

**Whittier**

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# **Comprehensive Plan Update 2005**

*Submitted to:*

**City of Whittier**

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*And the*

**Whittier Planning and Zoning Commission**

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*Accepted by City Council Resolution*

*On September 26, 2005*

*Submitted by:*

**ASCG**  
INCORPORATED  
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## Acronyms

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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

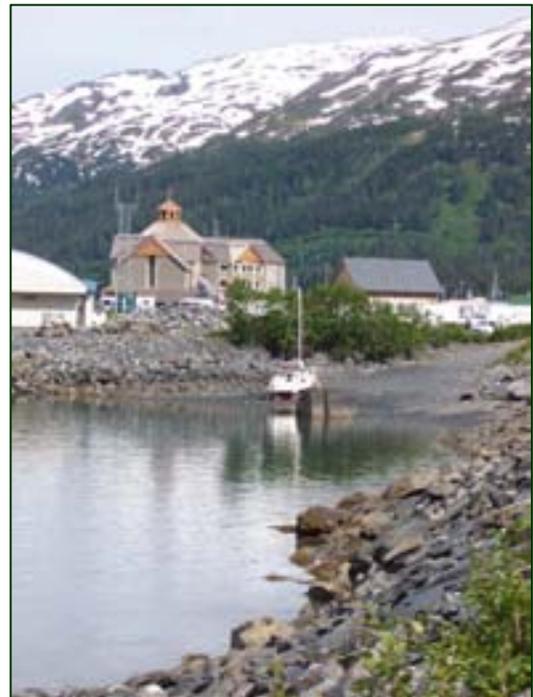
The most recent Whittier Comprehensive Master Plan was completed in 1995. Since then, many changes have taken place in Whittier that have altered the community's infrastructure, economy and plans for the future. Some of the significant changes include:

- The conversion of the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel allows vehicular access to the community.
- Plans that affect the Whittier community and vicinity were developed by the Railroad and Forest Service.
- A Watershed Council was formed to plan for all of Whittier's current and future watersheds.
- A Planning Task Force for Whittier and a Development Team for Shotgun Cove were formed.
- Phase I and II of Shotgun Cove Road design is completed and construction is anticipated in 2006.
- Demand for moorage in Whittier's small boat harbor increased.
- Fast ferry service between Whittier and other Prince William Sound communities began in 2005.
- The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities may close the Whittier Airport.
- A new cruise ship dock was constructed and major cruise ships returned to Whittier.
- New lodging and dining accommodations were constructed.
- 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.

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 1995 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.



*Cruise terminal and The Inn at Whittier*

The 2005 Whittier Comprehensive Plan Update was funded through the City with grants from the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Rural Development, and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF). According to the Whittier Municipal Code, the Comprehensive Plan must be reviewed every two 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, including an all-day work session, to assist with the planning process.

To gain insight into community needs and to create a future vision for Whittier, three public meetings were held on February 3, March 23, and May 20, 2004. Each of these meetings was covered in the Turnagain Times; flyers were posted at the school, in Begich Towers, Whittier Manor, and throughout the community; and, in some cases, the Planning and Zoning Commission made phone calls to promote meeting attendance. After each meeting, newsletters were developed and mailed to all Whittier residents and to other interested parties recapping the meetings and advertising future opportunities for involvement. The February 3 meeting was attended by 127 residents and other stakeholders.

A planning task force made up of representatives from the City, ARRC, Chugach Alaska Corporation (CAC), ADOT&PF, Chugach Electric Association, ASCG Incorporated, USDA Rural Development, US Forest

Service (USFS), the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), CRW Engineering – the firm working on the Whittier Water System Master Plan, and the offices of State Representative Mike Hawker and US Congressman Don Young, was formed to advise and assist in the planning process. The Whittier Planning Task Force participated in person and via e-mail throughout the development of the plan.



*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 September 26, 2005.

## Vision statement

With the information gathered at the February 2004 visioning workshop, a community vision statement was developed:

“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 at 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 the Bay”. 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 Whittier City Limits.

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.

