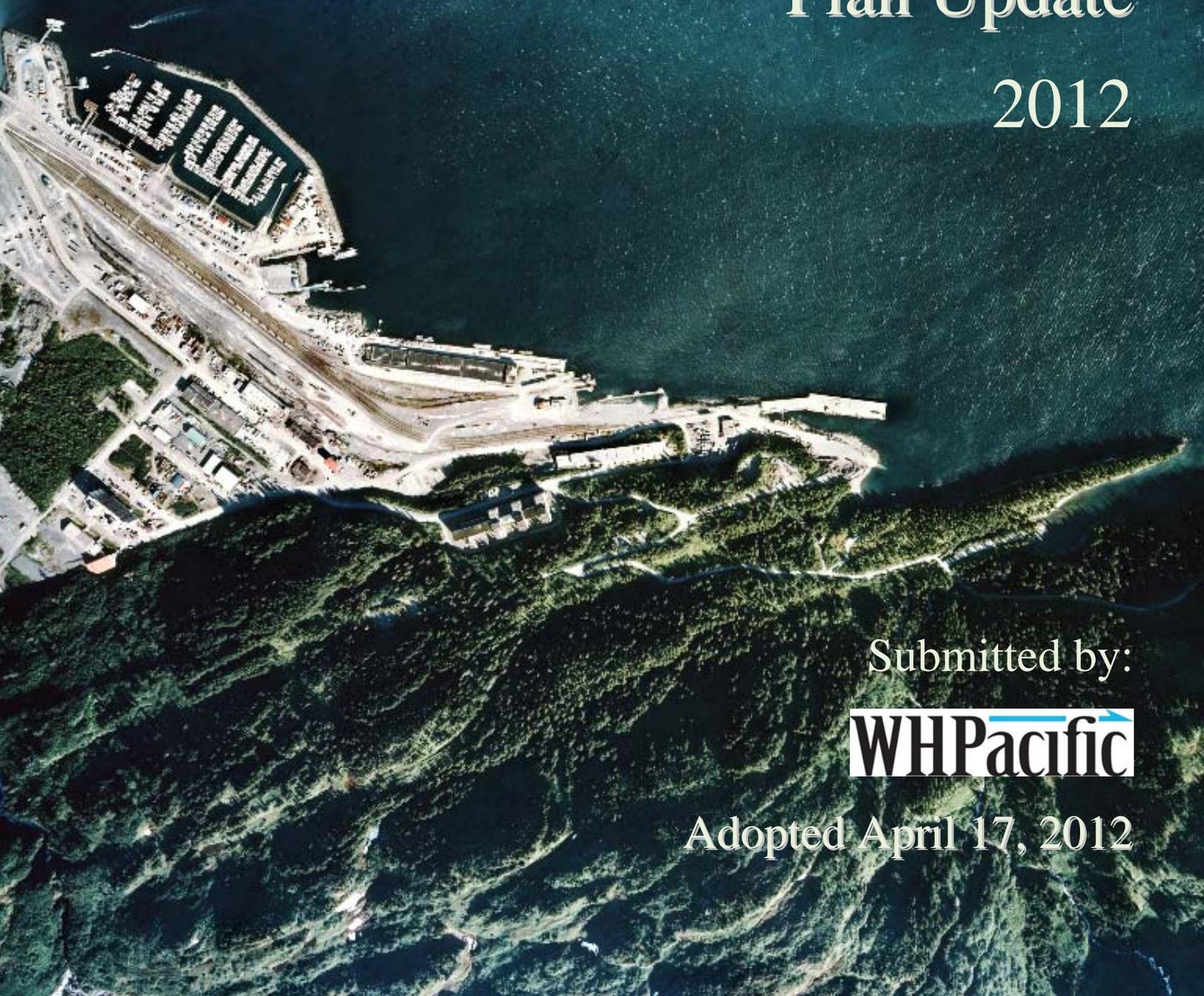




City of Whittier

Whittier Comprehensive Plan Update

2012



Submitted by:

WHPacific

Adopted April 17, 2012

Whittier

Comprehensive Plan Update 2012

Submitted to:

City of Whittier

Lester Lunceford, Mayor

Robert Prunella, City Manager

And the

Whittier Planning and Zoning Commission

Charlene Arneson, Chair

Accepted by City Council Resolution

On April 17, 2012

Submitted by:

WHPacific



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Acronyms

AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic
ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
AMHS	Alaska Marine Highway System
ARMS	Alaska Railroad Marine Services
ARRC	Alaska Railroad Corporation
AS	Alaska Statute
BTI	Begich Towers, Incorporated
CAC	Chugach Alaska Corporation
CIRI	Cook Inlet Region, Incorporated
CMP	Coastal Management Plan
CSD	Chugach School District
CY	Calendar Year
DCED	Department of Community and Economic Development
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ETT	Emergency Trauma Technician
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
GPS	Global Positioning System
GSA	General Services Administration
HB	House Bill
INTRA	International Tourism and Resort Advisors
kV	kilovolt
kW	kilowatt
MARSEC	Maritime Security
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NRCS	(USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service
PAPI	Precision Approach Path Indicator
POL	Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants
PUD	Planned Unit Development
PWS	Prince William Sound
REAA	Rural Education Attendance Area
RIC	Rural Information Center
ROD	Record of Decision
RV	Recreational Vehicle
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
USCG	United States Coast Guard
VASI	Visual Approach Slope Indicator
WAMS	Whittier Area Maritime Security

Chapter One: Introduction

Purpose of the plan

The previous Whittier Comprehensive Master Plan was completed in 2005. Since then, many changes have taken place in Whittier altering the community's infrastructure, economy and plans for the future. Some of the significant changes include:

- The hours of access through the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel have been extended, allowing greater access to the community.
- Plans that affect the Whittier community and vicinity were developed by the Railroad and Forest Service.
- The Watershed Council has been working to plan for all of Whittier's watersheds.
- Phases I and II of Shotgun Cove Road design are completed. Construction of the first segment of Phase I began in 2006.
- Demand for moorage in Whittier's small boat harbor increased.
- Alaska Marine Highway ferry service connects Whittier to Cordova and Valdez and other Prince William Sound communities on the Southcentral Alaska Route; while the Cross-Gulf Route connects Whittier and southcentral communities to Southeast Alaska.
- The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities may close the Whittier Airport. A new airport may be built at Emerald Cove.
- Improvements were made to cruise ship facilities and the railroad connection to Anchorage. Major cruise ships continue to dock in Whittier.
- New transmodal Alaska Marine Line (AML) Dock off-loading facilities were built.
- A marine park was developed at Smitty's Cove and at Shakespeare Creek.
- The first pre-formed artificial reef in Alaska was established in 2006, as a restoration tool for coastal waters.
- Land was designated at Shakespeare Creek to accommodate a viewing platform, fish spawning and a fishing lagoon.
- Several other infrastructure projects are in various stages of design and construction, or have been completed. These include expanded campground facilities, a marina, a large vessel dock, and additional parking.
- Planned Unit Development (PUD) is planned at the head of the bay.



Cruise Terminal and the Inn at Whittier

Because of these extensive changes, the City of Whittier recognized the need for a complete Comprehensive Plan Update to provide direction for the community's future development. Through this planning effort, the various entities within the community, including the residents, the City government, Chugach Alaska Corporation, locally active businesses and interested agencies, came together to establish common goals and strategies for their achievement

The purpose of this plan is to update the 2005 plan by inventorying current conditions, analyzing issues and

making recommendations to help Whittier achieve its long-term (20-year) goals and policies. Whittier's elected and appointed officials, public agencies, and businesses can use the data in this document to set policy and to analyze areas of investment potential. It can also be used in support of requests for funding.

The 2012 Whittier Comprehensive Plan Update was funded through the City's general fund. According to the Whittier Municipal Code, the Comprehensive Plan must be reviewed every two years and be updated every 5 years.

Contents of the plan

Chapter One presents an overview of the planning process and an introduction to Whittier's location.

Chapter Two gives background information about Whittier's location and residents.

Chapter Three is an inventory of Whittier's infrastructure including housing, facilities, administration and services.

Chapter Four gives information about transportation in and around Whittier.

Chapter Five discusses Whittier's current economy and future opportunities for development.

Chapter Six contains maps and information about Whittier's current and future land ownership and use.

Chapter Seven presents a review of security measures affecting Whittier.

Chapter Eight summarizes other plans and recommendations for the area.

Chapter Nine presents the goals, policies and actions adopted through this planning process.

Public involvement

The Whittier Planning and Zoning Commission oversaw the work on the Comprehensive Plan Update. They regularly reviewed chapters and met several times in work sessions and regularly scheduled meetings to assist with the planning process.

To gain insight into community needs and to create a future vision for Whittier, a public meeting was held on January 28, 2012. The meeting was advertised in the Turnagain Times; flyers were posted at the school, in Begich Towers, Whittier Manor, and throughout the community. Before the meeting, a newsletter was developed and mailed to all Whittier residents and to

other interested parties advertising the meetings and giving an overview of the planning process.



On February 3, 2004, 127 people gathered to talk about their vision for Whittier's future.

The plan was adopted by City Council resolution on April 17, 2012.

Vision statement

The vision statement developed for the 2005 Comprehensive Plan was reviewed at the January 2012 meeting and reaffirmed. It reads:

"We are a distinctive community with strong ties to our natural setting. Uniquely positioned as a gateway to the wonders of Prince William Sound and strategically located for multi-modal transportation of people and cargo, our location drives our economy and provides outstanding recreational opportunities for our residents and visitors.

"Our vision for Whittier includes preserving our unspoiled environment, while improving amenities for all those who live and visit here. We see a Whittier with full-time access and ample, first-rate facilities to attract visitors and improve the quality of life for residents of all ages. We see a beautiful, clean Whittier with a self-sufficient economy and opportunity for local ownership of land, homes and businesses."

Chapter Two: Background information

Whittier's natural setting

Location

Whittier is approximately 47 air miles, 62 miles by road or rail, southeast of Anchorage. The City of Whittier is located near the head of Passage Canal, a fjord of Prince William Sound. The nearest major communities to Whittier are Anchorage, 62 miles; Valdez, 97 miles to the northeast; Cordova, 110 miles east; and Seward, 125 miles to the southwest. Whittier is a year-round, ice-free port and is a focal point for marine activity and freight transfer from sea-train barges servicing Southcentral Alaska. See Figure 1.

The Whittier town site lies on a fan-shaped delta on the south shore of Passage Canal. The delta, approximately a mile square, is bordered by Whittier Creek on the west and by a mountain ridge on the east. At the west end of Passage Canal is a 1.5 square mile delta, commonly known as "West Camp" or "Head of Passage Canal". This delta is formed by creeks flowing from Portage Pass, Shakespeare Glacier and Learnard Glacier. These two deltas comprise the land area on which the Whittier community infrastructure is presently located.

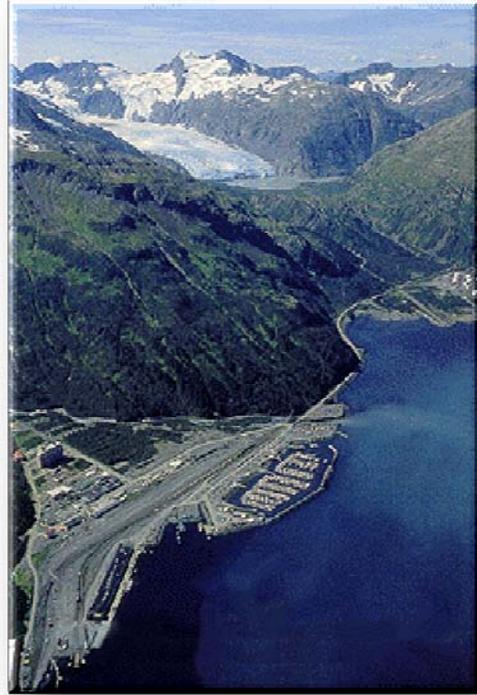
The city limits encompass a total of 17 square miles, including both deltas, most of Passage Canal, and undeveloped lands eastward to Shotgun Cove. Annexation of the Shotgun Cove area on April 6, 1973, enlarged the city limits by 8 square miles. See Figure 2.

Most communities have evolved through building and land improvement projects by individuals, private businesses or public agencies. In Whittier's case, much of the community infrastructure is the result of various government projects, many of which were built by the U.S. Army during World War II and in the following years.

Geology

The Whittier area's natural subsurface composition consists primarily of slate and greywacke, (a tight, non-porous, dark colored sandstone containing angular grains and fragments of other rocks) and is probably of Cretaceous age. The subsurface is locally overlain by unconsolidated Quaternary deposits consisting of

glacial moraine, reworked outwash, stream gravel and artificial fill in the developed area.



Aerial view of Whittier Delta (left) and Head of Passage Canal Delta (right)

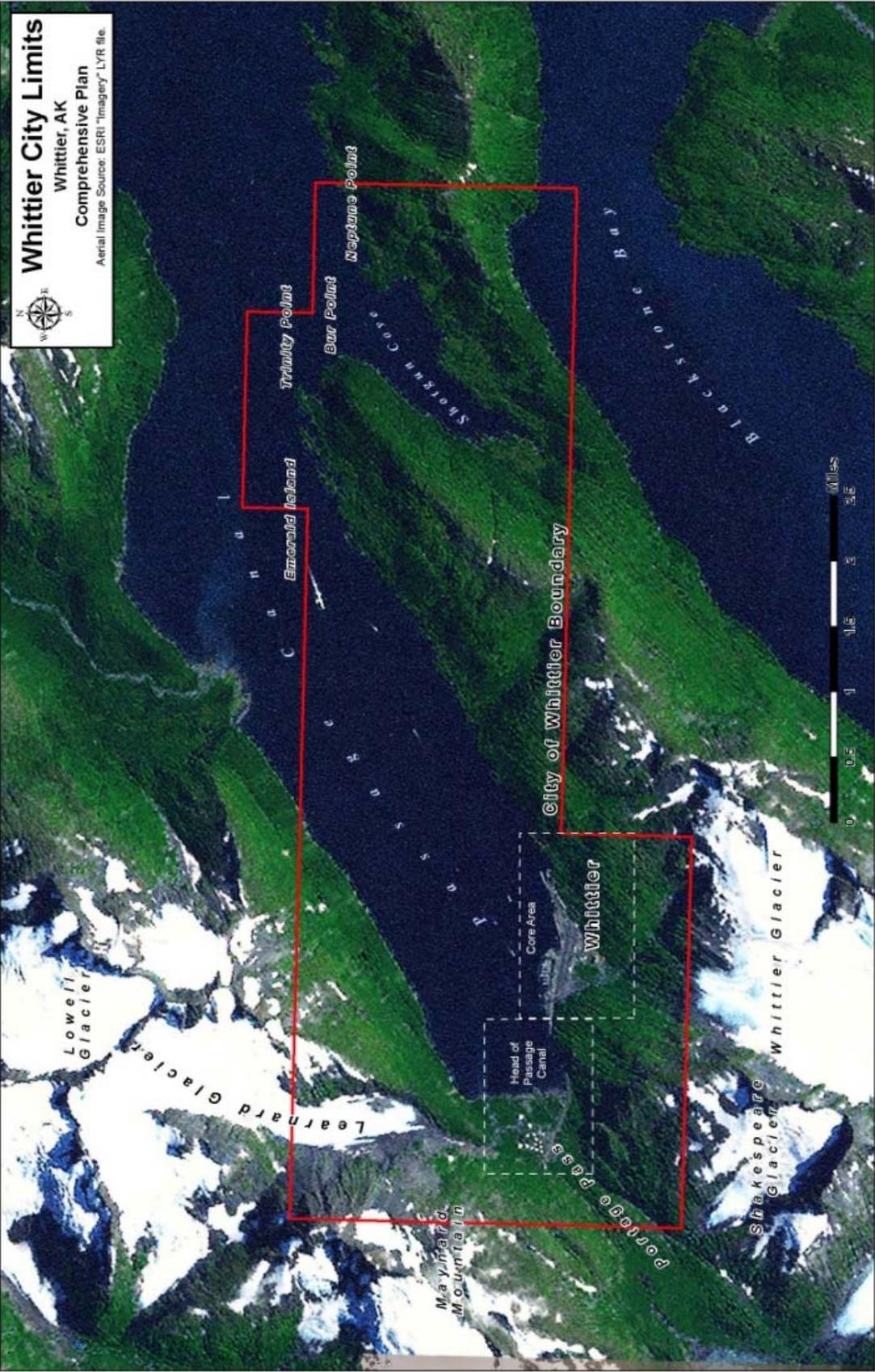
Both the Whittier and the Head of Passage Canal Deltas are formed of unconsolidated deposits of outwash and stream gravel. Composition of the Whittier Delta is largely coarse sub-angular to sub-round gravel in a matrix of coarse sand. The maximum gravel depth is unknown, but is at least 44 feet deep under Begich Towers in the center of town.

The sediments at the Head of Passage Canal are similar to those of the Whittier Delta. However, the outwash and stream deposits in the northern part of the delta are overlain by a moraine from the Learnard Glacier. The moraine that overlays the Head of Passage Canal Delta deposit consists largely of jumbled heaps and ridges of coarse angular blocks of slate and greywacke of unknown depth. Locally, patches of sand and gravel are interspersed with the coarse blocks.



 **Location Map**
Whittier, AK
Comprehensive Plan
Aerial Image Source: ESRI "Imagery" LYR file.







Marina breakwater in Whittier

Southcentral Alaska, in general, is seismically active. According to the University of Alaska Fairbanks Seismology Department, approximately 11 percent of the world's annual earthquakes and 52 percent of all earthquakes in the United States originate in Alaska, placing the Cook Inlet region in seismic risk zone 4. This is the highest risk zone, defined as an area where major structural damage will occur. In 1964, the second strongest earthquake recorded to date shook Southcentral Alaska at a Richter Scale magnitude of 9.2. The epicenter was located in Unakwik Inlet in Prince William Sound, less than 40 miles northeast of Whittier.

Topography

With the exception of the Whittier and Head of Passage Canal Deltas, the topography of the area generally rises abruptly from the shoreline at a grade of 30 to 60 percent to mountain altitudes ranging from 3,500 to 4,500 feet. Protrusions of bedrock and rock faces are numerous throughout the area.

The Whittier Delta gradually increases in slope. The slope of the land around the Begich Towers, at the southern end of this delta, is from 3 to 5 percent. The average slope in the Head of Passage Canal Delta is less than 3 percent. The only other lands within the city limits that have relatively moderate slopes are near the coastline in the Shotgun Cove area, particularly around Emerald Bay and at the head of Shotgun Cove. The area's topography has and will continue to influence and limit the amount and type of growth that can occur in Whittier.

Marine environment

Passage Canal is one of the most westerly of several long fjords comprising Prince William Sound. In the Whittier area, the canal averages about a mile and a half in width and is over 600 feet deep. The tidal conditions in Passage Canal are similar to those of other recorded areas in Prince William Sound. The water depth increases very rapidly from the shoreline except in the delta areas. Waves in the middle of Passage Canal can range from 4 to 6 feet in windy weather. The diurnal (daily) tide range is 12.1 feet. The maximum elevations of low and high water occur during January and July with tides ranging from approximately -3.7 feet to +15.0 feet. The maximum tidal current in the canal opposite Whittier Harbor is about 2 knots.

Despite the presence of several glaciers in the surrounding valleys, ice does not form in Passage Canal during the winter. Thin layers of ice do form on structures and facilities exposed to ocean spray. Although the port is ice-free, it is subject to strong winds, fog and heavy precipitation. Port approaches can be subject to seas reaching four to six feet during poor weather.

Climate

Whittier's geographical setting, on a relatively narrow fjord, surrounded by snow-capped mountains and glaciers, is the basis for its climate involving wind and weather common to both the coastal mountains and open coast.

High winds are common in Whittier due to the city's proximity to Portage Pass. The pass acts as a natural venturi that accelerates winds, much like pinching off a garden hose accelerates water.

Generally, winds in Whittier blow from Portage Pass into Passage Canal (WSW) or the opposite direction (ENE). South winds, coming from Whittier Glacier can be strong and gusty, especially in winter and early spring. At least five different wind vectors have been identified in the Whittier area. All have different velocities and duration factors relative to seasonal changes and the geography of Passage Canal. The two strongest winds blow easterly and westerly respectively, along the axis of the Canal.

Whittier residents report that the widening of the road and subsequent demolition of approximately 500 feet of the mountainside near Whittier Creek produced changes in wind velocity and direction that have

adversely affected the northeast side of town, including the Whittier Small Boat Harbor.

The wind vector with the greatest impact on the Whittier Delta and developed areas is a south wind blowing off the Whittier Glacier. Its velocity typically ranges from 30 to 50+ miles per hour and can blow for long periods. This wind can create snowdrifts that cover downtown buildings, cars, and streets. On one occasion, the wind was strong enough to topple an open railroad boxcar. Outdoor activity during these periods is severely limited.

An observation team recorded the following wind speeds: periods of calm, 51.5 percent of the time; light winds, less than 15 miles per hour, 27.2 percent; and winds 15 to 45 miles per hour, 21.3 percent. The prevailing winds for the period are recorded as being lengthwise of Shotgun Cove, WSW 24.1 percent and ENE 17.6 percent of the time. In the opinion of local residents who frequent the area, Shotgun Cove is often subject to high winds over the pass from Blackstone Bay.

Winter temperatures generally range from 17 to 28 degrees Fahrenheit; summer temperatures average 49 to 63 degrees Fahrenheit. As shown in Table 1 total average annual precipitation is approximately 198 inches, including about 250 inches of snow.

Snow accumulation can exceed four feet on the ground during February or March. With drifting, snow depth can be much higher. The maritime climate can mean quick changes from snow to rain and back again. Snow removal, snow load problems and severe icing

are concerns during the winter months. Snow accumulations can damage buildings and endanger small craft moored at the harbor.



The Buckner Building blanketed in winter snows

The high snowfall, high winds, and steep mountain slopes result in frequent avalanches in the area. Avalanches near the railroad tunnel portals have resulted in derailed trains, tunnel closure, damaged and destroyed facilities, buried equipment, and trapped people. Part of the south side of Passage Canal is exposed to surge waves generated by major avalanches originating from avalanche paths along the north shore of Passage Canal.

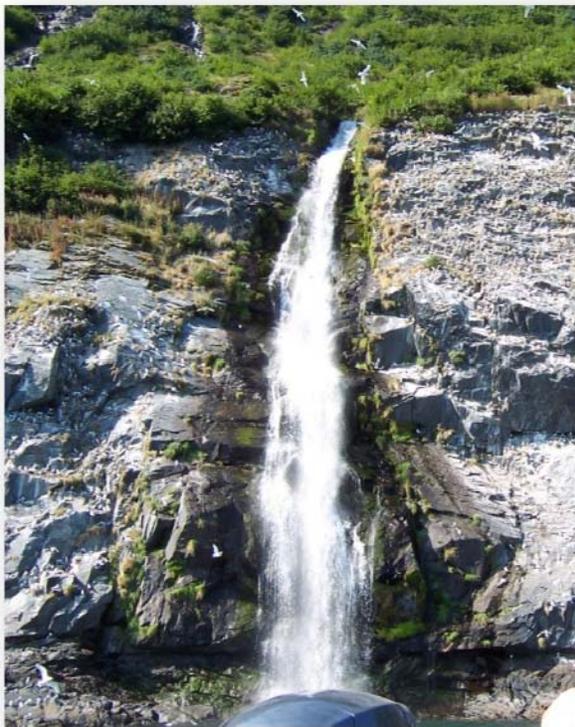
Table 1: Average temperatures and precipitation – period of record: 10/02/1950 to 12/31/2010

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Average Max. Temperature (degrees F)	31.1	32.6	35.4	43.2	51.4	59.7	62.4	60.9	53.4	42.8	35.3	32.7	45.1
Average Min. Temperature (degrees F)	22.9	24.3	25.8	32.6	39.4	46.6	50.8	49.7	44.0	34.5	27.0	24.5	35.2
Average Total Precipitation (inches)	18.32	15.63	13.86	15.37	14.94	9.83	10.92	14.73	20.68	19.92	19.02	23.45	196.67
Average Total Snowfall (inches)	49.2	48.6	47.0	21.7	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	6.5	26.7	56.8	258.1
Average Snow Depth (inches)	33	43	48	36	8	0	0	0	0	0	5	19	16

Source: Western Regional Climate Center

Flora and soils

Ground cover in the area consists of a thin layer of topsoil over bedrock, covered with lichens and grasses. Wild flowers and high-bush blueberries are common in certain areas. The predominant tree cover in the area is 80 percent Sitka Spruce and some Western Hemlock. Both species typically grow to 14 inches or more in diameter and heights to 55 feet in this part of Prince William Sound. Growth rates in the fjords of Prince William Sound are generally very slow. Many trees in these areas take 50 years to reach a significant size. Regeneration is a slow and haphazard process on the steep slopes in the area. Scrub alder, blueberry and salmonberry bushes grow in the delta areas, particularly where land has been cleared. Whittier is noted for the abundance and size of its berry crop, which attracts an increasing number of berry pickers each year.



Kittiwake rookery on the north side of Passage Canal across from Whittier

Fish and game

Prince William Sound, including waters adjacent to Whittier, has a variety of fish and other forms of marine life. The most common fish include rockfish, flounder, halibut and four of the five species of Pacific

salmon. Crab, shrimp and clams are also native to the area. Whales, porpoises, seals, sea otters and sea lions also can be seen in Passage Canal during certain periods of the year. Black bears, occasional wolves, coyotes and mountain goats are the most predominant large land animals. Moose are occasionally seen near the tank farm, apparently entering over Portage Pass. Snowshoe hares, porcupines, beavers, river otters, mink, marmots, squirrels and weasels are common small mammals.

Migratory birds such as geese, ducks and cranes use Portage Pass in crossing the Coast Range between Prince William Sound and Western Alaska. Some waterfowl, however, remain in the Whittier area year-round. A large rookery on the north side of Passage Canal contains numerous birds including gulls and kittiwakes. The kittiwake rookery has about 6,000 breeding Blacklegged Kittiwakes, in addition to Glaucous-winged Gulls and Pigeon Guillemots. This is the largest kittiwake colony in the Sound. This rookery is very accessible and often visited by tourist ships and recreational boaters. The colony is in fact the most visited seabird colony in Alaska. Bald eagles and ptarmigan are common to the area. Rufous hummingbirds, once thought not to travel as far north as Whittier, are now common summer visitors.

The people of Whittier

Population

Historic population

Whittier has historically experienced rapid population rises and declines, with most of these reflecting the extent of military involvement. The army first envisioned and built the community in the early 1940s. Since Passage Canal never freezes, Whittier was the closest fail-safe port to Anchorage. The usually overcast skies formed by trapped clouds at the junction of the Chugach and Kenai Ranges made Whittier a difficult target for enemy bombers. The army moved troops and supplies through Whittier en route to the Aleutian Islands, the only location of combat on U.S. soil during World War II. The Army constructed deep-water port facilities, massive concrete warehouses, a tank farm fuel storage facility, two major complexes to house its troops and a small network of roads, streets and utility systems.

