

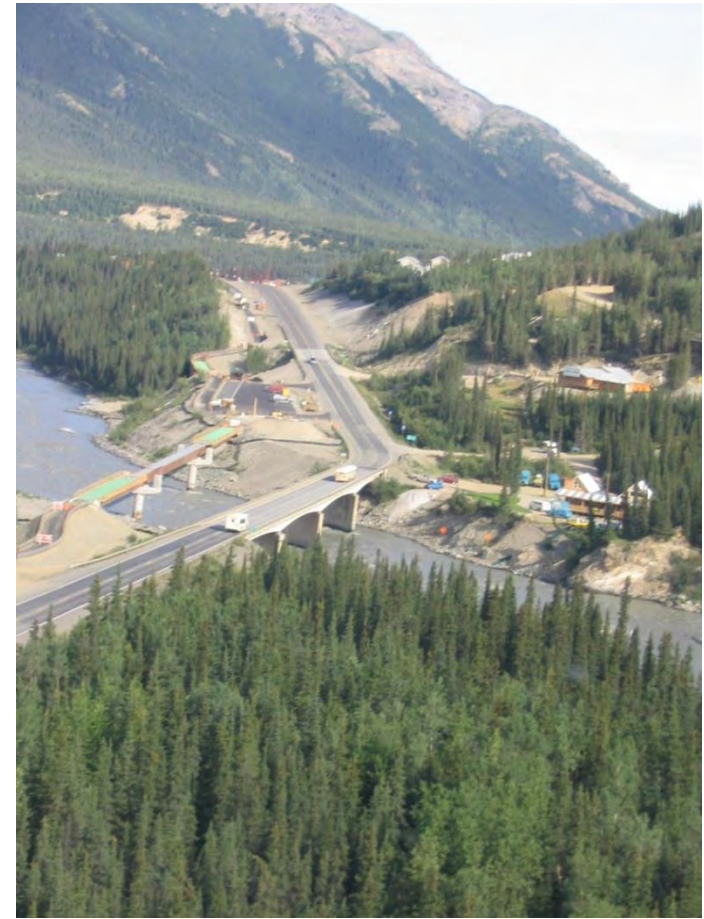
Denali Borough Land Use & Economic Development Plan :: Spring Work Session

“A Vision of Where We Want to Go”

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Chris Beck, Principal

Anna Brawley, Senior Associate



Tonight's Agenda

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| 5:30 – 5:45 | Plan Background & Process |
| 5:45 – 6:15 | Borough Facts & Trends |
| 6:15 – 6:30 | Case Studies |
| 6:30 – 7:30 | Discussion: Issues and Goals |
| 7:30 – 8:00 | Wrap Up, Next steps |



1. Project Background, Purpose, Process



Project Background

“I’ve lived here for over twenty years, and I don’t like government, I don’t want taxes and zoning, and I’m really irked to see the trashy buildings going up around our borough, and all the no trespassing signs, and the changes I’ve seen in the place I call home” *(meeting participant in Healy, winter 1997)*

“Regulate the #%*&! down the street, who is creating real problems, but don’t bother me”. *(frequently heard sentiment, all over Alaska)*



Purpose Statements from the Comprehensive Plan

1. Doing nothing is not an option. Failure to act will result in erosion of our regional character, quality of life, and independence.
2. We have the ability and the resources to shape a positive future.
3. Protecting and enhancing our quality of life requires an open mind, a willingness to examine alternate solutions.
4. Our efforts to shape a better future must be driven by the values and concerns of the entire community.

Comprehensive Plan “Bill of Rights”

1. Equal rights for all
2. The right to beneficial use of private real property
3. The right to seek economic security
4. The right to be secure in your home
5. The right to access public lands and waters
6. The right to access exceptional educational opportunities
7. The right to have safe and effective transportation
8. The right to have efficient and adequate public facilities
9. The right to live in a clean, safe, and orderly environment
10. The right to be free from interference in your chosen lifestyle
11. The right to open and transparent government responsive to the public interest and inclusive of diverse opinion

Borough History – Setting the Stage

- 10-12,000 years – Native people live in/travel through the region
- 1919 Coal mine opens at Healy
- 1923 Pres. Harding drives the stake; ARR complete; McKinley National Park formally dedicated
- 1930-50 Suntrana grows from 61 to 150 people
- 1937 McKinley Park Hotel, & Healy school open
- 1938 Kantishna road, 1957 – Denali Hwy, 1972 – Parks Hwy
- **1950's-2000's private & state, then borough subdivisions**
- 1990 Denali Borough incorporates
- 1997-2014: Borough receives 49,789 acres of municipal entitlements
- **1970's-today Annual out-of-state travel to AK grows from 300,000 to 2,000,000 visitors; "Glitter Gulch" glitters, evolves**



Why this Plan?

Extract from A::B report to the Borough, Fall 2016

- The Borough has very limited controls over use of private land. And lots of people like it that way.
- **Borough's comprehensive** plan has sensible goals, but no accompanying land use plan, and few specifics for guiding growth.
- More Borough residents are pointing out the downsides of the lack of borough land use planning and regulations. Examples include:
 - Disruption of residential areas, e.g., noise, traffic, unsightly structures
 - Unplanned development that creates safety issues
 - **A less than attractive built environment in "Glitter Gulch"**

So... outcomes of this plan:

1. **A forum to discuss and set a vision for the borough's future**
2. Broad land use and economic goals and strategies, including a generalized land use map, at borough-wide and sub-regional scales
3. A foundation for a possible second phase, to develop more specific policies, where there is local support, to reach those goals,

Starting Principles for this Plan

Extract from A::B report to the Borough, Fall 2016

- **Build a plan “from the bottom up”**
- Start with agreement on goals – *then* consider best ways to reach those goals
- **Respect “sub-regional” differences**
- **It’s the economy**
- A process that is open, inclusive; that reflects both the desire for and hesitations about planning and land use regulation
- Be pragmatic; aim for practical, widely supported first steps

Planning Process

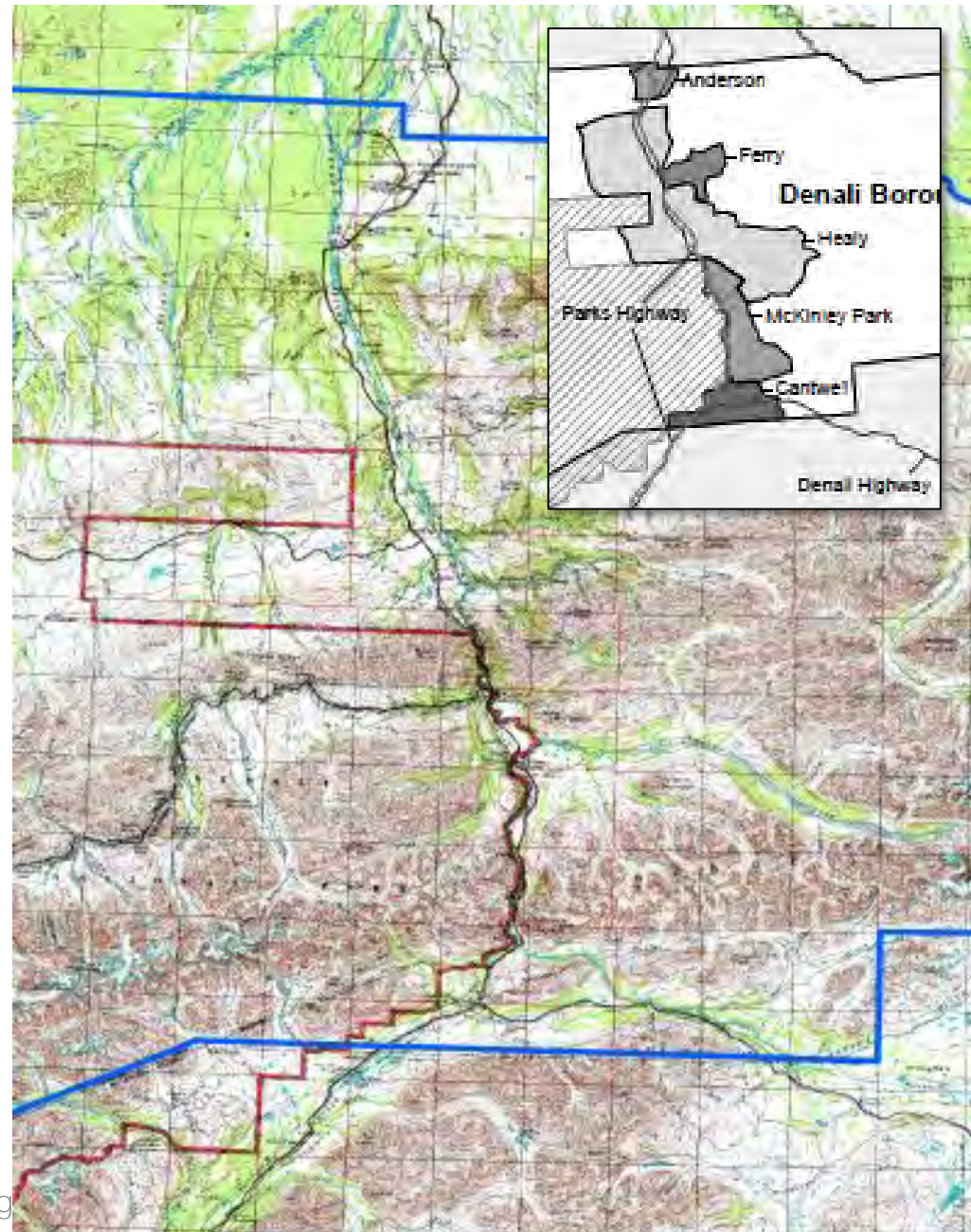
*Phase One** (extract from A::B contract, approved 3.8.17)

1. Start-Up: Set a Clear Process March
 - Form Plan Advisory Team; hold 1st meeting
 - Begin outreach process – web page, interviews, survey?
2. Update Growth Facts and Trends Mar/April
 - **PowerPoint “Snapshot”; compile base maps**
3. 1st Draft Land Use/Economic Development Plan May/July
 - **Initial Trends/Issues/Goals “Report”**
 - 1st set of public workshops; 2nd Plan Team mtng (June)
 - Draft Borough-Wide **Plan, “sub-regional” plans**
4. Land Use Map, Refined Sub-Region Strategies Aug/Oct
 - Draft Land Use Plan Map
 - Fleshed out strategies for guiding land use
 - 2nd set of public workshops; 3rd Plan Team mtng
 - Refined overall borough-wide, sub-regional plans
5. Formal Planning Comm., Assembly Approval End of 2017

*Option for Phase Two, with specific policies to implement broad goals

Plan Geography

- 12,000 square miles (larger than 9 states)
- 70% within Denali NP&P
- **Distinct “sub-regions”**
 - Anderson/Clear
 - Healy/Ferry
 - Park Entry
 - McKinley Village/Yanert
 - Cantwell
- Focus of this plan
 - Think about full borough
 - Focus on accessible area



Plan “Stakeholders” Who’s missing? What’s the best process to engage these parties?

- Diverse communities – each with a general character but also its own internal diversity
 - Residents
 - Private landowners
 - Visitors
- Businesses
 - Range of tourism businesses;
 - big players (Holland America/Princes, Aramark)
 - Locally-based business (activities, food, accommodations, **B&B Association...**)
- Land Managers, Agencies, Organizations
 - National Park Service
 - State of AK – Natural Resources, DOT/PF, AKRR
 - Ahtna Corporation/Native Village of Cantwell

Role of Plan Advisory Team

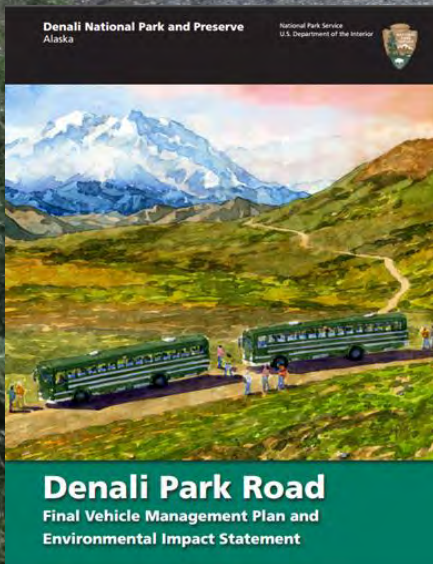
Membership

- Planning Commission, plus approximately 6-8 other individuals, to help the group best represent the range of views and interests found in the borough

Responsibilities

- Meet 3-4 times over the course of the process.
- Provide a helpful, efficient sounding board and review body – at meetings and reviewing draft documents
- Work with Agnew: : Beck to engage people in the process
- Attend public workshops in locations of interest
- Help explain recommendations of the final draft plan to friends, neighbors and the Assembly.

2. Borough Snapshot: Place, Economy, Demographics...



A Place to Live, Work, Visit, Recreate...



A Place to Live, Work, Visit, Recreate...



Denair Borough Plan | March 21, 2017 Meeting

Diverse Economy: Two Main Categories

Tourism + Hospitality

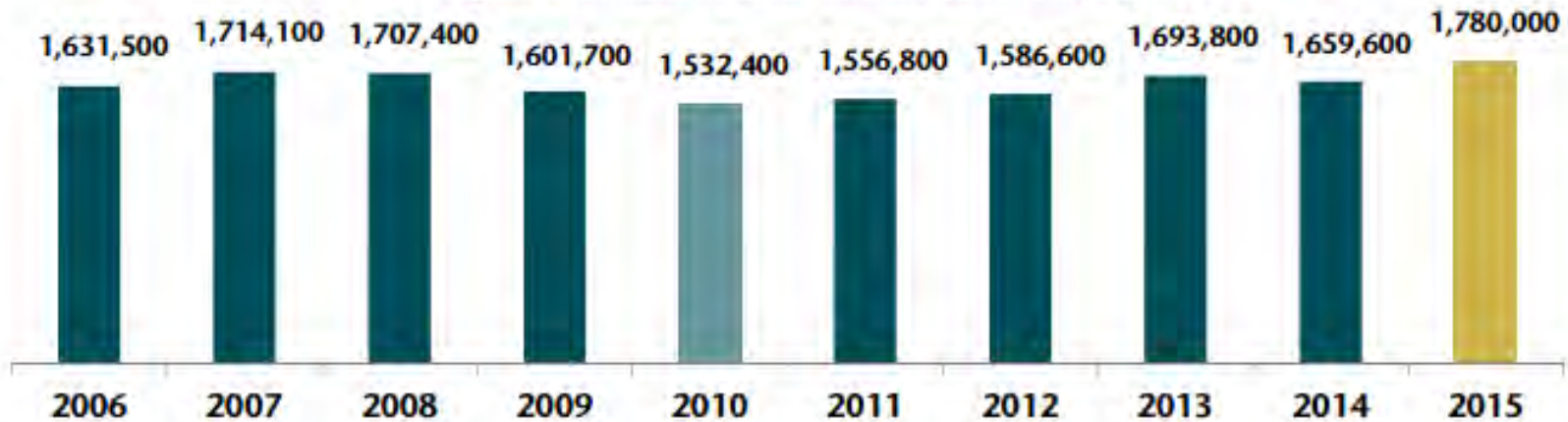
- Highly seasonal: threefold increase in number of workers during summer peak
- Concentration of restaurant + hospitality workers, seasonal park staff

Natural Resources, Military + Government

- Modest numbers good, stable year-round jobs
- Primary employers
 - Usibelli Coal Mine
 - Clear Air Force Station
 - GVEA, Railroad
 - Federal, state + local government workers

Tourism: Travel to AK continues to grow

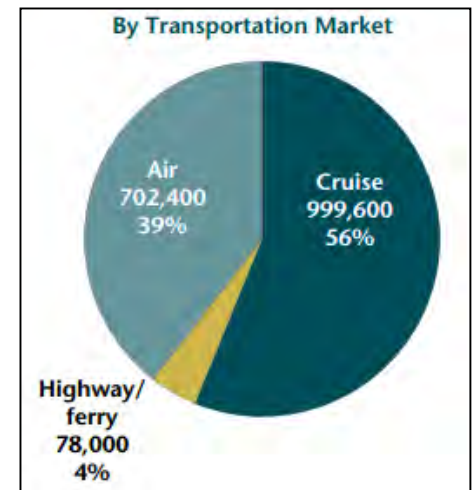
Figure 2. Summer Visitor Volume to Alaska, 2006-2015



Source: AVSP V and AVSP VI.

