Priority Product Development Programs
 - Tourism Training
 - Investment Promotion
 - Marketing Program
 - Impact Management
 - Flightseeing
 - Congestion
 - Air and Water Quality
 - Resource Health
 - Fall Tourism Forum
 - Plan renewal and performance