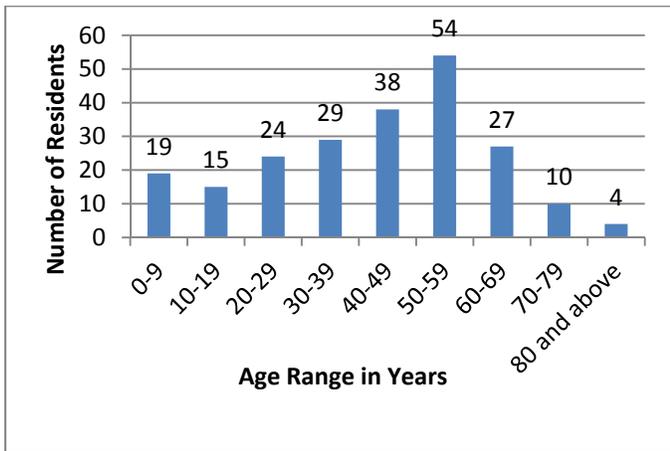
At the height of military activities in the late 1950s, there were over 1,300 people living in Whittier. After 17 years as an active port, Whittier was deactivated by

the military, “due to the steady decline in the amount of cargo, which has made the port uneconomical as an all-military port of entry.”¹ The final military transport ship left Whittier in October 1960. Private business suffered without their military clientele, and the population dropped to 65 by 1963.

Current population

The 2010 census reported 220 people living in the City of Whittier; a gain of 36 people since the 2000 census reported 184 residents. In 2010, the median age in Whittier was 48, nine years higher than at the 2000 Census. Exhibit 1 shows the age ranges at the time of the 2010 Census.

Exhibit 1: 2010 Age range of Whittier residents



As in many small Alaskan communities, the population of Whittier also varies dramatically according to the season. During the summer, a large number of recreational users and commercial fishermen seeking access to Prince William Sound come to Whittier. Many recreational visitors arrive on the weekend and spend only a limited amount of time in the city.

With the opening of the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel in the summer of 2000, the return of cruise ships in 2004 and expanded tunnel hours in recent years, Whittier experienced an influx of workers for fish processing, railroad, construction, recreational and other seasonal employment opportunities.



The Buckner Building, completed in 1953, was once the largest building in Alaska, and was called the "city under one roof."

Projected population

It is expected that Whittier’s population will continue to increase as businesses expand or come to the community in response to higher numbers of visitors. Assuming this population growth will occur in small increments each year, it would have minor impacts on the community. However, with development such as fast ferry service, potential projects at the Head of Passage Canal, residential and support facilities at Shotgun Cove, increased tourism, industrial development, and higher numbers of cruise ships making Whittier a destination, more rapid growth and increased impacts may occur.

If businesses in Whittier respond to the potential demand for services and activities generated by the improved road access, and development projects, substantial growth in employment will likely result. It is assumed that people would move to the community in response to the number of job opportunities available. The increased population would likely include more families with children. Adequate housing and other infrastructure will be a major constraint to substantial population growth. Seasonal workers in the tourism and fishing industries, and people with vacation or recreational homes in the community would increase the community’s population substantially in the summer.

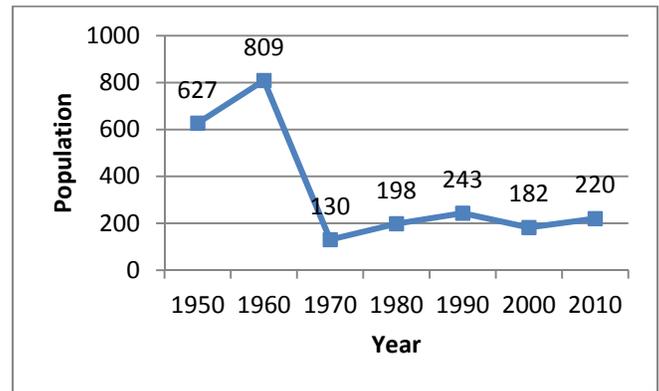
¹ Major General J.H. Michaels, quoted by Alan Taylor in *The Strangest Town in Alaska*, 2000, Todd Communications, Anchorage, AK.



Whittier Tunnel Walk, summer 2004

Exhibit 2 shows the population of Whittier over the past 60 years. Since the abrupt population decline in the '60s, the population has remained relatively stable with a slight growth trend. The planned development of 600 acres at Shotgun Cove has the potential to bring substantial growth to Whittier. The 2004 *Whittier Water System Master Plan* projected the city's permanent residents to number 1,345 by 2025, with summer visitors growing to more than 3,000.²

Exhibit 2: Whittier historic population



Blackstone Road

² City of Whittier Water System Master Plan, 35% Submittal, September 17, 2004. Prepared by CRW Engineering Group.

Chapter Three: Infrastructure

Whittier’s infrastructure is clustered in the two deltas at the Core Area and the Head of Passage Canal. The facilities at these locations are shown on Figure 3.

Housing

In 1973, Whittier residents voted to buy the 97-acre military facility, which included all of Whittier’s core area.³ Begich Towers, then called the Hodge Building, was a part of the final purchase, but the Buckner Building was not.

Unlike most communities where single or low density residential development is the most common form of housing, most Whittier residents live in one of two buildings; either the fourteen-story Begich Towers or the two-story Whittier Manor. Whittier residents can own or rent condominiums in either Begich Towers or Whittier Manor. Both facilities were originally built as military quarters more than a half-century ago. Table 2 and Table 3 show an inventory of housing in the community.

Table 2: Housing data

Total housing units	280
Occupied housing units	114
Family-occupied housing units	48
Non-family occupied units	66
Vacant housing units	166
Vacant housing due to seasonal use	104
Owner occupied housing units	43
Renter occupied housing units	71
Population living in households	220

Source: 2010 US Census

Table 3: Number of units at each location

Location	Total number of units
Begich Towers	197
Whittier Manor	80
Anchor Annex	6
Whittier Subdivision Phase II	5

Source: City of Whittier

Not all the units in Begich towers are used for housing, as some have been converted to businesses and service providers’ facilities.

Begich Towers

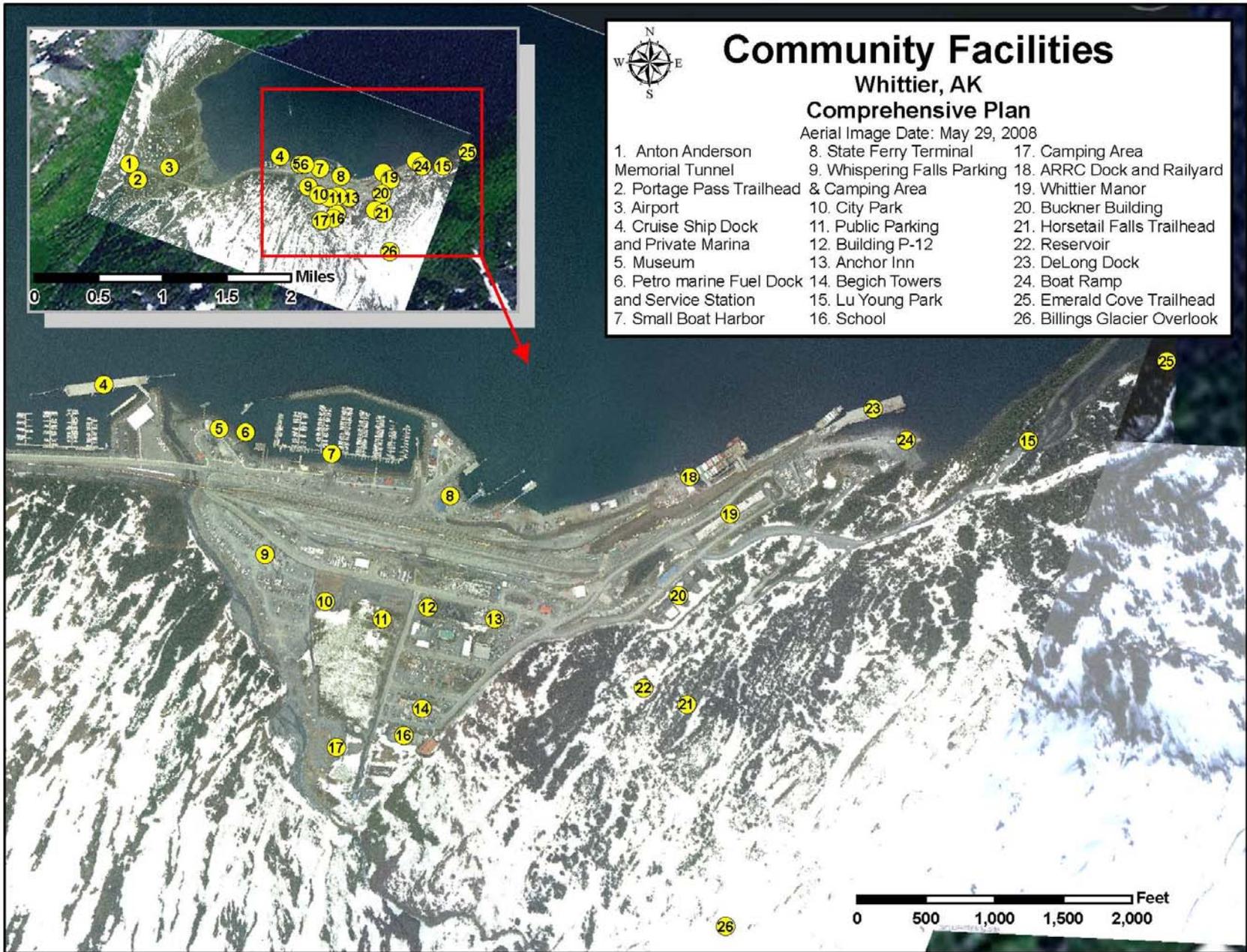
The Begich Towers manager estimates a 5 percent annual rate of change in ownership of housing units, and that 10 percent are rented out on a monthly basis. Whittier residents own 92 of the condominiums, while non-residents own 106 units.

In general, all occupied living units in Whittier are of fair to good quality. Begich Towers is a poured concrete structure and offers a greater diversity of unit size than the Whittier Manor. All units in Begich Towers and Whittier Manor have full living facilities. Most units are residential, though some, mainly on the first floor, are used for government, office or business space. All floors in Begich Towers are residential except the 1st, 14th and 15th floors. These three floors are zoned commercially.



Begich Towers

³ Taylor, Alan, *The Strangest Town in Alaska, The History of Whittier Alaska and the Portage Valley*, 2000.



Whittier Manor

The 80-unit Whittier Manor is a wood structure. Some of the units in each of the buildings have been remodeled. In some cases, separate units have been combined to give larger living areas.

Whittier Manor is located on land leased from ARRC. According to the railroad’s lease department, when the current lease expires in 2019, the land goes to the City for renewal. This means that the City will take over management for this property under the master lease agreement.



Whittier Manor Condominiums

Anchor Annex

The Anchor Annex, built in 1954, was renovated in 1986. It contains four efficiency and two one-bedroom apartments that are available for rent.



The Anchor Store, Inn, & Annex

Other residences

The few single-family homes located along Cove Road are of contemporary wood frame construction standards. They have no utilities and are usually only occupied in the summer.

The Buckner Building

The Buckner building, which was designed to be the principal living quarters for the Army, is unoccupied, run down, and all items of value have been stripped for salvage or destroyed by vandals. It has not been maintained since the 1964 earthquake, and though not structurally damaged by that event, has significantly deteriorated.

The now privately owned, 273,660 square foot Buckner Building, which cost the army \$6,000,000 to build, was the largest structure in Alaska for many years after its construction in 1950.



The derelict Buckner Building

Costs

Compared with many other communities in the state, the cost of owning, purchasing housing in Whittier is relatively inexpensive, ranging from \$25,000 to \$65,000 depending on size and view. The median rent paid in Whittier in 2009 was \$730.⁴

The estimated mean house/condo value in 2009 was \$61,356, up from \$39,000 in 2000. In the past, many purchasers of condominiums were people from outside the community who mostly used the units only on the weekends. Some of the new condominium owners appear to be buying the units for year-round residency. Many people choosing to live in Whittier are retired or semi-retired. Positive factors in choosing to move to

⁴ <http://www.city-data.com/city/Whittier-Alaska.html>. Accessed September 15, 2011,

Whittier include the convenience of living on the road system, the reasonable cost of purchasing a condominium and the low cost of living.

Purchase prices at the Begich Towers and Whittier Manor vary greatly depending upon the quality of renovations made to the unit and its location. Units in both buildings with a view of Passage Canal generally have higher resale values. Purchase prices for upscale, remodeled three-bedroom units in Begich Towers have run \$70,000 to \$75,000 in 2011. Basic one- to two-bedroom units, with original military construction have ranged in price from \$20,000 to \$30,000.⁵

Average assessed values have increased in recent years. Rental prices have also increased. Demand for rental units has increased, and it is difficult to find rental units during the summer months.

At both the Begich Towers and the Whittier Manor, condominium fees are assessed by the size of the unit. Condominium fees include all utilities, such as electricity, sewer, water and garbage.

About 25 vacant lots in the area of Whittier are presently zoned for single-family residential development. The topography of the land and high costs of providing access, sewer and water, however, discouraged homebuilding. Most of the lots are less than one-half acre. Ownership of these lots has changed very little in the last few years. In September 2011, only one lot was available for purchase.

Housing demand

Of the apartments and condominiums available for residential purposes, many are vacant in the winter. While Whittier’s housing occupancy rate is high in the summer, transient workers occupy most vacant housing. Inclement weather and lack of year-round employment are factors in the high winter vacancy rate.

While the number of existing housing units in Whittier is adequate to meet the current year-round and transient needs, there is demand for single-family homes in Whittier.

High-density housing development in the core area may be the most cost-effective means of providing

housing; however, it does not seem to meet the desires of most residents.



Residents at the February 2004 Visioning Workshop illustrated their desire for single-family homes

Potential homebuyers are expected to request single-family units. Currently, the lands most suitable for development are in Subdivision Phase II along Shotgun Cove Road. Most of the lots, which are privately owned, have not been developed because utilities are not yet available in this area. As utilities are expanded following the Shotgun Cove Road project, development of the Subdivision Phase II lots should become more feasible.

The City of Whittier, Chugach Alaska Corporation and Chugach National Forest are in the process of developing a plan for subdivisions at Emerald Cove and Shotgun Cove.

With the City’s receipt of management authority over 600 acres of State lands in Emerald Cove, located along the proposed Shotgun Cove Road and within Shotgun Cove, many residents are hopeful that additional single-family homes may become possible.

With additional housing at Emerald and Shotgun Coves, housing prices and property values throughout the Whittier area would likely increase to reflect the expense of development and increased demand. Property owners would see their equity increase, but property taxes would increase for homeowners, as well. Tenants would incur higher rent rates, making it difficult for lower income residents and those on fixed incomes to afford housing.

City-owned facilities

The City owns its present administrative office complex comprised of two single apartments on the first floor of Begich Towers. The City Council, and the Port and Harbor Commission meet in the City Council Chambers in Building P-12 which also houses the City

⁵ Personal conversation with Sam Gimelli, Keller Williams Realty, who handles realty in Whittier, September 29, 2011.

Shop. The Planning and Zoning Commission meets in the Homeowners Lounge on the fifteenth floor of BTI. Public Safety in Whittier is shared by several city organizations: police department, volunteer fire department, search and rescue/dive team and volunteer emergency medical services (EMS).

The Police Department is located in suite 104 of Begich Towers. Fire and EMS are housed in Building P-11.

City administration

The City of Whittier was incorporated in 1969 as a fourth-class city. The 1972 revision of the State Municipal Code (Title 29) reclassified fourth-class cities as second-class cities. Because Whittier remains below the 400-resident threshold for first-class city status, it remains a second-class city. The City of Whittier maintains a website at www.whittieralaska.gov with information about the City's departments, municipal code, and ongoing projects.

Whittier has a City Manager form of government. The Manager is responsible for administering the City's day-to-day operations and carrying out the policy directions of the City Council, including the assurance to all taxpayers and residents that government is effective and responsive to their needs. Central staff support to the Manager is provided by City Clerk, Executive Assistant and the Commissions Clerk. The Director of Public Safety oversees the Fire Department and EMS, while the Police Chief, Public Works Director and Harbormaster operate their respective departments. The City also retains the services of an attorney to assist with legal concerns.

Whittier is using many of the powers available to a second-class city. The City taxes real property at the maximum rate established by Whittier voters, one-half of one percent (0.005) of the assessed valuation. Legislation has been passed that permits the City Council, with the consent of voters, to levy a tax as high as two percent (0.02) of the assessed valuation. Whittier requires business licenses for all commercial establishments and charges various fees to users of the Small Boat Harbor to support harbor operations. The City also exercises planning, platting and zoning powers. Whittier adopted its most recent zoning ordinance in late 1984 and its most recent subdivision ordinance in 1999. Whittier is located in the unorganized borough.



Building P-12

City Council

A seven-member City Council provides policy direction. Council members are elected in a general city election in October and serve staggered terms. The elected members select one Council member to serve as Mayor. The Council meets twice per month on the first and third Tuesday evenings. Additional special meetings and work sessions may be scheduled, as well.

Planning and Zoning Commission

The Planning and Zoning Commission has five members, all residents of Whittier. Its regulatory powers include making platting, variance, traffic and conditional use decisions and it advises the City Council on planning and zoning concerns, including the content of the Comprehensive Plan and zoning map. The Commission operates according to Title 17 of the Whittier Municipal Code. It meets at regular monthly meetings and at work sessions as needed.

Port and Harbor Commission

The Whittier Port and Harbor Commission is a seven-member panel that acts in an advisory capacity to the City Council in port and harbor matters, including the Small Boat Harbor and the City-controlled lands at the head of Passage Canal. At least five members of the panel must be Whittier residents and up to two may be non-resident stakeholders. The Commission also advises the City Council on the following:

- Operation, management, regulation, and control of the City's port and harbor facilities

- Land use issues
- Contract review
- Economic and infrastructure development planning
- Setting or adjusting tariffs
- Budget, capital improvement program, and funding programs
- Appeals

Municipal revenues and expenses

In CY03, the City received State funded Municipal Assistance and Revenue Sharing funds of \$23,377. Other City revenues were generated through local real property and sales taxes, service charges from providing local public works services, lease of City property and principal and interest payments on properties in escrow.

Exhibit 3 shows the City revenues totaling \$4,431,436 for 2010.

Table 5 shows a comparison of the breakdown of revenues for the City of Whittier for the past eight years, while Table 5 provides information on expenses over the same period.

The City owns and operates the Whittier Small Boat Harbor. In summer 2004, the City accepted ownership of the Small Boat Harbor from the State of Alaska. The harbor is operated as an enterprise fund. Revenues generated by providing services and moorage may only be used for the harbor – to finance operations and maintenance and fund capital investment. The harbor operates above capacity in the summer months. Harbor operations will be discussed in detail in the Chapters 4 and 5.

Exhibit 3: 2010 revenues by category

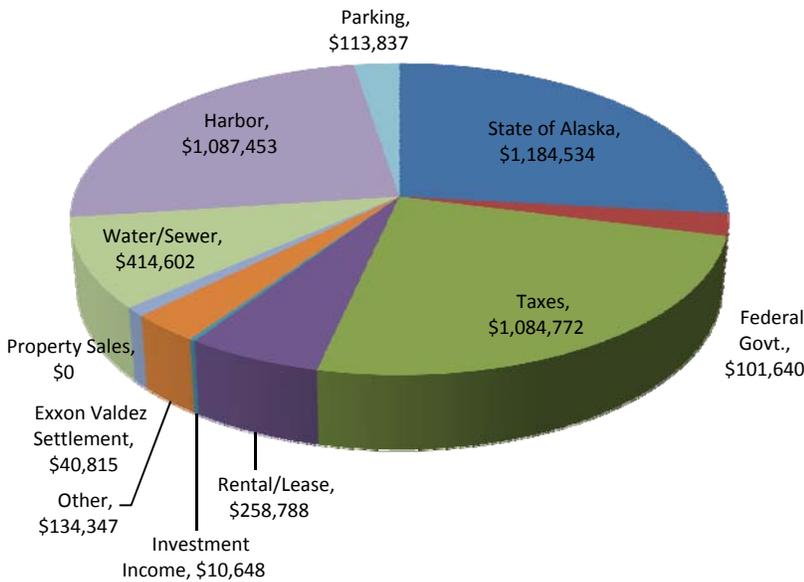


Table 4: Comparison of City of Whittier revenues, 2003 through 2010

	2,003	2,004	2,005	2,006	2,007	2,008	2,009	2,010
REVENUE: (not including grants)								
State of Alaska		78,137	230,421	84,662	229,387	262,288	1,308,261	1,184,534
Federal Govt.		340,449	293,173	88,074	78,667	25,972	137,258	101,640
Taxes		586,317	740,593	636,005	860,851	1,133,548	1,071,220	1,084,772
Rental/Lease		268,740	238,234	398,591	271,765	294,912	247,848	258,788
Investment Income		20,245	19,843	44,799	49,911	23,778	13,786	10,648
Other		81,247	115,561	104,483	40,585	20,379	31,380	134,347
Exxon Valdez Settlement		0	0	0	0	0	373,161	40,815
Property Sales		0	0	0	0	0	94,248	0
Water/Sewer			317,152	436,831	515,946	527,080	496,676	414,602
Harbor			778,934	1,098,279	1,002,501	1,077,808	995,821	1,087,453
Parking			79,195	56,159	95,438	89,914	90,314	113,837
TOTAL REVENUE	0	1,375,135	2,813,106	2,947,883	3,145,051	3,455,679	4,859,973	4,431,436

Table 5: Comparison of City of Whittier expenses, 2003 through 2010

	2,003	2,004	2,005	2,006	2,007	2,008	2,009	2,010
EXPENDITURES:								
Council	53,434	44,159	49,018	77,700	68,040	74,520	77,406	86,848
Commissions	24,076	18,018	15,069	2,717	0	0	0	5,456
Administration	174,862	254,077	202,216	175,481	429,148	587,977	605,115	466,442
Elections	2,521	4,947	6,507	7,020	2,351	1,695	1,894	1,350
Police	233,006	519,218	499,916	282,651	279,637	327,675	348,231	352,863
Fire Dept.	26,719	119,329	158,822	80,578	95,746	37,726	36,529	51,164
EMS	53,730	183,881	141,028	88,515	104,855	96,414	104,147	116,206
Public Works	285,996	407,698	365,749	391,250	557,980	433,470	396,564	313,682
Property & Facilities	119,335	120,492	366,555	152,197	54,960	57,369	94,900	76,924
Parks & Recreation AK Coastal Zone Mgmt	520	500	53,955	6,709	0	0	0	0
Debt Service	10,537	13,665	13,100	13,660	5,647	0	0	0
Transfers	11,533	9,882	11,533	9,759	9,868	24,137	24,137	22,341
Water/Sewer	31,000	2,700	0	0	81,473	60,154	57,100	94,000
Harbor	163,727	203,397	668,326	616,575	701,129	722,975	695,990	651,274
Parking			1,156,325	1,307,179	1,230,478	1,247,841	1,416,838	1,367,288
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,190,996	1,901,963	3,741,967	3,231,246	3,649,012	3,723,636	3,931,512	3,667,159

Source: City of Whittier.

Municipal services

Public safety

Public safety in Whittier is provided by the Whittier Police Department, Whittier Volunteer Fire Department, and Whittier Volunteer Emergency Medical Service (EMS), as well as one full-time paid fire fighter/EMT III. Staffing of the Whittier Police Department varies with budget considerations and seasonal fluctuations. The Whittier Volunteer Fire Department has two engines and an aerial truck; while the Whittier Volunteer Emergency Medical Service operates two ambulances. Additionally, the United States Coast Guard and Alaska State Troopers provide public safety services in the area.

Police

The Whittier Police Department has existed, in various forms, since 1993. Current staffing is two full time officers and a police chief, all of whom are certified by the Alaska Police Standards Council. Two seasonal officers augment staff for the five summer months. This staffing level mandates a significant number of on-call hours. Department staff responds to calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Police and Fire Officials on Shotgun Cove Road

The police department is housed in a converted one-bedroom condominium on the first floor of Begich Towers. The office contains approximately 250 square feet. There is no holding cell or other area with provisions for prisoner processing. There is no safe, secure area to interview suspects or to assist witnesses or victims. All areas pose a risk and liability when handling suspects or prisoners. The City would like to

have a combined Public Safety Building to address these deficits and provide dedicated and up-to-date facilities for the Fire Department and EMS, as well.

The department is fairly well-equipped. Staff has the use of four-wheel-drive patrol vehicles and ATVs. All patrol vehicles have radar, computer and internet access. Three have printers. This facilitates service at the scene of an accident or crime. A Buffer Zone Protection Plan (BZPP) Grant in 2010 allowed the City to purchase five security video cameras, which were installed at the fire hall, harbormaster's office and at the Head of Passage Canal. The police department has the equipment to tie into a statewide communications system. The EMS is in progress to become part of this system as well. Five satellite phones were purchased in 2011, three of which have voice and data capability. Additionally, the City Public Safety Department has the ability to tie in directly to the microwave system from Begich Towers, the Harbormaster's Office and the Head of Passage Canal.

Police activity during winter months is primarily in response to domestic violence and assault cases. During the summer, an increase in property crime (theft and criminal mischief) and traffic offences is noted. Using recognized tourism-oriented policing principles, police activity in Whittier over the summer season is comparable to a recreational community with a population of 2,000 to 3,000.

Fire Department & EMS

The Whittier Fire Department was accredited in 2011 and can now conduct its own Firefighter I class in the City. They typically cross train with the DOT tunnel fire response staff for best utilization of resources.

The Fire Department, which remains voluntary, maintains a fleet of two fire engines and one aerial truck. The EMS has a staff of volunteer Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and is equipped with two ambulances, one of which carries a defibrillator.

The Fire Department and EMS are housed in a portion of the public works building, which remains in substandard condition, with problems such as significant roof leaks.

The large summer population of residents, cruise passengers, campers and day tourists continues to strain the resources of the department. Expansion of

the Whittier Fire/EMS Department is necessary to keep up with the ever-increasing demands.

Public Works

The City Public Works Department provides road maintenance, snow removal, water and sewer, and emergency power to the community. The department is headed by a director assisted by four full-time staff.

The City Shop and Public Works office is located on Whittier Street in building P-12. The Public Works Department’s responsibilities include grading the unpaved roads, snow removal and dust control.

There are approximately seven miles of roads in Whittier, including approximately four miles of paved roads and nearly three miles of unpaved roads. With an annual snowfall estimated at about 42 feet, snow removal is a major expense. The City does not clear Cove Creek Road in winter. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities maintains the road from the tunnel to the ferry terminal. The road to the Lu Young Picnic Area is unpaved and generally not maintained. The City is responsible for maintaining most of the other roads.



Public Works Department facilities

Health

The Whittier Medical Clinic, located in Begich Towers suite 301, is operated by the Eastern Aleutian Tribes Native Corporation. Staff includes a family nurse practitioner and a community health practitioner. The clinic is open Monday and Tuesday, with hours posted on the door..

Financial issues have caused difficulty for the clinic’s operation. Federal and state grant funds may be

available to help meet operational costs, but require local matching funds, as well. The City and Eastern Aleutian Tribes are working together to create a strategy to keep the clinic open.

