

Long Range

Municipal

Planning

4-14-94

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Copies of minutes listed below were originally included in this file. The minutes are available on the legislative computer database. In order to save space copies of minutes have not been left in the files.

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THE CITY OF WHITTIER

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THE CITY OF WHITTIER
Redevelopment and Urban Design Plan
March 1994

I--Purpose of the Project

A. Answer two questions:

1. How should the City and State respond to expected impact from visitation as a result of new Whittier access?
2. Who benefits from the visitation and by how much?

B. Market Based Examination

1. Analysis of anticipated visitation tells the City who will come and how often they will return.
2. This demand analysis suggests likely scenarios for public and private investment to provide facilities to meet the demand.

C. Key Factors Affecting the Demand for Whittier Visitation

1. Whether new access is constructed.
2. Which alternative is selected.
3. Cost of access, especially whether there is a toll if a road is constructed.
4. The attractiveness of Whittier as a destination and its ability to provide amenities to meet the demand.

II--Funding of the Project; Consultants Involved

A. Funding of the Project

1. Alaska Railroad Corporation
2. Alaska Dept. of Transportation and Public Facilities
3. Alaska Dept. of Commerce and Economic Development
4. City of Whittier

B. Consultants Working on the Project

1. International Tourism and Resort Advisors (INTRA)
2. Peratrovich, Nottingham and Drage (PN&D)

3. Gary Peterson Associates, Inc.
4. Kenneth Morton Associates
5. David L. Martin, C.P.A.

III--Projected Visitation to Whittier with New Access

A. Information from Northern Economics Study for EIS

1. Current visitation over ARRC Shuttle system is about 200,000 persons per year.
2. If no new access is provided, and no new visitor facilities are constructed in the town, visitation and city population will grow only very gradually.
3. If improved rail shuttle access is provided, visitation will grow by 100,000 in the first year, and increase steadily to 539,000 in 2015. Whittier population will grow from 300 in 1997 to 440 in 2015.
4. If a new road is constructed, visitation will grow rapidly, with 900,000 visitors after the road opens, and over 1.4 million visitors by 2015. Whittier population will increase from 360 in 1997 to 1,120 in 2015.

B. Economic Opportunity from Visitation.

1. Assuming no toll, summer visitation will be larger than the number of visitors to Portage Glacier, with over 4,000 visitor parties on peak weekends.
2. A \$15 toll reduces summer visitation by one-third, as the bulk of visitors are day sightseers.
3. Annual no-toll visitation generates over \$29 million in annual visitor expenditures on lodging, transportation, tours, food and beverages, and related tourism expenses.
4. In ten years, Whittier employment will exceed 200 employees on average, with 400 employees in the summer with an annual payroll of nearly \$4 million.

IV--Achieving Projected Visitation and Economic Opportunity

A. City of Whittier Redevelopment Strategy

1. The City must adopt the suggested urban design concept plan and map as a part of its zoning and

comprehensive plan in support of a tourism-based marine-oriented lifestyle.

2. City residents must achieve consensus and commit their time and resources to the redevelopment concept.
3. The City must establish long term partnerships to implement the plan and keep the focus on redevelopment separate from daily City functions.

B. Involvement of Other Entities and Agencies

1. The City and ARRC must enter a development contract for the Core Area of Whittier. The ARRC owns or leases 50% of this area and 70% of the waterfront. Although much of this land is already committed to the proposed uses, another \$1.75 million is required to modify ARRC operations and commence new construction in this area.
2. The City must assure State support for the Whittier Access Project, to include road infrastructure within the core area. DOT/PF should minimize any toll required.
3. The Marine Highway System should construct a new ferry dock at an adjacent location as it continues to upgrade ferry operations in Prince William Sound.
4. The City must enlist support of other governmental agencies and private parties to fund dock and harbor developments to facilitate expanded day cruise and recreational boating opportunities, as well as the return of the cruise ship industry.

V--Redevelopment Concept Required to Meet Expected Visitation

A. Phase I of Redevelopment, Required Prior to New Access

1. Move Ferry Terminal to the east end of the Railroad dock (\$4.5 million).
2. Realignment and paving of major road access and support roads (\$3.1 million).
3. Expand small boat harbor and day cruise operations inland from current harbor (\$6.7 million).
4. Rehabilitate Railroad Dock and Wharf Building to accommodate cruise ships, day and ferry operations and

related commercial enterprises (\$3.3 million).

5. Provide paved and unpaved parking to support road access and peak visitation (\$1.6 million).

6. Establish boat launch ramps and dry storage for small craft and transient moorage (\$3.8 million public expenditure and \$3.7 million private investment).

7. Construct waste water treatment facility and related utilities (\$1.6 million).

8. Private investment in retail and food & beverage services (\$4.8 million).

9. Summary: \$25.0 million public investment and \$8.5 million private investment.

B. Phase II of Redevelopment, after opening of new access

1. Further retail, commercial and food & beverage services (\$2.9 million).

2. Harbor and visitor services (\$3.0 million).

3. RV and campground facilities (\$1.1 million).

4. Summary: \$ 8.5 million private investment without significant further public investment.

C. Phase III of Redevelopment, complementing harbor development with inland projects, after Phase II.

1. Expanded waste water services (\$1.3 million).

2. Commercial and retail construction (\$8.5 million).

3. Professional services (\$6.0 million).

4. Apartments and town homes (\$36.5 million).

5. Government & public recreation (\$1.5 million).

6. Single family construction (\$7.0-\$11.0 million).

7. Summary: \$1.8 million additional government and \$60.0 million or more additional private investment.

D. In conclusion, once this concept is fully implemented in ten years, about \$28.0 million of government funds invested in Whittier results in a projected \$80.0 million in private investment in the three phases of development.