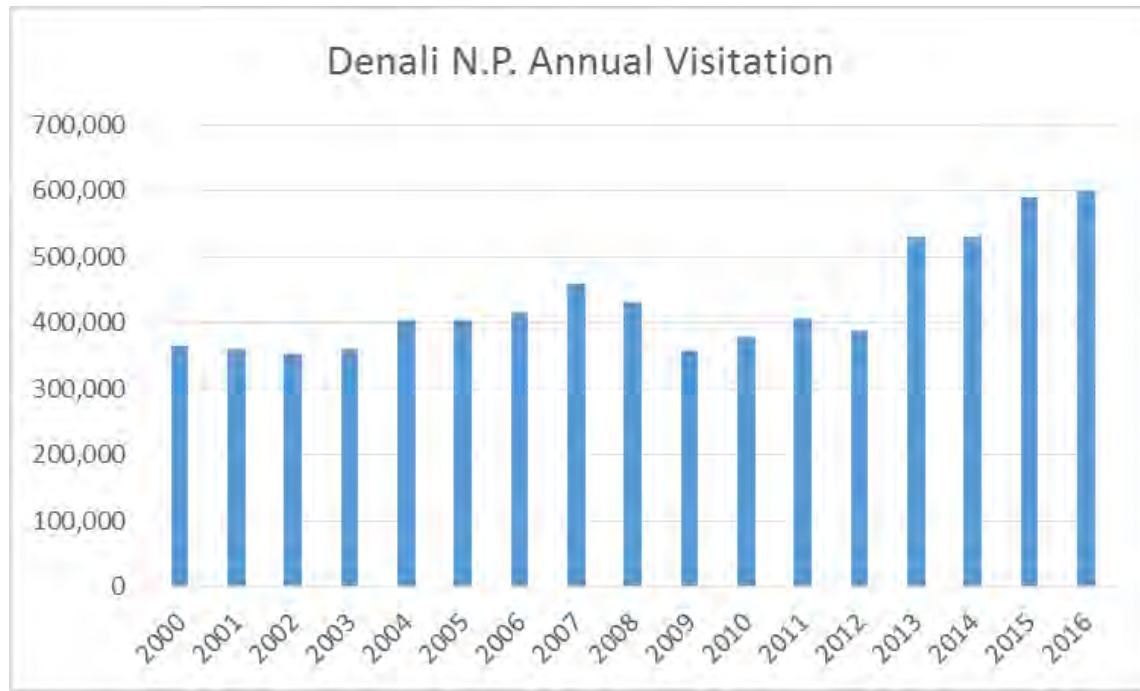
- Out of state summer 2015 visitors grew 7 % over 2014
- Compared to 2014: 13 percent increase in air volume; cruise up 3%; highway/ferry grew at 14 percent.

Source: Alaska Visitor Statistics Program VI, Interim Report, Summer 2015



Park Visits: the Heart of The Borough Economy

“About one new hotel/year”



<https://www.nps.gov/dena/learn/management/statistics.htm>

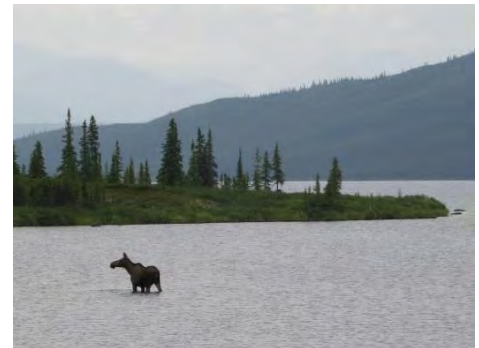
Use Outside Of Summer Small, But Growing

Bookmark this report: [https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Recreation%20Visitors%20By%20Month%20\(1979%20-%20Last%20Calendar%20Year\)](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Recreation%20Visitors%20By%20Month%20(1979%20-%20Last%20Calendar%20Year))

| Year | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | Total |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| 2017 | 725 | 1,467 | | | | | | | | | | | 2,192 |
| 2016 | 500 | 1,303 | 2,948 | 5,057 | 50,776 | 139,310 | 160,357 | 151,365 | 69,907 | 2,934 | 1,446 | 1,509 | 587,412 |
| 2015 | 326 | 851 | 2,597 | 2,573 | 55,920 | 136,454 | 155,987 | 146,067 | 57,612 | 1,474 | 461 | 435 | 560,757 |
| 2014 | 396 | 1,019 | 2,231 | 2,883 | 49,380 | 127,291 | 151,285 | 138,254 | 56,890 | 846 | 455 | 385 | 531,315 |
| 2013 | 319 | 1,001 | 1,300 | 2,065 | 44,947 | 127,243 | 153,636 | 140,079 | 59,490 | 313 | 240 | 289 | 530,922 |
| 2012 | 263 | 195 | 1,896 | 2,913 | 32,983 | 101,260 | 102,316 | 108,208 | 37,184 | 740 | 240 | 235 | 388,433 |
| 2011 | 247 | 701 | 1,142 | 7,514 | 33,549 | 92,585 | 118,271 | 105,823 | 45,263 | 954 | 273 | 260 | 406,582 |
| 2010 | 298 | 669 | 1,178 | 2,952 | 29,350 | 90,821 | 110,592 | 104,398 | 37,428 | 764 | 173 | 232 | 378,855 |
| 2009 | 64 | 871 | 723 | 1,549 | 24,759 | 90,662 | 102,992 | 97,307 | 37,707 | 969 | 183 | 255 | 358,041 |
| 2008 | 351 | 702 | 918 | 1,959 | 27,773 | 114,888 | 129,762 | 119,541 | 35,623 | 521 | 114 | 157 | 432,309 |
| 2007 | 3,136 | 3,769 | 5,846 | 2,665 | 37,143 | 111,767 | 129,454 | 116,065 | 47,150 | 807 | 329 | 177 | 458,308 |
| 2006 | 442 | 272 | 891 | 7,764 | 28,829 | 111,060 | 123,246 | 98,605 | 43,598 | 550 | 470 | 208 | 415,935 |
| 2005 | 403 | 751 | 2,118 | 1,451 | 27,022 | 99,756 | 114,308 | 108,451 | 38,121 | 5,716 | 2,922 | 2,501 | 403,520 |
| 2004 | 313 | 392 | 1,441 | 3,087 | 30,132 | 100,127 | 116,601 | 108,097 | 39,969 | 2,525 | 1,059 | 493 | 404,236 |
| 2003 | 975 | 886 | 753 | 2,985 | 27,260 | 88,471 | 104,686 | 97,821 | 34,639 | 889 | 374 | 450 | 360,189 |
| 2002 | 101 | 90 | 1,858 | 2,437 | 25,525 | 84,916 | 105,422 | 60,231 | 30,383 | 254 | 91 | 27 | 311,335 |
| 2001 | 42 | 252 | 464 | 861 | 25,020 | 89,229 | 109,881 | 99,767 | 34,520 | 72 | 66 | 17 | 360,191 |
| 2000 | 22 | 115 | 216 | 500 | 23,810 | 92,862 | 111,929 | 97,581 | 36,820 | 77 | 6 | 45 | 363,983 |
| 1999 | 29 | 79 | 207 | 458 | 23,686 | 95,652 | 120,134 | 102,573 | 43,848 | 141 | 48 | 12 | 386,867 |
| 1998 | 36 | 75 | 261 | 626 | 26,131 | 92,670 | 115,478 | 100,141 | 36,692 | 274 | 90 | 45 | 372,519 |
| 1997 | 54 | 49 | 271 | 779 | 23,058 | 86,916 | 113,436 | 94,585 | 34,824 | 177 | 84 | 45 | 354,278 |
| 1996 | 9 | 7 | 52 | 200 | 24,676 | 80,725 | 105,447 | 94,342 | 35,810 | 78 | 21 | 18 | 341,385 |
| 1995 | 84 | 88 | 400 | 2,948 | 25,415 | 150,886 | 150,533 | 169,322 | 43,502 | 110 | 15 | 6 | 543,309 |

Tourism: NPS Policy Drives/Limits Growth

- **Denali Nat' Park 2012 Vehicle** Mgt. Plan sets 20 year capacity (10% growth over 20 years)
- Park is working on a series of plans directly relevant to Borough Plan:
 - South Denali Visitor Center
 - Day Use Facility at Mile 231
 - Front Country Trails Plan (fall 2017)
 - Long Range Transportation Plan (June 2017)
 - Commercial Services Plan (fall 2017)
- Overall intent re NPS policy?
 - Expand front country recreation, e.g., trails
 - Create shuttle system linking out of park destinations to the park, linking trails
 - Expand business partnerships to provide guides, other market-driven visitor services
 - Expand shoulder season, winter use



Tourists = Bed Tax = Good Schools...

Bed Tax

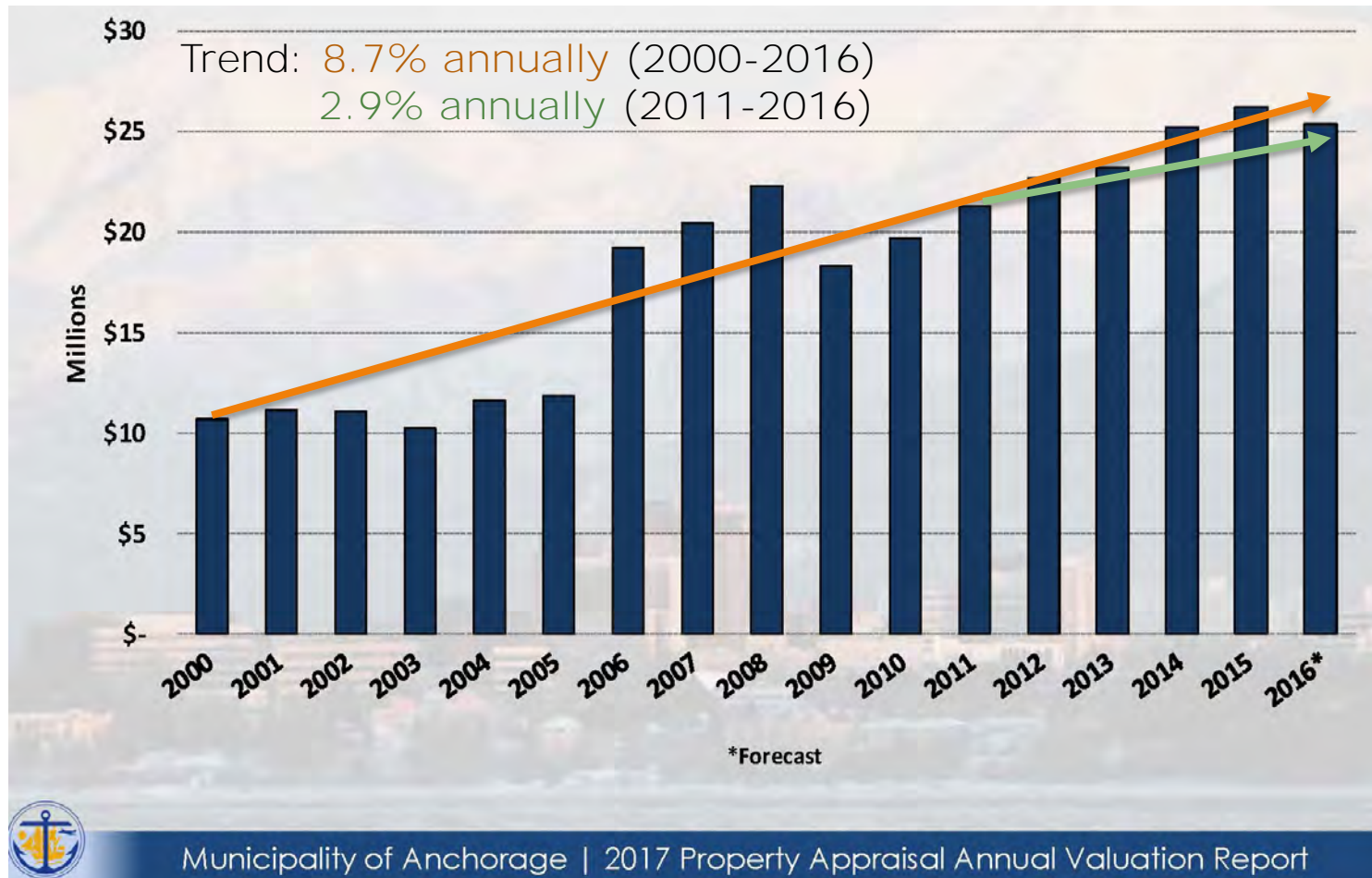
- Applies to: all overnight lodging within the Borough, up to 30 days
- Rate: 7% of daily lodging rate
- Exemptions:
 - Government employees
 - Permanent residents in lodging facilities

Code: DBC 3.25.030

Annual Revenue

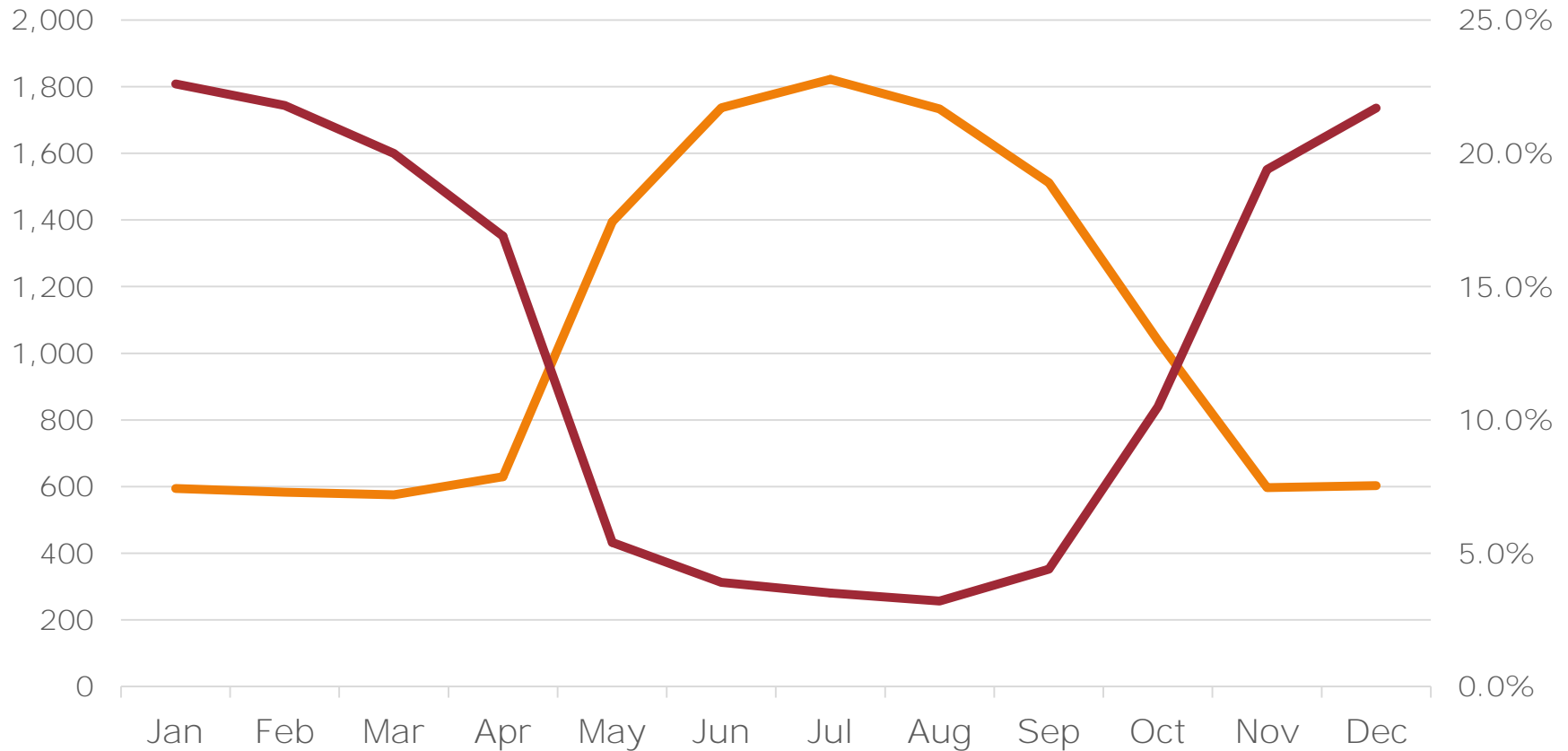
| Year | Revenue |
|----------------------|-------------|
| FY12 | \$2,573,815 |
| FY13 | \$2,730,762 |
| FY14 | \$3,067,856 |
| FY15 | \$3,318,321 |
| FY16 | \$3,431,826 |
| FY17 (budget) | \$3,350,000 |
| Avg. Annual Increase | 6.7% |