The EMT corps provides emergency medical care to Whittier residents and is often called on to help people from outside the community where no emergency care is available. On those occasions, the injured or sick are met at the boat harbor where care is administered and transport is arranged. Since the opening of the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel to vehicular traffic, the EMTs also serve victims of traffic accidents in the vicinity. The EMT corps is supervised by a sponsoring physician for medical care matters.

With increasing recreational activity in Whittier including divers, kayakers, anglers and others, and with cruise ships docking regularly in Whittier, additional EMT staffing is becoming a critical issue. Federal statute mandates an EMT-3 or paramedic be available to receive patients from cruise ships. Additional upper-level EMT or paramedic staff will be needed to meet these needs and the needs of an increasing Whittier population.

Whether as part of a multi-purpose building or as a stand-alone facility, improved and expanded clinic facilities to meet the healthcare needs of residents and visitors to Whittier are needed.

Recreation

Whittier’s location on Passage Canal with easy access to Prince William Sound provides many opportunities for marine recreation. The community’s many seasonal recreational visitors and its residents enjoy boating, sightseeing, sport fishing, kayaking, sailing and recreational shrimping activities on the Sound. The area is also a popular site for scuba divers who frequent the clear, deep waters of Passage Canal. The over-capacity usage of the Small Boat Harbor is indicative of Whittier’s high demand as a gateway to Prince William Sound.

Whittier’s winters, typical of those in coastal Prince William Sound, are characterized by frequent storms bringing strong winds, deep snows, and large amounts of rain. While this limits many outdoor recreational pursuits; scuba diving, hunting, snow machining, and cross-country skiing remain popular. Excellent indoor recreational facilities are considered extremely important to the community, as well.

One of the most popular land-based recreational opportunities is the Community Education Program. It is a joint effort of the Chugach School District (CSD) and the City of Whittier that is operated out of the school gymnasium throughout the year. The gym is open for public use, provided adult supervision is available, three nights a week. Adult and children's indoor volleyball, basketball, a weight room and roller skating are some of its most popular activities. Additional activities for youth were a high priority of Whittier residents participating in the Visioning Process for the 2005 plan.

There is a picnic area at First Salmon Run, built in 1989, and dedicated in 2010 to Lu Young, late wife of Congressman Don Young. The picnic tables are still in fair condition; however, the roof of the pavilion is in need of repair. The picnic area at Salmon Run is scheduled for improvement as part of the Shotgun Cove Road project and another picnic area and parking lot will be constructed at the Emerald Cove trailhead.



Congressman Don Young watched as Mayor Lester Lumceford unveiled the sign for Lu Young Park.

Private camping facilities have been established on land belonging to the Alaska Railroad Corporation west of the school. Facilities include recreational

vehicle (RV) sites, a covered picnic area, outdoor privies and a drinking water source.

The cruise ship industry estimates that approximately seven percent of cruise ship passengers will travel apart from tour groups; while the rest of the passengers are members of tour groups whose time and activities are generally controlled while in Whittier. Because of this control, these groups place limited demand on services and facilities in the community and spend little money. It is therefore important to focus the City's efforts on the independent visitors, who will spend more time and money in the community and require more services and facilities. Overland visitors and ferry passengers will also contribute to the makeup of tourism in Whittier. With increased tunnel access, the cruise ships, and ferry service, tour groups and independent visitor numbers will both increase. Summer months and weekends will remain the peak time periods for travel and new facilities and services will be required to meet this demand. Accommodating this increase in visitors will have major impacts on tourism and recreation in Whittier.



Cruise ship docked in Whittier.

Education

The Chugach School District (CSD) operates the school in Whittier. It is a Rural Education Attendance Area (REAA) that receives the majority of its funding, about \$1.7 annually, from the State of Alaska Foundation Aid program. Federal Law PL-874 provides about \$100,000 in federal funds annually through the state to the school district for children of parents living and/or working on federal

property. The support was provided in lieu of local tax revenues. State and Federal funds fluctuate from year to year.

Other revenues to the school district come from timber harvest on National Forest lands (about \$8,000 per year), and interest and other minor sources. The district has received in the past and is currently using grant funding; however, funding of this type is generally restricted in its intended uses, is limited in duration, and cannot be relied upon for regular yearly budget purposes. The City of Whittier, as a second-class city, is not obligated to provide local tax support for the school.

During the 2010-2011 school year, 33 students were enrolled at the Whittier School. Enrollment has ranged between 30 and 55 for the past several years. The school's ideal capacity is approximately 80 students, though this can vary depending on the number of students at various levels. Elementary school children require less specialized facilities and building space than high school students.

The ratio of students to teachers in the CSD is about 8 to 1, with Whittier's ratio currently about 10 to 1. The Whittier School presently has three full-time teachers, one aide, a principal/teacher, a library aide/breakfast cook and a secretary. The school is located behind Begich Towers and houses educational facilities from kindergarten through 12th grade. Preschool has also been provided every year since 1986, though this is dependent on available funding.



Whittier Community School

The school building has been remodeled several times since its construction. In 1981, four classrooms, a library, darkroom, kitchenette, small office and storage area, and a multipurpose room were built. In 1985, a regulation size gymnasium was added to the east side of the building. In 1986, the multipurpose room was expanded to include the library, offices and lunchroom, as they exist today. Most recently, in 2009, the school received a new roof and improved handicap access.

The CSD superintendent and administrative offices are located in Anchorage. In addition to the Whittier School, the REAA includes schools in Tatitlek and Chenega Bay. Extension school services are provided for home schooling. The district also offers community education services directed toward adult education and recreation.

Educational Awards

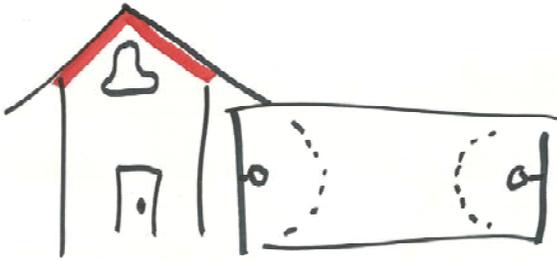
In April 2009, the CSD was selected as a winner of the **2009 APEX Excellence Award** by Alaska Performance Excellence. The award represents the highest level of recognition that an Alaska organization can receive for performance excellence. Award judges described CSD as a “truly role model organization.”

In 2001, Whittier School was awarded the **New American High Schools Award**. “New American High Schools” are innovative schools whose whole-school reform efforts enable their students to excel. The U.S. Department of Education has identified these leading-edge schools throughout America's cities, suburbs, and rural towns. Their students represent the diversity of their communities.

New American High Schools have dramatically improved their quality of education, and work to ensure that all students are:

- Challenged by rigorous academics and high expectations
- Benefiting from a small, safe, personalized learning environment
- Well-prepared for college and careers⁶

⁶ Chugach School District website, <http://www.chugachschools.com/awards/> 2004.



School facilities and basketball court were illustrated as an important part of community life at the visioning workshop

In 2001, CSD was also honored with the **Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award** and set an example across the nation of grass roots reform in education. CSD has pioneered a standards-based system of "whole child education" that emphasizes real-life learning situations. After securing a waiver from the Alaska Department of Education, the district replaced credit hours and grade levels – hallmarks of traditional schooling – with an individualized, student-centered approach. This approach aims for measurable – and demonstrable – proficiency in 10 areas of performance, from basic academic and career development skills to cultural awareness and character skills. CSD's high-school graduation requirements exceed Alaska's requirements in many ways.⁷



Whittier Community School

⁷ National Institute of Standards Technology website, *Baldrige Award Recipient Profile*, http://www.nist.gov/public_affairs/chugach.htm 2004.

Whittier School future needs

The current school facility is operating at approximately half its capacity and will continue to meet the needs of the community if the population remains stable. However, if increased tourism in Whittier causes businesses to expand or to move into the community, the population could grow at an increased rate, which in turn could cause the school to reach or exceed its capacity. If this occurs, a new school or an expansion of the existing school would be required to accommodate the student population.

With any major increase in student population, additional teachers will be required. It is anticipated that teacher to pupil ratio would be increased to accommodate the higher student enrollment, but a full-time principal and other staff members may be required resulting in student to staff ratios that remain similar to the existing student to teacher ratio of ten to one.

If the City of Whittier met or surpassed the 400-resident population threshold to become a first-class city, it could choose to provide education services in the community. Additional taxes would be required to support the school in addition to partial state funding. In the event that the City did not elect to provide education services, the Chugach REAA would continue to operate the school with state funding. Substantial increases in student enrollment would change the education facility needs in Whittier.

Other Facilities

Museum

The Prince William Sound Museum, currently located in the Anchor Inn and grocery store, features exhibits that present the history of Whittier, the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel, the Alaska Railroad, Alaska Steamship Company, World War II, and the Cold War in Alaska. Funding for the museum, which opened in 2005, came from the Denali Commission, as well as corporate and private contributions.

Library

The Whittier City Library has been closed for several years and the books placed in storage. Residents feel that it is very important for the City to have library facilities to meet resident needs. A City Library has been discussed as part of a multi-purpose structure.

Whether it is in such a facility or elsewhere, a library is a priority of the Whittier community.

Nondenominational Church

A nondenominational church, currently meeting in Begich Towers, serves the community's spiritual needs. The members would like to build a dedicated church facility in the core area.

City-Provided Utilities

Water

The City water system serves the Whittier Delta area encompassing the core area, the Small Boat Harbor, the Alaska Railroad yard, and the port area ending at DeLong Dock. Cove Creek Road does not have service.

Three wells located between Whittier and Fifth Streets supply water to the area. The wells are between 70 and 80 feet deep and range in capacity from 220 gallons per minute to 530 gallons per minute. These wells are sited in close proximity – within 500 feet – of the industrial area that includes the railroad yard and equipment maintenance shops. Whittier's topography constrains land available in the core area for development; and the requisite 200-foot protective radius around each well puts otherwise useful land off limits.

The City reservoir is an underground concrete tank installed by the US Army in the 1950s. It was lined in polypropylene in 1995 to stop leakage. The tank has a capacity of one million gallons and is located about 150 feet higher in elevation than the Buckner Building and slightly to the west. Fire hydrants are located near major buildings and in the harbor and railroad dock areas. A chlorination facility was also constructed in 1995; however, due to the high quality of Whittier's water DEC has not mandated the use of chlorination at this time.

The western end of the Small Boat Harbor is served by a single 6-inch water main. Each cruise ship typically takes on over 300,000 gallons of water from this main at a rate of 500 to 1,000 gallons per minute. This reduces the water available for fire suppression in the west area of the Small Boat Harbor when cruise ships are refilling their water tanks.



Whittier Small Boat Harbor, August 2004

Sewer

The City sewer system serves the Whittier Delta area encompassing the core area, the Small Boat Harbor, the Alaska Railroad yard, and the port area ending at DeLong Dock. The sewer system in Whittier consists of a wastewater collection system and primary treatment facility. Primary treatment of the wastewater is performed in six 50,000-gallon concrete septic tanks located near Depot Road. Treated effluent is discharged into Passage Canal. This system is sized to meet the needs of approximately 1,150 permanent residents.

The City of Whittier disposes of treated effluent under a permit issued by EPA that allows a waiver for secondary treatment; the waiver is based on Section 301(h) of the Clean Water Act. Treated effluent is disposed of through a deep-water discharge pipe constructed in 1984.

Five lift stations, 8-, 10-, and 12-inch sewer mains, force mains, septic tanks, and outfall make up the current sewer system. The system requires minimal maintenance: sludge must be removed annually and the deep-water discharge pipe must be inspected

every several years. Sewer lines in the harbor area were installed in 1988 and sewer mains in the core area were upgraded in 1999. Additional piping was constructed around the small boat harbor in 2003 and 2004.

Future Needs

The 2004 *Whittier Water System Master Plan* states that a water main extension on Whittier Street from Dojer's Shop to the railroad crossing at Whittier Creek is needed to complete a water main loop for the western area of the Small Boat Harbor. This will ensure that there is adequate capacity for fire protection for the Small Boat Harbor as well as for cruise ship use.

The Water System Plan recommended relocation of the water wells to open up additional developable land in the core area and to move the water source away from the industrial area. This remains a need.⁸

Residential, commercial and other infrastructure development at Shotgun Cove will require a municipal water supply and distribution system for general use and fire protection. Wastewater collection, treatment and disposal alternatives will need to be explored and a system implemented. Shotgun Cove systems may support development between the Whittier core area and Shotgun Cove, although the final configuration of systems has yet to be determined. A utility trench has been blasted along the portion of Shotgun Cove Road that has been constructed to facilitate future utilities installation.

Utilities infrastructure including water and wastewater systems are needed for development at Head of Passage Canal, as well. These systems would support commercial and industrial development in Whittier.

The existing sewer treatment system in the core area is sized for a permanent (wintertime) population of 1,150 residents, and a summer visitor population of 2,430 people, for a total of 3,580 people. When Whittier's core area population starts to approach these population figures, the City's sewer treatment program will need to be reevaluated.

⁸ Phone conversation with CRW engineer, Pete Bellezza, September 21, 2011.

Public and private utility services

Electric power supply

Chugach Electric Association, Inc., a member-owned electric cooperative, supplies electric power to the City of Whittier. Serving Anchorage as well as all of the communities along the Turnagain Arm, Chugach is the largest electrical cooperative in Alaska. Chugach generates power to serve its members and wholesale customers from hydroelectric and gas turbine sources located in Southcentral Alaska.

Chugach supplies electric power to Whittier via a single 25 kilovolt (kV), three-phase power line extending from its Portage Substation approximately 11 miles to city's core 'triangle' area. The Chugach 25 kV distribution system serving Whittier can accommodate a peak electric demand of approximately 10,000 kilowatts (kW). From the Portage Substation, the 25 kV power line extends overhead to the entrance of the Anton Anderson tunnel, where it transitions to an underground circuit extending into the city. Currently, the typical peak annual electric demand of the City is between 1,000 and 1,500 kW.

The City owns several emergency backup generator units due to the remote location of the community and a 200,000-gallon bulk fuel storage facility is under construction in the core area. The portable units can supply a total of 850 kW of reserve power. Most building complexes, as well as the harbor, have their own back-up units. A few buildings, however, are not covered by emergency electrical power. The City accommodates these shortfalls by rotating power during an emergency.

Depending on the scope of community infrastructure and commercial developments, the electric supply system serving Whittier may require improvements and upgrades. Harbor expansion projects, Alaska Marine Highway ferry dock upgrades, access improvement projects (i.e., railways, roadways), potential commercial and residential developments in the Emerald Bay/Shotgun Cove vicinity, as well as community infrastructure projects such as community centers, schools, and recreational facilities may require improvements to the electric system.

The cost of improvements or upgrades to the main Chugach Electric supply system serving the City would be borne by the entire Cooperative, therefore lessening the local economic impact. Electrical line

extensions to commercial and residential developments would be in accordance with Chugach electrical service tariffs as filed with the Regulatory Commission of Alaska. Improvements to the main electrical system required to serve major industrial customers may require a special contract with the utility.

Telephone, Internet and cable television

Services provided by Yukon Telephone and their affiliated company, Supervision Cable TV, include telephone service, Internet service and cable television.

The Whittier telephone exchange is owned by the Yukon Telephone Company. Yukon Telephone continues to modernize its equipment for the communities it serves. There are approximately 580 local phone connections in use in Whittier. For long distance calls, the exchange uses 16 long distance fiber-optic trunks routed through the small tunnel. All telephone cables within the City are located underground.



Modern communication systems are important to Whittier residents

There are currently about 260 Internet subscribers in Whittier. Begich Towers Incorporated (BTI) has a contract with Supervision Cable for services within Begich Towers and then subcontracts with Begich Towers residents. Cable television service, offering a variety of channels is available throughout the community, as well. Yukon Telephone/Supervision

receives the signal via satellite dishes and provides service through cable to subscribers.

Solid waste services

Since early 1994, the City has contracted with Waste Management of Alaska (formerly Peninsula Sanitation, Inc.) to haul refuse from Whittier to the Anchorage Landfill. Trash is deposited in dumpsters located at the harbor office, harbor east ramp, harbor store and Building P-12. During the winter season, most of these are emptied by Waste Management once every two weeks on Friday. Some are emptied on an on-call basis as needed. Beginning May 1, a summer schedule is implemented with more frequent pick-ups to accommodate the higher use rate associated with the season. Additional dumpsters are located in other areas of the community but are not a part of the City’s contract with Waste Management of Alaska.

Whittier’s location, regional geology, and limited land base make it difficult to envision how the community might develop a landfill that would meet state and federal requirements. As a result, the City will continue to transport solid waste to Anchorage for the foreseeable future. Future growth will result in additional solid waste generated in the community, presumably expanding the services needed from the private solid waste contractor.

Natural gas

Enstar Natural Gas Company provides natural gas to Whittier. The petroleum, oil and lubricants (POL) line that formerly transported fuel from the Department of Defense tank farm in Whittier to Anchorage along Turnagain Arm was refitted in 1997 by Enstar to make available natural gas service to the communities of Whittier, Indian, Bird Creek and Girdwood. Rates for natural gas in Whittier are similar to Anchorage rates, which compare favorably with the rest of the country.

Future Needs

Current plans for Shotgun Cove Road include a buried utility duct through which electric, telephone, and possibly cable TV wires could be run. Coordination is underway with Enstar to determine funding, placement, and other factors relating to the placement of a gas line during road development. The gas line must be at least five feet from the electrical utility lines.

Plans, at this time, call for Whittier city water to be piped to Shotgun Cove. Sewer service would only be extended as far as Cove Creek and the currently platted residential lots. These plans are still under development and are subject to change.

Chapter Four: Transportation

Long before Whittier existed as a year-round community, Chugach Eskimos hunted and gathered in the area. They trekked over Portage Pass and Portage Glacier to trade and fight with the Athabascan Indians of Cook Inlet. In the late 19th century, many miners and prospectors also used Portage Pass to reach the gold fields of Cook Inlet and the Kenai Peninsula. This route is part of the Iditarod National Historic Trail system.



Members of the Alaska Engineering Commission survey team, Portage Glacier, 1914.

Often dropped off at the head of Passage Canal, these adventurers used pack trains, sleds, and pulleys to drag equipment and supplies over Portage Pass in hopes of striking it rich in Cook Inlet or on the Kenai Peninsula. During this period, Portage Glacier still covered most of Portage Lake. Travelers climbed to Portage Pass and traversed the eastern edge of Portage Glacier to Bear Valley. From there they would walk the front of the glacier onto the base of Begich Peak and drop down to Portage Valley.⁹

Land Transportation

Railroad

In 1941, Anton Anderson, an Army engineer for whom the tunnel is named, headed the construction team building a rail spur from Portage to Whittier. This spur was a major supply link for the World War II war effort.

The rail line into Whittier was completed in 1942 to serve the needs of the US Military who desired an alternate year-round ice free port to Seward. Military

supplies and equipment were pouring into Alaska in support of the Aleutian Campaign against the Japanese. At the end of World War II the military gradually reduced its presence and, with few exceptions, turned all its assets over to the then federally-owned Alaska Railroad. The Alaska Railroad continues to own the majority of land in the Whittier central core area and continues to utilize Whittier as a main port of access to the lower 48 and Canadian National rail systems. In 1985, the State of Alaska purchased the Alaska Railroad, its assets and land from the federal government. The Alaska Railroad is now a wholly-owned State asset required to operate with financial independence from the State.

Passenger Rail

ARRC operates year-round regularly scheduled passenger service throughout its system with peak service from mid-May to mid-September. However, Whittier does not support winter service and access to Whittier is provided by the dual-use Anton Anderson Tunnel owned by the Alaska Railroad and operated by the Alaska Department of transportation and Public Facilities. During peak summer season, the Glacier Discovery passenger train travels to Whittier once a day. The roundtrip cost is \$89 and the one-way cost is \$74 between Anchorage and Whittier. One train departs from Anchorage to Whittier, stopping twice at Portage before continuing on to Spencer Whistle Stop and Grandview. This train returns to Portage and Whittier, but not Anchorage. Passengers returning to Anchorage take a motorcoach from Portage. Cruise passengers arriving in Whittier who would like to travel independently of the cruise tour may continue their travels via one of the Railroad's other public transportation options.

The Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska, Cruise Ship Calendar for 2012 lists four cruise ships—the Coral Princess, Island Princess, Sapphire Princess and Diamond Princess—docking a total of 36 times projected for the 2012 season.¹⁰ As an additional service to the cruise ship industry, the Alaska Railroad provides charter train service for most cruise ship passengers taking them to the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport as well as to lodging or destinations in Interior Alaska.

⁹ Alaska Department of Transportation, Whittier Access website. <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/creg/whittiertunnel/history.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.experienceketchikan.com/support-files/cruise-ship-calendar-whittier.pdf>. Accessed October 13, 2012.

A temporary platform and rail spur were installed near the new cruise ship dock to allow cruise ship passengers access to rail transportation. A removable canopy provides shelter for passengers waiting to board the train. In 2004, the ARRC reported that because passengers are required to cross the Whittier Highway to access this spur, they would like a more permanent and safer solution developed.



The Alaska Railroad provides passenger service to cruise ship tourists

Freight

Whittier, a year-round, ice-free, deep-water port, acts as freight exchange hub for barge service between Alaska, the lower 48 and Canada. Freight accounts for the majority of ARRC's business with 25 percent of ARRC's statewide freight revenue being transported through Whittier.

Rail barge service to Whittier began in 1964 and continues today with two companies providing regularly scheduled service to Alaska. Alaska Marine Lines, LLC (AML), a subsidiary of Lynden Inc., began barging weekly railcars between Seattle and Whittier in September 2000. Three barges are employed in this service in order to ensure weekly departures from Seattle, as inclement weather and other factors may prevent the barges from completing a round trip in the usual seven days. The new barges are designed to provide faster, more efficient and more reliable service. ARRC also receives freight from Canadian National via the CN Aquatrain, operating out of Prince Rupert, Canada.

The AML barge arrives with 42 to 70 rail cars carrying such products as iron, lime, salt, chemicals, and 100 or more flat cars carrying products such as lumber, pipe, and heavy machinery. The CN Aquatrain operates on a ten day cycle and usually arrives with 25 to 30 railcars of oilfield supplies.

The rail yard is used to the limits of its capacity with freight and passengers train operations. The rail yard

is used to store south-bound freight cars prior to barge arrival and off loading. When barges arrive, cars are unloaded onto tracks in the rail yard, after which the waiting cars can be loaded for transport south. Additional land serves as a staging area where flat cars are unloaded and containers are stacked prior to being loaded onto barges for transport out of Alaska.

The rail yard and switching tracks extend the full length of the Whittier core area, which consists of residential, industrial, and commercial areas. An at-grade crossing of the railroad yard is located near the Whittier Creek Bridge. When train switching operations occur, trains occupy the Whittier Creek Bridge and traffic trying to enter or exit Whittier Street must wait. There is no alternative vehicular access across the railroad operations area, although a pedestrian underpass was constructed in 2001 that connects the residential part of Whittier with the waterfront. The Railroad Master Plan for Whittier includes the future recommended action:

Work with City to develop future options to reduce traffic delays at the major railroad/highway crossing adjacent to Whittier Creek.

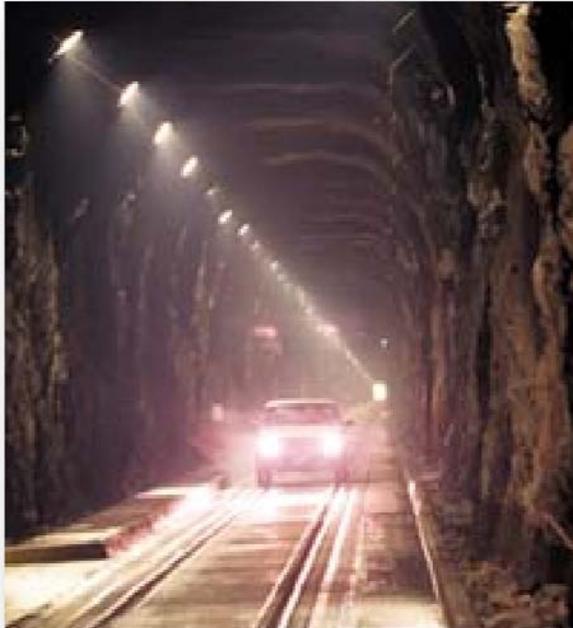
Roads

Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel

A 2.5-mile combined rail and highway use tunnel, the longest in North America, connects Whittier to Portage and the Seward Highway. In June 2000, after a major reconstruction effort, the state opened the tunnel for one-way motor vehicle traffic. The Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel is the first tunnel with a unique computerized traffic-control system that regulates both rail and highway traffic.

The tunnel offers one-way travel for highway vehicles generally switching traffic direction every half-hour. A total of 800 cars can travel through the tunnel during each opening, 400 in each direction. The tunnel schedule is available at the Bear Valley tollbooth or on the Internet at <http://www.tunnel.alaska.gov>. The tunnel schedule provides longer hours in the summer than the winter, with scheduled openings from 5:30 a.m. to 11:15 p.m. in summer and 7:00 a.m. to 10:45 p.m. during the winter. The tunnel, along with its associated vehicle staging areas and the Portage Glacier Highway between milepost 5.1 near Portage Creek and the

Whittier Ferry Terminal, is designated as a toll facility.¹¹ The state began to collect tolls on April 1, 2001. Fees are periodically reviewed and adjusted as deemed necessary. Table 6 shows the changes that were made in tolls. Booklets of 10 and 30 tunnel tickets and seasonal passes are available for reduced rates.



Vehicle driving through the Anton Anderson Memorial tunnel

Approximately 85,000 vehicles passed through in the first seven months the tunnel was open. This number dropped once fees were instituted and to date the large number of vehicles projected in some studies has never materialized. But as several studies projected, the tunnel alone would not provide conditions for expansion. For one thing, estimates were based on vehicle access without tolls or fares to Whittier.¹² Other assumptions included more resort development, increased small boat moorage availability, more cruise ship visitors and an increase in population. Although these did not occur to the extent predicted, and visitors were constrained by tunnel tolls, some of these changes are taking place currently and increased visitor numbers are expected.

¹¹ Title 17, Alaska Administrative Code 38.005.

