

From: [Mary Marks, Nilkaagugei](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: The VITF Reviews Seasonal Cruise Impacts and Goldbelt's Proposed West Douglas Port Project
Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 9:40:02 AM
Attachments: [Goldbelt Testimony.docx](#)

You don't often get email from mamarks2@alaska.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Hello,

Attached is my testimony and questions for consideration as the task force compiles testimony from shareholders and citizens of Juneau.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Gunalchéesh

"Nilkaagugei " Mary Marks
Goldbelt Shareholder

**“Nilkaagugei” Mary Marks
Goldbelt Shareholder
Juneau, Alaska**



June 16, 2026

Juneau Assembly Visitor Industry Task Force
c/o City Clerk's Office

RE: Public Testimony Regarding Tourism Development and Goldbelt Shareholder Perspectives

Dear Members of the Visitor Industry Task Force and Juneau Assembly,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the future of tourism in Juneau.

I am submitting the enclosed testimony as a Goldbelt shareholder who cares deeply about the long-term well-being of our community, our lands, and future generations. I recognize the important role that tourism plays in Juneau's economy, and I appreciate efforts to create economic opportunities for shareholders and residents alike.

At the same time, I believe it is important that major tourism developments be evaluated not only for their economic potential, but also for their long-term impact on shareholders, local residents, infrastructure, workforce development, cultural stewardship, and community well-being.

My testimony reflects both support for responsible development and a desire for greater transparency and accountability regarding how the benefits of tourism are distributed. As someone who has participated in public service and community decision-making, I have learned that growth should be measured not only by visitors' numbers and revenue, but by the lasting benefits it creates for the people who live here and for future generations who will inherit the results of today's decisions.

I have also attached a series of questions organized by topic. These questions are offered respectfully and in the spirit of constructive dialogue. They are intended to encourage discussion about shareholder benefits, community reinvestment, local employment opportunities, environmental stewardship, cruise industry partnerships, and long-term planning.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our community. I appreciate the opportunity to have my voice included in this important conversation.

Gunalchèesh

“Nilkaagei” Mary Marks
Goldbelt Shareholder

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Submitted by: “Nilkaagugei” Mary Marks
Goldbelt Shareholder

My name is “Nilkaagugei” Mary Marks and I am a Goldbelt shareholder.

I appreciate the opportunities that Goldbelt has worked to create for shareholders, and I support responsible economic development that benefits future generations. I understand that tourism is an important part of Juneau's economy, and I want Goldbelt to be successful.

However, I also have concerns that I believe deserve thoughtful discussion.

One of my biggest concerns is transparency regarding partnerships between Goldbelt and the cruise industry. I have heard that Goldbelt is working with Royal Caribbean, and I would like to know what percentage of the economic benefits from these developments will remain with Goldbelt, its shareholders, and the Juneau community, and what percentage will ultimately leave Alaska to benefit outside corporations.

As a shareholder, I want to see development that creates lasting value for our people. Too often, I have seen situations where economic activity is celebrated, but the benefits to local residents and Alaska Native shareholders are less clear. I want to know how success will be measured. Will it be based only on visitor numbers and revenue, or will it also be measured by local jobs, shareholder opportunities, cultural stewardship, and improvements to the quality of life for Juneau residents?

I am also concerned about how tourism revenues are used. While I understand that visitor-related revenues help support public safety and infrastructure, I would like to see a greater commitment to investing those dollars back into the community. If tourism continues to grow, residents should be able to see tangible benefits through investments that strengthen Juneau for families, elders, youth, and future generations.

Another concern is employment. Tourism should create opportunities for local people and shareholders. When I see seasonal workers being brought in from outside Alaska and sometimes from overseas, I wonder whether enough is being done to recruit, train, and develop our own workforce. I would like to know what efforts are being made to ensure that local residents and shareholders have access to these jobs and opportunities.

My perspective is also shaped by my experience as a former council member in another Alaska community. During that time, I witnessed large tourism interests place significant pressure on small communities to approve projects and infrastructure. I learned that communities should never make decisions based on fear of losing business opportunities.

Decisions should be made because they genuinely serve the long-term interests of the people who live there.

That experience taught me to ask difficult questions and to look beyond promises of economic growth. It taught me to ask who benefits, who bears the costs, and what protections are in place if circumstances change in the future.