Comparison: Anchorage Bed Tax, 2000-16



Highly Seasonal Workforce + Opportunities

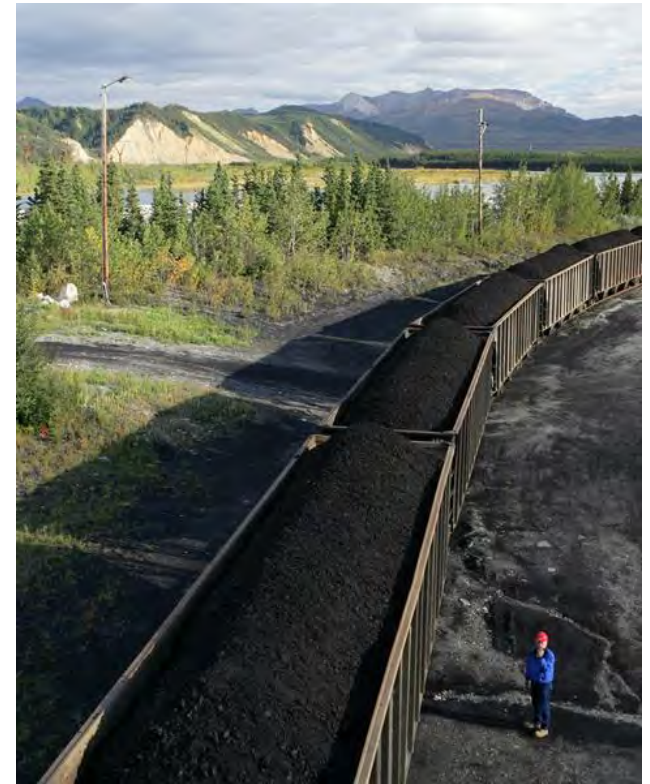
Labor Force + Unemployment Rate (2016)



Steady Resource Extraction Activities

Usibelli Coal Mine

- Founded 1943
- 110 year-round employees
- State lease: 35,100 ac.
- Production:
 - Approx. 700m tons available in total
 - 1943: 10,000 tons
 - Now: 1.2 to 2 mil tons annually
- Supplies six local power operations, including GVEA Healy plants
- Past exports to Asia/Pacific Rim
- Supports community events + activities; Usibelli Foundation funds scholarships, grants



... Steady (but Small) Revenue Stream

Severance (Excise) Tax

- Applies to: coal, limestone or gravel removed via commercial mining + extraction
- Rates:
 - \$0.05 / ton (coal, limestone)
 - \$0.05 / cubic yd (gravel)

Code: DBC 3.25.020

Annual Revenue

| Year | Revenue |
|----------------------|-----------|
| FY12 | \$110,898 |
| FY13 | \$94,695 |
| FY14 | \$91,569 |
| FY15 | \$96,086 |
| FY16 | \$71,214 |
| FY17 (budget) | \$60,000 |
| Avg. Annual Decrease | -7.2% |

Wildcard: Natural Gas Pipeline

Denali Park pipeline route alternative waits on congressional action

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH MAYOR'S OFFICE



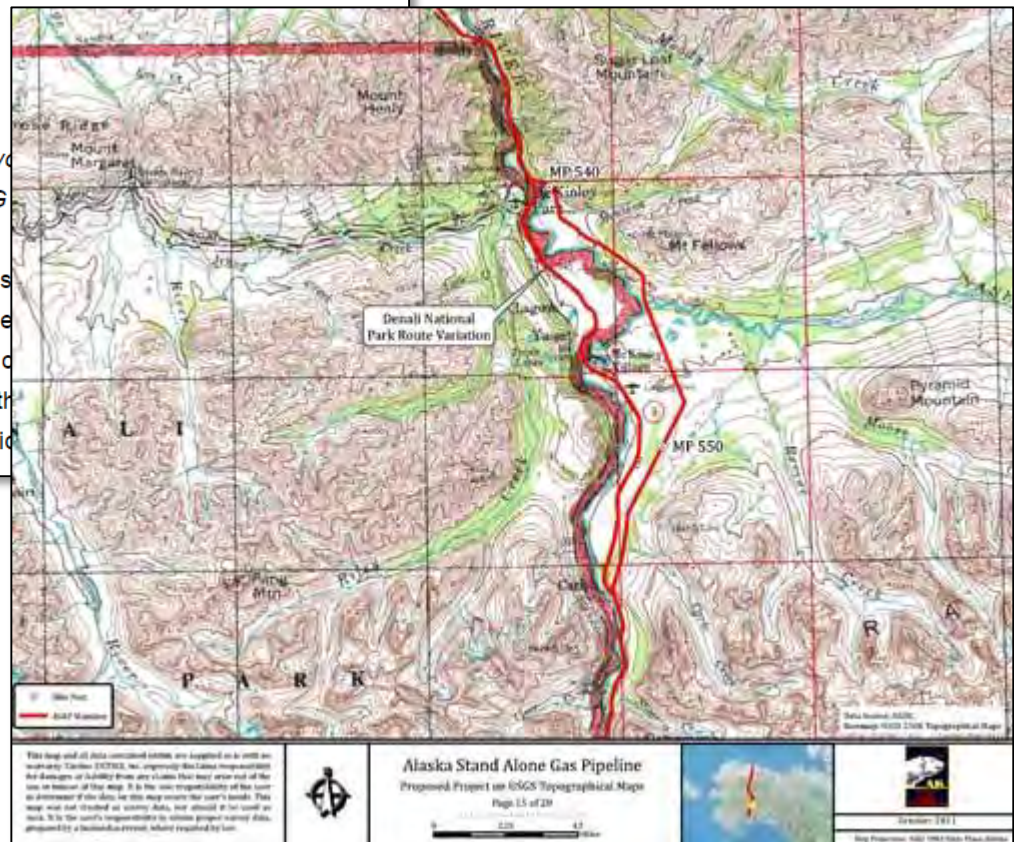
Published: November 30, 2016

By Larry Persily lpersily@kpb.us

Nov. 30, 2016

(This update, provided by the Kenai Peninsula Borough mayor's effort to help keep the public informed about the Alaska LNG

Contingent on an environmental analysis by federal agencies pending in a House and Senate conference committee — the natural gas pipeline could run through 6.16 miles just inside of Preserve to avoid steep side slopes and unstable terrain farther. This would eliminate the need to build a 500-foot-long pipeline bridge



Another Stable Sector, Another Wildcard

Clear Air Force Station

- Founded 1961
- 100 ac. developed
- 5 sq. mi. total area
- Conducts radar surveillance for skyward threats
- Stable, specialized employment, including civilian support jobs
- Major (\$107m) upgrades in 1998
- DoD plans to spend \$700 million on Clear's missile defense radar! But largely contained on base...



Borough Residents: Snapshot

The Borough's ~1,800 Residents are:

- Older, less diverse than Alaska as a whole
- Most commonly live with family or alone
- More educated (71% have more than high school education)
- Earning more than people in other boroughs
- Employed locally
 - Most year-round jobs go to Alaska residents
 - Many are employed only seasonally

Seasonal workers arrive from many other **places, but don't stick around.**

Small but Fast-Growing Senior Population

Age and Gender

Median Age: 42.2

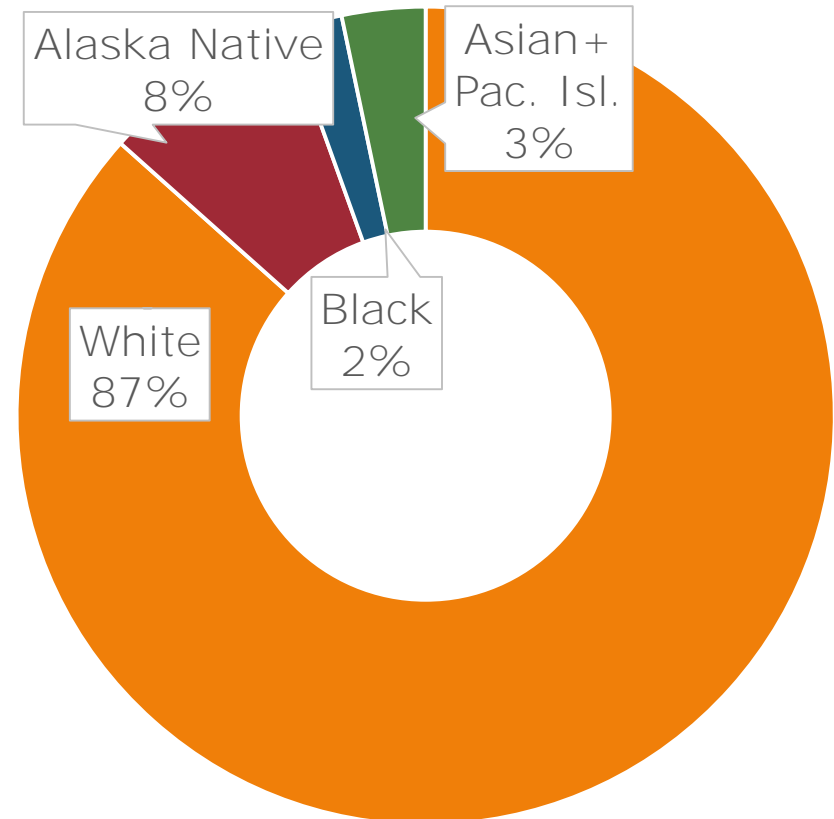
- Children (0-14): 17%
- Youth (15-19): 6%
- Seniors (65+): 11%
(used to be 3% in 2000)

Sex Ratio

- Male: 45%
- Female: 55%

Hispanic Origin: 3.6%

Race + Ethnicity



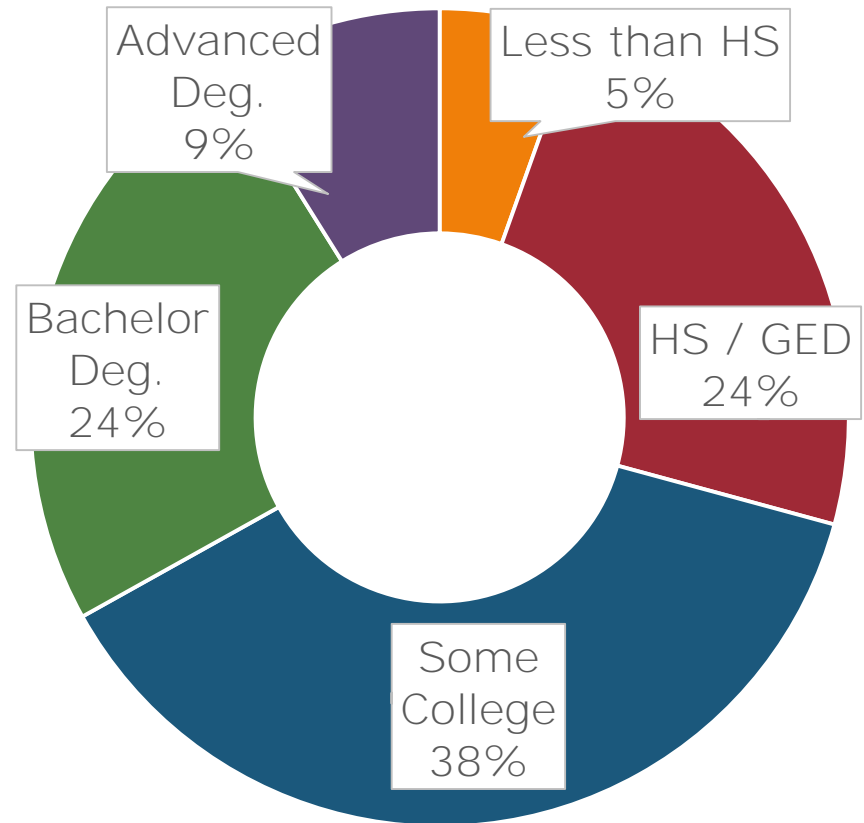
Note: each category includes people who identify as 2 or more races.

Skilled but Very Seasonal Workforce

Employment + Income

- Median Household Income: \$81,544
- Poverty Rate: ~13%
- Resident Labor Force
 - Summer: ~1600
 - Winter: ~600
- Most people employed in
 - Government
 - Tourism
 - Transportation + Utilities
 - Natural Resources
- Unemployment
 - Summer: 3-4%
 - Winter: 20-25%

Educational Attainment



School Enrollment Flat (Except PEAK)

School enrollment well below capacity

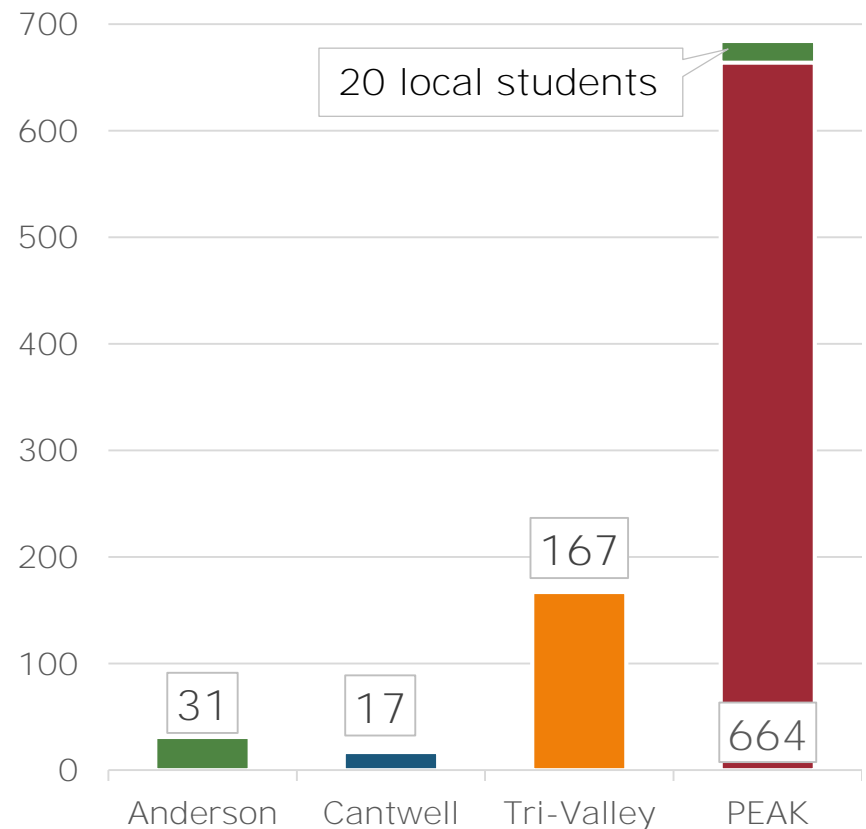
Denali Borough Schools

- Anderson (capacity 275)
- Cantwell (capacity 80?)
- Tri-Valley (Healy)
- PEAK (home school)

Budget (FY 2016)