¹² Whittier Access Project Technical Reports, January 1994

Table 6: Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel Tolls, 2001 & 2011

Vehicle Class	2001 Tolls	2011 Tolls
Class A	\$15	\$12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passenger vehicles not pulling trailers • Motorcycles and motorcycles pulling trailers • Trucks with a gross vehicle weight of less than 12,000 pounds, not pulling trailers • Recreational vehicles less than 28 feet and not pulling trailers 		
Class B₁	\$40	\$20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational vehicles 28 feet or greater not pulling trailers • Recreational vehicles less than 28 feet pulling trailers • Passenger vehicles pulling trailers (Trailers in this class cannot be more than 8.5 feet wide or 14 feet high.) 		
Class B₂		\$35
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational vehicles 28 feet or greater pulling trailers • Vans and buses designed to carry more than nine but fewer than 30 people including the driver • Trucks with fewer than four axles pulling trailers • Trucks with a gross vehicle weight of 12,000 pounds or more and fewer than four axles. (Trailers in this class cannot be more than 8.5 feet wide or 14 feet high.) 		
Class C	\$12	\$12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses designed to carry 30 or more people including the driver. 	5	5
Class D	\$12	\$12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trucks, including tractor and trailer combinations, with a gross vehicle weight of 12,000 pounds or more and four or more axles • Motor vehicles, including any trailer and any load, if they are more than 8.5 feet wide, excluding mirrors, but not more than 10.0 feet wide and not more than 14.0 feet high and not more than 75 feet long • Any motor vehicle that is not otherwise classified in this section. 	5	5
Class E	\$25	\$30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motor vehicles, including any trailer and any load, if they are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More than 10.0 feet wide, excluding mirrors, but not more than 11.0 feet wide 2. 14.0 feet high, but not more than 15.0 feet high and not more than 75 feet long. 	0	0
Class G		\$10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government/School vehicles 		

The current traffic patterns indicate a significant increase of traffic in the summer, which highlights the importance and magnitude of the tours, charter boat operations and other recreational activities in Whittier. In the summer, there is also more traffic on the weekends, indicating that Whittier is primarily a weekend destination for visitors from communities within easy driving distance.

Table 7: Monthly Vehicle Count, shown every two years, 2000 to 2010

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Jan		3318	4638	5420	5322	6100
Feb		3388	5276	5328	5500	6270
Mar		5440	6570	8176	7358	8324
Apr		6876	9622	11060	9944	10568
May		21614	28728	26014	27076	26232
Jun	30598	31648	39658	38616	38940	45164
Jul	46618	38916	45976	48930	42652	46306
Aug	45618	34460	42562	38758	41220	39944
Sep	28846	22882	25506	30306	23640	23754
Oct	12486	8698	11816	10976	9538	10530
Nov	6672	6286	5916	6522	6854	6368
Dec	5268	4944	5868	5220	5876	5178
Total	176106	188470	232136	235326	223920	234738

Source: ADOT&PF website:
<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/creg/whittiertunnel/trafficdata.shtml>

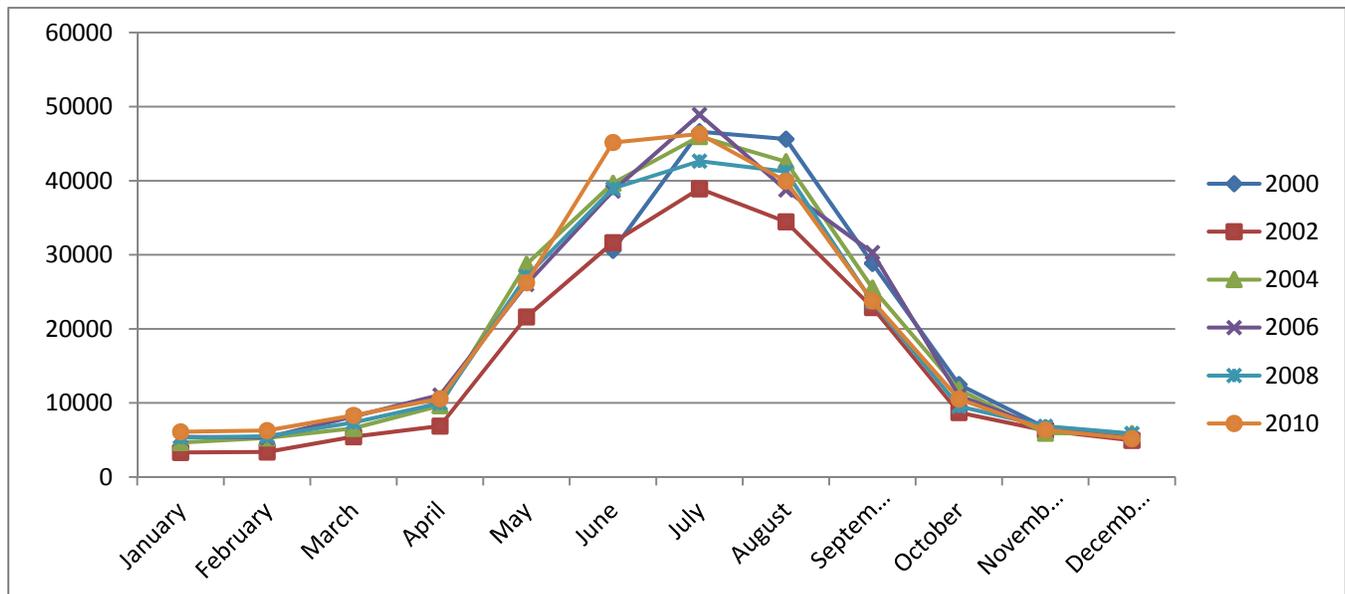
Exhibit 5 shows that in July 2004, traffic volume reached the same peak as it did before tolls were imposed in 2000. In addition, the traffic volume continued at an even higher rate than in 2000 for the rest of the summer, with annual traffic volume exceeding 100,000 for the first time. 2005 levels were even higher, with no decrease in volume anticipated.

Weekend travel, Friday through Sunday, accounts for over 51 percent of total traffic through the tunnel. This is indicative of the large number of visitors from Anchorage who come to Whittier for recreation on the weekends.

Exhibit 4 shows the large increase in vehicular traffic in the summer and the year-round increase of traffic on weekend days. January, February and March showed higher vehicle numbers in 2010, possibly due to extended tunnel hours.

The tunnel must close to vehicular traffic when it is needed for passenger or freight train access. The number of trains per day varies seasonally and with use levels, which can cause problems for vehicle access schedules. When cruise ships dock in Whittier in the summer, additional trains are required to serve passengers, causing additional tunnel closures.

Exhibit 4: Monthly Vehicle Count, 2000-2010



Source: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities website.

Road System in Whittier

Roads are generally categorized into functional classes. Functional classification is the grouping of roads, streets, and highways into integrated systems, ranked by relative importance and function served, relative to mobility and land access.

It also identifies the role each street or highway should play in channeling the flow of traffic in a logical and efficient manner. The general functional classification categories identified in Whittier’s municipal code are Major, Collector and Local Roads, and Alleys. These are defined in Table 8.

The classification system designated in the municipal code does not consider traffic volumes but primarily relies on roadway width and definition. The definitions of Major and Collector Streets are very similar with the width being the primary distinction. Using width as the deciding factor, most roads would fall into the local street category. The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) figures collected in 2001 (shown in Table 9) offer additional data to aid the City of Whittier in classifying its roads.

The Whittier Public Safety Director reports that the boat ramp and Triangle Road areas have the highest accident rates in Whittier.



A train enters Whittier from the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel as outbound vehicles wait their turns

The following inventory of Whittier roads indicates their classification based on AADT and function within the community. These roads are shown in Figure 4: Functional Classifications on the following page.

Table 8: Whittier’s Current Road Classification and Standards*

Classification	Description	Right-of-Way	Surface Width
Major Roads	A street designed to move traffic between major traffic generators in the city.	60 feet	40 feet
Collectors	A street designed to move traffic from local streets to major streets	50 feet	30 feet
Local Streets	A street designated to provide traffic access to individual abutting properties	40 feet	25 feet
Alleys	A public right-of-way shown on a plat that provides secondary access to a lot, block or parcel of land	20 feet	20 feet
Driveways	City code currently being written.		

**As designated in the City of Whittier’s Municipal Code*

Figure 4: Functional Classifications

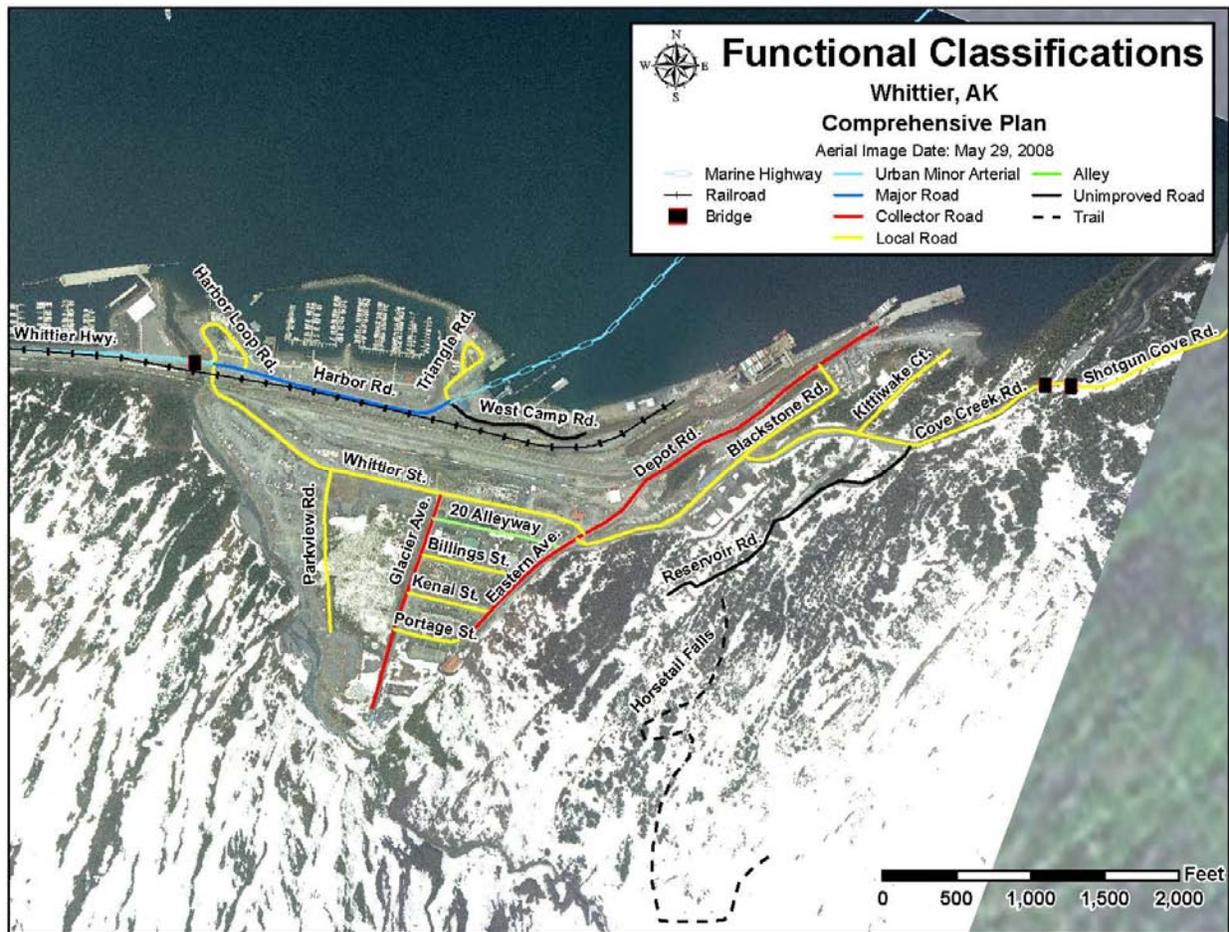


Table 9: 2001 Traffic Counts for Whittier

Road Name	Average Daily Traffic		Annual Average Daily Traffic
	May Hi/low	July Hi/low ADT	
<i>West Camp Road</i>	1539/587	2139/1312	1500
<i>Whittier Street</i>	2879/1040	2405/1361	1800
<i>Glacier Avenue</i>	826/469	1252/822	600
<i>Blackstone Road</i>	297/160	433/304	200
<i>Depot Road</i>	458/305	638/305	400
<i>Cove Creek Road</i>	88/25	196/45	50

Source: phone conversation with ADOT Central Region Planner, Joselyn Biloan, and Whittier Transportation Plan, 2001.

Major Roads

Two roads in Whittier qualify as major roads.

West Camp Road



West Camp Road leading into Whittier

West Camp Road is a major road providing access from the ferry terminal to the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel and the Seward Highway. Due to its significance as an access point between the Alaska Marine Highway and the Seward Highway this road is included on the National Highway System. West Camp Road also provides access to cruise ship facilities, permit parking, public harbor, railroad facilities, marine tour facilities, coast guard auxiliary station, harbor office, used oil collection facility, a variety of businesses and fee off-street parking.

Whittier Street

Whittier Street runs between West Camp Road and Eastern Avenue. Whittier Street provides important access to Begich Towers, fee parking, rail industrial area, Shoreside Petroleum tank farm and storage, boat storage, public works/city council chambers building, fish processing plant, fire department, Anchor Inn, grocery, restaurant, and the pedestrian tunnel to the waterfront. The pedestrian and bicycle amenities on this road are minimal and should be improved to meet existing need. Currently, there are only a few scattered sidewalks offering little protection from the high amount of vehicular traffic.

Collector Roads

Three roads in Whittier qualify as collector roads.

Glacier Avenue

Glacier Avenue runs from Whittier Street, past Portage Street to the new Whittier Creek levee. It provides access to Begich Towers, the school, camping/RV hook-ups, Whittier Falls, storage units, public works facility, and municipal property. Its condition is fair to poor with potholes and cracking throughout. There is erosion damage to the land on the west side of Glacier Avenue.

Eastern Avenue

Eastern Avenue lies between Portage and Whittier Streets. It provides access to the school, Begich Towers, the Kayak Place, and Anchor Inn. This paved road is in excellent condition. There is four-foot sidewalk with a curb and gutter on the west side that is in fair condition.

Depot Road

Depot Road is located between Hill and Whittier Streets, Blackstone Road, and the Eastern Avenue intersection. It provides access to the barge dock, long-term parking, bar and pizza place, and Anchor Inn. The condition of the road is good. There is a small section of road in extreme disrepair northeast of Hill Street. Depot Road lacks pedestrian facilities.

Local Roads

The majority of roads in Whittier qualify as local.

Blackstone Road

Blackstone Road runs between Eastern Avenue and Hill Street. Blackstone Road passes the Buckner Building and provides access to the Alaska West building, Smitty’s Cove, and Whittier Manor. The road is in fair condition with some cracking and potholes throughout. There are a curb and gutter and four feet of sidewalk on the east side ending at the Buckner Building. The sidewalk is in very poor condition. An erosion ditch begins where the sidewalk ends.

Shotgun Cove Road

In 2011, construction was completed on Phase II of Shotgun Cove Road. Along with Phase I, which was completed in 2009, over half of an approximately 2-mile road extending from Blackstone Road to the Emerald Bay Trailhead has been built and is providing benefits to the community.

Shotgun Cove Road provides access to existing public recreational areas used by both residents and visitors to Whittier. A scenic pull-off has already been built, and a picnic area and kayak launch are part of the Phase IV design. This is an important recreational access road and it is critical that it meet current safety standards.

Hill Street

Hill Street is located between Blackstone Road and Depot Road. Hill Street provides access to Whittier Manor and the Alaska West building. The road is in generally poor condition due to narrowness, potholes, and poor visibility. There is an erosion ditch on the north side of the road.

Parkview Road

Parkview Road runs south from Whittier Street. It provides access to undeveloped municipal and private lands, the municipal park, floodplain, and a private camping park. The road is in poor condition.

Triangle Road

Triangle Road is named for its distinctive shape. It runs one way and borders the Small Boat Harbor off West Camp Road. Triangle Road is the commercial hub of the community; accessing on-street parking, the harbor, Mariners' Memorial, dock, kayak rentals, eating establishments, public restrooms, and gift shops. Triangle Road is in excellent condition. It is paved and has wide sidewalks, curbs and gutters.

Billings Street

Billings Street lies between Glacier Avenue and Eastern Avenue. It provides access to 72-hour parallel parking on the south side, off-street parking and storage, the Kayak Center, marine facilities, boat storage, and storage units. The road condition is good with minimal cracking and potholes. It has a curb and gutter and four-foot sidewalks in poor condition on both sides of the street.

Kenai Street

Kenai Street runs between Glacier and Eastern Avenues. It provides access to diagonal parking, 72-hour parallel parking, Begich Towers, which houses the majority of Whittier residents and office space, and the reindeer house. The road condition is fair to poor with numerous cracks and potholes. The drainage is poor with evidence of ponding. There is a crumbling gutter and a four-foot sidewalk on the north side of the

road. There is a curb and gutter and a four-foot sidewalk in fair condition abutting Begich Towers.

Portage Street

Portage Street is located between Glacier and Eastern Avenues. It provides access to the school and Begich Towers. The road's condition is fair with some cracks and potholes. Although this road provides access to the school, there is no bike path or sidewalk abutting the school; however, a crosswalk has been striped for safer crossing. There is also an under-street crossing connecting Begich Towers and the school. There are a curb and gutter and a four-foot sidewalk on the Begich Tower side of the street.

Harbor Loop Road

Harbor Loop Road branches off West Camp Road. It provides access to an inn and restaurant, a coffee shop, satellite dishes, parallel parking, Shoreside Petroleum, and a boarding dock. Its condition is good, with rolled curbs and six-foot sidewalks. Additional facilities for day cruise vessels and private boats, and recreational vehicles within the vicinity and on the west side of Harbor Loop Road are planned. Improvements were made to Harbor Loop Road in summer 2004.

Kittiwake Court

Kittiwake Court branches off Cove Creek Road. It provides access to Smitty's Cove, and undeveloped lots. The gravel road is in poor condition with a steep slope leading to the water. There are no pedestrian facilities.

Cove Creek Road

Cove Creek Road is classified as a local road and is constructed of gravel. It provides access to the Salmon Run picnic area, a few residential sites, Emerald Cove Trail, and Horsetail Falls Trail, which are tourist destinations. Along this road are two new bridges

O'Neil Road

O'Neil Road starts at West Camp Road. It accesses old World War II bunkers, private land, and the access road to the Portage trailhead. The road is in fair condition.

Tank Farm Road

Tank Farm Road runs between West Camp Road and the harbor. It accesses the Department of Defense tank farm, truck fill stand, mainline pumphouse, combination building, , fire pumphouse, and the

harbor. The end of the road opens to a large paved area that offers an excellent view of Passage Canal, City of Whittier, mountains, and glaciers.

Alleys

Alleyway

The Alleyway is located between Eastern and Glacier Avenues. It accesses buildings and a parking lot that abut the south side of Whittier Street, and the buildings along the north side of Billings Street. The alley is narrow and in poor condition. This is the only road in Whittier that meets the criteria for an alley.

Planned Roads

Shotgun Cove Road extension

Construction on Phase IV of this project is anticipated to begin in 2013, and upon completion, will help the City of Whittier to meet its goals of:

- Improving the safety and efficiency of the Whittier road system;
- Providing new and/or enhance existing recreational opportunities in and around Whittier; and
- Assisting in the economic development of the community.

Shotgun Cove Road provides access to existing public recreational areas used by both residents and visitors to Whittier. A scenic pull-off has already been built, and a picnic area and kayak launch are part of the Phase IV design. This is an important recreational access road and it is critical that it meet current safety standards.

Pedestrian/Bicycle System

The military installed sidewalks with rolled curbs in the core area and sidewalks were added throughout the harbor and Triangle areas in 2004; in other areas of Whittier people walk in the street. In the summer, a fence prohibits pedestrians from walking across the railroad tracks in compliance with Homeland Security regulations. A pedestrian pathway under the railroad yard provides a vital connection from the harbor area to the core area and main residential area. The pedestrian underpass, constructed by ARRC was completed in June 2002, and is a 300-foot-long crossing beneath the rail yard, from the waterfront area to the Whittier town site. A 10-foot-diameter corrugated pipe provides the underpass frame, enclosing a concrete pathway. Covered portal ramps

at each end provide access, and covered pathways lead to the tunnel openings. The tunnel has significantly improved pedestrian safety in the rail yard area.

The Whittier Subdivision Ordinance encourages sidewalks to be constructed within right of ways; however, it lacks specificity regarding placement on the road, or their accompanying improvements such as utility boxes, street trees, or driveway aprons.

ADOT&PF installed a separated bike/walkway between West Camp Road and Passage Canal. That pathway connects to a sidewalk through the harbor area to the Triangle.

Facilities are also limited for cyclists. Except for the separated pathway and wide shoulders leading into Whittier from the tunnel, bicycle facilities are minimal. It is important to preserve pathway corridors and consider wide shoulders for cyclists on all major and collector routes.

Trails

There are three major trails in Whittier: the Portage Pass Trail, the Horsetail Falls Trail, and the Emerald Cove Trail. A project is underway in 2011 to rehabilitate and improve these trails to increase user safety and to make them more accessible to hikers of various abilities.

Portage Pass Trail

The Portage Pass trailhead is on the south side of the West Camp Road across from the tank farm. The trail is steep, but still possible for even the novice hiker. The trail used to be an old mining road and can be dusty during the summer months. Due to the elevation gain, snow can persist into late spring or early summer.

The Portage Pass trail offers views of Passage Canal, the surrounding mountains, and glaciers. A good picnic site is available near Divide Lake about midway along the trail, which leads to Portage Glacier. The trail begins in low shrubs and trees and extends above the timberline.

The majority of the trail is in Chugach National Forest, and is maintained by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) except for a parcel of land at the beginning of the trail that is privately owned. The USFS does not have a formal trailhead because the trailhead is on private property. The Forest Service is trying to obtain these unused parcels for a trailhead and parking. There are other issues with private and ARRC ownership in

relation to this trail. There needs to be a decision on rights of way for the trail.

Horsetail Falls Trail

There is a sign indicating the direction of the Horsetail Falls trailhead at the first fork on Cove Creek Road. The trailhead is located near the city water reservoir and has limited parking. Local residents are concerned with the location of the trailhead being in close proximity to the city's water supply. There is a concern that the water supply could be vandalized, and consequently, advertisement of the trail is limited to prevent a potential hazard for the residents of the community.

The trail winds one mile through alpine country southeast of Whittier. Boardwalks in wet areas help minimize the impact of foot traffic. A lookout platform provides a view of the harbor and nearby mountains. Views include the City of Whittier, the Passage Canal, mountains, glaciers, and a number of falls cascading off distant mountainsides, including Horsetail Falls.

The Horsetail Falls Trail is on city property. This trail was built by the Department of Parks and Recreation in 1998, and turned over to the city to maintain after construction on the trail was complete. An informational sign was stolen from the lookout platform in 2000. Heavy winter snows caused some damage to the boardwalks.

Emerald Cove Trail

The trailhead for Emerald Cove Trail lies beyond Second Salmon Run at the end of the new Shotgun Cove Road. Parking and picnic facilities will be available at the trailhead.

This trail has minimal gains in elevation and relatively easy terrain. It follows near the coastline of Passage Canal offering excellent views of the Passage Canal, mountains, glaciers, rivers and falls. There are opportunities to pick blueberries, salmon berries, and watermelon berries. Open sedge meadows, stream crossings, and spruce rainforests add variety to the trail. The three-mile trail ends at Emerald Cove.

The Department of Parks and Recreation built this trail, and like the Horsetail Falls Trail, it was turned over to the City of Whittier for maintenance when construction on the trail was completed.

Marine Transportation

Small Boat Harbor

In 1972, construction of a 100-berth small boat harbor at the mouth of Whittier Creek was completed primarily with State funds. In 1980, the State expanded the harbor to 332 slips. The City received ownership of the facility from the ADOT&PF in 2004. A 2010 project added 26 additional slips to the harbor, but with ongoing projects and reconfiguration the final total number of slips is still in flux. The harbor's berths remain filled, largely with recreational, commercial fishing, and charter boats. There is consistently a waiting list of 400 to 500.

The harbor berths both commercial and recreational vessels. Local charter boats and a large number of fishing boats regularly use the harbor. In addition, the harbor experiences short-term use from recreational boat owners who dry dock their boats in Whittier. Harbor facilities include a harbormaster office, two boat launch ramps, two boat maintenance grids, and fuel service depot. In addition, the Small Boat Harbor features the Ocean Dock which serves large day-cruise vessels and the City Dock. The City Dock is used primarily by commercial fishers. A crane, boom, and net are available for unloading their catches of shrimp, halibut, or salmon. A boat lift may be used on the City Dock to hoist boats out of or into the water.

The parking lot at the Small Boat Harbor was paved in 2004 and there are now approximately 185 fee permit, 75 short-term customer, and 15 handicapped parking spaces and 8 short-term vessel maintenance stalls available.



A variety of vessels in Whittier's Small Boat Harbor

Charter and tour boat operators have increased, and fishing and pleasure vessels continue to fill the harbor beyond its capacity. At the current rate of increase in larger vessel traffic, vessels from other harbors, and the potential for use by up to 17,000 small trailered vessels from Anchorage, moorage needs greatly exceed Whittier's capacity. Despite the private harbor and expansion of the existing harbor, the waiting list is still long. Construction of new harbors at the head of Passage Canal and Shotgun Cove could help alleviate the pressure to Whittier's Small Boat Harbor.

A study completed by the engineering firm of Peratrovich, Nottingham & Drage estimated that there is an unmet demand of between 1,500 and 2,000 berths for recreational vessels. In addition, there is a demand for larger vessels to accommodate the tourism trade, for fishing and for industrial uses.

Conditions are very crowded in the Small Boat Harbor. Multiple boats may be rafted together on a single float or be forced to anchor off shore creating safety and crowding hazards as well as causing significant delays in boat traffic. In addition to the problems generated by overcrowding, the float system itself is deteriorating and outmoded, with the current larger boats forced to use slips that are too small to safely accommodate them.

Private Marina

Cliffside Marina, completed in 2004, is located west of Whittier Creek and the cruise ship dock. This marina is run by an association similar to a condominium association and is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5 of this document.

Ferry System

The Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) serves Whittier daily on a year-round basis. The M/V Aurora connects Whittier with Cordova and Valdez six days a week. The Aurora began service in 1977. It is 235 feet long, and can transport 250 passengers and 34 vehicles at a service speed of 14.5 knots. Because the Aurora is used for short runs, staterooms are not available, although food service and a solarium are provided.¹³

In 2005, the new fast ferry M/V Chenega began service between Whittier, Valdez and Cordova. The service speed of the fast ferry is 32 knots, significantly

¹³ alaskaferry.com website of Viking Travel, Inc., contract agent of the Alaska Marine Highway System

reducing travel times. The M/V Kennicott now goes from Whittier to Bellingham, Washington.

Upgrades to the ferry terminal and dock were completed in 2005. The design for improvements including a new terminal building, generator and purser's station was completed in 2004.

Information and ferry schedules are available at www.ferryalaska.com.

Rail Barge Dock

Barge traffic in and out of Whittier consists of a weekly ARRC/Alaska Marine Line, LLC (AML) barge and a Canadian National barge that calls in Whittier once every 11 to 12 days.

Lynden Transport operates the weekly 420-foot rail barges between Seattle and Whittier under a contract with ARRC. The rail barges, which carry about 50 rail cars each, plus other freight, provide a marine extension of the Alaska Railroad linking it to other rail systems in the Lower 48 and Canada. In Whittier, the Alaska Railroad unloads the barges and the rail cars are routed to their destinations along the Alaska railbelt.

A barge leaves Seattle every Wednesday and each



barge takes approximately two weeks to complete the round trip. Actual travel time depends on weather.