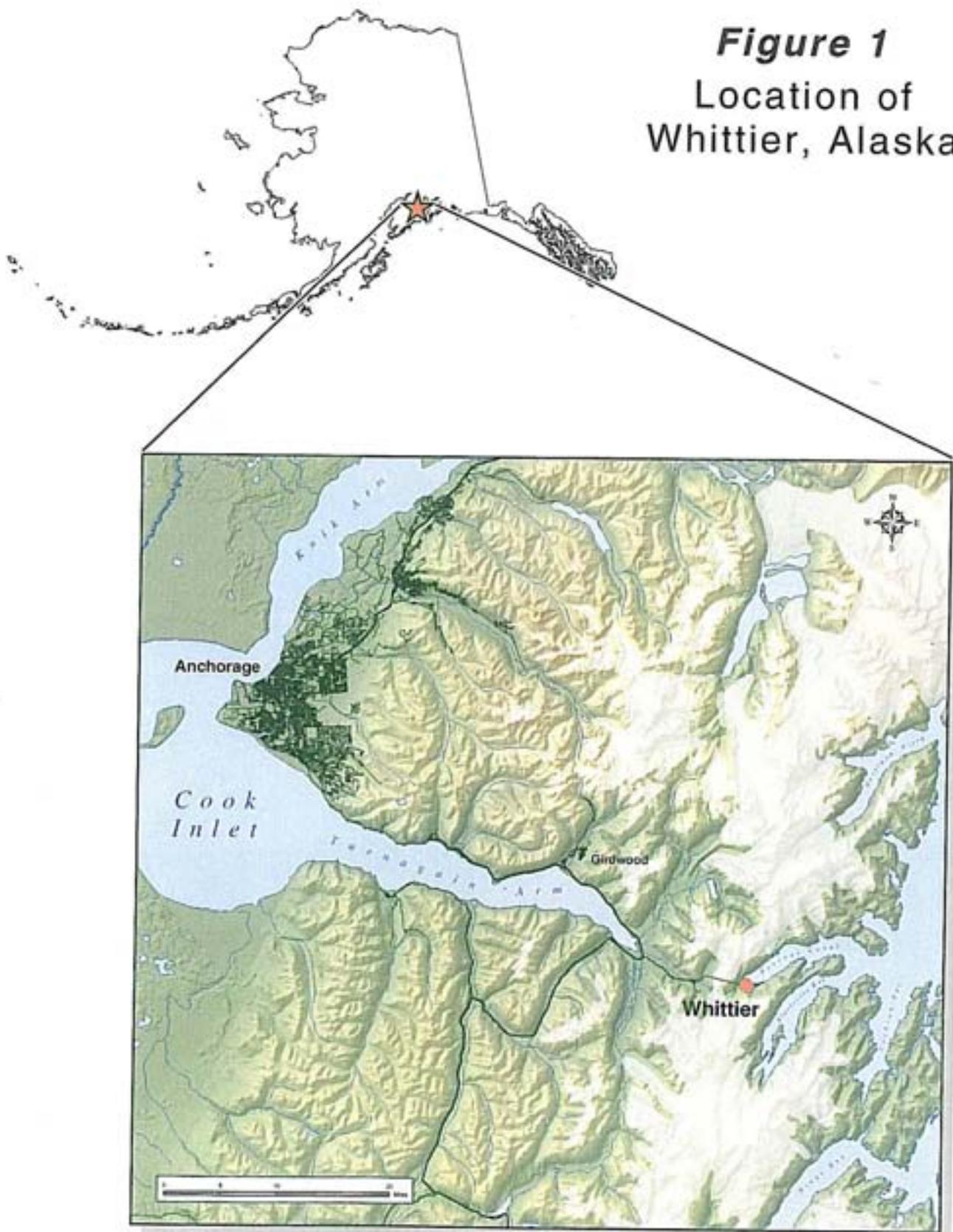


*Aerial view of Whittier Delta (left) and Head of the Bay Delta (right)*

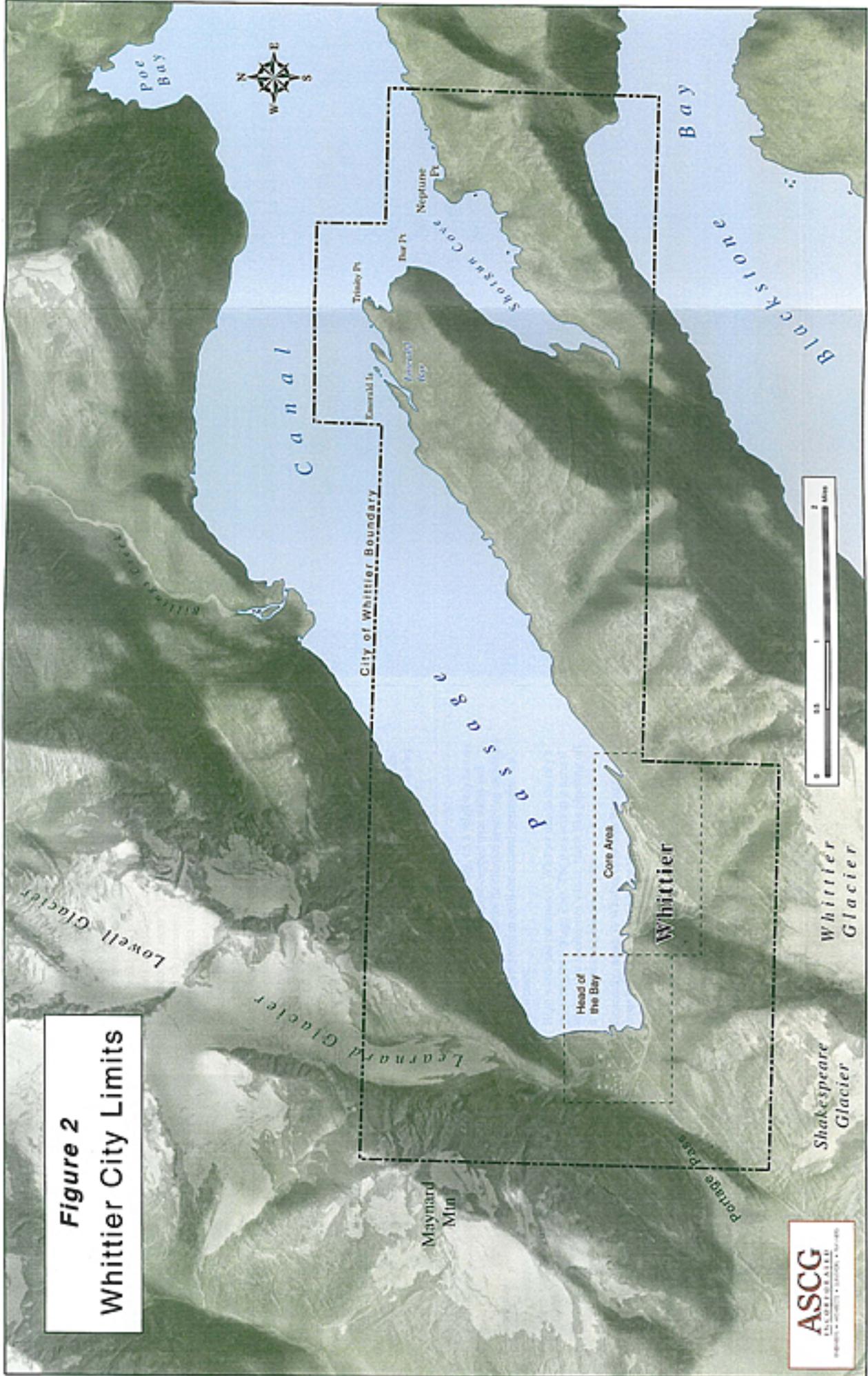
Both the Whittier and the Head of the Bay Deltas are formed of unconsolidated deposits of outwash and stream gravel. Composition of the Whittier Delta is largely coarse sub-angular to sub-round gravel in a matrix of coarse sand. The maximum gravel depth is unknown, but is at least 44 feet deep under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