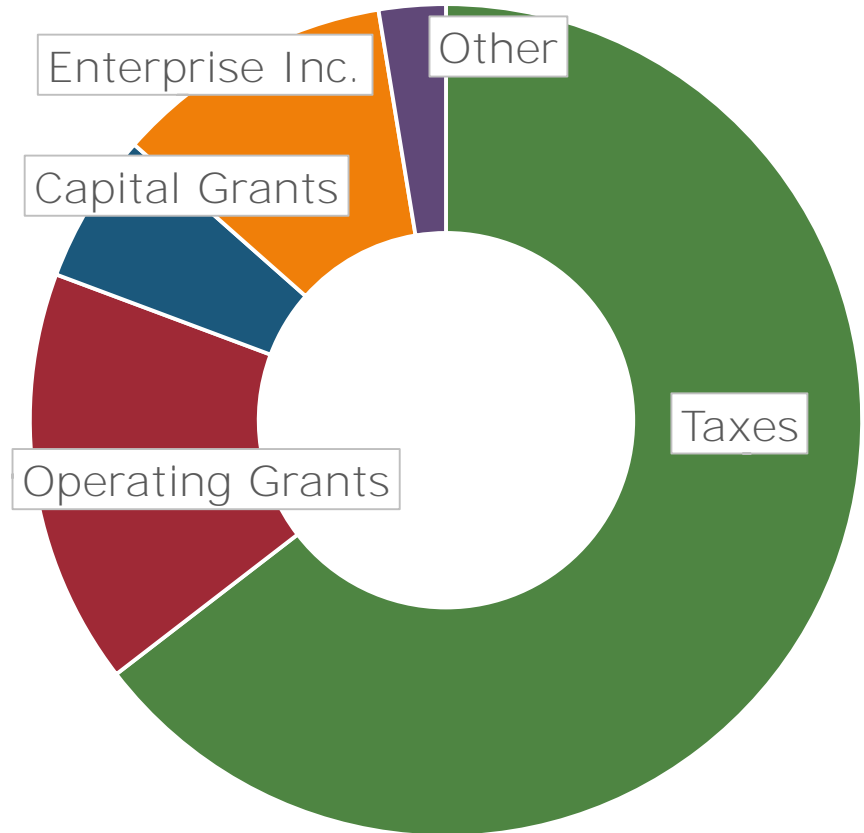
- Revenue: \$9,459,219
 - Local: \$2,306,896
- Expenditures: \$9,941,791

Enrollment (2016-2017)



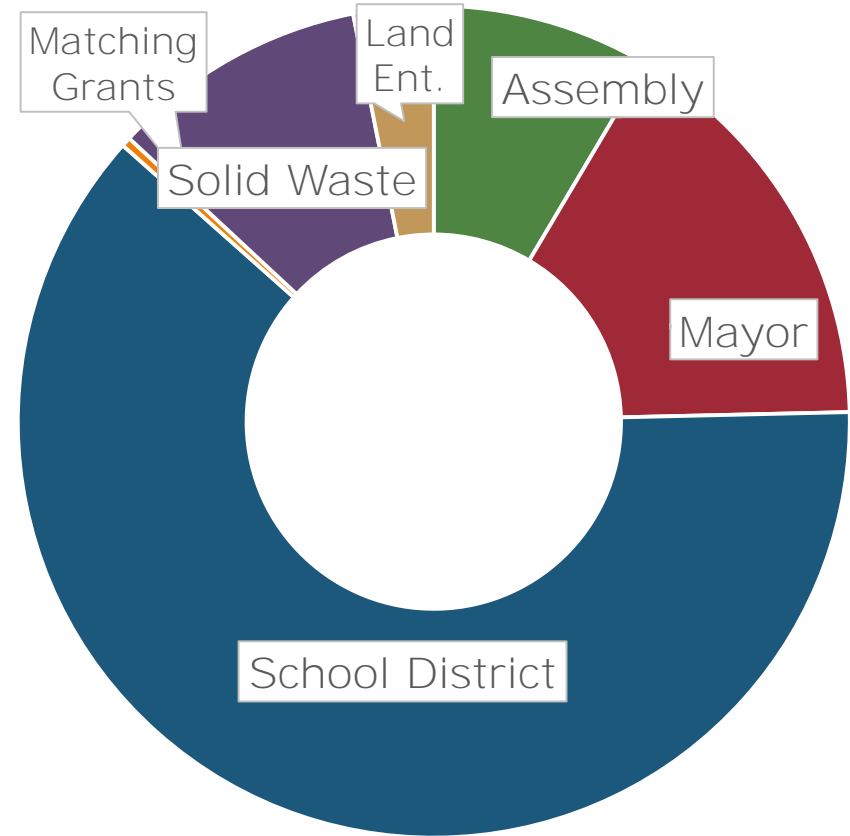
Borough Finances: Revenue

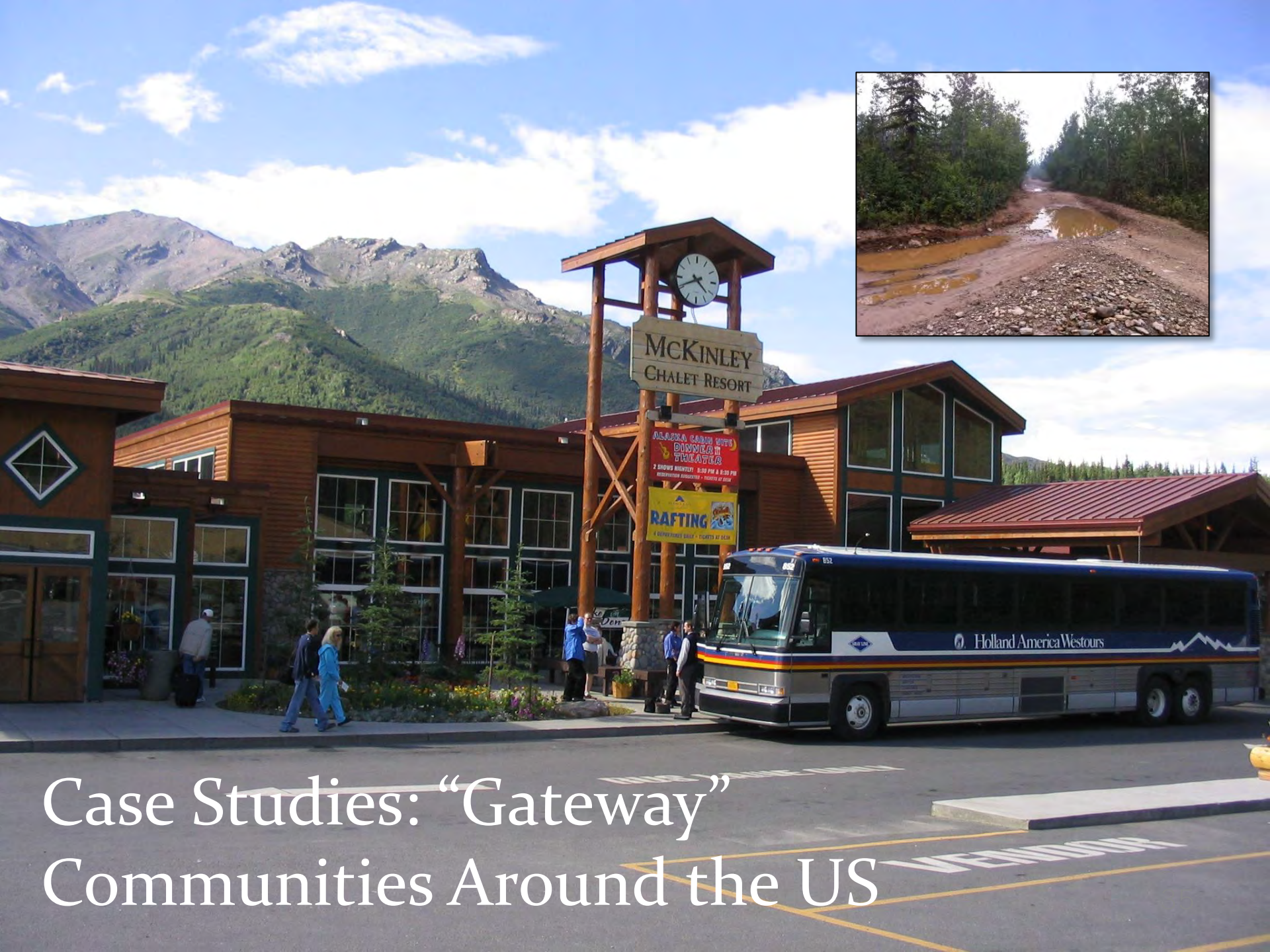
| Category | FY 16 |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Taxes | \$3,503,040 |
| <i>Bed Tax</i> | \$3,431,826 |
| <i>Severance Tax</i> | \$71,214 |
| Operating Grants | \$875,961 |
| Capital Grants | \$316,257 |
| Enterprise Income | \$590,409 |
| <i>Solid Waste</i> | \$573,221 |
| <i>Land Enterprise</i> | \$25,346 |
| Other | \$140,916 |
| TOTAL | \$5,426,583 |



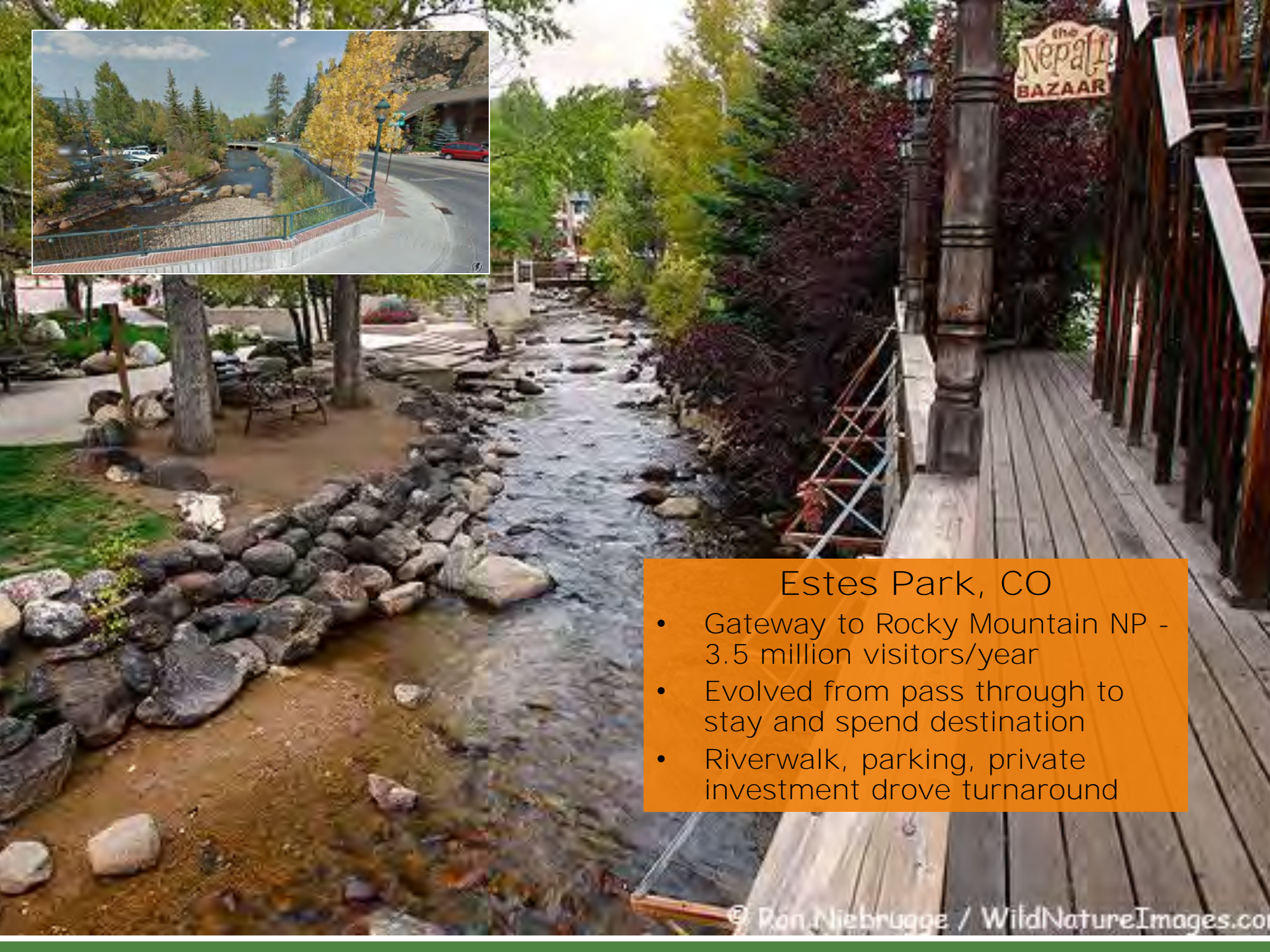
Borough Finances: Expenditures

| Category | FY 16 |
|---|--------------------|
| Assembly (incl staff) | \$449,970 |
| Mayor (incl grants to non profits, public safety) | \$875,961 |
| School District (incl capital) | \$3,274,279 |
| Matching Grants | \$19,288 |
| Solid Waste | \$526,952 |
| Land Enterprise | \$164,445 |
| TOTAL | \$5,353,490 |





Case Studies: “Gateway” Communities Around the US



Estes Park, CO

- Gateway to Rocky Mountain NP - 3.5 million visitors/year
- Evolved from pass through to stay and spend destination
- Riverwalk, parking, private investment drove turnaround



Springdale Utah
Gateway to Zion NP (from
2.6 to 4.5 million in 10 ys)
Shuttle system replaced
traffic jams; created
convenient mix of city
pleasures, natural wonders

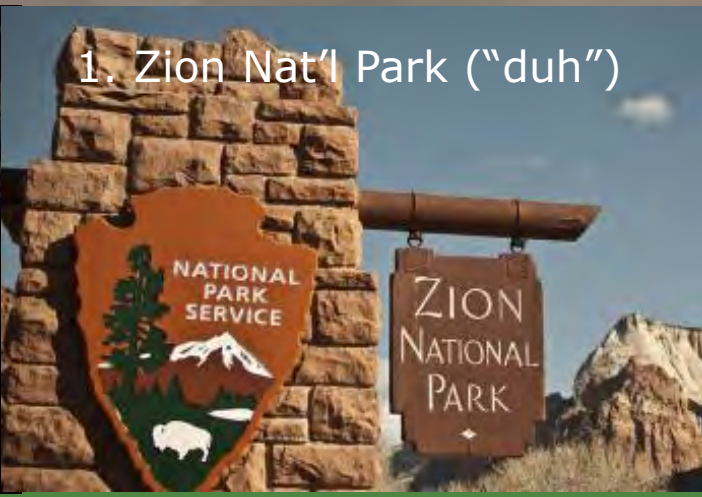
“Top 10 Things to Do In Springdale”



6. Downtown
Springdale



4. Bike Gooseberry
Mesa



1. Zion Nat'l Park (“duh”)



Pigeon Forge, TN
Gateway to Great Smoky N.P.
(11 million annual visitors)

The archetype of unregulated
land use, unregulated gateway
community commercial activity

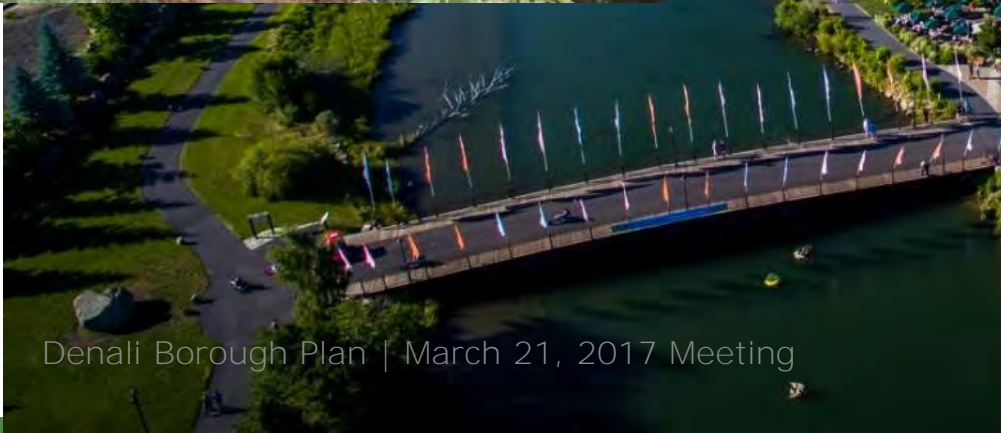




Bend Oregon
Natural assets, artfully
developed to drive a
remarkable economic revival:
bike trails, brewpubs, fishing,
skiing, second homes...