CN Aquatrain, a division of Canadian National Railway, ships goods to Alaska

via Whittier from Prince Rupert, British Columbia. Making more than 30 roundtrips per year, with about 45 rail cars per barge, CN Aquatrain numbers ConocoPhillips Alaska, BP, Continental Nitrogen & Resources, Spenard Builders and Fort Knox Gold Mine among its clients. A variety of products is carried on each voyage. Many of these products are crucial materials for Alaska's mining, oil and gas, and construction industries. CN anticipates expansion of its operations in Alaska and specifically Whittier as

resource development such as the natural gas pipeline occurs.

Great Pacific Seafood uses the ARRC dock to unload their fishing vessels.

Cruise Ship Facilities

Cruise ships currently stop several times a week at a new, floating dock and embarkation building, from May-September. The dock and building are owned by Whittier Dock Enterprises LLC. The dock and 20,000 square foot building can accommodate a single cruise ship visit each day.

Unlike a port of call, this dock provides the "turnaround" visit for these massive ships, which range up to 950 feet and 90,000 tons. They call at Whittier due to its proximity to Anchorage and tourism venues throughout Southcentral Alaska. The Alaska Railroad also provides a convenient rail terminal across the street, just steps from the cruise ship.¹⁴

ARRC constructed a special rail spur to accommodate transportation on cruise ship passengers arriving and departing from Whittier.

Passage Canal Development reports that approximately 20 Whittier residents are employed at the cruise ship facility, many as longshoremen.

Airport

Whittier Airport is located approximately one mile northwest of the Whittier core area near the Head of Passage Canal. The land is leased from the Department of Defense, which, in August 2004, began negotiations with the ARRC for an extension of the lease to move its expiration to November 2008.

The airport is a non-towered general aviation facility with one gravel 1,480-foot by 58-foot runway, which is in fair condition. The airport property plan includes a gravel apron and taxiway in addition to the runway. The airport is not maintained in the winter. There is no scheduled air service between Whittier and other locations. Travel by air is restricted by frequent adverse weather conditions. The airport functions as a landing strip for small aircraft traveling westward through Prince William Sound that, due to weather or other problems, are unable to cross the Chugach Mountains at Portage Pass. Floatplanes also infrequently land in Passage Canal.

The runway was once 500 feet longer but it was damaged by the 1964 earthquake. The runway is geographically constrained by mountainous terrain, tidal water, and by the only access road into Whittier. There is no lighting system, navigational aids, or fuel available at the airport and there are no based aircraft there.

The ADOT&PF completed a reconnaissance study that identified potential new locations for an airport in 2003. This report compared various future scenarios for the airport including closure of the current airport and airport relocation to one of eight considered sites. Closure of the airport without relocation would eliminate a landing place for wheeled aircraft in western Prince William Sound.

Potential relocation sites along Passage Canal that were considered included Billings Creek, Poe Bay, Logging Camp Bay, Pigot Bay, Point Pigot, Emerald Bay, Shotgun Cove and Tebenkof Bay. The Emerald Bay location was favored in that study for several reasons. It is located only 3.5 miles from Whittier in the direction that will be accessed by Shotgun Cove Road, currently under development. The Emerald Bay site has a relatively low percentage of Part 77 penetrations compared to the other sites considered and has two potential approach surfaces. It would have visual contact with Portage Pass and radio contact with Whittier.¹⁵

The Whittier City Council has passed a resolution in support of a joint endeavor with the ADOT&PF to pursue the Emerald Bay relocation alternative as its first choice, though not eliminating the other alternatives from consideration. This partnership between the State and the local community would entail the development of a more full-service facility with accommodations for wheeled and floatplane operations. They envision an economically self-sustaining facility with services such as transient parking, fueling, and possibly maintenance available. A facility such as this could serve as a base for flight-seeing tours and other visitor services and is a key element in Whittier's plans for economic development.

¹⁴ <http://www.whittiermarina.com/cruisedock/cruisedock.htm>

¹⁵ *Whittier Airport Master Plan Project Reports, Briefing Paper, Technical Memorandum 1 Conditions and Needs Assessment, Technical Memorandum 2 Alternatives Development and Analysis*, Prepared for Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, August 2003

Chapter Five: Current and future economy

Economic development planning can help create jobs, build up a more stable and diversified economy, and improve the quality of life. It provides a mechanism for individuals, government agencies (local, regional, state and federal), and private industry to coordinate economic development efforts in the community. Economic planning represents a multi-year course of action for economic development and diversification activities in the community. Economic development planning can also be used to obtain grants from state and federal granting agencies. Often economic development planning is a requirement to obtain funding for capital improvement projects.

Whittier’s origins as a military outpost led to its emphasis on commercial-industrial port and railroad land uses and its unusual condominium-style housing. It is very much an ocean-oriented town, focused on commercial and recreational boating in Prince William Sound, fishing and shipping. Overland, Whittier is connected to other regions of Alaska by the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel. Both railroad and vehicular traffic go through the Alaska Railroad-owned tunnel, which makes visiting Whittier a unique experience. The city is a pass-through point to the Prince William Sound for thousands of tourists and Alaskan recreational visitors each summer, and is a major railroad transfer point which helps to fuel the economy.

Whittier is very much an ocean-oriented town, focused on commercial and recreational boating in Prince William Sound, fishing and shipping.

Current economic indicators

Economic indicators in a community include such factors as population, cost of housing, employment rates, and median household and per capita income. Table 10 shows Whittier’s economic indicators compared to the Valdez-Cordova Census Area, and the State of Alaska to provide a context to understand the City’s local economy. Personal income trends provide an important measure of economic activity for a local area over time.

Table 10: Comparison of economic indicators

	Whittier	Valdez-Cordova Census Area	Alaska
Population	228	9,636	710,231
Per capita income	\$25,700	\$30,703	\$30,726
Median household income	\$47,500	\$60,383	\$66,521
Potential work force	189	7,278	528,189
Total employment	112	4,484	332,126
Unemployment Rate	11.2%	11.5%	8%
Below poverty level	13 (7.1%)	665 (6.9%)	67,472 (9.5%)

Source: www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca and <http://quickfacts.census.gov> ; U.S. Census Bureau's 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
*Percent of civilian workforce – does not include military personnel

The Whittier economic indicators depict a higher percentage of residents living below the poverty level than the rest of the census area but below the state as a whole.

Whittier’s primary work force is concentrated in transportation, local and state government administration, fishing, education and construction. The 2010 top employers in Whittier¹⁶, ranked by number of workers are:

1. City of Whittier
2. Chugach School District
3. Anchor Inn
4. SE Stevedoring Corp
5. Great Pacific Seafoods, Inc.
6. VMS, Inc.
7. State of Alaska
8. Begich Towers Condo Association, Inc.
9. Shoreside Petroleum, Inc.

¹⁶ Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section.

10. VECO Alaska, Inc.

The 2010 census reported the total potential work force, age 16 and over, at 189 people. The total employed was 112. Government employs approximately 26 workers, private sector workers number 79. Per capita income was listed at \$25,700, median family income \$51,875, and median household income in Whittier was \$47,500 in 2010. Thirteen people, 7.1 percent, live at or below the poverty level.

The 2010 census reported the following division of occupations in Whittier:

Table 11: Occupations in Whittier

Type of occupation	Approximate number employed
Management, professional and related occupations	4
Fishing	33
Services and trades	18
Construction, extraction and maintenance	13
Production, transportation and material moving	17

According to the 2010 US Census, approximately 16 percent of the population is unemployed and seeking work, while 37.1 percent are unemployed and not seeking employment.

The following data comes from the City of Whittier survey administered in 2003.

Table 12: Employment rates

Occupational status	Number
Seasonally employed adults	20
Year round employed adults	46
Self employed	22
Unemployed	13
Retired	24

A large percentage of the population is employed by various government agencies. Many people are self-employed and some alternate between available seasonal work and self-employment.

Whittier Businesses

Whittier businesses provide most of the goods and services one would expect to find in a relatively small Alaskan community. They even offer some unexpected surprises. Businesses range from regional barge transportation to florist services, from fancy dining to fudge, Internet service to tanning.

The Greater Whittier Chamber of Commerce maintains a website with information on local businesses. The website may be found at www.whittieralaskachamber.org.



Table 13: Whittier businesses

Type of business	Number of providers
Tourism related	
Fishing/hunting guides	15
Small boat charters	8
Mid-size/large charters	3
Sightseeing tours	10
Kayaking	3
Day cruises	5
Booking agents	2
Bed & Breakfasts	1
Hotels	2
Restaurants	9
Specialty foods	5
Liquor	1
Information & souvenirs	5
Visitor services	7
Camping	1
Marine services	
Supplies & services	4
Fish purchasing & processing	3
Transportation of goods	
Long distance	3
Regional	1
Services for residents	
General store	3
Laundry facilities	2
Other services	12

Recreation and tourism

Travel and tourism are an important part of Alaska's economy, and especially of Whittier's. The tourist industry's economic contribution expanded by 28 percent statewide between 1998 and 2002. Spending by and on behalf of travelers to Alaska totaled \$2.4

billion in 2002, and contributed 5.2 percent of the Alaska Gross State Product.¹⁷

Whittier is a center for tourism-related marine activities because it is the nearest year-round ice-free port to Anchorage and provides the closest recreational access to Prince William Sound for most of Southcentral Alaska. Whittier's present economy is mostly based on its marine location and the multiple uses of its port and Small Boat Harbor facilities.

Based on the positive trends in recreation and tourism, Whittier's economy is expected to continue to increase in this area. Many businesses in Whittier serve tourism needs.

Hotels and restaurants

Visitors to Whittier can choose from a variety of overnight accommodations. Presently, two hotels, two bed and breakfasts and several cabins offer transient accommodations to visitors in Whittier. Several of these establishments serve food to guests. Additionally, there are numerous businesses and eateries, many located in the Whittier core area. Some of these are seasonal in nature, only operating during the summer tourist season.

Day cruise and charter operations

Large-capacity day cruise ships take tourists on expeditions to view Prince William Sound's spectacular wildlife and scenery. These operations are beneficial to Whittier's economy as they bring in visitors who are often not part of an organized tour and so have time and money to spend in Whittier's restaurants and shops. Two main operators provide this service.

In addition to day cruises, other operators with boats of varying capacities offer more extended tours that can last several days. Smaller operators are often able to offer more flexible excursions that are tailored to the client's preferences. Still others provide transportation service to kayakers, scuba divers, hunters or hikers who wish to start at more remote locations.

¹⁷ Sachs, Adam. *The Alaska Tourism Satellite Account, A Comprehensive Analysis of the Economic Contribution of Travel & Tourism*, prepared by Global Insight for the Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development, April 2004.

In addition to these large and mid-size day cruise operators, small charter operators offer services to small groups for fishing trips, act as water taxis for kayakers and divers and take groups averaging six passengers on tours of the Sound. These small charter operators are an important segment of Whittier's economy. Other services provided include boat and tackle rentals and booking services for visitors seeking various charters or lodging.



Day-cruise vessel moored in Whittier

Cruise ship operations

In June 2003, the City of Whittier approved an agreement with Princess Cruise Lines allowing the return of the cruise ship industry to Whittier. While part of the agreement was a lifting of certain taxes on cruise passengers, the operation provides revenue for the city because it is located on city-owned land and tidelands. The city sells bulk water to the cruise ships.

The cruise industry states that seven percent of their customers are independent travelers. These travelers, who are not part of a tour schedule, book lodging from local bed and breakfast establishments, take day charters and tours, rent kayaks, and eat and shop in Whittier's restaurants and stores.

Because Whittier is a terminus for many cruises, it is the location where cruise personnel are given time off. These individuals also bring business to Whittier. Passengers disembarking for a few hours in Whittier will be looking for activities during their stay. This will provide opportunities to Whittier's residents and businesses.



AMHS Southcentral Alaska route
Source: <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs/>

Alaska Marine Highway

The AMHS was described in Chapter 5. The most recent year for which the Department of Transportation has statistics, 8,141 passengers and 2,782 vehicles embarked from Whittier on the AMHS; 9,728 passengers and 3,012 vehicles disembarked in Whittier. The M/V Kennecott has a bi-weekly cross-gulf route that connects Bellingham, Ketchikan, Juneau, Yakutat, and Whittier. The new fast ferry, M/V Chenega, began service in September 2005. Its capacity for both vehicles and passengers is the same as that of the Aurora, which has been serving Whittier; however, it is anticipated that with the shorter travel times provided by the faster ferry, a greater number of passengers will use the AMHS to travel between Prince William Sound communities. This high volume of passengers traveling to and from Whittier is expected to bring an increase in volume to Whittier's business community.

In addition to bringing visitors to Whittier, AMHS employs residents to assist with docking procedures.

Alaska Railroad

While tourists no longer depend solely on the railroad for access to Whittier and the Sound, many do still use this means of transportation, particularly in conjunction with marine tours, many of which have rail/water package tours. As of mid-September 2010, there were 10,995 passenger arrivals into and 6,753 departures from Whittier via the railroad. These figures do not include the special trains serving the Princess cruise passengers. Through the end of October, 4,686 cruise passengers arrived in Whittier via the railroad and 6,115 departed on the railroad. Many rail/cruise package tourists, principally those on the Princess charter trains, arrive and leave again without ever spending any time or money in Whittier. However, railroad passengers taking the smaller day cruises are more likely to spend time in town and bring business to local merchants.

The ARRC as a state-owned agency has tax-exempt status.

Recreational and commercial boating

The Whittier Small Boat Harbor has 332 slips. In July 2003, while inspecting the Small Boat Harbor, the state harbor engineer found 477 boats moored there. Because of this, the Small Boat Harbor harbormaster had to stop issuing new annual transit moorage agreements. More than 500 names are on the waiting list for boat slips in the Small Boat Harbor and people pay an annual fee to remain on the list. This extensive waiting list has increased from 316 in 1993.

The city receives revenue from Small Boat Harbor usage in four primary ways. Owners of boats moored year-round in Whittier pay property tax on their vessels, moorage fees based on the length of the vessel, and launch fees are charged to users who launch and retrieve boats from the Small Boat Harbor ramps. Commercial charter and tour vessels also pay a per-passenger user fee to the city.

Cliffside Marina, a privately funded and operated marina was constructed on city-owned lands and tidelands near the cruise ship dock. The first phase of this project, completed in 2004, included 112 slips. The new marina operates like a condominium complex and individual 40-foot slips are being sold for \$55,000. This is the first business venture of its type in Alaska.



Privately owned Whittier Marina on dedication day, January 1, 2005. Photo: Jim Barnett

Other recreational activities

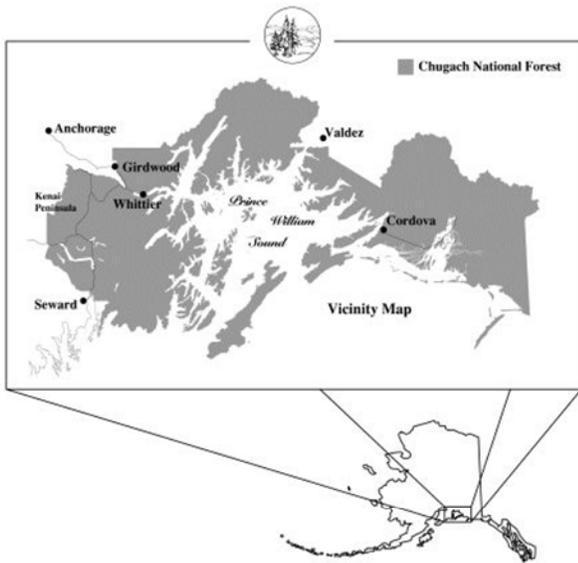
Camping, hiking, kayaking, skiing, scuba diving, snowmobiling and recreational hunting and fishing all draw people to Whittier.



Many kayak excursions leave from Whittier

Whispering Falls, a camping area, across from Shoreside Petroleum on Whittier Street, has been graded and is available for use, although it is still being developed. The city park, northwest of Begich Towers, was recently improved with facilities for picnicking, basketball and soccer. This has been popular with residents and cruise ship personnel on leave.

Available hiking trails are described in Chapter 4. These offer picnic opportunities and scenic views and are used by hikers and some mountain bikers. On a typical weekend day during the summer, up to 250 kayakers could begin a trip from Whittier – some leave directly from the Small Boat Harbor and others load their kayaks onto a charter boat to be taken to another



Source: <http://www.geographynetwork.com/chugach/>

launch site such as Blackstone Bay. The US Forest Service has a kayak sea ranger program to assist and monitor this rapidly growing recreational activity. They have found it necessary to limit the number of campers allowed at some of the more popular kayaker camping locations in the area.

Prince William Sound

Resource management agencies and Prince William Sound tour operators view the Sound as wilderness; both believe this quality is what attracts tourists and recreational users to the Sound. Recreational boating in the Sound is attractive because the waters are more protected than many others in the region.

Passage Canal and the fjords and coves of Prince William Sound are popular with recreational users. Recreation resources in the sound include fish, wildlife for hunting and viewing, wilderness scenery, berry picking, state marine parks, public cabins, remote coves and beaches for camping or anchoring boats, areas managed as wilderness, and protected waters for boating. The US Forest Service conducted two surveys of 12 communities, including Whittier, in and around the Chugach National Forest for their 2002 revision to the Chugach National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. These surveys indicated that the possible land uses that these communities rated as most important were:

- fishing;
- hunting; and,
- undeveloped land/wilderness.

Additionally, the land uses with the highest satisfaction rating across the communities were:

- scenic landscapes; and,
- viewing wildlife.

Whittier, Anchorage, Cordova, Valdez and Girdwood each had a majority of respondents favoring an increase in the tourism services sector, while all other communities had a majority of respondents favoring no change in this sector in their community.¹⁸ In general, the survey responses seemed to indicate the value of Whittier’s unspoiled setting to residents, as well as to visitors and Whittier’s desire to capitalize on the opportunities afforded by their scenic location.

According to *Recreation and Tourism in South-Central Alaska: Patterns and Prospects*, a report on visitor use of Chugach National Forest:

There is a broad agreement in the communities that national and worldwide desire for soft adventure, ecotourism, and controlled risk are important to Alaska. There has been a rise in non-consumptive use of wildlife and land across the region. People used to come to these communities to “kill things and take them away.” Many more people come now to look around, touch the land, and leave with photographs.¹⁹

Commercial fishing fleet

Fishing has historically been a strong economic factor in Prince William Sound. Fish harvested in Whittier include salmon, cod, halibut, herring, rockfish, spotted prawns, and coon-striped shrimp. Great Pacific Seafood bought and processed over 11 million pounds of seafood in Whittier in 2010. More than 300 fishermen sell to the five tenders that Great Pacific sends out to purchase fish where it is being caught. Fish is pumped from the tenders at the DeLong Dock. Primary processing is largely done at the plant in

¹⁸ Chugach National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, 2002 Revision <http://www.geographynetwork.com/chugach/>

¹⁹ Brooks, David J. and Richard W. Haynes, *Recreation and Tourism in South-Central Alaska: Patterns and Prospects*, General Technical Report PNW-GTR-511, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, 2001.

Whittier. All species of salmon, from the Copper River as well as Prince William Sound, make up the majority of the harvest. The remainder is made up of halibut and black cod. Approximately 35 percent of the fish are packaged and shipped fresh; the majority going to wholesale distributors in the Lower 48. The remaining 65 percent of the catch is frozen and more than half is sold in the United States with the rest going to foreign markets.

The Whittier Harbormaster’s office reported that 267 fishing vessels used the Small Boat Harbor between January and September 2010. Gill-netters are by far the largest portion of the commercial fishing fleet in Prince William Sound. Other fishermen include seiners, trawlers, pot shrimpers and long-line fishermen. The Whittier fish processing plant is open from May through September and employs up to 80 workers. Most of the employees are not Whittier residents.²⁰

The Wally Noerenberg Hatchery, built in 1985, is the closest hatchery to Whittier. It is located approximately 20 miles east of Whittier, in Lake Bay on the southern tip of Ester Island, in the South Ester Island State Marine Park. The hatchery is the largest pink salmon production facility in North America. Its returns included 7.2 million pink and 2.4 million chum salmon in 2001. Eight on-site year-round staff and twenty seasonal staff operate the facility.²¹ Other Prince William Sound hatcheries are located at Valdez, Main Bay, Sawmill Bay and Cannery Creek.

According to the Prince William Sound Economic Development Plan, “commercial... fishing continues to be very important, but circumstances continually change.” Questions regarding the future of commercial fishing involve how the world market and farmed fish will affect Alaska’s fish industry, whether aquaculture may be a viable solution, and how science can aid the fisheries.²²

²⁰ Telephone conversation with Roger Stiles, Great Pacific Seafood, Seattle, WA. September 27, 2004.

²¹ *Economic Impacts of the Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation*, p. 11. McDowell Group, February 2002.

²² *Prince William Sound Economic Development District Strategic Development Plan*, July 25, 2001, available online at http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/ardor/pub/MRAD_ARD_SP_PWS00.pdf

Marine services

Providing marine services accounts for much of the industrial, commercial and recreational/tourism employment in the community. Both the private and public sectors are involved in delivering marine services. As previously mentioned, the cruise ship facility and AMHS hire Whittier residents as longshoremen. The port facility creates approximately 20 permanent industrial jobs.

Several local firms offer supplies and services to private and commercial marine clients. These services include marine fuel, marine repair and welding, dry boat storage, self-storage warehousing, and of course, charter services. Two companies provide regional barge transportation throughout Prince William Sound.

The petroleum facility has operated under a City lease since 1992, with 1,000 square feet of waterfront dock and a fuel storage capacity of 45,000 gallons. In addition to marine fuel for recreational and commercial vessels, heating and automotive fuel is provided to the community.

Government

The city employs 20-25 people in the following areas:

Public Safety	5
City Administration	5
Fire/EMS	2
Harbor	8
Public Works	4

This, together with the School District, is a significant portion of Whittier’s workforce. As development occurs, the number of people required to provide services, such as public safety and administration, can be expected to grow as well.

The US government contracts with a local resident to operate the Post Office, which is open five days per week.

General Commercial Services

The number of consumer service related businesses in Whittier increased in recent years. In addition to the hotels and restaurants already mentioned, Whittier businesses include three general stores, two Laundromats, and a variety of other services such as tanning, movie rentals, donut shop, handyman services, television repair, and Internet service. The availability of these services is generally advertised on local bulletin boards and by word of mouth.

There are two condominium associations in Whittier. The Begich Towers, Inc. (BTI) is operated by the Begich Towers Homeowners Association, a non-profit corporation. BTI employs maintenance staff for the upkeep of Begich Towers. The Whittier Manor Association manages the Whittier Manor. Its employees include a maintenance worker and a part-time manager.

Future economic development opportunities

While many look forward to the possibility of community expansion in, and along the proposed road toward, Shotgun Cove or other areas for economic development opportunities, there is also economic potential nearby and readily accessible in the core area, including the existing Small Boat Harbor and at the head of Passage Canal. Development in and around the core area and at the head of Passage Canal could successfully focus on Whittier's more immediate needs, while Shotgun Cove development could respond to Whittier's long-term possibilities as a residential community and tourist destination.

Many development possibilities were discussed during the public involvement process, with the Whittier Planning and Zoning Commission, the Whittier Planning Task Force, and the Shotgun Cove Development Team. Additional economic development opportunities could be explored through the development of a Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Information on CEDS funding is available from the State of Alaska, Department of Commerce at www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca.

The following economic development suggestions are a synthesis of the ideas generated by these groups.

Economic opportunities in Whittier's core area and at the head of Passage Canal

The heart of Whittier is the core area where economic opportunities include the following:

Capitalize on the economic potential of increased tourism.

As shown throughout this chapter, tourism is on the rise and Whittier is uniquely positioned to benefit from this trend. Plan participants stated that when visitors come to Whittier, they should feel welcome and should be made aware of all that Whittier has to offer.

One way to welcome visitors is through an information center. There tourists can learn about Whittier's history, its businesses, and its local attractions. Maps of hiking trails and brochures advertising local eateries, recreational opportunities, and stores should be available. Improved signage could be utilized to direct visitors to areas of interest. The friendly attitude of local residents and business operators will help to make a visit to Whittier pleasurable and will encourage people to return.

As more visitors come to Whittier, demand would be created for additional visitor services. Cruise ship passengers, in town for only a limited time, would want planned tours to such destinations as the Black-footed Kittiwake rookery, the hatchery, or museum. Guided or self-guided walking tours of the town could be planned and hikes or kayak excursions could be facilitated. Additional tourists could support additional retail stores, local art sales, and additional eateries. Other possible businesses to serve tourists could include various forms of shuttle service around town or to the Begich-Boggs Visitor Center in Portage.

Research strategies for attracting new commercial development.

The City should encourage the private sector to develop businesses in Whittier. The process should be made as straightforward as possible, with requirements made clear and easy to access.

The state and federal government frequently has funding available for economic development, which should be pursued. The Rural Information Center (RIC), a joint project of the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education & Extension Service and the National Agricultural Library, is one source for information. Topics include:

- Successful strategies, models, and case studies of community development projects
- Small business attraction, retention, and expansion
- Tourism promotion and development

The RIC can be accessed at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/>. This website also

includes a database of federal funding sources for rural areas.²³

The tank farm and airport lie at the head of Passage Canal.

Port of Whittier Harbor Development Project

The Port of Whittier Harbor Development Project is a regional harbor enhancement initiative that will address immediate and future commercial and recreational boating needs, boost economic development, and serve as a catalyst for transportation infrastructure improvements. The project will involve improvement of the existing Small Boat Harbor and construction of a new boat harbor at the head of Passage Canal.

It is anticipated that the project will be constructed in phases:

- Phase I – Existing Small Boat Harbor Reconfigure and replace aging float system. Slope stabilization has been added.
- Phase II – Head of Passage Canal Construct new, additional boat harbor.
- East boat ramp reconstruction has been completed.

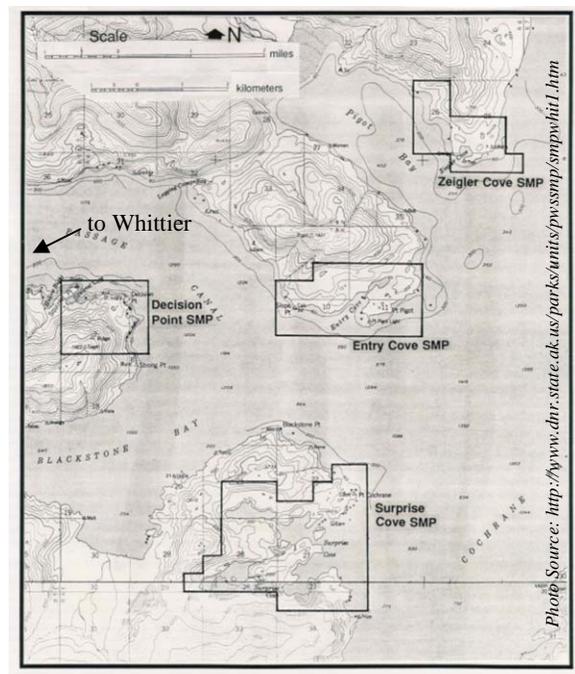
Economic opportunities at and toward Shotgun Cove

The City has been deeded 600 acres of land by the State of Alaska. The new townsite would provide a more attractive setting for visitors and would provide recreational opportunities for them. In return, this would create more employment opportunities in the community

The residents of Whittier would be the major beneficiaries if Shotgun Cove is developed into a new townsite and a center for recreational activity in Prince William Sound. At present, most Whittier residents live in the Begich Towers, Whittier Manor, or the Anchor Annex. The absence of other housing stock is an issue for many residents and discourages some people from living in the community. Development of Shotgun Cove would provide a variety of housing stock and provide more long-term, sustainable jobs in Whittier for local residents. The City’s tax base would

increase and, with this additional revenue, the City would be able to improve its delivery of public services to residents. Greater numbers of visitors would also result in more businesses in the community and a wider variety of goods and services that would be available for local residents. This would include more restaurants, retail outlets, and various services.