As a Goldbelt shareholder, I believe development on shareholder lands should create a true win-win outcome. It should respect the community, honor our responsibility as stewards of the land, create opportunities for shareholders, and produce benefits that remain visible for generations to come.

I am not opposed to development. I am asking for accountability, transparency, and assurance that the people who have the deepest connection to this land—its shareholders, Alaska Native people, and the residents of Juneau—receive meaningful and lasting benefits from the decisions being made today.

I have attached a list of questions for consideration by the Assembly, the Visitor Industry Task Force, and Goldbelt leadership. These questions reflect my desire for transparency, accountability, and a better understanding of how proposed tourism developments will benefit shareholders, future generations, and the Juneau community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Gunalchèesh

“Nilkaagei” Mary Marks
Goldbelt Shareholder

ATTACHMENT A

Submitted by: “Nilkaagugei” Mary Marks
Goldbelt Shareholder

Questions for Consideration Regarding Tourism Development, Shareholder Benefits, and Community Impacts

I support thoughtful economic development and appreciate efforts to create opportunities for shareholders and future generations. The following questions are offered in the spirit of transparency, accountability, and long-term planning.

I. Shareholder Benefits and Financial Transparency

1. What percentage of revenues generated from proposed tourism developments will remain with Goldbelt and directly benefit shareholders?
2. What percentage of revenues will be shared with or otherwise benefit outside corporations, including cruise industry partners?
3. How will shareholders be informed about the financial performance of these projects over time?
4. What specific long-term benefits are expected for future generations of shareholders?
5. What risks have been identified, and how will those risks be managed?

II. Cruise Industry Partnerships

1. What agreements exist between Goldbelt and cruise industry partners?
2. What level of operational influence will cruise industry partners have over future development decisions?
3. What protections are in place if cruise industry priorities change in the future?
4. How can shareholders be assured that decisions remain driven by community needs rather than outside corporate interests?

III. Community Reinvestment

1. What percentage of tourism-generated revenues are currently reinvested directly into the Juneau community?

2. Beyond public safety and infrastructure maintenance, what investments are planned to improve quality of life for residents?
3. How can tourism revenues support housing, workforce development, youth programs, elder services, recreation, and community facilities?
4. What measurable community benefits should residents expect to see from increased tourism activity?

IV. Employment and Workforce Development

1. What percentage of tourism jobs are filled by Juneau residents?
2. What percentage are filled by Alaska residents?
3. What percentage are filled by workers recruited from outside Alaska or internationally?
4. What efforts are being made to recruit, train, and retain local workers before positions are filled by nonresidents?
5. What opportunities exist for Goldbelt shareholders and descendants to receive training, apprenticeships, internships, and career advancement opportunities?
6. Are wages, benefits, and housing conditions sufficient to attract and retain local workers?

V. Environmental Stewardship and Land Management

1. How will environmental impacts be measured before, during, and after development?
2. What protections are in place for wildlife habitat and natural resources?
3. How does the project align with Goldbelt's responsibility as a steward of shareholder lands?
4. What plans exist to reduce environmental impacts associated with increased tourism activity?
5. What commitments are being made to preserve the land for future generations?

VI. Visitor Management and Infrastructure

1. What is the projected increase in visitor numbers associated with these developments?

2. What impacts are anticipated on roads, public services, emergency response, and community infrastructure?
3. Who will bear the costs of future infrastructure improvements?
4. What strategies will be used to prevent overcrowding and improve visitor management?
5. How will impacts on residents be measured and addressed?

VII. Cultural Preservation and Alaska Native Values

1. How will Alaska Native culture and history be represented respectfully and accurately?
2. How will shareholders be involved in decisions regarding cultural interpretation and programming?
3. How can development strengthen cultural preservation rather than commercialize cultural identity?
4. What opportunities will exist for Alaska Native shareholders to participate in and benefit from cultural tourism initiatives?

VIII. Long-Term Vision and Accountability

1. What does success look like in 10, 20, and 50 years?
2. How will decision-makers evaluate whether these projects have genuinely benefited shareholders and the community?
3. If tourism declines in the future, what contingency plans are in place?
4. How will future generations know that these developments fulfilled the promises being made today?
5. Can project success be measured not only by revenue, but also by community well-being, local employment, cultural stewardship, and shareholder prosperity?

Closing Question

If these developments increase tourism activity, how can we ensure that the resulting benefits remain visible within Juneau, within Goldbelt, and within the lives of shareholders and future generations, rather than primarily flowing to outside interests?