

Commercial Tour Permitting & Taxing

What: Building on the model of Haines, which has been issuing permits and setting limits on commercial tours for more than 20 years, Juneau needs to implement commercial tour permitting.

Highlights from Haines (<https://hainesborough.borough.codes/HBC/5>)

- * No person or entity shall operate a commercial tour in the Haines Borough except as authorized by a duly issued and currently valid tour permit obtained pursuant to this chapter for each primary activity offered. Multiple tour activities by a single operator having different impacts on the Haines Borough require a separate commercial tour permit. "Impacts" is a subjective evaluation considering traffic, congestion (density), land use, noise, population, and displacement of public use and access.
- * All new permits are subject to public comment before approval.
- * Conditions are placed on permits to address impacts.
- * Renewal is every two years and only requires new public hearing if there are threshold changes in the tour.

What will commercial tour permitting do to address widespread community concerns?

- * Provide detailed information on tour operations, impacts, and capacities. You cannot manage what you do not understand. Information gathered at application/permit review and reporting requirements allow CBJ management to aggregate actual end of season data.
- * Allow for limits and conditions on all types of day tours, on all lands and waters within the borough boundaries, including those tours which include helicopters, float planes and boats for transportation. Limits and conditions can be set for a type of tour, a geographic location, and specific operational requirements.
- * Include enforcement mechanisms that allow a permit to be withdrawn in the event of non-compliance or unanticipated adverse consequences.

Targeted Commercial Tour Tax

Tours are non-essential discretionary purchases. Adverse impacts of tour operations are borne by many. Imposing a targeted commercial tour tax, in addition to regular sales tax, provides modest compensation in the form of revenues to the city that can support general operations and services. Proponents see this as an alternative to a seasonal sales tax adjustment which puts greater burden on residents and businesses not involved in providing tours.

May 9, 2026

Juneau Cruise Control encourages the Assembly to draft legislation with Haines as a model, and to work with the community, impacted residents and businesses, to refine a tour permitting program for Juneau, with the objective of managing the industry and reducing adverse impacts, while generating general fund revenues for the community.

We have heard loudly from cruise-industry interests that they prefer to not be regulated by citizen initiative. We welcome a meaningful alternative, while reserving the initiative option if needed.

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