Bend, Oregon
Outdoor rec economy blossomed through partnerships between City, USFS, business community, local non profit user groups, and State (planning/marketing)



Case Studies: Local Plans

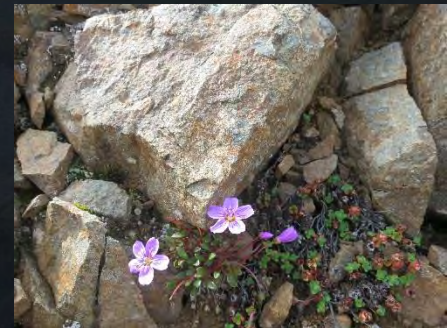
Talkeetna | Special Use District

- Starting Point: mix of fear of planning, and fear of rapidly growing tourism.
- **"Community/tourism plan"** set goals and strategies for supporting growth *and* maintaining community character.
- Widely shared agreement re the C/T Plan set the stage for the first ever zoning code in **Talkeetna ("SpUD")**.
- Zoning critics ultimately decided controlling growth was in their economic interest, and supported code regulations because they largely codified established but informal community building practices.
- Community now considering upgraded SpUD



Issues and Goals

*“These days no place stays special by accident.”
(Planner Ed McMahon)*



Issues + Priorities for the Future

From Comprehensive Plan (2015 update)

- Address housing shortage
- Improve facilities + services
 - Road system + land access improvements
 - Healthcare + senior services
 - Potential Healy regional airport
- Need for continued tourism growth
 - Parks Hwy. Scenic Byway program
 - Multi-use trails, amenities along corridor
- Plan for Borough-owned lands
- Support economic development

Land Use: Issues/Goals/Strategies?

Issues/Challenges/Opportunities

- Protecting neighborhood character
- Supporting investment
- Protecting public safety
- Avoiding excessive/any rules on use of private land

Examples of how active planning policy might help address these issues and challenges:

- Setting standards to help maintain the desired character of a neighborhood
 - Separating incompatible land uses, e.g. industrial from residential
 - Reducing off-site impacts of adjoining uses, e.g. through setbacks, buffers, or limitations on building heights
- Strategies so visitors choose to spend time, money in the borough
 - Standards to guide growth and improve the appearance and walkability of commercial areas like the park entry
 - Steps to protect the views along the highway.
 - Plans to improve, sustain diverse recreational opportunities, for residents and visitors, for example, through an active, multi-organization/agency trails plan.
- Strategies and partnerships to encourage growth in favorable locations
 - Overall land use map, showing general locations/densities/types of uses
 - Creating walkable, mixed use community centers, such as the long discussed idea of a better defined Healy town center.
- *What different/what else?*

Economic Development: Issues/Goals?

Issues/Challenges/Opportunities

- Diverse economy, but vulnerable to external trends (coal/tourism/federal \$)
- Highly seasonal economy; limited year round job opportunities, limited **options for young people to stay in the area (the “3-generation community”)**
- State budget deficit; likelihood Borough will have to pay more for public services – schools, roads, police, health – than in the past

Examples of how active planning policy might help address these issues and challenges:

- Strategies so visitors have more reasons to spend time and money in the borough. For example:
 - Standards to guide growth and improve the appearance and walkability of commercial areas like the park entry
 - Steps to protect the views along the highway.
 - Plans to improve, sustain diverse recreational opportunities, for residents and visitors, for example, through an active, multi-organization/agency trails plan.
- Ongoing support and advocacy re gas pipeline, Clear AFB?, coal exports?
- Partnerships to create clearer community identity, and clearer centers, such as the long discussed idea of a better defined Healy town center.
- What else/what different?

Infrastructure/Transportation

Issues/Challenges/Opportunities

- Providing access to land for new uses
- Providing ways for residents and visitors to get around without a car
- Creating options for expanded gateways to the National Park

Examples of how active planning policy might help address these issues and challenges:

- Guiding growth: a way for local governments to anticipate and synchronize the location and intensity of growth with expansion of roads and other infrastructure. Examples include:
 - Planning for roads and sidewalks to provide safe and convenient access from resident and employee housing to schools, shopping and jobs.
 - Planning for access to areas where land could be sold for private use (e.g., borough held properties, e.g. Montana Creek Borough bridge)
- Options to pay for needed infrastructure, e.g., Road Service districts like those used in the Mat Su.

Defining and Reaching Big Picture Goals

Issues/Challenges/Opportunities

- Beyond the specifics of setbacks or other detailed land use policies, planning offers the chance to work together to bring about what they want for their future – **to set out a vision and the steps needed: to make... *"intelligent use of the borough's resources for its present and future generations"*** (quote from the Borough Comprehensive Plan)

Examples of how active planning policy might help address these issues and challenges:

- Is growth, if well managed, desirable? How much, where, what kind of growth? What should be shown on the borough wide land use plan map?
- Do people want to see more year round residents, more year round jobs?
- **Do people want the borough to be "3-generation community" where more young people can stick around?**

The Road Ahead: Next Steps



Planning Process

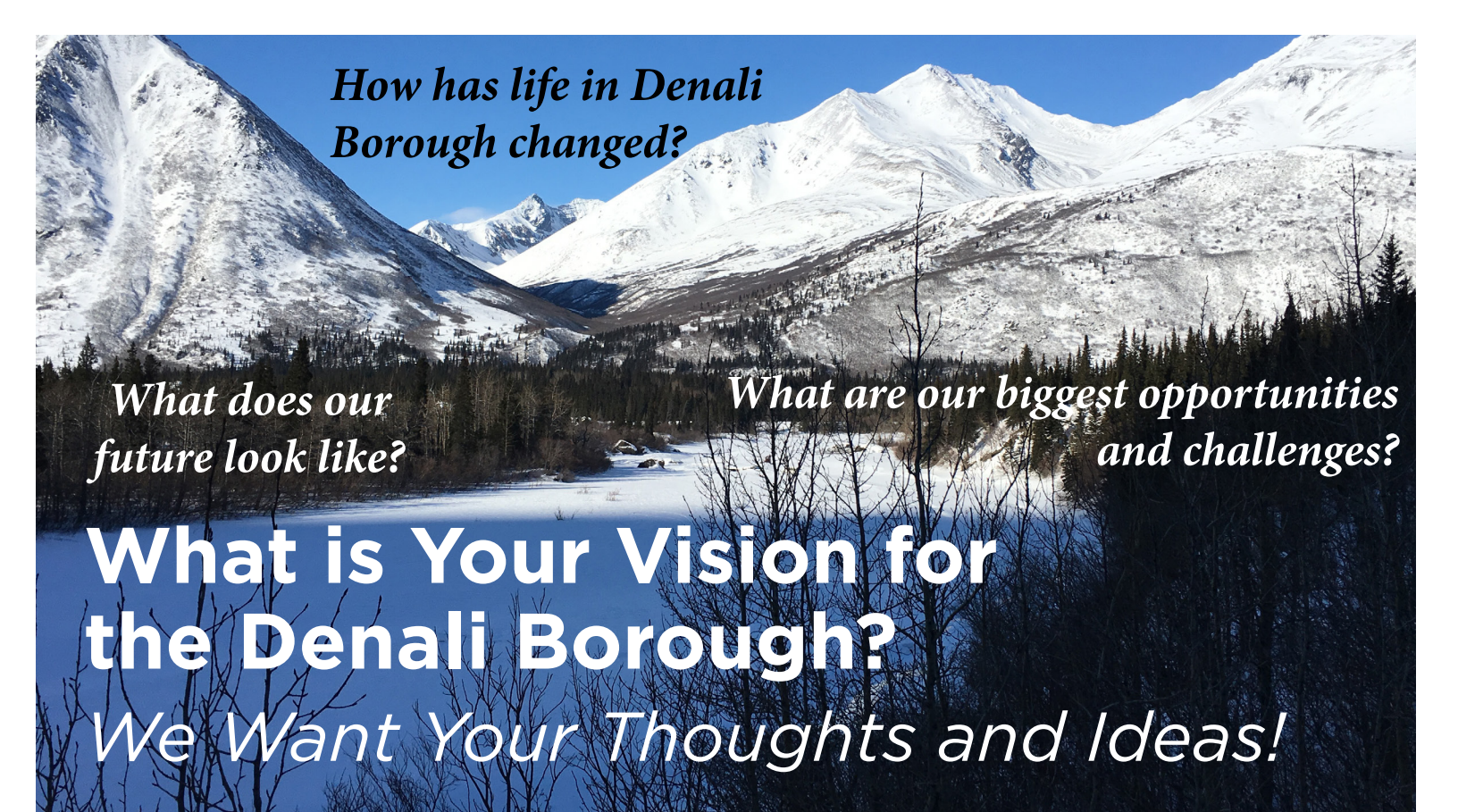
Phase One (extract from A::B contract, approved 3.8.17)

1. Start-Up: Set a Clear Process March
 - Form Plan Advisory Team; hold 1st meeting
 - Begin outreach process – web page, interviews, survey?
2. Update Growth Facts and Trends Mar/April
 - **PowerPoint “Snapshot”; compile base maps**
3. 1st Draft Land Use/Economic Development Plan May/July
 - **Initial Trends/Issues/Goals “Report”**
 - **1st set of public workshops; 2nd Plan Team mtng (2nd Wk June?)**
 - Draft Borough-Wide **Plan, “sub-regional” plans**
4. Land Use Map, Refined Sub-Region Strategies Aug/Oct
 - Draft Land Use Plan Map
 - Fleshed out strategies for guiding land use
 - 2nd set of public workshops; 3rd Plan Team mtng
 - Refined overall borough-wide, sub-regional plans
5. Formal Planning Comm., Assembly Approval End of 2017

Thank You!

Chris Beck | chris@agnewbeck.com | (907) 222-5424

Anna Brawley | anna@agnewbeck.com



*How has life in Denali
Borough changed?*

*What does our
future look like?*

*What are our biggest opportunities
and challenges?*

What is Your Vision for the Denali Borough?

We Want Your Thoughts and Ideas!

WHAT WILL WE TALK ABOUT?

Quality of Life

*What we value most about
our community, what we
want to improve*

Economy

*Strategies to support
more local businesses
and jobs*

Land Use

*Guiding future growth
and minimizing conflicts
between land uses*

Transportation

*Improving access with
roads and pedestrian/bike
trails, making roads safer*

SAVE THE DATE! COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Anderson & Clear

Monday, June 12 | 5 - 7 p.m.
Anderson City Hall

Healy & Ferry (before Assembly mtg.)

Wednesday, June 14 | 5 - 7 p.m.
Tri-Valley Community Center

McKinley Village

Tuesday, June 13 | 5 - 7 p.m.
McKinley Village Community Center

Cantwell

Thursday, June 15 | 5 - 7 p.m.
Cantwell Community Center

You are welcome to join any meeting. If you can't make the one close to home, join us another evening!

QUESTIONS? WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Visit the borough website for more about the project, and take our online survey!

Check the website regularly for updates. Survey will be open through Friday, May 26.

www.denaliborough.org

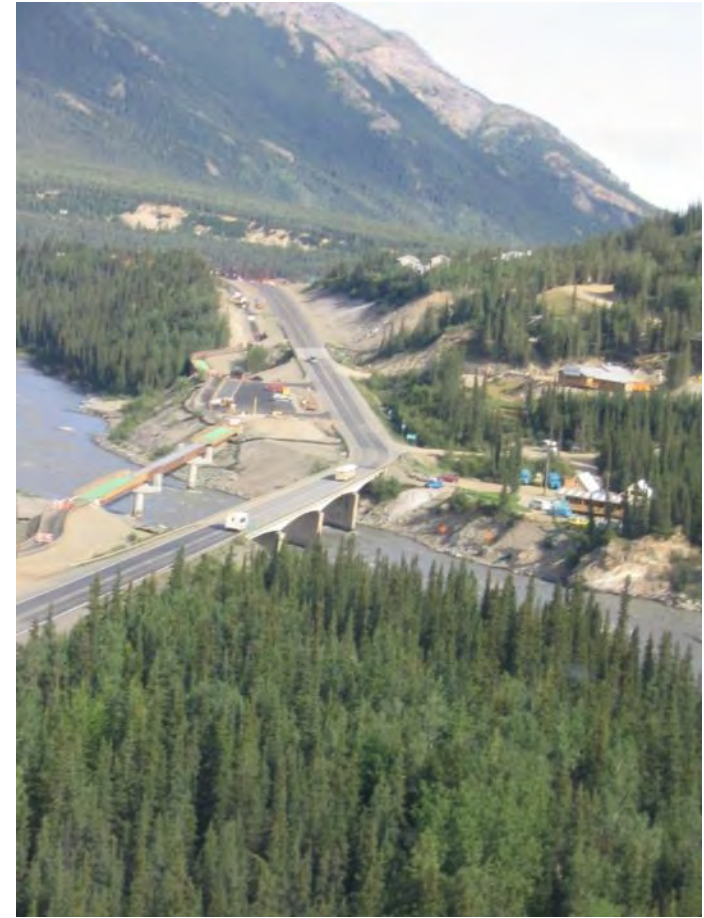
Contact Marsha Lambert, Borough Planner

mlambert@denaliborough.com | (907) 683-1330 | P.O. Box 480 Healy, AK 99743

Denali Borough Land Use & Economic Development Plan

June 2017 Public Workshops

“Growth could be a good thing if
we do it right.”



Chris Beck, Principal
Anna Brawley, Senior Associate

Engage Plan Implement  AGNEW
::BECK

Denali Borough: A Great Place to Live, Work, Visit, Recreate...



... Great Place to Live, Work, Visit, Recreate...



A (Wild) Place to Live, Work, Visit, Recreate...



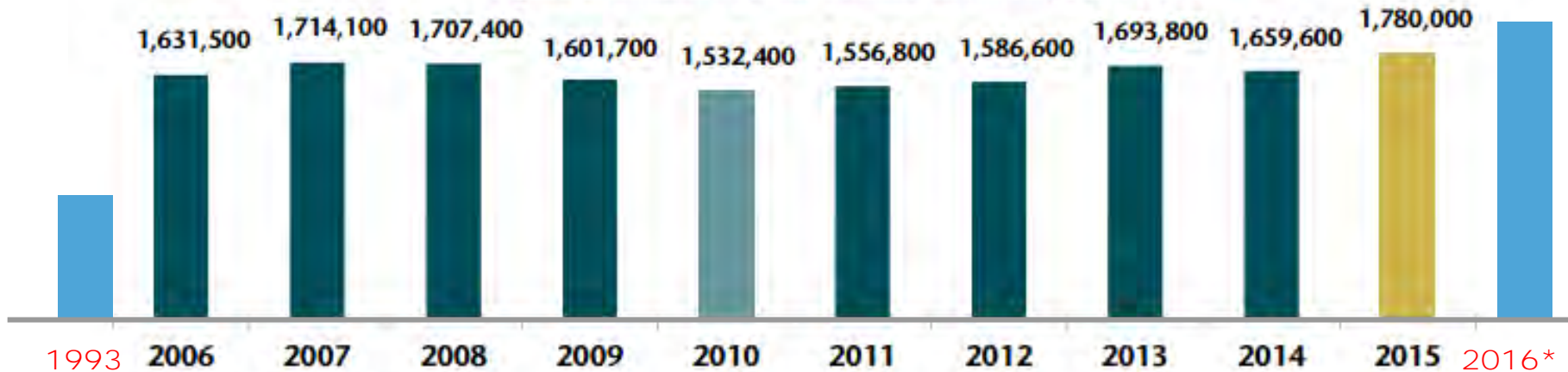
Starting Principles for this Plan

Extract from Agnew: : Beck report to the Borough, Fall 2016

- *Who?* build **a plan “from the bottom up”**
- *Sequence?* start with agreement on goals – *then* consider best ways to reach those goals
- *Focus?* **It’s the economy, it’s the way of life...**
- *One size fits all?* No – follow an open process that reflects both support and hesitations about planning and land use regulation; that respects differences between communities
- *Timeframe? Do Both:*
 - Big picture & long term. Given the high odds of continued growth and change, in 20 years, 30 years, what kind of place will the borough be to live, to work, to visit?
 - Near term & pragmatic; aim for practical, widely supported first steps

Context: Travel to AK continues to grow

Figure 2. Summer Visitor Volume to Alaska, 2006-2015

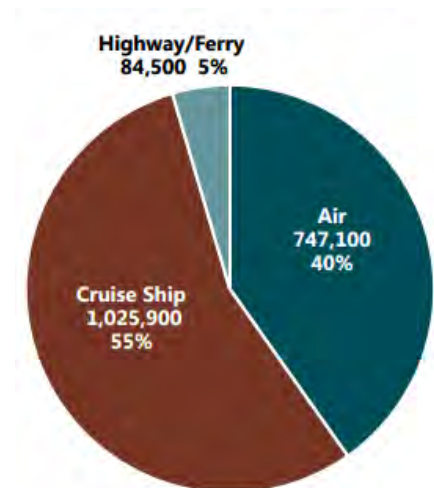


Source: AVSP V and AVSP VI.