Residents of Anchorage and other visitors to Whittier will also benefit from development of Shotgun Cove. At present, the waiting list for moorage at the Small Boat Harbor includes over 400 vessels. For vessels of certain sizes, the wait for a slip could exceed 15 years. A marina at Shotgun Cove would reduce the waiting time.



Four State Marine Parks closest to Whittier

In addition to marine-oriented activities, other recreational activities would be available for Whittier residents and visitors alike. Decision Point State Marine Park, located about two miles beyond Shotgun Cove on the point between Passage Canal and Blackstone Bay, would continue to be accessible from the water but additional trail access could be developed from the Shotgun Cove area. Increased visitors to Whittier and Prince William Sound would result in increased revenue for service providers.

Usage of the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel would increase, as well, resulting in higher toll revenues. With additional rail service for cruise ship passengers

²³ Contact information for the Rural Information Center: 10301 Baltimore Avenue, Room 304, Beltsville, MD 20705-2351. Phone: 1-800-633-7701. Fax (301)504-5181.

and an expected increase in vehicular traffic due to Shotgun Cove development, tunnel hours and schedules will require careful examination.

The private sector members of the Shotgun Cove Development Team will also benefit if Shotgun Cove is developed. As established in a memorandum of understanding (MOU), all contracting for professional services associated with development of City lands will be with the private sector members of the Development Team. In return for their contributions and the risk associated with developing the project, the private sector members of the Development Team will participate in the income generated from the development of Shotgun Cove and subsequent land sales and other income-generating activity.

It is essential that the remaining phases of Shotgun Cove Road be completed to fulfill the development potential this land holds for Whittier. Because of the limited land available in the core area, development of Shotgun Cove is critical to further growth for the City of Whittier.

Chapter Six: Land ownership, use and management

In this chapter, land ownership, present land use, future land use, land use regulation and land management are described.

Land ownership

Approximately 17 square miles, or almost 11,000 acres, exist within the Whittier municipal boundaries. Glaciers or water account for approximately 20 percent of that amount, leaving a total land area of less than 8,000 acres. Some of this land has grades in excess of 33 percent and therefore cannot be easily developed due to its steepness. Land ownership includes the Alaska Railroad Corporation, Federal Government, State of Alaska, City of Whittier, Chugach Alaska Corporation and privately owned and leased lands. See Figure 5: Whittier area land ownership and Figure 6: Whittier core area land ownership.

Federal Government

The federal government, once the sole landowner in Whittier, currently owns approximately 3,651 acres of lands that include acreage in the Chugach National Forest (especially at Trinity Point), the dock along the eastern waterfront in the town core area and lands at the tank farm at the Head of Passage Canal.

ARRC/State of Alaska

The State of Alaska, currently the largest landowner in Whittier, owns approximately 2,776 acres in Whittier acquired through a 1983 National Forest Community Grant Selection. State property includes land along the coastline of Passage Canal and in the Shotgun Cove area. The State received additional lands, most of which are in the Whittier core area, when it assumed ownership of the Alaska Railroad from the Federal government in January 1985. The state owns some of the tidelands and submerged lands in Passage Canal and the state-owned ARRC owns approximately 8,000 feet of waterfront in the core area, which represents about 70 percent of the total waterfront area.

City of Whittier

The City is the second largest landowner within the City Limits. In 1984, state legislation transferred 600 acres of federal lands received by the State directly to the City. Two years later, in 1986, the City received

working title to 228 acres in the Emerald Cove Subdivision (sections 8, 9, and 17). In 1994, it also obtained similar working title to 372 acres in the Shotgun Cove area (sections 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 21 and 22). For the City to obtain patented title to these lands, the federal government must complete patent to the State, and then the City may survey the lands for ultimate and final patent to the City. The City is required to sell lands not needed for public purposes within ten years of receiving title, or by the year 2014. The City owns approximately 1,650 feet or 15 percent of the waterfront in the core area and leases about 5,000 feet of waterfront from the ARRC.

At present, the only land the City has fee simple title to is a few small parcels in the Whittier core area. The City purchased these lands through the General Services Administration (GSA) when the U.S. Army ended its Whittier operations and sold its property.

Chugach Alaska Corporation

The Chugach Alaska Corporation is the third largest landowner in Whittier with a 315-acre parcel in section 18, located just east of the Whittier core area, and another 100 acres in two locations near the site of the proposed Shotgun Cove harbor.

Privately owned and leased lands

There are a small number of parcels of land, less than 250 acres in all, owned by other private interests excluding Chugach Alaska Corporation. Most of these lands are in the Whittier core area and the Head of Passage Canal, with the remainder located along the beginning of the Shotgun Cove Road. About 15 percent of the waterfront is privately held.

Some Head of Passage Canal lands are owned by an Anchorage-based developer and were purchased through a GSA auction. Most other private lands were purchased from prior land sales by the City. The City plans to sell some of its lands at Shotgun Cove once the access road is complete.

At the Head of Passage Canal, the Alaska Railroad leases land to the State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities for an airstrip. The State is expected to decide soon whether to renew this lease. The Alaska Railroad also leases about 5000 feet of waterfront in the core area to the City.

Figure 5: Whittier area land ownership

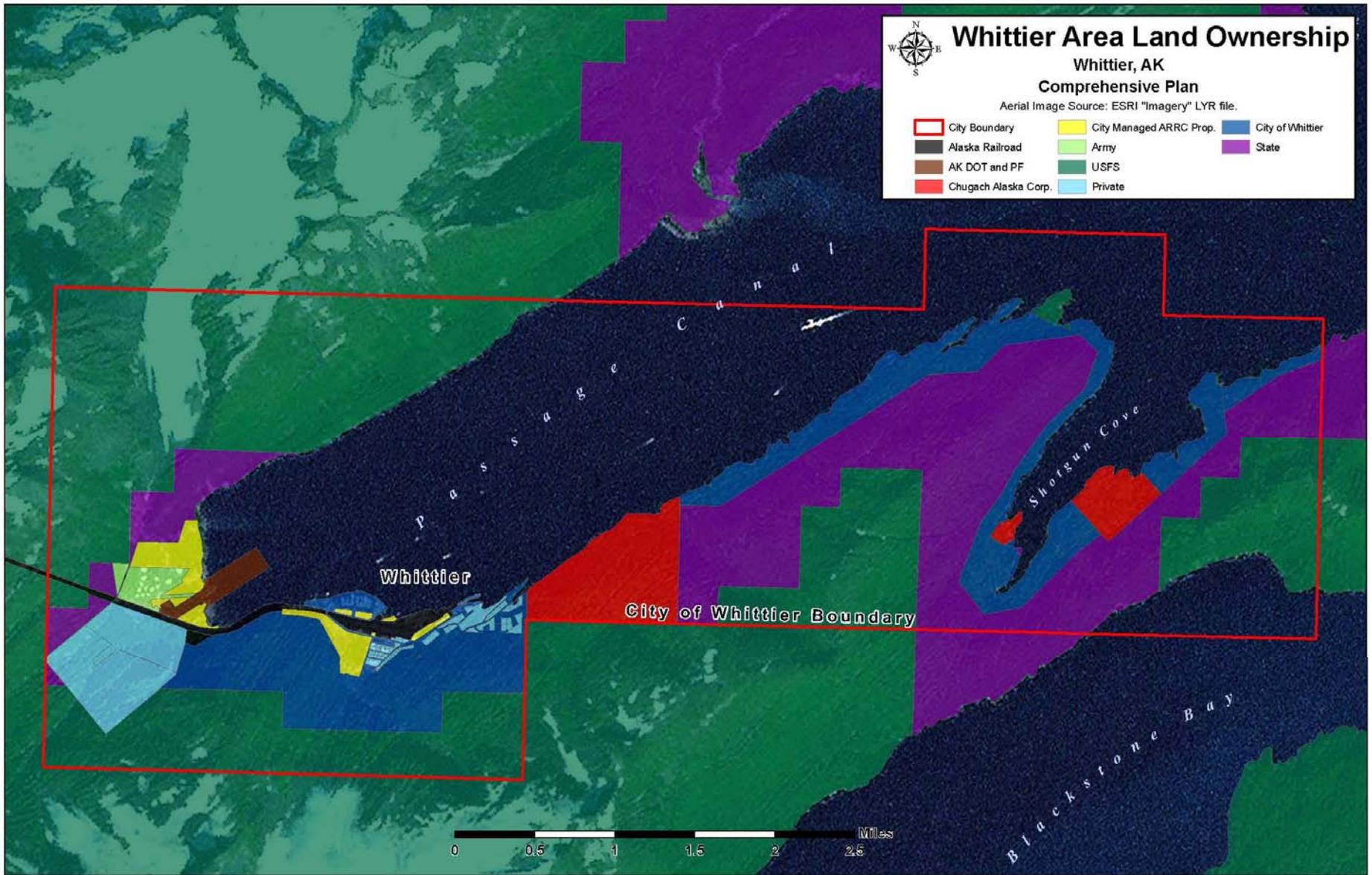
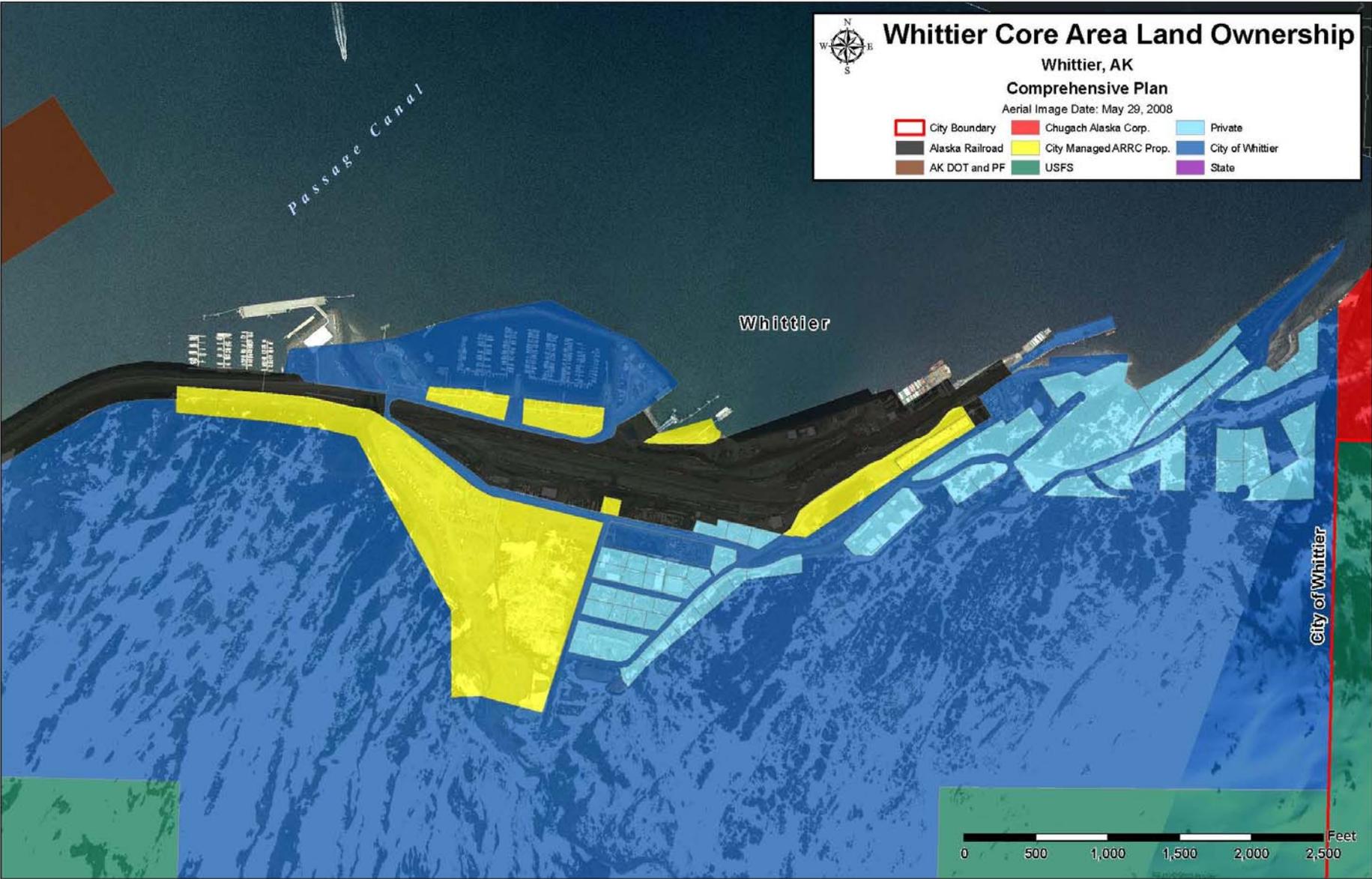


Figure 6: Whittier core area land ownership



In addition to the land leased to the City by the Alaska Railroad, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service leases about 38 acres at the Head of Passage Canal, adjacent to the U.S. Air Force former storage tank farm, to the City.

A parcel of approximately 6 acres, west of the school, is leased by the City to a private developer for use as a camping area.

Existing land use

The existing land uses in Whittier include industrial, commercial, public, seasonal single-family residential, multi-family residential and vacant. Park lands outside of the core area and Head of Passage Canal are vacant. See Figure 5 for a map of existing land uses within the core area.



Part of Whittier's core industrial area

Industrial Use

Approximately 58 percent of Whittier's presently developed land is used for industrial purposes. Industrial uses occur within the 212 acres of the Whittier core area or the Head of Passage Canal.

Major industrial uses include the following:

- the Alaska Railroad's industrial and passenger rail operations,
- roll-on, roll-off barge dock next to the Small Boat Harbor, and
- one seafood processing plant.

Residential

Because almost all residents live in either the Anchor Annex Apartments or the Whittier Manor or Begich Towers condominiums, the amount of land used for residential development is currently very small, about 10 acres. There are also several dwellings located on land the City subdivided and sold east side of the core area during its first years of incorporation.

Commercial

Whittier's commercial businesses are located in the Whittier core area and the harbor triangle. There is no Central Business District and commercial uses occupy a very small amount of the total land base, less than 5 acres. Commercial businesses are also located in Begich Towers.

Whittier has several new businesses. A new 25-room, 26,000 square foot hotel, a cruise ship dock, marina, and several smaller commercial ventures are all located along the waterfront. A 5-acre privately managed parking lot has been in operation on Whittier Street since 2000.

Public

The small boat harbor is the major public facility in Whittier. The small boat harbor and its adjacent parking areas, boat and trailer storage areas and support facilities, comprise much of the existing waterfront development. The waterfront area within the core area is comprised of approximately 13,000 feet.

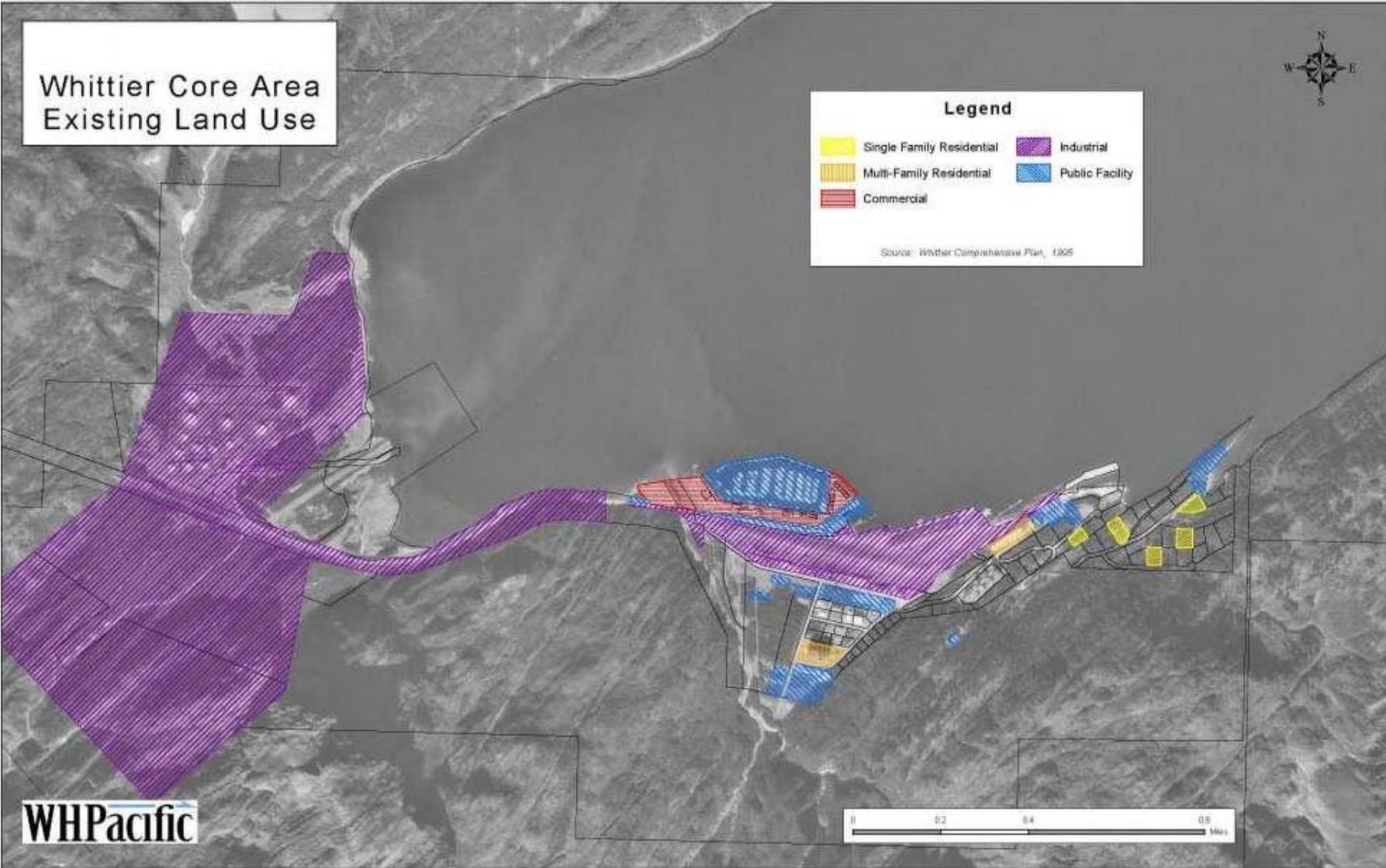
Smitty's Cove, located east of DeLong Dock, is used as a camping area, barge ramp, kayak launch and diving area. As an area with year-round water access, it is often used in diver and search and rescue certification and training.

Additional major public facilities include the school complex (about 5 acres), City offices (in Begich Towers), and the public works maintenance building. The city water wells are also located in this area. All public facilities are located in the Whittier core area and many are in former military structures. The police have also set up a firing range located at the Head of Passage Canal.

Open Space/Recreational Uses

A one-acre private campground is located west of the school. In addition, city land adjacent to Glacier Avenue and Whittier Street contains a small park.

Figure 7: Whittier current land use



Vacant

Over 900 acres of land within the city limits is vacant or open space. However, much of this land has steep slopes, heavy water run-off, or minimal amounts of top soil. Some is even glaciated. Of the 212 acres in the core area, only about 30 acres are uncommitted land suitable for development.

Future land use

In the past, all development in Whittier could easily be accommodated by the relatively small amount of lands in the Whittier core area and at the head of Passage Canal. This land base, however, is inadequate to meet the variety and extent of projected land uses. While Whittier wants to concentrate future tourism/recreation and commercial development in these areas, it also wants to encourage residential and commercial growth to the east in Emerald Bay and Shotgun Cove areas. Most of these lands are presently undeveloped and in their natural state.

The future land use section can be divided into the Whittier core area, head of Passage Canal, and the Emerald and Shotgun Cove areas. Future land uses are shown on Figure 6.

Future land use in the Whittier core area

This area presently serves as the center for all residential and commercial development and major waterfront facilities, the Small Boat Harbor and industrial port. The area supports a wide variety of mixed uses and much of the developable land base is occupied.

In the future, Whittier envisions this area continuing to support a wide variety of uses, with growth in tourism and recreational uses. The Whittier Museum needs a permanent location that will house its many exhibits in a visitor-friendly location. The U.S. Forest Service has approached the ARRC about the potential of enhancing the waterfront area, adjacent to the proposed passenger terminal, with a small visitor center. The visitor center would accommodate small groups and would include informational kiosks, outdoor viewing platforms, and restroom facilities. It would be appropriate to set land aside for these uses.

The core area serves as the center for all public services and facilities. The City offices and police, fire, school and public works facilities are located here. A goal of the City is to consolidate the City facilities and have recently pursued funding for a new

police, fire and emergency services building. With the anticipated increase in tourism, the need for expanding these services is recognized. Sites for new government facilities and a potential school site will also be reserved in the Shotgun Cove area. In the near future, the Whittier core area will continue to serve as the center for City services.

The land along Glacier Avenue is city owned and anticipated to be set aside for residential property.

At present, virtually all residents live in the Whittier core area in Whittier Manor, Anchor Inn Annex or Begich Towers. The City envisions these buildings continuing to be used for this purpose. Single-family residential development will be encouraged to be located in the Whittier core area and along the Shotgun Cove road. All of these lands have been platted and subdivided and most have been sold to private individuals.

Overall, future land use in the Whittier core area will continue to be mixed. The City, however, will guide expansion of the commercial business center in the core area and minimize use conflicts through this comprehensive plan.

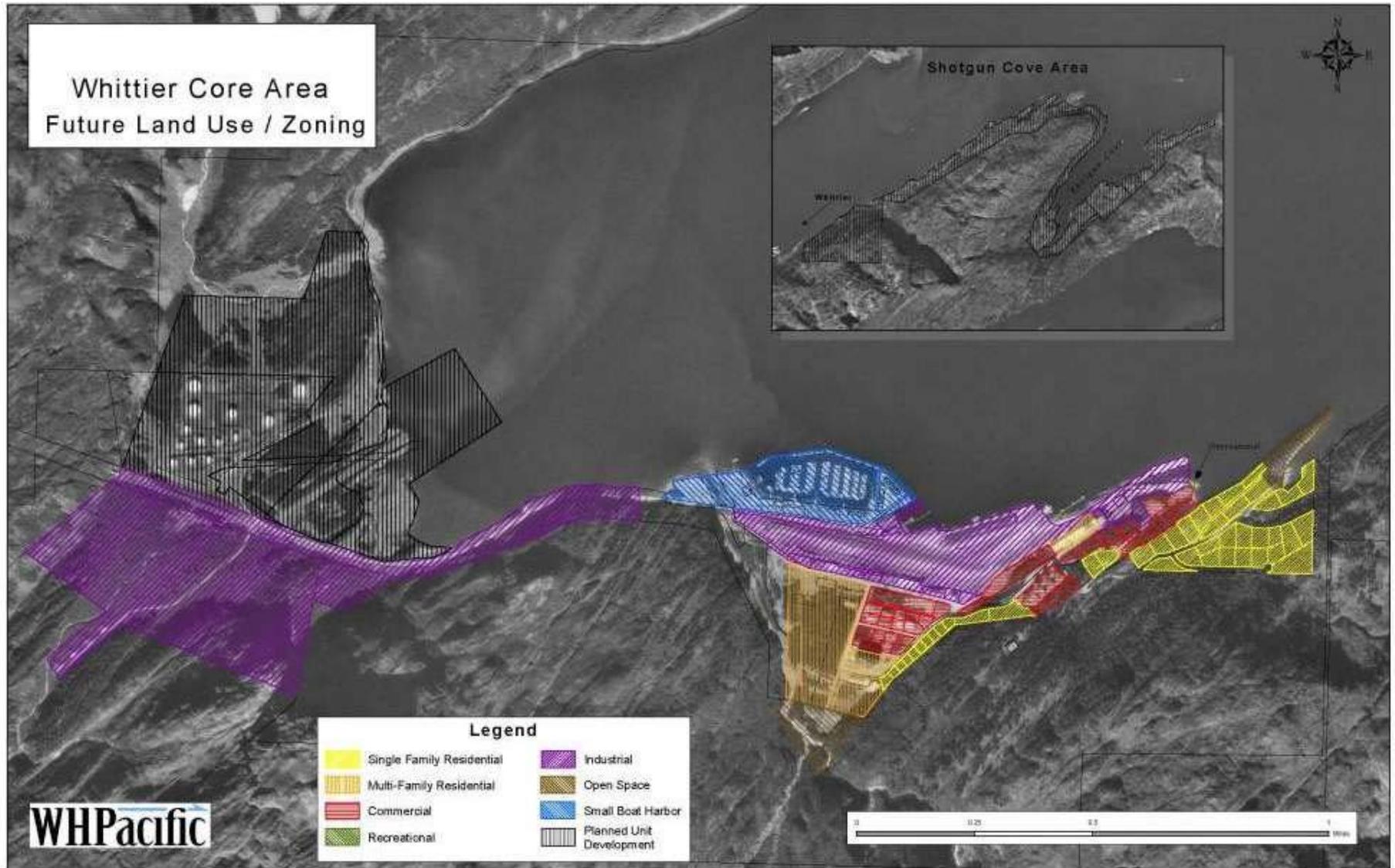
Future Land Use at the Head of Passage Canal

With exception of the fuel tank storage facilities, a short airstrip and the City's former landfill area, most of the lands at the head of Passage Canal are presently undeveloped.

The preferred future use for much of the lands at the head of Passage Canal is industrial and commercial harbor expansion. Possible industrial uses include an offloading facility for fuel barges, an industrial dock and storage yards for freight passing through an industrial port at the site, and a combination of recreational boating facilities.

Public input into this comprehensive plan indicated that while industrial uses should continue in this area, it is also appropriate to encourage light commercial and recreational uses in this area, particularly near the airport. Examples of recreational uses include a campground, trail, viewing/picnic area fishing lagoon, fish viewing area and city park. Light commercial uses included a small boat repair shop and a seasonal open market or regular Whittier Fair for summer visitors.

Figure 8: Future land use/zoning map



The City could regulate business licenses for vendors to prevent excessive duplication of services or competition with established local businesses. An informational kiosk or gazebo at the head of Passage Canal, would provide information to visitors.

The City has entered into a lease with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to use a 37-acre tract at the head of Passage Canal. The City Police department has developed a small rifle range in the area.

The City is currently working on a land management plan for the development of an area encompassing approximately 105 acres of ARRC lands that are managed by the City at the head of Passage Canal. *The Head of Passage Canal Land Management Plan* is intended to help facilitate small boat harbor, residential, commercial, industrial, and/or open space/recreational opportunities. The purposes of the plan are to provide a layout for future development, direction to proceed with a design study and feasibility analysis, and how to share costs among the public and private entities having an interest in its development. The plan will assess road, rail, and marine facilities, utilities, and other infrastructure needs for development.

