

**From:** [Merry Ellefson / Wayne Carnes](#)  
**To:** [City Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** Visitor Industry Task Force comments  
**Date:** Friday, January 31, 2020 8:05:58 PM

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**EXTERNAL E-MAIL: BE CAUTIOUS WHEN OPENING FILES OR FOLLOWING LINKS**

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Jan 30 2019

Task Force,

It was my intent to testify but I am out of town on a family emergency. Thank you for your consideration.

Why do we live here? Why do people visit? Where do the answers to these questions intersect? Thank you for studying these crossroads as you plan a healthy future for this community.

I went to school in Norway and following, arrived here in 1989, working for Holland America Lines and wearing red, white and blue polyester. I stayed- first to work at Perseverance, then to contribute to this community as an artist and a running and skiing coach. While my polyester has stayed the same, everything around it has changed re: tourism. No one is saying no to tourism, rather, the increased numbers and over-reaching dominance of industry have had unhealthy and wide ranging impacts which impact a healthy sense of community. Let's lead the nation in moving forward celebrating Juneau and investing in our kids, our local businesses, our habitat and lead the world as the CLEANEST tourist destination.

I will quickly state that I appreciate investments and infrastructure that keep us holistically healthy- a waterfront walk to the whale, the new Walter Sobeloff building and the renovated State Museum, the small and larger local businesses, the vendors invested in a downtown rooted in our place on the planet as they grow. I appreciate the improvement on some trails and roadways and the opportunities for young and old to support the summer season. I'm excited about opportunities where activities invest in the health of our youth. The more activities we have that are reinvested into a healthy environment and population, the better. I appreciate balance, but industrial tourism gets what it wants. That's not balance, it's dominance. The wake of unmitigated industry- smog, illegal discharge including the recent reprimand of Carnival cruise lines in court for NOT mitigating pollution, traffic and human congestion, the output of fossil fuels, air and land and sea noise, and congestion in many places so many of us now stay away from from May- September- incl. Mt Roberts, Thane, S Franklin, the Glacier area, West Glacier trail. Thanks for helping us recalibrate as a community.

It's essential to:

Impose a passenger limit as other major global ports are doing. Bergen, Norway came up at a meeting earlier on this task force as a port working to adapt TBMP. Bergen has a population of about 290,000 people and hosts 600,00 or so cruise industry guests. I believe in 2017, Bergen capped the number of cruise calls per day to four ships and/or 9,000 passengers.

Extend the task force in your decision-making with better representation from non industry leaders and neighborhood associations (NA). As Jim Powell's comments show, every NA is impacted by tourism. Add some teens. Look around you? You're unbalanced. Who else are you missing?

It's essential that students/youth continue to benefit from the industry in positive ways. How many more can we imagine? They will also inherit the community you are in charge of creating.

We must implement electric/non carbon emission busses and vehicles, perhaps collaborating with public transport in a larger vision of serving Juneau. The industry's other investments- such as the land purchase and bigger ships- demonstrate they can afford clean transportation. No more emissions of fossil fuels.

Impose a moratorium on plastic- no more bags, no more straws walking around town.

Please consider core community values when discussing tourism. It is essential to include major stakeholders as projects develop and it is our responsibility to ensure the voices of the Tlingit/indigenous people are more than represented as we amend and plan. For example, the Treadwell Historical plan, adopted in 2018, does not include the Tlingit history or perspective. With the two new totems in this area, expanding and **correcting** our gold rush narrative represents healing and inclusion. Additionally, a primary stakeholder, middle and high school cross country running, which practice and hosts hundreds of Southeast athletes in this area annually, were not consulted in developing this document.

The proposal to turn Eaglecrest into another tourist attraction in order to increase revenue must be revisited. As I've shared with the Manager many times, let's collaborate with the community groups BEFORE the industry steps in and takes over, or EC will be another place for locals to stay away from. It's our community's non motorized recreational, hunting and harvesting jewel.

NDNA and this community have long talked about North Douglas as a recreational jewel for all Juneauites and guests. Our neighborhood must be at the table at any increased tourism and be a strong participant in developing CUPs for Eaglecrest and other places including

the boat launch, Fish Creek corridor, etc. With unmitigated growth, all neighborhoods are vulnerable to industry.

Use CBJ resources to aggressively and promote a consistent and stable ferry system which attracts independent tourists and ensures that coastal communities receive public transportation. This "tour" celebrates our topography and serves our students, residents and is one of the healthiest ways Juneau can be a good neighbor. Here's a place we can learn from Norway. Go visit.

We must decide what we are selling- as it is literally and metaphorically is melting away.

Sincerely,  
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