- 2016 out of state summer visitors 1,857,500 – biggest ever
- 2014-2016: air volume up 20%,cruise up 6%; highway and ferry up 25%
- Alaska’s annual marketing budget: 49th in the US, \$1.5 million

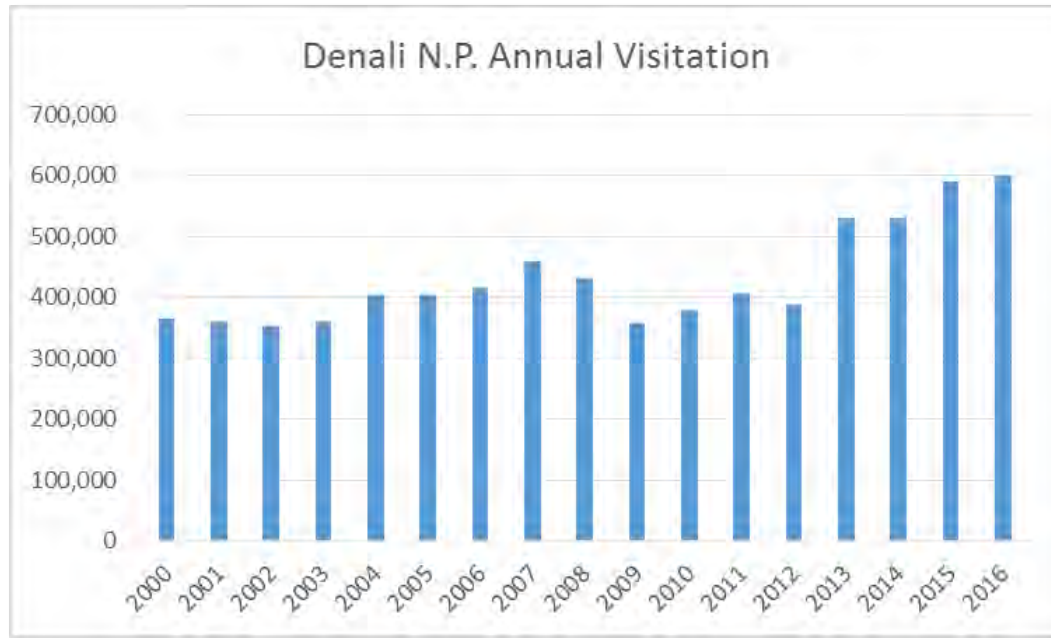
Source: Alaska Visitor Statistics Program VI, VII

Travel Mode



Park Visits: the Heart of The Borough Economy

“About one new hotel/year”



Dec-Feb visits: 190 in 2005-6; 3700 in 2016-17

<https://www.nps.gov/dena/learn/management/statistics.htm>

Out of State Summer Visitors: Denali: 428,000; Healy 43,000

Transp Mode: Denali – 50/50% cruise vs. air & hwy; Healy 11%/89%

Alaska Visitor Statistics Program VII – May 2017

What to Visitors Do? (shop, dine, stroll...)

TABLE 13.5 - Statewide Activities – Top 10 Interior Region and Communities (%)

| | All Visitors | Interior | Denali |
|------------------------|--------------|----------|--------|
| Shopping | 75 | 72 | 77 |
| Wildlife viewing | 45 | 73 | 81 |
| Cultural activities | 39 | 58 | 63 |
| Day cruises | 39 | 53 | 62 |
| Hiking/nature walk | 34 | 48 | 51 |
| Train | 32 | 47 | 57 |
| City/sightseeing tours | 31 | 35 | 42 |
| Fishing | 16 | 15 | 14 |
| Flightseeing | 13 | 19 | 23 |
| Tramway/gondola | 13 | 14 | 16 |

| | Glennallen | Delta Junction | Healy |
|------------------------|------------|----------------|-------|
| Shopping | 70 | 69 | 77 |
| Wildlife viewing | 69 | 64 | 79 |
| Cultural activities | 60 | 53 | 64 |
| Day cruises | 42 | 32 | 48 |
| Hiking/nature walk | 58 | 53 | 69 |
| Train | 14 | 15 | 25 |
| City/sightseeing tours | 21 | 16 | 33 |
| Fishing | 30 | 19 | 17 |
| Flightseeing | 15 | 10 | 25 |
| Tramway/gondola | 13 | 4 | 16 |



Alaska Visitor Statistics Program VII – May 2017

Planning Process

1. Start-Up; Form Advisory Group March
2. Growth Trends, Survey, Interviews Mar/April
3. Workshops & tasks above used to prepare Draft Land Use Economic and Development Plan May-July
 - Anderson/Clear AFB
 - McKinley Village/Park Entry
 - Healy
 - Cantwell
4. Land Use Map, Refined Community Strategies Aug-Oct
5. Formal Planning Comm., Assembly Approval End of 2017

What We're Hearing So Far

Anderson (8 people)

- School enrollment up 18 to 32; but half of all homes in town are abandoned
- Strong desire for new jobs, more people; **“solutions to chicken or the egg problem”**
- New strategies to reach those goals, including rebuilding link between Anderson & Clear (\$1.1 billion! construction project next door)
- Use public action to set stage for private business investments



What We're Hearing So Far

McKinley Village (35-40 people)

- “There are no land use controls here, anybody can build anything. We need zoning.”
- “Concentrate commercial activity, we don’t want to be Wasilla.”
- “I love being able to walk out my door and be in wild places.”
- “We need ‘calculated growth’ – ways to grow, create more year round jobs, more housing, more services, but also hold onto what makes this place special.”



What We're Hearing So Far

Healy (45 people)

- **"We need to evolve into a community where there are more opportunities to find a job, buy a home, build a life"**
 - "We need a four season community, a four season economy"
 - "It's sad to see great people who'd like to live here have to leave because they can't find work, find a place to live"
- **"Housing? - The more the better."**
 - Solutions to competition between seasonal employees, short term visitors, local residents who want to rent or buy
 - "Supply is tight, prices are high"



What We're Hearing So Far

Cantwell (20? people)

- “Need to grow, need young people moving back to town, need new jobs - we’ve turned into a retirement community”
- “Do we have to grow? I like Cantwell like it is, and we need to protect subsistence areas.”
- “We’ve got great opportunities in the borough to expand four season tourism, and four season jobs - snowmachines, dog sleds, skiing.”
- Better bike trails
 - Serve visitors and residents
 - Include a rec center, places to stay and shop, access to trails.
- “If change is going to happen we want some say in it.”

What We're Hearing So Far

Spring 2017 Community Survey Results

How has the community changed?

Many respondents shared a similar story: the community has benefited from strong economic growth, but has growing pains.

Positive

- + Economic growth, especially tourism
- + More services: new grocery store soon!
- + Transportation improvements: turn lanes, crosswalk and signal at Nenana Canyon
- + Community involvement & volunteerism

"I've seen more positive than negative overall but with growth there is always a little of both."

Negative

- Seasonal businesses, workers and visitors put strains on local services, communities
- Businesses and worker housing disrupt life in existing residential neighborhoods
- More people walking or biking on roads, crossing Parks Highway, safety issues
- Tight housing market:
 - o Properties sit vacant or undeveloped
 - o Hard to find affordable land to build on
- Health clinic closing: no medical services
- Vehicle and ATV tours damage trails

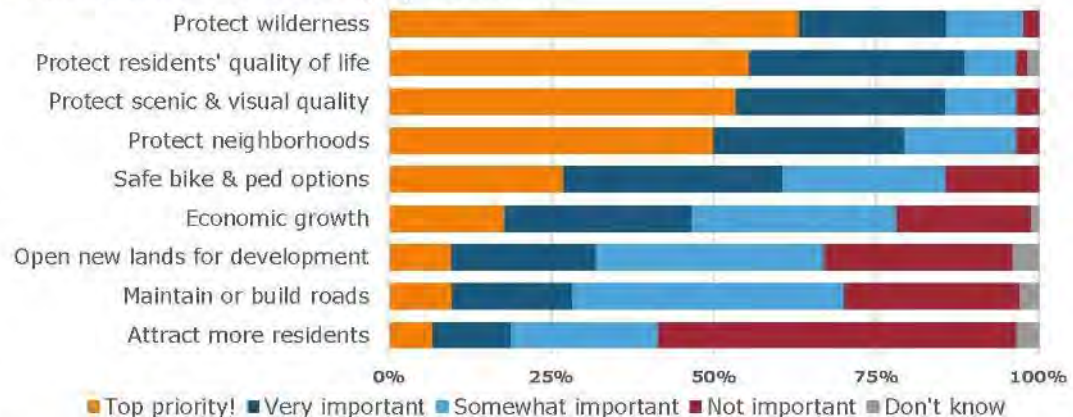
"Growth of commercial activity is impacting residential areas negatively."

"Too much development."

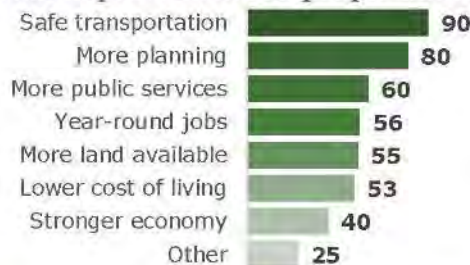
"Demand for seasonal housing is huge. For those of us that don't own land, trying to afford living here year-round can be difficult and expensive."

"Healy has become the employee housing area for park entrance businesses."

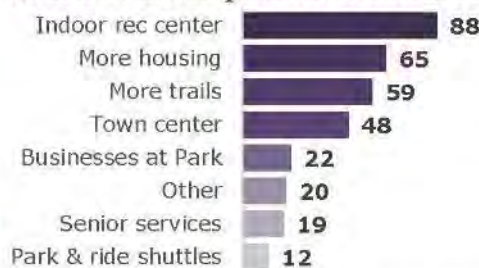
What should the community's priorities be?



What improvements do people want?



What new developments or amenities?



What does the future hold?

Respondents shared their hopes and concerns for the future. The big topics are below, raising big questions to consider: how to balance goals like limited government and neighborhood protection, limited growth and improved services?

Growth: slow or limited growth, no growth

Community: keep rural/small town character, support good relations with neighbors

Economy: uncertainty about mining and LNG project, dominance of tourism, becoming more seasonal or summer-only community

Regulation: too much regulation, not enough regulation, size of government, ability to enforce

"My biggest concern is focusing on economic growth over improving our quality of life. I want to continue to be a small, tight knit community with wilderness as our backyard."

"Keep it nice, with little government meddling."

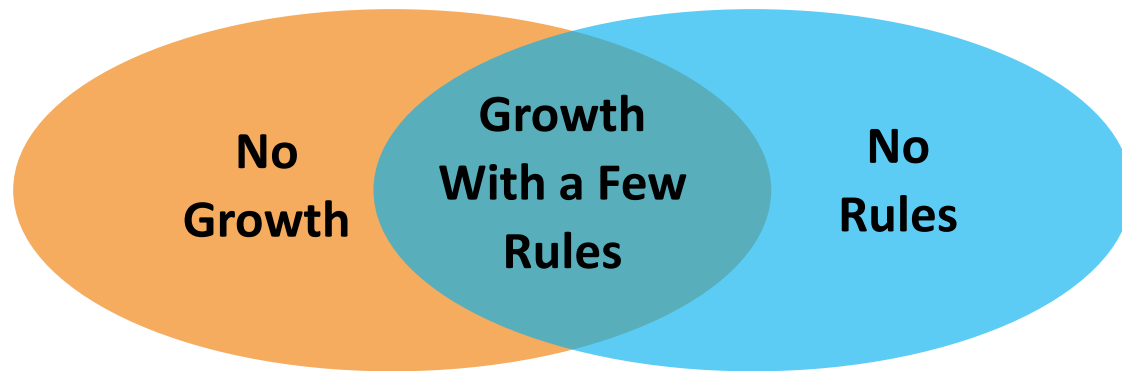
"My biggest hope is to have the financial opportunity to live my adult life here and raise a family."

What We're Hearing So Far



“Growth would be a good thing if we do it right.”

What We're Hearing So Far – Summary



“What’s the **recipe?**” “What does **‘doing growth right’** mean in the Denali Borough?”

Purpose of this plan? Clarify the broad future that people want for the borough

After this plan – work on means to achieve this vision

Borough-Wide Vision

- “What should be the experience of Denali Borough in 10, 20, 30 years, as a place to live, visit, work?”
- What response to what we’ve been hearing?

Case Studies: “Gateway” Communities

Other communities across the U.S. have responded to the unique challenges and opportunities of being next to or in the best access point to major recreational areas, including national parks. Below are some examples of the different directions communities can pursue, including one local example (Tahlequah).

Case Studies: Gateway Communities Around the US

- Tahlequah, OK:** Gateway to the Cherokee National Historical Park. Focus on historic preservation and tourism.
- Northgate Utah:** Gateway to the Wasatch-Cache National Park. Focus on outdoor recreation and scenic views.
- Payson, TN:** Gateway to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Focus on scenic views and outdoor recreation.

Case Studies: Local Plans

- Denali Borough:** Focus on sustainable economic development and tourism industry.
- Chena River, AK:** Focus on sustainable economic development and tourism industry.
- Denali National Park:** Focus on sustainable economic development and tourism industry.

Comprehensive Plan Goals

The Denali Borough Comprehensive Plan, updated in 2015, identifies many broad goals for economic development, land use, and transportation.

Future Economic Expansion

- Goal 1:** Create a sustainable, diversified economic base through development of natural resources and expansion of tourism industry.
- Goal 2:** Identify and promote development, including federal, state, and borough facilities and private industry to bring new and increased opportunities into the Denali Borough.
- Goal 3:** Fully utilize Borough lands with a management plan.
- Goal 4:** Promote generation of power from renewable resources.
- Goal 5:** Encourage development and expansion of communication infrastructure within the Borough.
- Goal 6:** Develop metrics to evaluate effectiveness of the Denali Borough's economic development efforts.
- Goal 7:** Support building a bridge across the Nenana River at Ferry to provide year round access from the Parks Highway to the Eva Creek Wind Farm and existing mining facilities.
- Goal 8:** Promote affordable housing for seasonal and temporary workers in the construction and tourism industry.
- Goal 9:** Encourage opening, operation of Healy Unit II Power Plant.