The lease signed in 1998 between the ARRC and the City recognized that having essentially all of the developable land in the City under one management regime would “enhance development of the premises and the adjacent City-owned land (including tidelands), thereby generating needed lease revenues, and enable the City to tailor its long-term needs to its unique requirements.”

The City anticipates designating the head of Passage Canal as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) under Chapter 17 of the Whittier Municipal Code. The intent of this designation is to allow flexibility in an area where standard commercial development is balanced with a mix of open space and recreational areas. The PUD designation would encourage the preservation of trees, shorelines, natural topography and geologic features, the prevention of soil erosion, and would promote an environment of stable character in harmony with the surrounding area. A development project would have to be designed to provide both variety and diversity, so that the maximum long-range benefit would be gained and the unique features of the development site would be preserved and enhanced.

Future Land Use in Emerald Cove and Shotgun Cove

At present, most lands in the area east of the Whittier Core are undeveloped and in their natural state. Until recently, the lands were part of the Chugach National Forest and managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

The transfer of most lands in this area to the State, the City and Chugach Alaska Corporation means that these lands are one step closer to development. Whittier wants to encourage appropriate development for the Emerald Cove area that includes single-family residential, multi-family residential, limited public purposes (school, utilities, and parks) and open space. The City wants to prohibit industrial development. It is expected these lots will be developed with single-family homes with independent utilities.

The City's intent for the Shotgun Cove area is to encourage development that will support a quality living environment for year-round residents, seasonal residents and tourism/recreational users. Construction of the proposed Shotgun Cove Road and Harbor is a necessary prerequisite for full-scale development in this area. Uses that will be permitted include

- commercial (hotels, lodges, restaurants, stores);
- public purposes (boat harbor, parking);
- single and multi-family residential; and
- open space/recreational uses for lands that are unsuitable for year round development.

The City is working closely with the Chugach Alaska Corporation (CAC) and State of Alaska to encourage development of the Shotgun Cove area. The CAC is interested in establishing commercial developments, and the State may dispose of additional lands. The City encourages high to medium density developments (commercial development and condominiums to 1-acre lots) on lands located close to the Cove's waterfront to receive an adequate return on their capital investments. However, the State lands are in the higher elevations located away from the shores of the Cove, and could allow low-density development (1- to 5-acre lots).

The following table compares the approximate current and recommended future acreage of Whittier's various zoning districts.

Table 14: Zoning Acreage Comparison

Zoning District	Existing Acreage	Future Acreage
Single Family Residential	33	35
Multi-family Residential	8	32
Commercial	27	27
Planned Unit Development	23	1,107
Industrial	402	329
Small Boat Harbor	34	35
Open Space	4	13
Public Facility	4	-
Recreational	-	132

Land use regulation

Under Alaska Statutes, Title 29, the City has the option to adopt planning, platting and land use regulation powers. To carry out these powers, the City established a five member Planning Commission appointed by the City Council, and adopted zoning and subdivision ordinances.

Alaska State Statute Title 29 requires that a zoning code must be based on a land use plan in an approved Comprehensive Plan.

Title 29 of the Alaska Statutes governs the use of land in municipalities. The City of Whittier was incorporated in 1969 as a fourth-class city. The State Municipal Code (Title 29), revised in 1972, reclassified fourth-class cities as second-class cities. Whittier became and has remained a second-class city because of its population, which has always remained well below the 400 resident threshold for first-class cities. Whittier falls under AS 29.35.260, which states that a second class city may provide for planning, platting, and land use regulation as, provided by AS 29.35.180(a) for first and second-class boroughs.

Alaska Statute 29.40.030 states, in part, that the comprehensive plan is a compilation of policy statements, goals, standards and maps for guiding physical, social, and economic development, both

private and public. Comprehensive plans include a land use plan component.

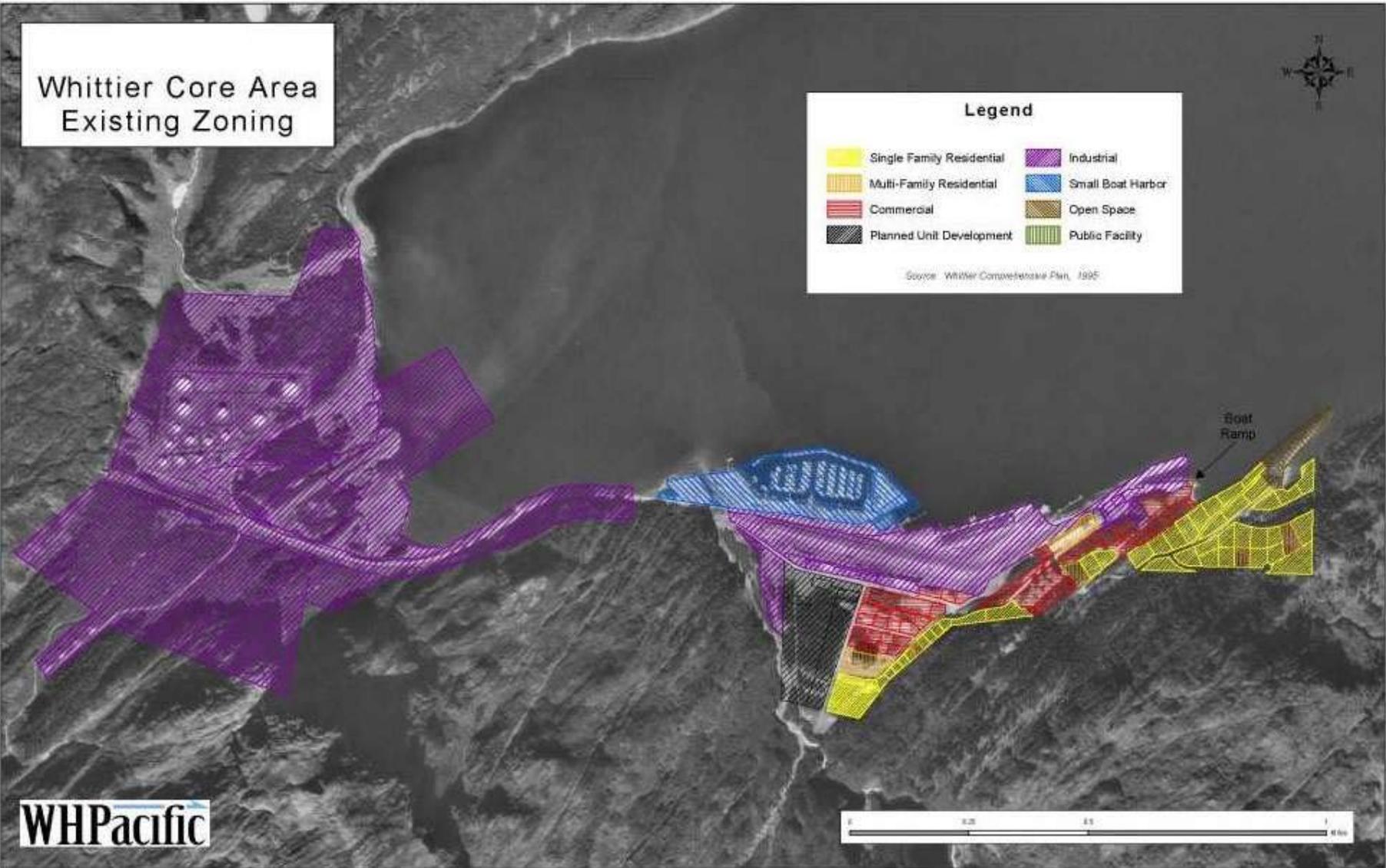
Alaska Statute 29.40.040 further requires, in part, that in accordance with a comprehensive plan and in order to implement the plan the City shall adopt zoning regulations restricting the use of land and improvements by geographic districts.

Zoning Ordinance

The present zoning ordinance, adopted in October 1984, uses a multi-district zoning approach and has eight districts. These districts are: single family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, small boat harbor, open space, planned unit development and Marine Park. The ordinance is based on a system of permitted and conditional uses for each of the eight districts. Building dimensional requirement, such as minimum lot area, setbacks, building heights and number of parking spaces, are also identified as standards applying to each district. In addition, the ordinance identifies how it will be administered by the City, how nonconforming uses will be treated, the process and standard for determining variances, appeals and conditional uses, and how the City can amend it. Figure 7 shows the existing zoning.

The Whittier Coastal Management District has revised their program to meet the new regulations.

Figure 9: Existing zoning



Cooperative Agreements

The City can use cooperative agreements or memorandums of understandings (MOUs) with one or more parties to help provide effective land management. In general, an agreement describes terms two or more parties agree to meet to help better provide a mutually beneficial service.

In 1998, the City signed a Ground Lease and Management Agreement with the Alaska Railroad Corporation. In the agreement, both parties recognized the importance of the ARRC land within the city core area. This land, estimated to be 46 percent of the usable land available in the city core, is vitally important to the City's future. The agreement recognizes this fact and sets forth conditions by which the City is given the authority to manage these lands and to provide the ARRC a percentage of any sublease payments.

The Ground Lease and Management Agreement also recognizes the need to develop a mutually acceptable Land Management Plan, or updated Whittier Comprehensive Plan. The Management Plan is intended to guide development of leases on the ARRC property. The Agreement states that should the City seek to sublease or develop a portion of the leased premises in a manner that does not conform to the Comprehensive Plan, the City must first consult with ARRC. Should the ARRC object to the proposed nonconforming development, the City shall not be allowed to proceed. The agreement is effective until November 12, 2033; two additional 35-year terms of extension are a part of the agreement, taking the duration of the agreement to November 12, 2108.

At present, the City uses other cooperative agreements or MOUs with the State and Federal government to manage public facilities and provide public services. An example of a multi-party cooperative agreement is one signed for the Shotgun Cove Road Project. Participants include the City of Whittier, the Federal Highway Administration/Western Federal Lands Highway Department and Chugach Alaska Corporation. This agreement sets out the responsibilities of each party in the development of the road to Shotgun Cove.

An MOU was also signed between the City of Whittier, Chugach Alaska Corporation and several private businesses to do initial planning and future management and development of lands to the east of

the Whittier core area. The agreement focuses on lands in Shotgun Cove and development concerns such as the provision of sewer and water services.

The City should continue using cooperative agreements as a way of accomplishing desired projects and providing public services. This is particularly important in consideration of the new demands placed upon the City and its residents by visitation caused by improved road access.

Municipal Land Disposal Program

One land management tool available to the City as a landowner is the use, lease and sale of its own lands. When the City was first formed, it purchased lands in the Whittier core area from the General Service Administration. The City retained ownership of some of the parcels it purchased, but it disposed of most. To raise monies for the newly incorporated City, it had a land sale, but this restricted its ability to better influence how development would occur. For example, most of the lands sold were never developed, and at present, the City owns very little land in the core area to meet future needs.

Since the initial land sale, the City has periodically had sales to dispose of small amounts of property it considered excess. The City has not prepared a long-term land sales program but it has examined the need for the lands to be sold. The City's receipt of 600 acres in the Emerald Bay and Shotgun Cove areas emphasizes the need for it to prepare a comprehensive land development and disposal program. Terms of the conveyance from the state require the City to dispose of all lands not needed for public purposes by 2014. This is an extension from the previous 2004 conveyance. This program should identify lands needed for present and future public needs (schools, roads, watersheds, etc.), and the best means for development and disposal of lands.

Land Leases

An alternative to the sale of municipal lands is to lease them for purposes that meet public needs. The City may determine that an undeveloped parcel of municipal land may be used for a development activity for a period of years before it is needed for other purposes. Leasing, rather than disposing of lands, the City can generate revenue while retaining ownership through a lease.

An example of land that the City leases to businesses is the Triangle area with shops, charter companies,

restaurants and other businesses that lease City land and thereby bring revenue to the City.

While the City owns some small parcels in the Whittier core area that could be leased to a developer, the acreage that would be available for lease in Shotgun Cove and along the proposed road to Shotgun Cove would substantially increase the City's land available to be leased.

The City may also obtain advantage by leasing lands from other private and public parties.

Covenants

Covenants are a common method municipalities use to maintain a degree of control of land uses after disposing of municipal lands through a land sale. Covenants are requirements, restrictions or limitations the City would place on lands by including them in the terms of the deed of sale. Covenants can be used with Whittier's present form of multi-district zoning, but the City should use them cautiously, as they are conditions on the deed and difficult to change or remove.

As an example, when the City disposes of its lands, it may want to attach covenants to the sale that limit the buyer from subdividing the land or require the buyer to build a house within a specified period of time. This would help prevent the holding of land for speculation without development or improvement. The hold of unimproved property which is in the core area and served by all utilities has contributed to the lack of single family housing in the community.

Chapter Seven: Security

September 11, 2001, brought home the reality of terrorism to Americans. Taking security measures is no longer a choice, but is mandated by both the government and common sense.

Whittier is the farthest north year-round ice-free port. Because it is a critical port of entry for goods, including most hazardous materials transported into Alaska via barge and rail, as well as being a busy tourist destination in the summer with day trippers, sport fishing, and cruise ships bringing in large numbers of visitors, it is very important that plans are made to ensure the safety of Whittier's residents, visitors, and facilities. Acknowledging Whittier's strategic importance, outside agencies have invested and must continue to invest in security training, equipment and planning in Whittier.

This chapter explores the various facets of security in Whittier.

Whittier is a port community and is therefore affected by the regulations mandated by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) to ensure security. When the Coast Guard determines that additional security measures are necessary to respond to a threat assessment or to a specific threat against the maritime elements of the national transportation system, the Coast Guard may issue a Maritime Security (MARSEC) Directive setting forth mandatory measures. Each facility owner or operator must comply with any instructions contained in a MARSEC Directive issued by the Commandant of the Coast Guard. MARSEC levels range from Level 1, Normal, to Level 3, Incident Imminent. Specific guidelines are given for necessary actions at each level.

Whittier Area Maritime Security

The Whittier Area Maritime Security (WAMS) committee works under the aegis of the Coast Guard to ensure safety. This committee is chaired by the USCG Port Captain who operates out of Anchorage. Other members include the Vice Chairman (Whittier's Chief of Police) who generally runs the meetings, the Fire Chief, the harbormaster, and representatives of various agencies and facilities operating in Whittier including the Boatowners' Association, AMHS, ARRC, cruise ship companies, tunnel contractor, and the private marina. WAMS was formed under guidelines from the USCG.

Created by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Joint Terrorism Taskforce presents information to the WAMS committee to keep them up to date on developments and procedures. The State of Alaska Office of Homeland Security - Alaska State Defense Force has assigned a unit to Whittier and its members conduct monthly drills providing both land and waterside security.

Security is a multi-layered endeavor. The WAMS committee coordinates security efforts spanning all of Passage Canal. Beneath WAMS, individual facilities have security plans. These include the AMHS ferry system, the ARRC, and the cruise ship facilities. Individual vessels that carry over 149 passengers or weigh over 100 tons have a vessel security officer who is responsible for training vessel staff and filing a vessel security plan with the port harbormaster. The plans are kept on file by the harbormaster and the Police Department.

Under the auspices of the WAMS committee, all of Whittier's various hazard and security planning is coordinated. This includes planning for contingencies such as tsunamis or earthquakes, avalanches, oil spills, human attacks and hazard mitigation. Much of the funding for compliance with security regulations comes through grants from the Homeland Security Administration.

Each member of the WAMS committee and others with a role in Whittier's security has a 24-hour contact number. State coordination is facilitated through the State Office of Domestic Preparedness.

The Alaska Marine Highway System, Alaska Railroad Corporation, and the Whittier cruise ship facility have security plans in place because of the size of vessels or number of passengers served. The following sections detail more about the security of these facilities.

AMHS

Because the ferry, which docks in Whittier, carries more than 149 passengers, it must have a vessel security officer and vessel security plan. In addition, AMHS enforces strict security measures on travelers and vehicles using the system, including:

- Unaccompanied vehicles are searched prior to being loaded on board;
- Adult passengers must present government-issued photo identification;

- Only ticketed passengers may access the baggage carts;
- Visitors are only permitted aboard AMHS vessels when accompanied by authorized personnel;
- All vehicles are checked for hazardous materials;
- Unattended baggage is not permitted in terminals; and
- Passengers are warned that additional security measures may be imposed as needed.

ARRC

There are three major facilities in Whittier, Alaska, which are owned by the Alaska Railroad Corporation, that require security planning.

1. Rail-Barge slip: ARRC owned and operated, this slip services rail-barge traffic from Seattle, Washington, and Prince Rupert, British Columbia.
2. Prince William Sound Cruises dock: ARRC leases waterfront property to this day-cruise company that has installed an office and floating dock. The facility does not receive vessels certificated for over 150 passengers.
3. Delong Dock: General service dock primarily used for commercial fishing vessels, local freight vessels under 100 gross tons, small cruise ships carrying under 150 passengers and an occasional cruise ship certificated for over 150 passengers.

Most Whittier residents live within sight of this facility, which is patrolled routinely by officers of the Whittier Police Department and operates under the guidelines set by WAMS.

The security administration and organization of these facilities is handled via the existing Alaska Railroad Security program. This program is modeled as a standard railroad police force consisting of a Senior Agent overseeing Railroad Security Agents and programs system wide. The Railroad Agents are responsible for all aspects of rail security for the system including emergency response management.

While Railroad special agents have the ultimate security responsibility at the facility, the day-to-day operation is with the barge slip manager being the employee in charge. Contract security officers are assigned and perform the entry control functions to the

rail yard and perform extra security functions during barge operations. This is a new requirement and there will be contract security officers present year round.

As additional security requirements are established by the Department of Homeland Security and other government departments, the number of security officers and related equipment are expected to increase at all railroad facilities.

Cruise ship facility and adjacent marina

Because of the high volume of passengers traveling on cruise ships, each ship has a security officer on board. Additionally, the cruise ship terminal has a facility security officer responsible for security screening prior to passenger boarding. The City participates in regular tabletop exercises with the cruise ship facility security staff.

With its proximity to the cruise ship facility, it is important that the private marina also have security measures in place. The marina management established a Security/Rules Committee, which developed a security plan for the facilities. This plan includes fencing with fob or card activated gates at the gangways, security cameras internet accessible to the Coast Guard, and alarms to alert personnel to any tampering with the security system. Security measures will be implemented at the marina and at the dock serving Phillips and Major Marine cruise vessels.

Future security needs

Cross-disciplinary planning for emergencies is the first step in preparedness. It is essential that in planning for further development in Whittier's core area, Head of Passage Canal, or in Shotgun Cove that the more stringent standards of today's security be taken into account. Location of facilities must be planned so that public institutions are placed an appropriate distance from potential hazards.

Airport

With land access limited to the single-lane tunnel, an airport is considered an important link to the rest of the state. A beacon to assist pilots to land in poor weather would increase the effectiveness of an emergency-access air facility and prevent Whittier from being inaccessible in the event of a tunnel shutdown. The beacon is a requirement for airports to be used for visual approaches at night. Lighted wind indicator, runway edge lighting, and runway end identifier lights also aid night visual approaches. A vertical glide

slope indicator(s), such as PAPI or VASI, is also important for emergency flights.

A global positioning system (GPS) instrument approach that would allow landing when visibility is as low as 1 mile would also help in emergencies. Visual landings can occur when visibility is more than 3 miles. A long enough runway (3200 feet, but as short as 2400 feet in some conditions) and clear obstacle free zone and threshold siting surfaces would be needed for an instrument approach.

City facilities

Improved security equipment is needed to adequately screen for potential threats entering Alaska via barge or rail through Whittier. Sensor equipment to test for the presence of hazards such as radioactive material or certain poisons would greatly increase the security of Whittier and the communities, including Anchorage, through which the trains run.

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Chapter Eight: Other plans and recommendations

Various government agencies and private entities, including but not limited to the Alaska Railroad Corporation, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, the National Wildlife Federation, the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and the USDA National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), have been working with the community to develop plans that include development in Whittier and its immediate vicinity. This chapter provides an overview of other planning documents that affect Whittier.

City of Whittier, Alaska, Local Hazards Mitigation Plan, February 2008

The Whittier LHMP, adopted in 2008, describes natural hazards that threaten the community and potential actions to lessen or remove the impacts of these hazards. Identified hazards affecting Whittier include flood, wildland fire, earthquake, avalanche tsunami, severe weather, landslide, and erosion.

Community assets were identified and their vulnerability to each potential hazard was assessed. Whittier is a small community in a constrained space; therefore, most hazards impact the whole community to some degree.

Levee failure was identified as a threat, as well. The plan stated “The Whittier Creek Levee was constructed approximately 50 years ago. Over the course of time, the levee protection has eroded, and the stream channel has filled in, bringing into question the ability of the levee to provide protection to many key facilities in downtown Whittier.”

Any development or construction projects in Whittier should be screened against the LHMP to ascertain the vulnerability of the location under consideration and to see if mitigation actions are necessary to more safely develop the area.

Reviewed on a regular basis, the LHMP is scheduled for update in 2013.

Sustainable Economic Development for the Prince William Sound Region, September 2005

This document was prepared for the National Wildlife Federation, Alaska Office, by Eco-Systems: Economic and Ecological Research in collaboration with the

Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) and the University of Alaska Anchorage. The purpose of the document is to assist Prince William Sound communities to “capture economic opportunities afforded by improved access while maintaining control over residents’ economic future and quality of life.”²⁴

The goals of this project were to:

- Identify opportunities and challenges to diversify and grow the Prince William Sound economy while improving the quality of life for Prince William Sound residents and maintaining the exceptional natural environment.
- Help foster and strengthen partnerships for economic development.
- Consider new pathways to a prosperous economic future.

Whittier Water System Master Plan, June 2005

The purpose of this study was to update the City’s Water System Master Plan that was completed in 1990.

The updated plan reviewed the City’s existing water system; gave an analysis of water system needs related to increased cruise ship dockings, tourism activities, and overall community growth and commercial expansion; reviewed water system needs for development at Head of Passage Canal and Shotgun Cove; discussed existing water source quality and treatment requirements; and analyzed alternative water well locations.

Forest Service Planning Projects

The 5.5-million acre Chugach National Forest in Southcentral Alaska forms a great arc around Prince William Sound on the Gulf of Alaska. The Forest stretches more than 200 miles from southeast of Cordova to the eastern Kenai Peninsula. The diverse landscapes of the Forest include high altitude icefields, rugged mountain peaks, tidewater glaciers, and extensive wetlands.

²⁴ Fay, Ginny, et al. *Sustainable Economic Development for the Prince William Sound Region*, September 2005. Accessed online, January 5, 2012, http://www.nwf.org/~media/PDFs/Regional/Alaska/PRCA_PWS-Sustainable-Economic-Development.ashx

The Chugach National Forest was created by presidential proclamation in 1892 as the Afognak Forest and Fish Culture Reserve. For more than a century, the Forest has provided outstanding fish and wildlife habitat and, more recently, world-class recreation and tourism opportunities. Fish, wildlife, and recreation/ tourism continue to be the major resources and uses of the Forest and represent its greatest potential for future management.

The Chugach National Forest is the second largest in the National Forest System and has three distinct geographic areas: the Kenai Peninsula, Prince William Sound, and the Copper River Delta.

The Prince William Sound area encompasses 2,625,140 acres (48 percent of the Forest). It is an area of forested islands, intricate coastlines, and tidewater glaciers, with portions still recovering from the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill of 1989. Lands in the western portion were designated as the Nellie Juan-College Fjord Wilderness Study Area in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980. The Glacier Ranger District where Whittier is located encompasses most of western Prince William Sound.

Chugach Forest Plan

The first Chugach Forest Plan under the National Forest Management Act was completed in 1984. Revision of this plan was launched in 1997 with publication of a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register. More than 3,000 comments were received during this initial scoping.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement and Forest plan were released in September 2000 for public review and comment. During the revision effort, over 33,000 written comments were received and analyzed.

The Revised Land and Resource Management Plan may be viewed and downloaded from the following interactive websites.

Chugach National Forest Homepage:

http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach/forest_plan/plan_docs1.html

Forest Plan Interactive website:

The 2002 revision of the Chugach National Forest *Revised Resources and Management Plan* may be accessed at:

http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fs8_028736.pdf

The following excerpts from the *Revised Resources and Management Plan* provide a sampling of the plan's direction regarding the Whittier area.

“Recreation and Tourism Recreation and tourism in Prince William Sound will be focused on the summer months with little activity during the winter. Within the radius of a day use zone from Whittier, along the east side of the Sound and near the community of Chenega Bay, small dispersed recreation developments will exist to accommodate increased recreation activity” p. 3-17.

“Emphasize wilderness values in western Prince William Sound. Provide recreation opportunities near Whittier to address projected increased recreation demand” p.A-2.

Public comments are reported as saying:

“A majority of respondents in 8 of the 12 communities (excepting Anchorage, Kenai, Soldotna, and Sterling) indicate that the proper Forest response to increased use of Prince William Sound due to the new Whittier Road is to develop minimal new facilities to mitigate impacts rather than more facilities to enhance use.

“Whittier, Anchorage, Cordova, Valdez and Girdwood each had a majority of respondents favoring an increase in the tourism services sector, while all other communities had a majority of respondents favoring no change in this sector in their community” p.B-12.

Prince William Sound Human Use Study

The Prince William Sound (PWS) Framework is the Chugach National Forest's (CNF) comprehensive effort to evaluate recreation in Prince William Sound. The project took place during the years from 2009 through 2011.

In the twenty years since the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS), Prince William Sound has experienced numerous changes. The spill itself impacted and disrupted resources and human services in the Sound, but over the past decade the Sound has experienced increased human use activity, as well. With the opening of the Whittier Tunnel and the introduction of high speed ferry service, access to the Sound by independent and commercial users has increased. There is growing concern that increased competition and rapid growth in users may be threatening

resources and services – particularly those injured and still “recovering” from EVOS.²⁵

Goals of this Framework include:

- Determine the level and distribution of human use in the Sound associated with recreation, tourism, and subsistence activities.
- Ensure increasing recreation and tourism use does not adversely impact sensitive resources, including resources and services still recovering from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS).
- Identify strategies to manage for and support sustainable human use into the future.

Whittier Creek Watershed Council, 2004

A watershed council for the Whittier Creek Watershed was formed in April 2004. This Council is comprised of people who live or own land within the Whittier Creek Watershed boundaries and is assisted by technical and facilitation support from the USDA NRCS and other State and Federal entities. A comprehensive watershed plan for Whittier Creek is currently being developed

The biggest concern with the watershed is the dike that protects the city from flooding. Upon the completion of a watershed plan for Whittier Creek, the Whittier Comprehensive Plan in its completion should flex to accommodate the watershed plan. The watershed plan should guide development and other activities in Whittier to protect the long-term environmental integrity within the watershed boundaries.

Alaska Railroad Master Plan for Whittier

The rail yard is used to the limits of its capacity with freight and passenger train operations. Use of any of the tracks for passenger operations could only occur on days when no freight operations are planned. The rail yard is often used to store south-bound freight cars prior to barge arrival and off loading. When barges arrive, cars are unloaded onto tracks in the rail yard, then the waiting cars can be loaded for transport south. Additional land serves as a staging area where flat cars are unloaded and containers are stacked prior to being loaded onto barges for transport out of Alaska.

