
RE: Public Comment – CBJ Visitor Industry Task Force

From: Eric Forst

Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2026 11:45 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@juneau.org>

Subject: Public Comment – CBJ Visitor Industry Task Force

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

Public Comment – CBJ Visitor Industry Task Force

Hello,

I wanted to take a moment offer some comments for the task force.

I have lived and worked in downtown Juneau for 30 years and I have operated several businesses here during that time. I have seen the visitor numbers increase over that time and I have also seen the number of businesses increase as well. Downtown is a unique area that thrives on those visiting us from around the world. Every day I talk to people who are just amazed at where we get to call home. As the visitor numbers have grown, I have seen Juneau take steps to handle and

manage that growth. Sometimes a little bit late but we have made great strides in managing the flow of people through our downtown.

Wayfinding, the sea walk, ropes and bollards on south franklin, and improved crossings with crossing guards have all worked well to improve the flow of traffic. Those improvements have allowed us to grow as a destination, and they have allowed us to grow our business as a result. We are a tourist economy, and we need to embrace that while we continue to manage our growth, not restrict it. There are more steps that can be taken to improve the visitor and local experience.

Finishing the sea walk is key and will greatly reduce the number of busses on south franklin. The new Huna-Totem dock, when complete, will also serve to further spread out those visiting as well and encourage redevelopment of vacant store fronts on front street. We have the capacity to manage responsible GROWTH going forward. We are fortunate to know exactly when the busiest times are and even during those short periods of time when the passengers are offloading or loading, I have rarely felt we could not handle the volume. Yes, its busy, yes there may be a short period of time when it MIGHT take 5 or 10 minutes to get from Main Street to AML but those times are predictable and avoidable for those who live here and know the schedule. Communicating those peak times to residents as well as when there are slow times downtown is an important way of managing our biggest sales tax contributor, our visitors!

Together we can and should manage, not just restrict, the future growth of the industry.

Eric Forst

General Manager/Partner

Red Dog Saloon and Mercantile



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