Land Use

- Goal 1:** Ensure that Denali Borough Bill of Rights guides land use regulation functions to protect private real property rights.
- Goal 2:** Maintain and update the Denali Borough Base Map.
- Goal 3:** Develop a Denali Borough Land Use Plan.
- Goal 4:** Ensure that each community can retain its individual identity and develop services to support their particular requirements.
- Goal 5:** Further develop borough planning and subdivision ordinances.
- Goal 6:** Develop a method for tracking recordable and transactions within the Denali Borough.

Transportation

- Goal 1:** Develop and maintain a Long Range Comprehensive Transportation Plan.
- Goal 2:** Expand public transportation.
- Goal 3:** Support and participate in the Parks Highway Scenic Byway Corridor Partnership Plan.
- Goal 4:** Pursue an area north of Healy for the future use of a regional airport that would be capable of handling “life flight” and commuter aircraft from Anchorage and Fairbanks to increase public safety and access for residents and tourists.
- Goal 5:** Support feasibility study of constructing a bridge to access the portion of the Borough northeast of the Nenana River.
- Goal 6:** Support feasibility study of constructing a bridge to access the portion of the Borough west of Anderson.
- Goal 7:** Support feasibility study of various accesses to Borough land at Horribla Creek.
- Goal 8:** Support state's efforts to identify, resolve RS247? routes and transportation corridors.
- Goal 9:** Support Alaska DOT&PF efforts to develop a conceptual plan for a highway to McGrath and Kuskokwim River, originating at Fax Bridge.
- Goal 10:** Encourage and support DOT and NPS to develop multi-use paths along Parks Highway in communities and heavily-used tourist areas.
- Goal 11:** Encourage and support DOT and NPS in improving highway safety with implementation of turning lanes, passing lanes, pedestrian cross-walks, traffic signals, reduced speed limits in congested areas, pedestrian bridges and tunnels.
- Goal 12:** Support and encourage DOT and NPS to remove the at-grade railroad crossing at Mile 235, Parks Highway.

Population Trends

Denali Borough has a core population of 1,600 year-round residents, and the population almost triples during the summer months with seasonal workers and part-time residents. The data describe the year-round population. This information was first presented at the March 21, 2017 Denali Borough Planning Commission meeting.

Small but Fast-Growing Senior Population

Age and Gender: Median Age: 48.2
 • Census (2014): 17%
 • Youth (20-24): 4%
 • Senior (65+): 24%
 (Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development)

Skilled but Very Seasonal Workforce

Professionals – Seasonal: 1,000 seasonal workers, 80% male
 • Average Age: ~45%
 • Gender: 50% Male
 • Most jobs are seasonal
 • Education: High School
 • Income: \$15,000
 • Average: 40 hours/week

Borough Population: Demographics

| Year | Pop. | Female | Male | White | Black | Other |
|------|-------|--------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2009 | 1,426 | 708 | 718 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2011 | 1,476 | 748 | 728 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2012 | 1,496 | 768 | 728 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2013 | 1,523 | 773 | 750 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2014 | 1,599 | 814 | 785 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2015 | 1,698 | 878 | 820 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2016 | 1,826 | 934 | 892 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2017 | 1,974 | 1,011 | 963 | 92% | 0% | 8% |

Borough Population: Households

Household Characteristics:
 • Pop. in households: 72%
 • Avg. household: 2.09
 • 40% in families
 • 37% in group quarters
 • 11% in group quarters

Household Market:
 • Owner occupied: 29%
 • Renter occupied: 71%
 • Median household income: \$15,200
 • Median age: 48.244

School Enrollment Flat (Except PEAK)

Denali Borough Schools:
 • Enrollment (2017): 1,000
 • Enrollment (2016): 1,000
 • Enrollment (2015): 1,000
 • Enrollment (2014): 1,000
 • Enrollment (2013): 1,000
 • Enrollment (2012): 1,000
 • Enrollment (2011): 1,000
 • Enrollment (2010): 1,000
 • Enrollment (2009): 1,000

Borough Population: Schools

| Year | Enrollment | Male | Female | White | Black | Other |
|------|------------|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2009 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2010 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2011 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2012 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2013 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2014 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2015 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2016 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 92% | 0% | 8% |
| 2017 | 1,000 | 500 | 500 | 92% | 0% | 8% |

Borough-Wide Strategies to Reach Vision

Three breakout groups:

- Economy
- Land Use & Neighborhoods and Transportation

Choreography: Assigned to first group; Take 15 minutes, and discuss poster topic, then switch. We'll take notes, full group report back. **Done by 6:20!**

(We'll then switch to map-based discussion with a specific local focus.)

Healthy Local Economy & Borough Fiscal Health

Future Issues, Opportunities & Choices

Local Services & Quality of Life

- **Government Spending & Impacts on Borough:**
 - About 70% of Denali Borough School District funding (\$8.3 million) comes from state and federal sources. Alaska's budget problems mean local residents may need to pay for a larger share of local public services, like in response to reduced state spending on schools, roads, police, other services.
 - \$700 million is being invested at Clear AirS. Much of the technical work to be done out of state, and producing few locally-based jobs and other economic benefits. Could this change in the future?
- **Local Services & Facilities: Public and Private Sector:**
 - The borough's population is small and aging. School enrollment is flat or declining, and local schools have significant unused capacity.
 - How will these demographic trends affect the borough's economic health?
 - Are there arguments for growth in the right locations, at the right scale, as a way to sustain or improve desired local facilities and services? Examples from the survey: a recreation center, trails & roads, medical clinic. What about expanding services and shops serving local residents?

Economic Growth

- **Tourism Attraction & Spending:**
 - The Park Service aims to slow growth of in-park vehicles, and to guide subsequent recreation and tourism demand to "front country" locations and non-summer seasons, and to rely on more on local private sector partners.
 - How will this policy affect overall visitation (and bed tax revenues)?
 - What new, local economic opportunities may become available?
 - Could heavy outdoor Park Entrance become year-round from centers for tourists (and residents)?
- **Coal, Gas & Energy:**
 - Hubbell coal mine currently serves the Alaska market. The future could bring renewed exports, and/or growing markets to reduce carbon-based fuel usage.
- **A Low-Risk, Clear-Crystal Ball?**
 - **Stable Economy?** By Alaska standards, the borough economy is stable and diverse. But coal, tourism, and government spending follow national & global trends.
 - **State and Federal Spending:** What future at Clear AirS, with this private budget, and with state support to borough schools and roads?
 - **Big Pipeline Wildcard?** The proposed natural gas pipeline would pass through the Borough, creating jobs and potentially substantial property tax.
 - **Climate Change Alaska's** climate is warming twice as fast as global averages, what will this mean for issues from tourism to road maintenance costs?
- **To Grow or Not to Grow? Tough Choice:**
 - "Today, it's tough to offer a 3-generation economic paradigm, children and grandchildren can make a good living in the same place."
 - The survey results, while not statistically valid, showed diverse opinions among residents, but overall a real relationship or opposition to growth.
 - At the same time, there was support for benefits that come with growth: new facilities, capacity to define and maintain neighborhood character, and sustained economic opportunities. Some questions in context:
 - Is it realistic to stop growth?
 - Could tourism evolve toward all-season activities, bringing more visitation jobs? Would that be a net positive for the borough?
 - If growth is desired in a way that maintains the community's values, can a growing economy and growing population be a good thing long term?
 - "These days, no adult stays special by accident." - *Thomas M. Mulholland, Commissioner of the Borough, June*

Land Use & Neighborhoods

Future Issues, Opportunities & Choices

Neighborhood Character

- **Process: Neighborhood Character:**
 - For borough residents want kind, or even any, rules on use of private land. At the same time, residents' neighborhoods have seen some big changes recently, including new employee housing, motorcycle parking, and commercial activity.
 - Should the borough overall, or individual areas, have policies to reduce off-site impacts of land uses, e.g., setbacks, buffers, or other options?
 - Should there be rules separating potentially incompatible land uses, such as separating industrial uses or gravel pits from adjoining homes?
- **Increase Housing Supply:**
 - Many voices expressed desire for more housing options, for year-round residents as well as seasonal employment. How best to respond to this need?
 - Improve access to and sell borough-owned land or land held by the Alaska Rental Health Trust, the Alaska Health Fund, the State of Alaska?
 - Work to find residential/commercial locations for seasonal workers?
 - Create incentives to bring more existing private land onto the market.
 - Improved access to city utility, whether more conventional option would be in a private lot, giving owner a motivator to "sell on" land in location.
- **Environment, Economy & Quality of Life:**
 - Land use policies can have big impacts on all these topics. Options in context:
 - Strategies to guide growth and improve appearance & walkability of some areas, like the Park entrance? Create a "leafy town center"? This occurs at night in a current form in previous plans.
 - Strategies to improve recreational opportunities for residents and visitors? (Example: a trail path, more "front-country" recreation or public space?)
 - Strategies to protect, share along the "rainbow" to protect natural landscapes (e.g., setbacks from streams, rules on off trail vehicles)?

Manage Land Use

- **Two aspects from the Comp. Plan:**
 - "Doing nothing is not an option. Failure to act will result in erosion of our regional character, quality of life, and independence. Through planning and involving individuals of the Denali Borough, we can maintain and improve the qualities we like about this region."
 - "Enact the Denali Borough 'Bill of Rights' guide land use regulation functions to protect private real property rights."
- One option to bridge the gap between those who want no growth, and those who want to regulate or manage it, is shown below:
 - **No Growth** | **MANAGED GROWTH** | **No Manage**
- Currently all land is zoned unrestricted except the around the landfill which is zoned industrial. Any plan for more land use must needs to be realistic about the capacity of the borough to manage growth.
 - "The #1 activity of visitors throughout the world (including Alaska) is shopping, dining and entertainment in a pedestrian-friendly setting." - *US Travel Assoc., AREA 7, 2016/2017*

Healthy Local Economy & Borough Fiscal Health

Future Issues, Opportunities & Choices



Tourism Attractions & Spending

The Park Service aims to slow growth of in-park vehicles, and to guide anticipated recreation and tourism demand to "front country" locations and non-summer seasons, and to rely on more on local private sector partners.

- How will this policy affect overall visitation (and bed tax revenues)?
- What new, local economic opportunities may become available?
- Could Healy and/or Park Entrance become year-round town centers for tourists (and residents)?



Coal, Gas & Energy

Usibelli Coal Mine currently serves the Alaska market. The future could bring renewed exports, and/or growing pressures to reduce carbon-based fuel usage.



Government Spending & Impacts on Borough

- About 79% of Denali Borough School District funding (\$5.3 million) comes from state and federal sources. Alaska's budget problems mean local residents may need to pay for a larger share of local public services. How to respond to reduced state spending on schools, roads, police, other services?
- \$700 million is being invested at Clear AFS. Much of the technical work is being done out of state, and producing few locally-based jobs and other economic benefits. Could this change in the future?



Local Services & Facilities: Public and Private Sector

The borough's population is small and aging. School enrollment is flat or declining, and local schools have significant unused capacity.

- How will these demographic trends affect the borough's economic health?
- Are there arguments for growth in the right locations, in the right style, as a way to sustain or improve desired local facilities and services? Examples from the survey: a recreation center, trails & roads, medical clinic. What about expanding services and shops serving local residents?



A Less-than-Clear Crystal Ball: External Forces

Stable Economy? By Alaska standards, the Borough economy is stable and diverse. But coal, tourism, and government spending follow national & global trends.

State and Federal Spending What future at Clear AFB, with Park Service budgets, and with State support to borough schools and roads?

LNG Pipeline Wildcard The proposed natural gas pipeline would pass through the Borough, creating jobs and potentially substantial property tax.

Climate Change Alaska's climate is warming twice as fast as global averages. What will this mean for issues from tourism to road maintenance costs?



To Grow or Not to Grow? Tough Choices

"Today, it's tough to offer a 3-generation economy: parents, children and grandchildren can make a good living in the same place."

The survey results, while not statistically valid, showed diverse opinions among residents, but overall a real reluctance or opposition to growth.

At the same time, there was support for benefits that come with growth: new facilities, capacity to define and maintain neighborhood character, and expanded economic opportunities. Some questions to consider:

- Is it realistic to stop growth?
- Could tourism evolve toward all-season activities, bringing more year-round jobs? Would that be a net positive for the borough?
- If growth is guided in a way that matches the community's values, can a growing economy and growing population be a good thing long term?

"These days, no place stays special by accident." - Planner Ed McMahon, presentation in the Borough, 1998

Land Use & Neighborhoods

Future Issues, Opportunities & Choices

The existing Borough Comprehensive Plan and the interviews and survey associated with this update highlight a range of land use issues, goals and choices. Highlights are presented below.

Neighborhood
Character



Environment, Economy
& Quality of Life

Housing Supply



Managing Land Use



Protect Neighborhood Character

Few borough residents want strict, or even any, rules on use of private land. At the same time, residential neighborhoods have seen some big changes recently, including new employee housing, motorcoach parking, and commercial activities.

- Should the borough overall, or individual areas, have policies to reduce off-site impacts of land uses, e.g., setbacks, buffers, or other policies?
- Should there be rules separating potentially incompatible land uses, such as separating industrial uses or gravel pits from adjoining homes?



Increase Housing Supply

Many voices expressed desire for more housing options, for year round residents as well as seasonal employees. How best to respond to this need?

- Improve access to and sell borough-owned land? or land held by the Alaska Mental Health Trust, the Alaska Railroad, the State of Alaska?
- Work to find neighborhood-compatible locations for seasonal workers?
- Create incentives to bring more existing private land onto the market. Improved access is one option; another more controversial option would be to a property tax, giving owners a motivation to not "sit on" land indefinitely.



Environment, Economy & Quality of Life

Land use policies can have big impacts on all these topics. Options to discuss:

- Strategies to guide growth and improve appearance & walkability of some areas, like the Park entrances? Create a Healy town center? The picture at right is a concept from a previous plan.
- Strategies to improve recreational opportunities for residents and visitors? Example: a trails plan, more "front-country" recreation on public lands?
- Strategies to protect views along the Parks Highway? to protect natural landscapes (e.g., setbacks from streams, rules on off trail vehicles)?



Manage Land Use?

Two extracts from the Comp. Plan:

"Doing nothing is not an option. Failure to act will result in erosion of our regional character, quality of life, and independence. Through planning and involving individuals of the Denali Borough, we can maintain and improve the qualities we like about this region."

"Ensure that the Denali Borough 'Bill of Rights' guides land use regulation functions to protect private real property rights."

One option to bridge the gap between those who want no growth, and those who want no regulation or management, is shown below:



Currently all land is zoned unrestricted except the around the landfill which is zoned industrial. Any plan for more land use rules needs to be realistic about the capacity of the borough to enforce them.



"The #1 activity of visitors throughout the world (including Alaska) is shopping, dining and entertainment in a pedestrian friendly setting."

- US Travel Assoc.

Transportation, Access & Safety

Existing Plans

Healy Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Plan

- Developed by the Healy Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Ad-hoc Committee
- Approved by the Borough Assembly in August 2016
- Focused on Healy (Parks Hwy mi 247 to 251.2, Healy Spur, Otto Lake, Hilltop, Stampede/Lignite)

Overall Goal:

Prevent vehicle-pedestrian related accidents and conflicts in a growing community.

Goal 1: Infrastructure. Establish safe traffic and pedestrian routes within the community of Healy.

Goal 2: Education. Promote a culture of safety and mutual respect between motorized and non-motorized user groups.

Strategies to promote safety:

- Multi-use paths, turn lanes, wider shoulders on DOT roads
- Speed limit and pedestrian crossing signage
- Trails or safe crossings for students at Tri-Valley School

Denali Park Transportation & Trails Planning

Vehicle Management Plan

- Adopted 2012
- Slower growth of vehicles allowed within the Park over the next two decades
- Shift future recreation demand from Park Road to "front country" activities at Park entrance and accessible areas
- Respond to increasing shoulder-season/winter demand

Trails Strategy & Long Range Transportation Plan

- Planning in progress, summer 2017
- Possible trail routes along Parks Highway, additional access points to the Park from the north or south, connecting existing Oxbow & Triple Lakes trails
- Possible future shuttle system for improved access into the Park or travel between destinations within the Park
- Develop or expand partnerships to improve visitor amenities and services within and around the Park

Where Do We Want to Go?