The rail yard and switching tracks extend the full length of the Whittier core area, which consists of residential, industrial, and commercial areas. An at-grade crossing of the railroad yards is allowed only located near the Whittier Creek Bridge. When the train switching operation occurs, trains occupy the Whittier Creek Bridge and traffic trying to enter or exit Whittier Street must wait. There is no alternative vehicular access across the railroad operations area, although a pedestrian underpass was constructed in 2001 that connects the residential part of Whittier with the waterfront. The Railroad Master Plan for Whittier includes the future recommended action:

Work with City to develop future options to reduce traffic delays at the major railroad/highway crossing adjacent to Whittier Creek.

State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Prince Williams Sound Transportation Plan, July 2001

The key element of the Prince William Sound (PWS) Transportation Plan was the purchase of two new high-speed ferries, (one immediately and the second several years later), which would be deployed to serve Cordova, Whittier and Valdez with much greater frequency, capacity, and convenience than are now provided. The plan achieved these transportation service objectives without adding to present system operating costs, while dramatically improving transportation revenues. Under this proposal, the *Bartlett* and the *Tustumena* would no longer provide service within Prince William Sound. The *Tustumena* would continue to provide service between the Kenai Peninsula and Southwest Alaska. The plan was arrived at through an iterative process that considered all transportation modes, eventually narrowing its focus to marine transportation. In the final analysis, the current system configuration (Final Alternative 1) was compared with three new ferry system concepts (Final Alternatives 2, 3 and 4). Final Alternative 3 (hence referred to as the "Preferred Alternative") outperformed the other concepts.

The (PWS) Transportation Plan, begun in May 1997, focuses on linking communities within the region to each other, to the rest of the state and to outside the state. The PWS area historically has provided two natural gateways to Alaska’s interior via Thompson Pass near Valdez and via the Copper River valley.

²⁵ USDA Forest Service Planning website. Accessed January 5, 2012. <http://www.fs.usda.gov>

Completion of the Whittier Access Project, which provides direct auto and rail access from Anchorage to Whittier, further strengthens the region's gateway role. While the PWS area possesses tremendous strengths, chief among which are its beauty and natural resources, it also faces numerous transportation challenges.

There exist significant differences in mobility and access among the region's communities. Seward, for example, has direct connections to highway, air, rail, and the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS). On the other hand, Cordova, Chenega Bay and Tatitlek are wholly dependent on AMHS and air travel. This reliance is problematic in several respects. First, residents of communities with no overland access pay higher costs for goods and for travel.

Second, existing AMHS service upon which these residents are reliant is infrequent, irregularly scheduled, insufficient to meet demand during the summer peak, and inconvenient (e.g., midnight arrivals and departures). Third, the lack of access and mobility is a barrier to economic diversification.

Constraints upon the provision of lower-cost, more convenient, faster transportation alternatives include the area's challenging weather and topography, the predominance of State and Federal land ownership, the importance of conserving subsistence resources, and the value of preserving the area's natural resources.

Proposed Plan Elements:

AMHS Improvements - The Preferred Alternative. In the Preferred Alternative, the State would initially purchase a new 32-knot, 30-vehicle highspeed ferry similar to the "Sitka class" vessel developed for Southeast Alaska service. This vessel, homeported in Cordova, would make alternating loops (one round trip per day) among the ports of Cordova, Valdez and Whittier year-round. A second identical vessel would be added 6-10 years into the plan's life. It would be homeported in Valdez and dedicated in peak season.

The entire Prince Williams Sound Transportation Plan may be viewed at the following website:

<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/areaplans/pwsplan.shtml>

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, STIP, FY 2010 - 2013

The federal-aid eligible portion of Whittier Tunnel Maintenance and Operations are funded in the current

STIP, with \$2,253,300 slated for 2011, \$2,343,500 in 2012 and \$2,437,200 in 2013.

Whittier Airport Master Plan, 2003

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), in conjunction with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), has undertaken a project to evaluate the need for, and feasibility of, replacing the existing Whittier airport with a new "emergency use only" airport in the western Prince William Sound region near Portage Pass.

In August of 1998, ADOT&PF received a resolution from the City of Whittier asking to review, under public comment, the necessity of retaining airport facilities in Whittier under current capabilities. Hearings were held by ADOT&PF in Whittier and Anchorage during October of 1998 to take public testimony. The results of the hearings concluded that although the airport is no longer important in providing access and services to the community, it continues to serve an important role in the safety of the regional airport system, especially for aircraft operating between Prince William Sound and the Anchorage bowl. The ability of the existing airport to continue functioning in this role is in jeopardy given the facility's design deficiencies, topographic challenges, questionable eligibility for FAA funding, and pressure for the development of adjacent lands.

The purpose of the airport master plan is to further evaluate the need for, and feasibility of, replacing the existing Whittier airport with a new 'emergency use only' airport in the Western Prince William Sound near Portage Pass. If it is determined that a new "emergency use only" airport is not needed, the Whittier airport would be closed.

If it is determined that a new "emergency use only" airport is needed, the location and design standards to which the airport would be constructed would be determined through negotiation between ADOT&PF and FAA.

The Airport Master Plan project would consist of three phases:

Phase I: Preferred Alternative Identification. This phase includes a condition and needs assessment, public input and involvement, and alternative development analysis.

Phase II: Draft Master Plan and Environmental Assessment. Selection of the preferred alternative and a more detailed analysis of the environmental impacts associated with development options will occur during the project's second phase.

Phase III: Final Master Plan. The final phase incorporates comments on all documents and drawings into a final airport master plan submitted for FAA approval.

A briefing paper was prepared in 2003, which is a component of the first Phase. The briefing memorandum provides an overview of community characteristics, airport conditions, existing design standards, and forecasted demand.

Additionally a subsequent memorandum, Alternatives Development and Analysis, was prepared which consists of a demand capacity analysis and the development of potential alternatives.

The master plan was halted at the end of the scoping phase and has not moved forward yet, as of fall 2005.

City of Whittier Indirect Effects Planning Assistance Coordination and Implementation Planning – Final Short-term Critical Needs, 1998

This plan was prepared to assess the impact of improving access to the City of Whittier with the opening of highway through the Whittier Tunnel. Visitation to Whittier was expected to increase substantially. To deal with the expected increase in visitors, the City of Whittier, the ADOT & PF, and the ARRC embarked upon a planning process to identify capital improvements in Whittier and agency actions necessary to handle the influx. This plan purpose was to provide the means for coordinating agency planning efforts with the ultimate objective of integrating the identified capital needs and corresponding agency actions for implementation in Whittier. The planning effort was initiated through a cooperative effort of the ADOT&PF, the ARRC, and the City of Whittier.

City of Whittier Redevelopment and Urban Design Plan, 1994

This largely unimplemented document was written by International Tourism and Resort Advisors (INTRA) to assist Whittier to capitalize on the opportunities afforded by increased access when the tunnel would be converted for vehicular use. The plan addresses the potential impacts on Whittier's core area from

increased access and describes methods that the City can use to encourage private business investment in Whittier.

Alaska Coastal Management Program, 1988

The Whittier Coastal Management Plan (CMP) was written in 1988 and became effective in 1990. In May 2003, the Alaska State Legislature passed House Bill 191, which states in part that all coastal management district plans must be revised to meet certain criteria. In general, the revised district plans and enforceable policies must be revised to clearly show a connection between coastal resources and the policies.

To Comply with Alaska Statute (AS) 46.40, as amended by HB 191 (May 2003) the district plan and enforceable policies must meet the following criteria:

- Must meet the statewide standards and district plan criteria adopted under AS 46.40.040 (the new regulations)
- May not duplicate, restate, or incorporate by reference statutes and administrative regulations adopted by state or federal agencies (AS 46.40.030 (b))
- Must be clear and concise as to the activities and persons affected by the policies, and the requirements of the policies; (AS 46.40.070 (a) (2)(A))
- Must use precise, prescriptive, and enforceable language (AS 46.40.070 (a) (2)(B))
- May not address a matter regulated or authorized by state or federal law unless the enforceable policies relate specifically to a matter of local concern (AS 46.40.070 (a) (2)(C))
- Must be changed to reflect the changes to consistency review for activities subject to Department of Environmental Conservation permits, certifications, approvals and authorizations (AS 46.40.040 (b) and AS 46.40.096)
- Should be changed because the determination of the scope of a consistency review is affected by whether an activity is the subject of a district enforceable policy (AS 46.40.096(k))

The CMP sunsets if it is not revised and approved by DNR by March 1, 2007 (HB 191, Transition, Sections 46 and 47)

- Districts have 1 year after adoption of new regulations or until July 1, 2005 to submit a revised plan to DNR, whichever is later
- Existing district plan enforceable policies remain in effect until July 1, 2006, unless new ones are adopted by DNR.

The Whittier coastal district plans, at this time to retain and revise 26 policies, delete 69 policies and create at least one new area of local concern.

The resource inventory will require the producing approximately 20 maps (some of which can be combined) depicting areas and activities that relate to the enforceable policies. Accompanying narrative information and scientific evidence will also be written.

A resource analysis chapter will be written to analyze impacts of activities on coastal resources. The implementation, subject uses and proper and improper uses chapter need to be revised to meet the new requirements under 11 AAC 114.

There are no anticipated changes to the boundary of the Whittier Coastal District. The issues, goals and objectives, subject uses, proper and improper uses and implementation chapters will be rewritten during the plan amendment.

The Whittier Coastal District is on track to revise their CMP during State Fiscal Year 2005/06 and will meet the state deadline to remain in the program.

Chapter Nine: Community Goals, Policies and Actions

This chapter presents guidelines that the City and other landowners or developers can use to assist them with decision-making and long-range planning. The goals, policies, and implementation actions were developed through the public involvement process and were based on public suggestions, previous plans, and other community and consultant input. The goals, actions and policies were reviewed and updated using information gathered at a public meeting January 27, 2012. All goals, policies, and actions were reviewed and approved by the City Planning and Zoning Commission.

- Goals are general achievements that the community wishes to accomplish. Goals provide guidance for developing policies.
- Policies set the course of action that the City will take.
- Actions are task-oriented events that lead to implementation of goals and policies.

In the January 27, 2012 public meeting, participants were asked to rank their top three priorities overall, as well as their top priorities for each goal. This ranking process is the primary basis for the prioritization levels in the following table.

The rankings also reflect the City Council's annual identification of Whittier's main legislative priorities. For 2012, the top priorities identified were:

- Continued construction of Shotgun Cove Road;

- Whittier navigation improvements/Watershed study;
- Repair of the levee above the Whittier Core Area;
- Replacement of the public works/public safety building; and
- Water and wastewater system upgrades.

Additional criteria shaping the rankings included feasibility, fundability, and whether the project is necessary for continued safe city operations. High priority projects are those that the City plans to begin or achieve in the next five years; medium priority projects five to ten years, and low priority projects ten to twenty years. Actions labeled "ongoing" are those that do not conform to a timetable but must be pursued as opportunities arise.

Whittier's goals, policies, and actions were divided into seven general categories:

- Transportation
- Facilities
- Municipal Government
- Land Use
- Recreation
- Appearance
- Economy

The following pages detail the specific goals, policies, and actions developed during the planning process.

Transportation

	Description	Priority Ranking	Project Status
Goal 1	Expand and improve access into and transportation facilities within Whittier.		
Policy 1.1	Improve the Small Boat Harbor and water access to Whittier.	High	
Action 1.1.1	Establish the Port of Whittier Harbor Development Project, including the reconstruction and expansion of the existing small boat harbor and construction of a new harbor at the head of Passage Canal, as Whittier's top priority project.	High	
Action 1.1.2	Work with state and federal funding agencies and elected officials, the Denali Commission, and private sources to obtain funds to design and construct the Port of Whittier Harbor Project and development of the head of Passage Canal uplands.	Medium	
Action 1.1.3	Pursue expanded and improved Alaska Marine Highway (AMHS) service to Whittier.	Low	
Action 1.1.4	Improve navigation in Passage Canal.	High	Identified as a capital budget priority for 2012 in City of Whittier Resolution 995-11.
Policy 1.2	Improve circulation of vehicles within Whittier's core area and road access to Anchorage, other areas of the state, and outlying areas of the community.		
Action 1.2.1	Make access available to lands in Shotgun Cove critical for the community's economic development through completion of the Shotgun Cove Road project.	High	Identified as a capital budget priority for 2012 in City of Whittier Resolution 995-11.
Action 1.2.2	Submit local road projects to the Alaska Department of Transportation (ADOT) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.	High	
Action 1.2.3	Explore the possibility of the RS2477 route over Portage Pass.	Low	
Action 1.2.4	Continue to seek funding to complete a road toward Decision Point State Marine Park.	High	
Action 1.2.5	Provide shuttle service within Whittier.	Medium	
Action 1.2.6	Provide shuttle service between Portage and Whittier.	Medium	

Policy 1.3	Improve pedestrian circulation within Whittier’s core area.	Medium	
Action 1.3.1	Improve pedestrian crossing at Whittier Creek.	Medium	
Action 1.3.2	Integrate ADA compliant pedestrian trails and/or sidewalks with ongoing highway improvements.	Medium	
Policy 1.4	Provide adequate and convenient residential and transient parking.		
Action 1.4.1	Develop a multi-level parking facility that could also serve as boat storage in the off-season.	Low	
Action 1.4.2	Construct paved parking lots.	Low	
Policy 1.5	Develop plans for improved transportation within Whittier.		
Action 1.5.1	Develop a circulation plan to improve access to, and safe circulation within, the core area, to include needs of both vehicles and pedestrians.	High	
Action 1.5.2	Develop a parking plan with recommendations for walkway, street crossing, and beach access as well as shared parking where feasible.	Medium	
Policy: 1.6	Expand vehicular tunnel access to Whittier.		
Action 1.6.1	Improve tunnel access into Whittier by increasing the hours of operations in both summer and winter.	Medium	Tunnel hours have been extended, particularly in winter.
Action 1.6.2	Promote the construction of a new tunnel facility.	Low	
Policy 1.7	Pursue continued and improved air access to Whittier.		
Action 1.7.1	Coordinate with the State of Alaska and the FAA to secure funding for improved airport facilities and infrastructure.	Medium	
Action 1.7.2	Promote the design and construction of a helicopter pad to serve the Whittier community.	Medium	

Policy 1.8	Improve quality of road system for sustainability.		
Action 1.8.1	Institute a program to rebuild the roads to appropriate standards.	Medium	
Action 1.8.2	Develop programs to pave gravel streets and reduce erosion areas.	Medium	
Facilities			
Goal 2.	Expand and improve facilities to meet current and future needs in Whittier.		
Policy 2.1	Improve public buildings and services.		
Action 2.1.1	Design, seek funding for, and construct new harbor office – part of the Port of Whittier Harbor Development Project – in the Harbor District.	High	
Action 2.1.2	Research funding opportunities to repair or replace the public works facility.	High	Identified as a capital budget priority for 2012 in City of Whittier Resolution 995-11.
Action 2.1.3	Pursue funding for a central City Services building to house all city services which may include but be not limited to public safety; fire and EMS; city, state and federal administrative facilities; library; health and recreational facilities.	High	
Action 2.1.4	Provide modern, maintained public restrooms and shower facilities.	Low	
Action 2.1.5	Establish a major maintenance and repair fund and a major equipment fund for replacement of public works equipment when necessary.	Medium	
Policy 2.2	Improve the quality and availability of emergency medical services in Whittier.		
Action 2.2.1	Provide in the City budget for financial support for emergency medical services and physician sponsorship of EMS.	High	
Action 2.2.2	Continue to expand and upgrade the existing Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program, including the addition of an EMT III or Paramedic to support community health care. Work to qualify as many residents as possible for these positions.	Medium	

Action 2.2.3	Document and publicize the importance of Whittier as an emergency medical center for western Prince William Sound.	Low	
Action 2.2.4	Support the efforts of agencies responding to waterborne emergencies.	Ongoing	
Policy 2.3	Encourages State and Federal agencies and private sector vendors to enhance and expand access to scheduled health and social services for Whittier residents and visitors.		
Action 2.3.1	Create favorable conditions to encourage agencies and vendors to provide scheduled specialized health and social services in Whittier.	High	
Action 2.3.2	Encourage retrofitting historical buildings for ADA compliance.	High	New action - 2012
Policy 2.4	Provide safe and adequate public facilities and utilities to support existing needs, seasonal population fluctuation, and community growth.		
Action 2.4.1	Provide municipal lands for public school facility needs and reserve a site for a public school in the Shotgun Cove/Emerald Cove Subdivision.	Medium	
Action 2.4.2	Repair and expand the existing sewer and water systems as needed.	High	Identified as a capital budget priority for 2012 in City of Whittier Resolution 995-11.
Action 2.4.3	Explore effective sewer and water system alternatives in areas of the municipality where connection to the central system is not practicable.	Low	
Action 2.4.4	Develop and implement a storm drain management plan.	Medium	
Action 2.4.5	Explore and encourage the use of alternative energy sources.	Medium	
Action 2.4.6	Research solid waste alternatives and develop and implement a solid waste management plan.	Low	
Action 2.4.7	Encourage additional internet/cable providers to serve Whittier's residents.	Ongoing	

Municipal Government

Goal 3	The municipal government will serve its citizens through a strategy of responsible stewardship of its environmental, economic and human resources.	Medium	
Policy 3.1	Expand the local government corporate boundary.		
Action 3.1.1	The City will seek to annex areas that are planned for sale or development by the state and are deemed by the City to be beneficial to its economic development.	Medium	
Policy 3.2	Improve relations between city government and businesses for the economic and social welfare of the community.		
Action 3.2.1	Develop a strategy to foster a team/cooperative spirit between city officials, business owners and the public.	High	
Policy 3.3	Research methods to generate revenue other than taxes to pay for services and facilities.		
Action 3.3.1	Pursue bonds, local improvement districts, grants and Capital Improvement Program projects.	High	
Action 3.3.2	Attend statewide meetings to stay involved with other agencies.	High	
Action 3.3.3	Examine alternative means of service delivery, such as privatization of services and contracting existing city services.	Medium	
Policy 3.4	Protect and enhance the natural features, environment, and scenic beauty of the area around Whittier.		
Action 3.4.1	Encourage consideration of and compliance with Whittier Comprehensive Plan, Hazards Mitigation Plan, Coastal Zone Management Plan, and subdivision and zoning ordinances.	High	
Action 3.4.2	Coordinate with state and federal agencies for environmental protection and permitting.	Medium	

Action 3.4.3	Develop a checklist of agencies and resources to provide guidance for responsible development.	Medium	
Policy 3.5	Coordinate hazard mitigation and response in Whittier.		
Action 3.5.1	Train local personnel and provide equipment in Whittier to control and respond to life threatening industrial accidents.	Medium	
Action 3.5.2	Develop a schedule to review and update and practice emergency evacuation plan for Whittier area.	Ongoing	
Action 3.5.3	Work with industrial users and transporters of hazardous materials to develop an improved public awareness of existing capabilities to respond to emergency situations.		Completed
Action 3.5.4	Develop a plan to deal with potential hazards such as fire, earthquake, flood, hazardous material spills, etc.		Completed
Action 3.5.5	Develop web-based GIS and provide for public viewing of security cameras throughout the community.	Medium	New – 2012
Action 3.5.6	Repair levee above Whittier Core Area.	High	New – 2012. Identified as a capital budget priority for 2012 in City of Whittier Resolution 995-11.
Action 3.5.7	Review and update Hazard Mitigation Plan according to schedule.	Ongoing	New – 2012
Policy 3.6	Support recreational opportunities by providing local governmental assistance.		
Action 3.6.1	Develop a land use plan for parks and trails.	Medium	
Action 3.6.2	Provide support for agencies and groups for pass through grants.	Medium	
Action 3.6.3	Review and upgrade the recreational area map and designate use areas.	Medium	Initial map created.
Action 3.6.4	Establish a volunteer and community work service program to provide recreational enhancement labor.	Ongoing	

Land Use

Goal 4	Guide the Use of Land in a Manner that Provides for Orderly and Efficient Community Growth.		
Policy 4.1	Develop a land use plan for the head of Passage Canal		
Action 4.1.1	Pursue grant funding for economic development planning, programming and feasibility.	Ongoing	
Action 4.1.2	Work with stakeholders to produce a complete land use plan for development of small boat harbor, residential, open space/recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation, and/or enhancement areas.	High	
Policy 4.2	Update the core area land use plan.		
Action 4.2.1	Determine the appropriate land use for properties in the core area.	High	
Action 4.2.2	Identify City owned properties and designate uses in a City Land Use Plan.	Medium	
Policy 4.3:	Develop a land use plan for Shotgun Cove.		
Action 4.3.1	Pursue economic development grant funding for economic development feasibility study.	Ongoing	
Action 4.3.2	Prepare an economic development feasibility study for Shotgun Cove development.	Medium	
Action 4.3.3	Zone available areas for land development.	Medium	
Action 4.3.4	Finish Phase II & III of Shotgun Cove Road to facilitate future growth in the area.	High	
Policy 4.4:	Ensure that the public has access to designated public use land and beach areas.		
Action 4.4.1	Plat rights of way and easements to the water.	Medium	
Action 4.4.2	Designate and provide ADA compliant access to areas for public use.	High	
Action 4.4.3	Designate potential recreational sites in the Passage Canal area.	Medium	

Policy 4.5:	Provide land for use by the private sector.		
Action 4.5.1	Coordinate with state and federal agencies to facilitate the construction of affordable residences.	High	
Action 4.5.2	Encourages the State Department of Natural Resources to dispose of State lands in Passage Canal that are suitable for private development.	Medium	
Action 4.5.3	The City will offer residential, commercial and industrial land with covenants that require development for the intended use within a specified timeframe.	Medium	
Action 4.5.4	Explore opportunities to acquire publicly held lands for development by City of Whittier or for private development.	Medium	
Policy 4.6	Develop a strategy for the tank farm.		
Action 4.6.1	Acquire the tank farm property.	High	
Action 4.6.2	Develop a land use plan for the tank farm property.	High	
Policy 4.7	Ensure land use practices are consistent with responsible watershed management.		
Action 4.7.1	Develop a watershed study.	High	Identified as a capital budget priority for 2012 in City of Whittier Resolution 995-11.

Recreation

Goal 5	Create recreational opportunities and activities for residents and visitors.		
Policy 5.1	Increase recreational facilities for residents and visitors of all ages.		
Action 5.1.1	<p>Improve Whittier's trail system using but not limited to the following means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Work with relevant state and federal agencies to identify and sign hiking trails in Whittier; * Improve trailhead and kayak launching facilities at the end of the second segment of the Shotgun Cove Road project; * Improve Lu Young Park recreational facilities; * Create more hiking, skiing, snowboarding, and snow machine trails; * Install a tow rope at the Whittier Creek waterfall to facilitate skiing; and * Connect existing trails. 	High	
Action 5.1.2	<p>Work to provide increased marine recreational facilities and activities including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Establish a kayak launch area and ramp; * Construct an ADA accessible creek- and salmon-viewing platform at Shakespeare Creek; * Designate fishing areas for non-boaters 	Medium	
Action 5.1.3	<p>Seek funding for and construct an indoor recreation facility and adjoining park area to include but not be limited to the following facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Community swimming pool; * Sports and recreation facility * Ice skating rink: 	Low	
Action 5.1.4	Set aside areas to provide for recreation use.	High	
Action 5.1.5	Work with state and federal agencies to assist in constructing the Shotgun Cove small boat harbor.	Medium	
Action 5.1.6	Promote Whittier as a shore-based recreational center for hiking, camping, berry picking and sightseeing.	Medium	
Action 5.1.7	Encourage the development of camping and day-use facilities.	Ongoing	

Action 5.1.8	Pursue funding to design and construct a youth center for Whittier residents.	Medium	
Action 5.1.9	Promote winter activities in the Whittier area.	Ongoing	
Policy 5.2	Promote regional recreational events and competitions.		
Action 5.2.1	Coordinate with various groups to encourage events in Whittier.	Ongoing	
Action 5.2.2	Encourage guided walking tours and facilities for self-guided tours.	Ongoing	

Appearance

Goal 6	Capitalize on Whittier’s Natural Beauty and Visual Appeal.		
Policy 6.1	Encourage coordinated clean up and enhancement projects.		
Action 6.1.1	Develop and implement a plan to require new construction to include beautification elements.	Medium	
Action 6.1.2	Enhance downtown boardwalk system, especially along the waterfront.	Ongoing	
Action 6.1.3	Install interpretive and informational signs to enhance visitors' experience in Whittier.	Medium	
Action 6.1.4	Promote annual community clean-up kick-off days and on-going clean-up efforts.	High	
Action 6.1.5	Create architectural standards.	Medium	
Action 6.1.6	Continue to pursue a solution to derelict structures such as the Buckner Building and USFS Building (near Anchor Inn).	Low	

Policy 6.2:	Research grants for art and other aesthetic improvement projects.		
Action 6.2.1	Provide support to agencies and groups for pass through grants.	Ongoing	
Action 6.2.2	Research and apply for grants.	Ongoing	
Action 6.2.2	Research incentive programs for landscaping and beautification projects.	Ongoing	
Action 6.2.3	Encourage recycling efforts throughout the community.	Ongoing	

Economy

Goal 7.	Create Economic Opportunities for Residents and Businesses throughout the Whittier community.		
Policy 7.1	Establish a strategy for local hire.		
Action 7.1.1	Promote the utilization of local residents to the maximum extent possible for local jobs.	Ongoing	
Policy 7.2	Capitalize on the economic potential of increased tourism.		
Action 7.2.1	Create a tourist information center.	Medium	
Action 7.2.2	Promote growth of small business tourist industry.	High	
Action 7.2.3	Foster a friendly and inviting attitude towards visitors.	Ongoing	
Policy 7.3	Research strategies for attracting new commercial developments.		
Action 7.3.1	Work with the private sector in attracting more businesses to Whittier.	High	
Action 7.3.2	Pursue obtaining economic development grants from the state and federal governments.	Ongoing	

Action 7.3.3	Ensure that there are adequate land use areas for commercial and economic development.	High	
Policy 7.4	Maintain and encourage expanding Whittier's use as a major marine center for Southcentral Alaska.		
Action 7.4.1	Encourage expansion of Whittier's economy based on commercial fishing, marine industrial and tourism/recreation activities.	Ongoing	
Action 7.4.2	Construct new harbor facilities at Shotgun Cove.	Medium	
Policy 7.5	Maintain and encourage developing Whittier as a deep-water port.		
Action 7.5.1	Support the continuation of a fuel and product storage and transshipment depot in Whittier.	Medium	
Action 7.5.2	Research the feasibility of and, if feasible, support the development of natural gas liquefaction at the Head of Passage Canal.	Low	
Policy 7.6	Encourage expansion of commercial business and service industry development in Whittier.		
Action 7.6.1	Support and encourage renovation of existing structures for commercial business, warehouses and fish processing in the Whittier core area.	Ongoing	
Action 7.6.2	Attract commercial development that serves local community needs.	Ongoing	
Action 7.6.3	Pursue grant funding for infrastructure development, such as utilities, transportation/access improvements, recreational and other public facilities.	Ongoing	