The sediments at the Head of the Bay 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 the Bay 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.

**Figure 1**  
Location of  
Whittier, Alaska



**Figure 2**  
**Whittier City Limits**





Looking toward Head of the Bay from east of Whittier core area

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 the Bay Deltas, the topography of the area generally rises abruptly from the shoreline at a grade of 30-60 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 3-5 percent. The average slope in the Head of the Bay 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.



Snow piles up around boats parked in Whittier in the winter.

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 03/31/2005**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Average Max. Temperature (degrees F)	31.2	32.7	35.6	43.2	51.1	59.7	62.5	60.9	53.2	42.6	35.4	32.6	45.1
Average Min. Temperature (degrees F)	22.9	24.3	25.9	32.5	39.3	46.5	50.8	49.6	43.8	34.2	27.1	24.3	35.1
Average Total Precipitation (inches)	18.89	15.48	13.69	15.42	15.08	9.77	10.54	14.83	20.87	19.95	19.14	24.15	197.80
Average Total Snowfall (inches)	47.6	48.1	41.4	21.9	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	6.7	25.3	56.3	249.1
Average Snow Depth (inches)	33	45	49	35	6	0	0	0	0	1	5	20	16

Source: Western Regional Climate Center Flora and Soils

**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.”<sup>1</sup> 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.



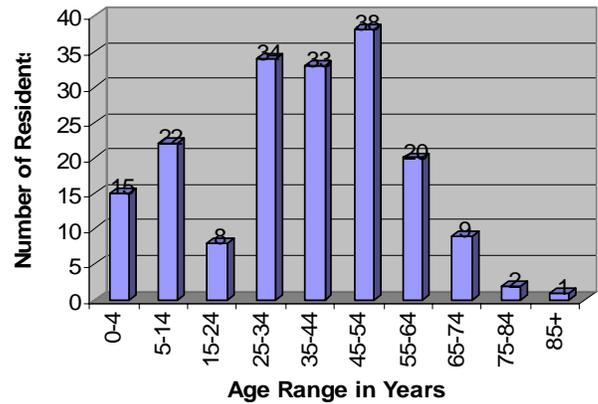
*The Buckner Building, completed in 1953, was once the largest building in Alaska, and was called the "city under one roof."*

**Current population**

The 2000 census reported 184 people living in the City of Whittier; a loss of 59 people since the 1990 census reported 243 residents. This loss was primarily due to the U.S. Army closing the fuel tank farm at the head of Passage Canal and to diminished commercial fishing.

In 2000, the median age in Whittier was just over 39. Exhibit 1 shows the age ranges at the time of the 2000 census. The age range spans from newborn to 90+ years old, and the length of residency runs from a few months to over 26 years.

**Exhibit 1 Age range of Whittier residents**



Like 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 and the return of cruise ships in 2004, Whittier experienced an influx of workers for fish processing, railroad, construction, recreational and other seasonal employment opportunities.

**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 the Bay, 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 can be expected.

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

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

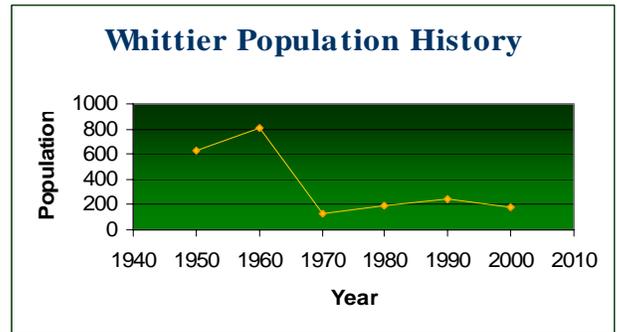
substantial population growth. Seasonal workers in the tourism and fishing industries, and people with vacation or recreational homes in the community would increase the community's population substantially in the summer.



Whittier Tunnel Walk, summer 2004

While these numbers do not show an upward population 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.<sup>2</sup>

**Exhibit 2 Whittier historic population**



Source: US Census data



Along the route to Shotgun Cove – looking toward Whittier

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

## Chapter Three: Infrastructure

### Housing

In 1973, Whittier residents voted to buy the 97-acre military facility, which included all of Whittier’s core area.<sup>3</sup> 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 a half-century ago. Table 2 and Table 3 show an inventory of housing in the community.



Whittier Manor Condominiums

**Table 2 Housing data**

Owner occupied housing units	34
Renter occupied housing units	52
Non-family occupied units	40
People living in households	182
Housing occupied by a single family	7
Occupied housing units	86
Vacant housing due to seasonal use	127
Total housing units	224

Source: 2000 US Census – based on a 52% sample of households

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

**Table 3 Number of units at each location**

Location	Total number of units
Begich Towers	198
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 1<sup>st</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> floors. These three floors are zoned commercially.