Issues & Opportunities



| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Land Access</p> <p><i>What are the priorities?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access for future sales of Borough land for residential uses? • Access to areas adjoining existing development (e.g., Montana Creek area?) • Access to remote lands | <p>Bike & Pedestrian Safety</p> <p><i>What options to address growing pedestrian traffic?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-use trails on roads • Improvements at key intersections (with DOT) • Planned developments to create attractive, practical, safe walkable places |
| <p>Road Maintenance</p> <p>State funding likely to decline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Should the Borough explore options to adopt road powers for local needs?</i> • <i>Should residents/land owners have the option for Road Service Areas, where there is local support?</i> | <p>Trails Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document formal and informal trail network • Set priorities & processes for preserving high value public trails • Public private partnerships for maintenance, events, education, signage |
| <p>Park Traffic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support more front country development, activities • Connect trails within and outside the park • Promote shuttle, circulation plan, better access to most popular destinations | <p>Scenic Character</p> <p><i>Given the importance of tourism, what actions to maintain visual quality of the Parks Hwy corridor?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign ordinance? • Keep vegetation as buffers? • Restrict development? |

The Road Ahead: Next Steps



Planning Process

Phase One (extract from A::B contract, approved 3.8.17)

1. Start-Up: Set a Clear Process March
 - Form Plan Advisory Team; hold 1st meeting
 - Begin outreach process – web page, interviews, survey?
2. Update Growth Facts and Trends Mar/April
 - **PowerPoint “Snapshot”; compile base maps**
3. 1st Draft Land Use/Economic Development Plan May-July
 - **Initial Trends/Issues/Goals “Report”**
 - 1st set of public workshops; 2nd Plan Team mtng
 - Draft Borough-Wide Plan, community plans
4. Land Use Map, Refined Community Strategies Aug-Oct
 - Draft Borough wide Land Use Plan Map
 - Fleshed out strategies for guiding land use
 - Public workshop; 3rd Plan Team mtng
 - Refined overall borough-wide, sub-regional plans
5. Formal Planning Comm., Assembly Approval End of 2017

Thank You!

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More Information
Check the Borough Website
<http://www.denaliborough.org/>
For

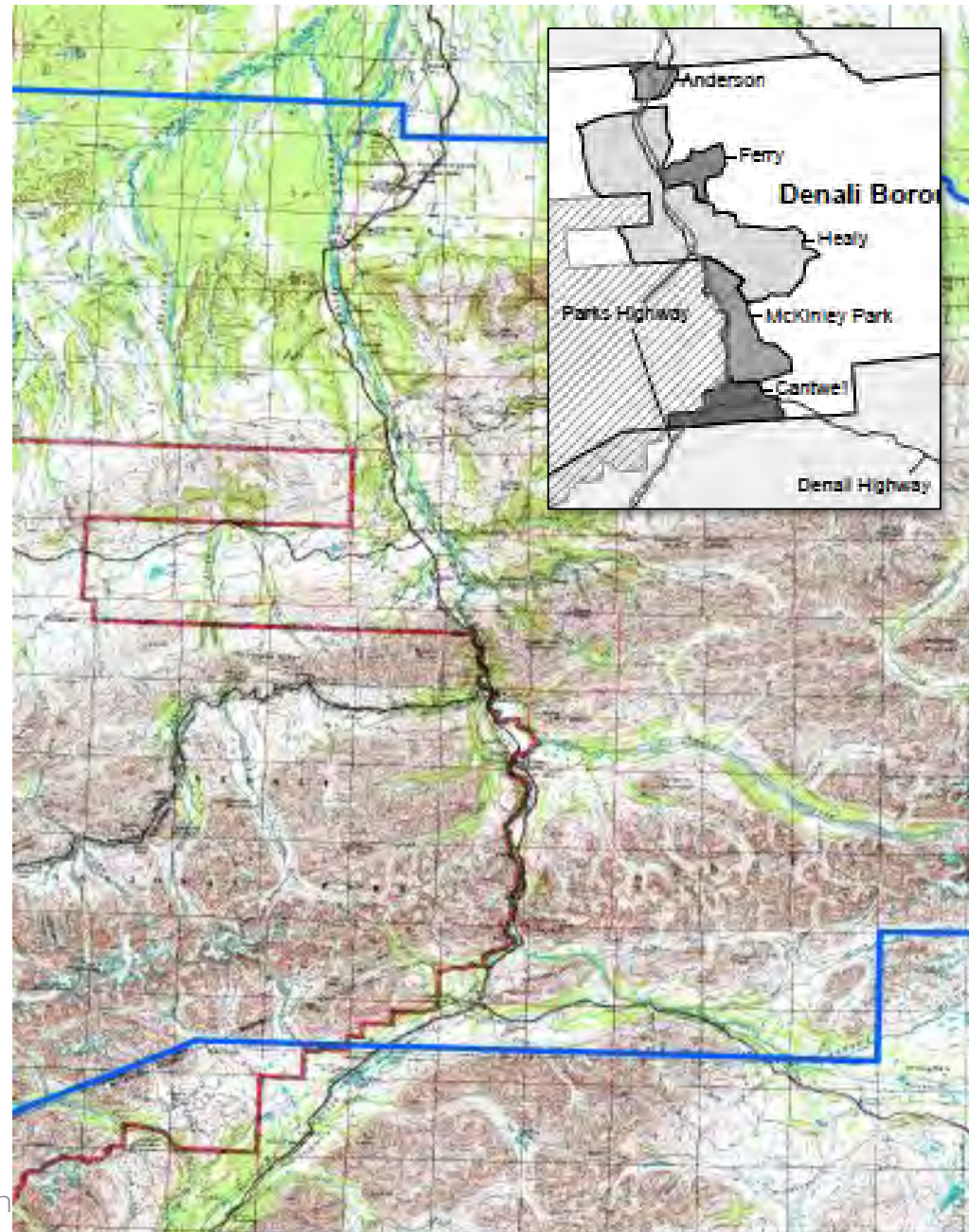
Plan Geography

Borough Geography:

- 12,000 square miles (larger than 9 states)
- 70% within Denali NP&P

Plan Structure:

- Start with full borough
- Then consider implications for individual, distinct communities
 - Anderson/Clear AFB
 - Healy/Ferry
 - Park Entry/McKinley Village/Yanert
 - Cantwell



Population Trends

Denali Borough has a core population of 1,800 year-round residents, and the population almost triples during the summer months with seasonal workers and part-time residents. This data describes the year-round population. This information was first presented at the March 21, 2017 Denali Borough Planning Commission meeting.

Small but Fast-Growing Senior Population

Age and Gender

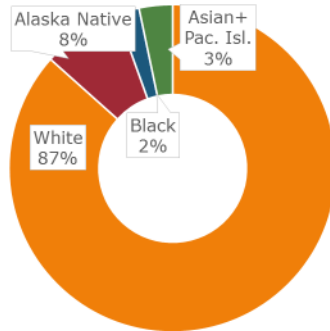
- Median Age: 42.2
- Children (0-14): 17%
 - Youth (15-19): 6%
 - **Seniors (65+): 11%**
(used to be 3% in 2000)

Sex Ratio

- Male: 45%
- Female: 55%

Hispanic Origin: 3.6%

Race + Ethnicity



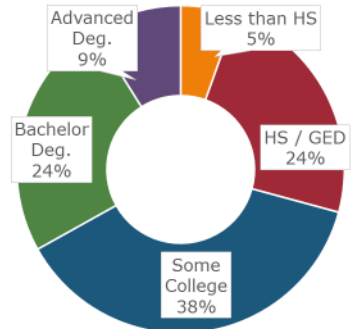
Note: each category includes people who identify as 2 or more races.

Skilled but Very Seasonal Workforce

Employment + Income

- Median Household Income: \$81,544
- Poverty Rate: ~13%
- Resident Labor Force
 - Summer: ~1600
 - Winter: ~600
- Most people employed in
 - Government
 - Tourism
 - Transportation + Utilities
 - Natural Resources
- Unemployment
 - Summer: 3-4%
 - Winter: 20-25%

Educational Attainment



Borough Population: Demographics

| Year | Total Popln. | Anderson | Cantwell | Healy | Denali Park | Rest of Borough |
|--------------------|-------------------------|----------|----------|-------|-------------|-----------------|
| 2010 | 1,826 | 246 | 219 | 1,021 | 185 | 155 |
| 2011 | 1,834 | 245 | 204 | 1,051 | 186 | 148 |
| 2012 | 1,856 | 224 | 207 | 1,080 | 188 | 157 |
| 2013 | 1,792 | 222 | 196 | 1,066 | 190 | 118 |
| 2014 | 1,788 | 194 | 183 | 1,105 | 189 | 117 |
| 2015 | 1,786 | 210 | 185 | 1,086 | 188 | 117 |
| 2016 | 1,810 | 238 | 198 | 1,074 | 189 | 111 |
| Avg. Annual Change | -0.2% | -0.5% | -0.5% | 0.4% | 0.3% | -4.7% |
| | 2015-2016: 1.33% | | | | | |

Borough Population: Households

Household Characteristics

- Pop. in households: 77%
- Avg. household: 2.34
- Avg. family: 3.08
- 59% in families
- 33% living alone
- 27% with children (<18)
- 17% with seniors (65+)
- Pop. in group qtrs.: 23%

Housing Market

- Owner occupied: 75%
 - 1,192 owners
- Renter occupied: 25%
 - 402 renters
- Seasonal units: 745
- Housing Types:
 - 77% single family
 - 12% multi-family
 - 11% mobile home + other (boat, RV)
- Median home value: \$190,200
- Median rent: \$1,044

School Enrollment Flat (Except PEAK)

School enrollment well below capacity

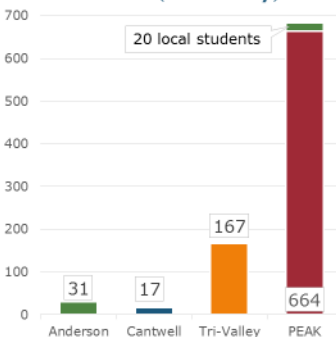
Denali Borough Schools

- Anderson (capacity 275)
- Cantwell (capacity 80?)
- Tri-Valley (Healy)
- PEAK (home school)

Budget (FY 2016)

- Revenue: \$9,459,219
 - Local: \$2,306,896
- Expenditures: \$9,941,791

Enrollment (2016-2017)

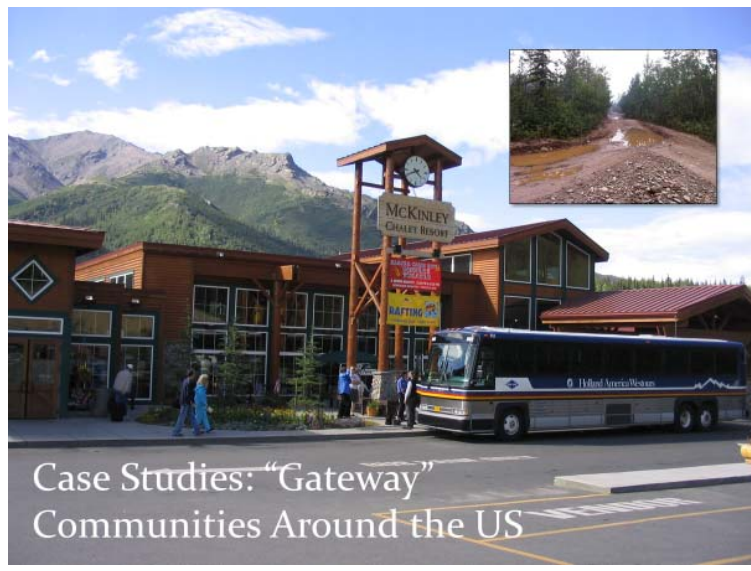


Borough Population: Schools

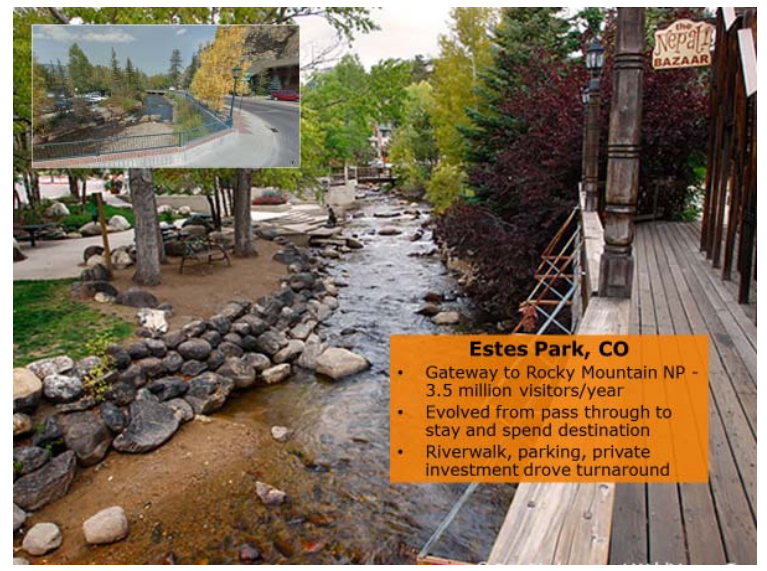
| School Year | TOTAL | Anderson | Cantwell | Tri-Valley | PEAK |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| 2006-2007 | 564 | 53 | 19 | 171 | 321 |
| 2007-2008 | 591 | 57 | 26 | 165 | 343 |
| 2008-2009 | 424 | 43 | 34 | 160 | 187 |
| 2009-2010 | 463 | 32 | 35 | 169 | 227 |
| 2010-2011 | 751 | 39 | 27 | 179 | 506 |
| 2011-2012 | 743 | 32 | 22 | 180 | 509 |
| 2012-2013 | 896 | 21 | 22 | 190 | 663 |
| 2013-2014 | 875 | 16 | 19 | 178 | 662 |
| 2014-2015 | 896 | 19 | 16 | 174 | 687 |
| 2015-2016 | 878 | 32 | 14 | 163 | 669 |
| 2016-2017 | 879 | 31 | 17 | 167 | 664 |
| Avg. Annual Change | 5.1% | -3.8% | -1.0% | -0.2% | 9.7% |

Case Studies: "Gateway" Communities

Other communities across the U.S. have responded to the unique challenges and opportunities of being next to or the best access point to major recreational areas, including National Parks. Below are some examples of the different directions communities can pursue, including one local example (Talkeetna).



Case Studies: "Gateway" Communities Around the US



Estes Park, CO

- Gateway to Rocky Mountain NP - 3.5 million visitors/year
- Evolved from pass through to stay and spend destination
- Riverwalk, parking, private investment drove turnaround



Springdale Utah
Gateway to Zion NP (from 2.6 to 4.5 million in 10 ys)
Shuttle system replaced traffic jams; created convenient mix of city pleasures, natural wonders

"Top 10 Things to Do In Springdale"



- 6. Downtown Springdale
- 4. Bike Gooseberry Mesa
- 1. Zion Nat'l Park ("duh")



Bend Oregon
Natural assets, artfully developed to drive a remarkable economic revival: bike trails, brewpubs, fishing, skiing, second homes...

Recreation economy blossomed through partnerships between City, USFS, business community, local non profit user groups, and State (planning/marketing)



Denali Borough Plan | March 21, 2011



Pigeon Forge, TN
Gateway to Great Smoky N.P. (11 million annual visitors)

The archetype of unregulated land use, unregulated gateway community commercial activity

Case Studies: Local Plans

Talkeetna | Special Use District

- Starting Point: mix of fear of planning, and fear of rapidly growing tourism.
- "Community/tourism plan" set goals and strategies for supporting growth *and* maintaining community character.
- Widely shared agreement re the C/T Plan set the stage for the first ever zoning code in Talkeetna ("SpUD").
- Zoning critics ultimately decided controlling growth was in their economic interest, and supported code regulations because they largely codified established but informal community building practices.
- Community now considering upgraded SpUD

