PLANNING
FOR INCREASED TOURISM

ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE
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Port of Juneau sees cruise industry rebound in 2022

With Canada dropping its vaccination requirement, the cruise industry is gearing up for a big season. By Scott McIlvaine
Updated: October 1, 2022
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There’s lots of excitement in Juneau this year about the return of cruise ships. At the top of the list is the return of the ships from Canada, this came with the news that the Canadian Border is now open to cruise ships. This is a big win for the tourism industry in British Columbia.

“The news from Canada is a game-changer,” says Brian White, president of the Cruise Lines International Association. “Not only do we expect specific ports to be open again, but we also expect this to lead to a strong recovery in the tourism industry.”

One of the main concerns for the tourism industry is the number of workers needed to manage the influx of cruise ships. Blanchard is working hard to find enough workers to help manage the ships.

City, cruise lines agree on goals to manage tourism impacts

People walk the docks as the sun sets in downtown Juneau on Monday night. The City and Borough of Juneau recently signed a memorandum of agreement with member companies of Cruise Lines International Association to come to an agreement on a number of tourism management issues in Juneau. (Carlise Larson/Juneau Empire)

City, cruise lines agree on goals to manage tourism impacts

The list includes communication on scheduling, less landfill waste and a focus on local businesses.

Tourists are returning to Alaska this summer. Will there be enough workers to manage them?

By Ambra DeMott
Updated: April 12, 2022
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An old-time car waits for a tourist to receive their first visit to Alaska. A joint venture is underway to ensure there are enough workers for the tourism industry.

Cruise lines are aiming to bring tourists back to Alaska, but they need to make sure there are enough workers to manage the ships.

Alaska Trail Guides Bike Tours co-owners Elly Masser, left, and Frankie Walsh have a fleet of new bikes that clients will ride on their Coastal Ocean Bike Tours. Photographed at Kincaid Park on Sunday, April 10, 2022. (Bill Roth / ADN)

Facing a potentially record-breaking tourism season, hospitality companies in Alaska say they’re struggling to find enough workers, even as they try to lure them in with higher pay and bonuses.
AGENDA

› Tourism growth in Alaska
  / Pre- and post-COVID

› Community Impacts
  / Benefit or detriment?

› Project examples
  / Problems faced and solutions developed

› How can my community prepare?
Cruise passenger volume experienced its biggest year-over-year increase of the last decade.

- McDowell Group, Alaska Visitor Volume, Winter 2018-19 and Summer 2019
"There is pent-up demand, people have been at home saving money, and Alaska checks off what people are looking for: wide open spaces, beautiful scenery and broad horizons.

- Early numbers show Anchorage has had a strong 2022 tourism season, Anchorage Daily News, 9/14/2022

Alaska’s cruise tourism industry has recovered, but not fully, from COVID-19

September 15, 2022 by James Brooks, Alaska Beacon

Cruise ships line the Juneau waterfront on Wednesday, June 8, 2022. (Photo by James Brooks/Alaska Beacon)

Southeast Alaska, home to the core of Alaska’s tourism industry, has largely recovered from the economic disaster caused by COVID-19, but the region still has fewer jobs than it did before the start of the pandemic.
Community Impacts

Community Issues:
/ Housing
/ Public facilities
/ Support services (e.g., emergency response)

“We just don’t have the infrastructure right now,” she said. “We don’t have the facilities. I don’t think we even have the slightest idea of what we would do if there was an emergency and we had 500 to 2,000 extra people on the island. There’s a lot that needs to be talked about and put in place before we would even consider going out for bids or soliciting cruise ships.”

– Executive Director Carlin Enlow of the Unalaska/Port of Dutch Harbor Convention and Visitors Bureau, KTOO, 3/20/2019
PROJECT EXAMPLE: SKAGWAY

- Port Master Plan
  - CARES Act funding
  - Separation of conflicting uses
  - Inter-modal connections
  - Partnership with AMHS
PROJECT EXAMPLE: KODIAK

- Waterfront Master Plan
  - Address aging infrastructure
  - Accommodate tourism growth
  - Support fishing industry
  - Growing USCG presence
**PROJECT EXAMPLE: COOPER LANDING**

- Unit 395 Master Plan
  - Affordable housing shortage
  - Outdoor recreation opportunities
  - Year-round destination
HOW CAN MY COMMUNITY PREPARE?

- Plans & Policies
  - CEDS
  - Comprehensive Plan
  - Short-term housing

- Infrastructure
  - Water & sewer
  - Roads & trails
  - Waterfront
  - Energy

- Partnerships
  - Public-private
  - Inter-governmental
  - Tribal
QUESTIONS?

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