Begich Towers

**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.

**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.

**Costs**

Compared with many other communities in the state, the cost of owning, purchasing or renting housing in Whittier is relatively inexpensive, ranging from \$25,000 to \$65,000 depending on size and view.

The average purchase price for condominiums has risen in the last ten years. 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. The two major factors in moving to Whittier are the reasonable cost of purchasing a condominium and the low cost of living.

Table 4 shows the average purchase price for Whittier condominiums in 2002-2003.

**Table 4 Cost of condominium ownership**

Unit size	Begich Towers			Whittier Manor
	Price	Floor	View	
Efficiency	\$25,000	1		\$15,000
One bedroom	\$50,000	14-15	harbor	\$22,500
	\$45,000		mountain	
Two bedroom	\$45,000	2-12	harbor	\$25,000
	\$55,000		harbor	
	\$40,000	2-12	mountain	
	\$50,000	14-15	mountain	
Three bedroom	\$50,000	2-12	harbor	none
	\$65,000		14-15	
	\$45,000	2-12	mountain	
	\$55,000		14-15	

*Source: The estimates were made by the real estate agent handling sales in Whittier and were based on sales, appraisal and market conditions as of August 2003.*

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.

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.

**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. Lack of year-round employment, limited tunnel access and inclement weather are all 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 an especially large 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 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 during

the first phase of 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. Construction of an access road to Emerald Cove is the first phase of their development plans.

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, Planning and Zoning Commission and the Port and Harbor Commission meet in the City Council Chambers in Building P-12, which also houses the City Shop. 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.ci.whittier.ak.us](http://www.ci.whittier.ak.us) 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 the Finance Officer and City Clerk, assisted by the Deputy City Clerk and the Commissions Clerk. The Fire Chief oversees the Fire Department and EMS, while the Police Chief, Public Works Supervisor and Harbormaster operate their respective departments. The City also retains the services of an attorney to assist with legal concerns.



Building P-12

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 an unorganized borough. Consideration of a proposal to incorporate a Prince William Sound Borough using the legislative review method is ongoing as of 2005.

### 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 Monday 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, 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 2002, the City Council voted to operate on a calendar year (CY) rather than a state fiscal year (FY); so all years reported in this section are from January through December. 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 \$1,375,135 for CY04.

**Exhibit 3 2004 revenues by category**

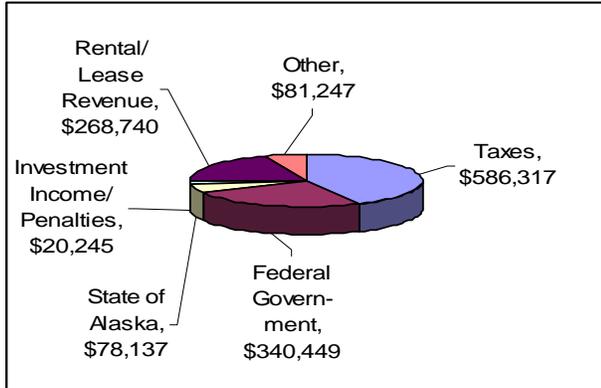


Table 5 shows a comparison of the breakdown of expenses for the City of Whittier for the past two years.

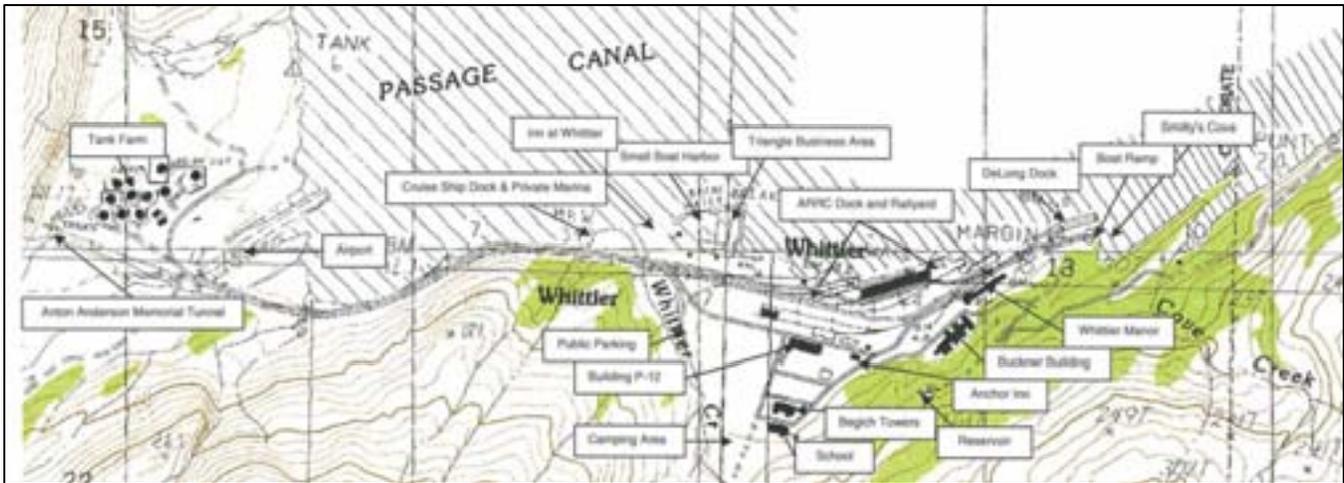
The City owns and operates the Whittier Small Boat Harbor. In summer 2004, the City accepted ownership of the Small Boat Harbor from the State of Alaska. The harbor is operated as an enterprise fund. Revenues generated by providing services and moorage may only be used for the harbor – to finance operations 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.

City equipment-rental rates and Small Boat Harbor service charges and fees may be found in Appendix A.

**Table 5 Comparison of expenses, 2003 and 2004**

Summary and Comparison Expenses for 2003 and 2004		
	CY03	CY04
Council	\$53,434	\$44,159
Commissions	\$24,076	\$18,018
Administration	\$174,862	\$254,077
Elections	\$2,521	\$4,947
Police	\$233,006	\$519,218
Fire	\$26,719	\$119,329
EMS	\$53,730	\$183,881
Public Works (Shop)	\$285,996	\$407,698
Property & Facilities	\$119,335	\$120,492
Parks & Recreation	\$520	\$500
AK Coastal Zone Mgmt	\$10,537	\$13,665
Debt Service	\$11,533	\$9,882
Transfers	\$31,000	\$2,700
Water/Sewer	\$163,727	\$203,397

Source: City of Whittier audit records  
 This does not include grants administered by the City.



Facilities located in the Whittier Core Area and at the head of Passage Canal.

## 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). Staffing of the Whittier Police Department varies with budget considerations and seasonal fluctuations. The Whittier Volunteer Fire Department has four trucks and 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.



Whittier Police Department cruiser

### 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. A seasonal officer to augment staff for the five summer months has been in place since 2004. This staffing level

mandates a significant number of on-call hours. It is currently a goal of the department to have an on-duty or on-call officer available to all emergency (significant threat to life or property) calls.

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. Additionally, the department was not designed for its current purpose, and so is lacking in both effectiveness and efficiency.

*“The mission for every member of the police department is to affirmatively promote, within available resources and engaging in lawful police functions, a feeling of security and safety for every member of the community. This mission requires positive effort based on each officer’s self-initiative. Although the department is unique in its law enforcement abilities, providing police services and addressing quality of life issues are its bread and butter.”*

*- Police Chief, David A. Sexton  
2005*

The department is fairly well-equipped. Staff has the use of three four-wheel-drive patrol vehicles and two ATVs. Vehicles and officers all have new radios. One car has a video camera; two have radar units. Progress is underway to equipping the vehicles with terminals capable of running criminal history and

driver status checks. New shotguns are needed for all three vehicles. The department also lacks breathalyzer and dispatch equipment.

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 and EMS Departments are staffed by one paid Fire/EMS Chief and 14 volunteers, five of which are Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) 1s. The department responds to approximately 50 calls per year with the majority of the runs being EMS. Some members have been trained in basic firefighting as well as hazardous materials response. The department is currently working to train all members to the firefighter 1 and EMT 1 levels and train the current EMT 1s to the EMT 2 level. The Fire Department operates one ladder truck, two pumpers, and two Advanced Life Support equipped ambulances. The Fire Department is housed in a portion of the public works building, which is in marginal condition with 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 Salmon Run picnic area is unpaved and generally not maintained; however, that road will be paved as part of the Shotgun Cove Road project. 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 through Friday, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm and 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm.

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 the return of cruise ships to Whittier, additional EMT staffing is becoming a critical issue. In 2004, EMS staffing included one EMT-1 and two EMT-2s in Whittier. Because of other jobs, these individuals are not always available to make ambulance emergency runs. While the Clinic staff has assisted, at times, with medical transport, their primary duty is at the Clinic, which cannot be left unstaffed. 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.



Picnic area at First Salmon Run

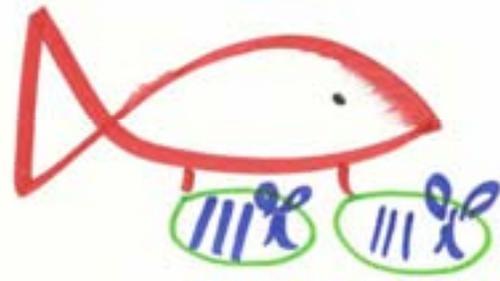
### Recreation

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 enjoy 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 this plan.



"Salmon Run"

There is a picnic area at First Salmon Run, built in 1989. 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.

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 make up of tourism in Whittier. With tunnel access, the return of 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.



*Princess cruise ship docked in Whittier – summer 2004*

## 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 million 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 2003-2004 school year, 40 students were enrolled at the Whittier School. Enrollment has ranged between 38 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

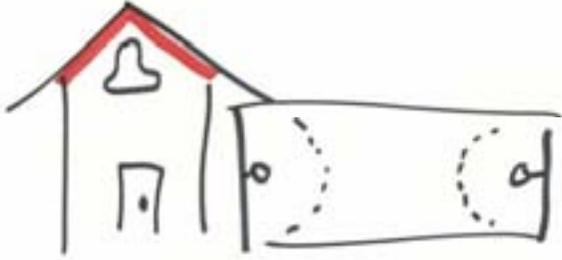
The CSD superintendent and administrative offices are located in Anchorage. In addition to the Whittier School, the REAA includes schools in Tatitlek and Chenega Bay. Extension school services are provided for home schooling. The district also offers community education services directed toward adult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

## Educational Awards

In 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 careers<sup>4</sup>



*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.<sup>5</sup>

#### **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.



*Students at Whittier Community School*

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 will certainly change the education facility needs in Whittier.

#### **Whittier community future education needs**

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.

<sup>4</sup> Chugach School District website, <http://www.chugachschools.com/awards/> 2004.

<sup>5</sup> National Institute of Standards Technology website, *Baldrige Award Recipient Profile*, [http://www.nist.gov/public\\_affairs/chugach.htm](http://www.nist.gov/public_affairs/chugach.htm) 2004.

## 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

A public library will be opening in the spring of 2006 in a converted two-bedroom condominium on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor of Begich Towers. The library is administered by a five-member Library Board. Donations are welcome and the Board will be seeking grant funding as soon as it is eligible.

It is anticipated that the library will move into a municipal multi-purpose building when that is constructed.

### 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.



Whittier Small Boat Harbor, August 2004

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, the City decided not to implement its use.

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.

#### 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 September 2004, draft 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.

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.

Utilities infrastructure including water and wastewater systems are needed for development at Head of the Bay, 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.

## **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**

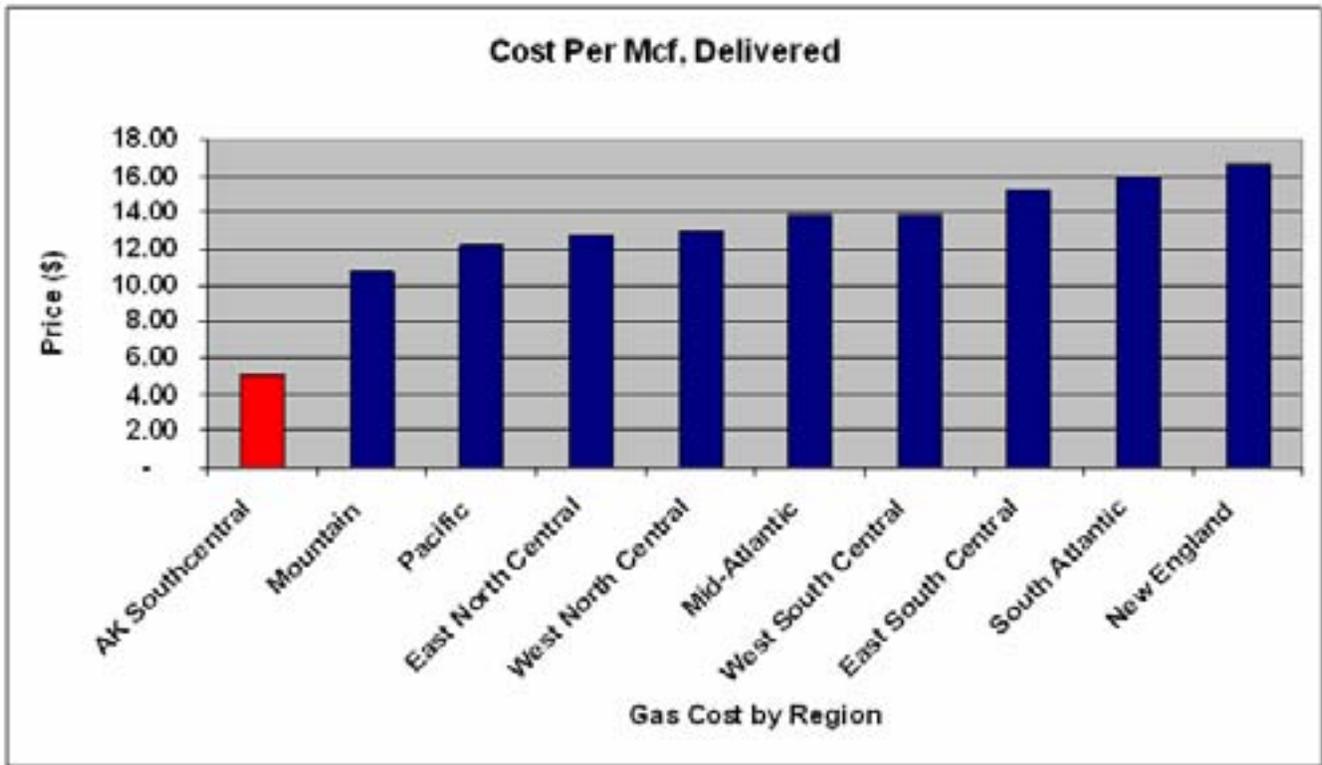
Since early 1994, the City has contracted with Waste Management of Alaska (formerly Peninsula Sanitation, Inc.) to haul refuse from Whittier to the Anchorage Landfill. Trash is deposited in dumpsters located at the harbor office, harbor east ramp, harbor store and Building P-12. During the winter season, 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 as shown in Exhibit 4.

Exhibit 4 Comparison of natural gas price by region



Source: [http://www.enstarnaturalgas.com/CompanyInfo/rate\\_info.htm](http://www.enstarnaturalgas.com/CompanyInfo/rate_info.htm)

**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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 traverse Portage Glacier in 1914*

*Source: The Strangest Town in Alaska, by Alan Taylor, 2000.*

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.<sup>6</sup>

### 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

<sup>6</sup> Alaska Department of Transportation, Whittier Access website. <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/creg/whittiertunnel/history.htm>

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 Alaska Railroad, which is owned by the State of Alaska. 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 national rail system.

#### Passenger Rail

On ARRC's summer schedule (May 14-September 11), a passenger train travels into Whittier once a day. The roundtrip cost is \$64 and the one-way cost is \$52. Stops are made along the way at Girdwood and Portage. Most passengers who travel this route are tourists.

The Alaska Railroad features one rail diesel car and two types of single-level passenger cars that serve this route. One is a 78-seat coach built by Daewoo Heavy Industries of Korea. There are 70 reclining seats and two four-seat sets with a table between for games, writing or snacks. The other is one of the newly remodeled 60-seat coaches built for the Union Pacific in the 1950s. Each coach has provisions for wheelchair travelers and two restrooms per car and each has semi-reclining and forward facing seats. Parcel racks above keep carry-on luggage from underfoot.

The Alaska Railroad does not provide passenger service to Whittier during the winter months.



*The Alaska Railroad provides passenger service to cruise ship tourists*

In 2004, the cruise ship industry reinstated Whittier as the terminus for many of its cruises. Currently Whittier can expect 56 landings a summer with increases anticipated in the future. In 2005, Whittier was utilized as port of call for six cruises while continuing its role as terminus for other cruises. The Alaska Railroad provides charter train service for most cruise ship passengers.

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.

### **Freight**

Whittier, a year-round, ice-free, deep-water port, acts as freight exchange hub for barge service between Alaska and 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.

Alaska Railbelt Marine LLC, a subsidiary of Lynden Inc., began barging weekly rail cars 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 14 days. According to an ARRC spokesperson, the new barges are designed to provide faster, more efficient and more reliable service. ARRC also has a contract with an independent barge service, CN Aquatrain, operating out of Prince Rupert, Canada.

Typically, there are two to three weekly freight trips into Whittier with 42-70 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 rail yard is used to the limits of its capacity with freight and 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. A grade crossing of the railroad yards is allowed only near the Whittier Creek Bridge. When the switching 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.

### **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.

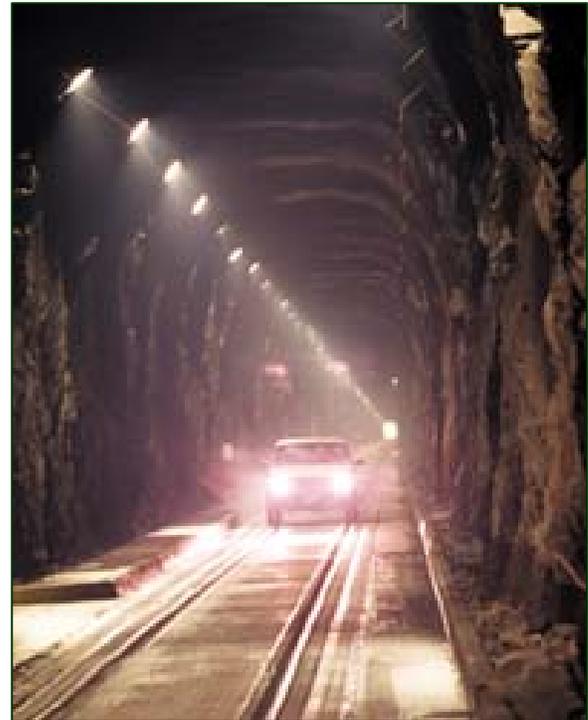
The tunnel offers one-way travel for highway vehicles generally switching traffic direction every half-hour. A total of 800 cars can travel through the tunnel during each opening, 400 in each direction. The tunnel schedule is available at the Bear Valley tollbooth or on the Internet at <http://www.tunnel.alaska.gov>. The tunnel schedule provides longer hours in the summer than the winter, with openings in 2005 from 5:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. in summer and 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (6:30 p.m. on Fridays) during the winter. In April, 2005 the tunnel was open on a "transition schedule" from 8:30 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. seven days a week in recognition of the fact that increased daylight hours and spring weather bring more visitors to Whittier. The shorter winter access times often prove problematic; residents transacting business in Anchorage are constrained by having to return before the final tunnel closure of the day. In the event of a power outage or other emergency, service providers are often unable to reach Whittier to remedy the problem in a timely manner.

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.<sup>7</sup> 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. It should be noted that booklets of 10 and 30 tunnel tickets and seasonal passes are available for reduced rates.

<sup>7</sup> Title 17, Alaska Administrative Code 38.005.

**Table 6 Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel Tolls – 2001 and 2004**

Vehicle Class	2001 Tolls	2004 Tolls		
<b>Class A</b>	\$15	\$12		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passenger vehicles not pulling trailers</li> <li>Motorcycles and motorcycles pulling trailers</li> <li>Trucks with a gross vehicle weight of less than 12,000 pounds, not pulling trailers</li> <li>Recreational vehicles less than 28 feet and not pulling trailers</li> </ul>				
<b>Class B<sub>1</sub></b>			\$40	\$20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreational vehicles 28 feet or greater not pulling trailers</li> <li>Recreational vehicles less than 28 feet pulling trailers</li> <li>Passenger vehicles pulling trailers (Trailers in this class cannot be more than 8.5 feet wide or 14 feet high.)</li> </ul>				
<b>Class B<sub>2</sub></b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreational vehicles 28 feet or greater pulling trailers</li> <li>Vans and buses designed to carry more than nine but fewer than 30 people including the driver</li> <li>Trucks with fewer than four axles pulling trailers</li> <li>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.)</li> </ul>	\$35			
<b>Class C</b>	\$125	\$125		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buses designed to carry 30 or more people including the driver.</li> </ul>				
<b>Class D</b>	\$125	\$125		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trucks, including tractor and trailer combinations, with a gross vehicle weight of 12,000 pounds or more and four or more axles</li> <li>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</li> <li>Any motor vehicle that is not otherwise classified in this section.</li> </ul>				
<b>Class E</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motor vehicles, including any trailer and any load, if they are:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 10.0 feet wide, excluding mirrors, but not more than 11.0 feet wide</li> <li>14.0 feet high, but not more than 15.0 feet high and not more than 75 feet long.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	\$250	\$300		



*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.<sup>8</sup> 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.

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.

<sup>8</sup> Whittier Access Project Technical Reports, January 1994

**Table 7 Monthly Vehicle Count, 2000 to 2003**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
January	-	2,311	1,639	2,269	2,319
February	-	2,895	1,642	2,390	2,638
March	-	5,879	2,648	3,455	3,285
April	-	3,799	3,329	4,474	4,811
May	-	8,795	10,402	10,927	14,364
June	14,495	14,521	15,351	15,645	19,829
July	22,528	15,922	18,874	20,008	22,988
August	22,118	14,628	16,808	17,304	21,281
September	13,866	8,206	11,059	10,893	12,753
October	6,023	3,331	4,135	4,852	5,908
November	3,163	1,983	2,930	2,734	2,958
December	2,515	1,554	2,323	2,135	2,934
TOTAL	84,708	83,824	91,140	97,086	116,068

Source: Gordon Burton, Facility Manager, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

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.

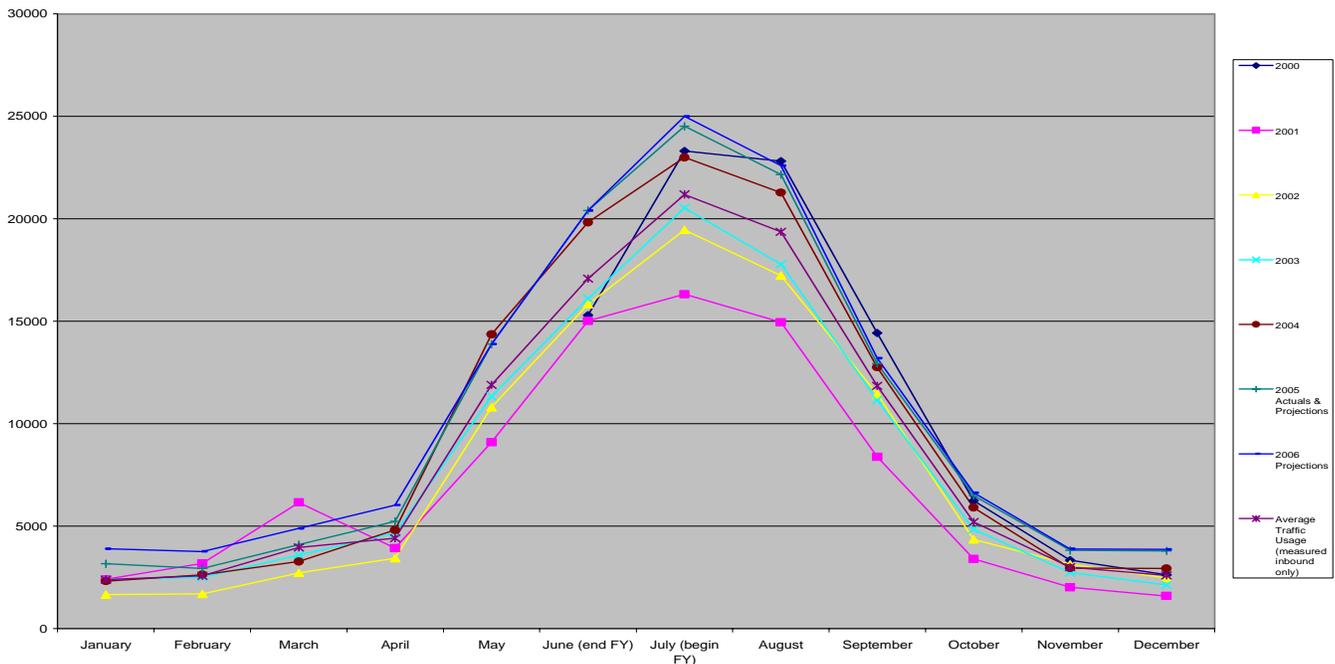
Weekend travel, Friday through Sunday, accounts for over 51 percent of total traffic through the tunnel. This is indicative of the large number of visitors from Anchorage who come to Whittier for recreation on the weekends.

Exhibit 5 shows the large increase in vehicular traffic in the summer and the year-round increase of traffic on weekend days.

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. More cruise ships docked in Whittier in summer 2005 and additional trains were required to serve passengers, causing additional tunnel closures.

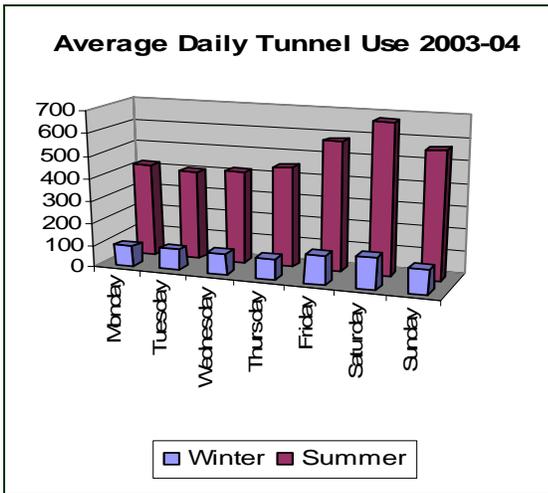
**Exhibit 5 Monthly Vehicle Count, 2000-'04**

**Traffic Volume Comparison**



Source: Gordon Burton, Facility Manager, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

**Exhibit 6 2003-04 Average Weekly Tunnel Traffic, Summer and Winter**



**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 offer additional data to aid the City of Whittier in classifying its roads.



*Residents desire increased access*

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

The following inventory of Whittier roads indicates their classification based on AADT and function within the community. These roads are shown in the Functional Classification System illustration 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

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



**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

### Major Roads



West Camp Road leading into Whittier

Two roads in Whittier qualify as major roads.

#### West Camp Road

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, 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 between Whittier and Portage Streets. 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

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 boat storage, 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.

*Hill Street*

Hill Street is located between Blackstone Road and Depot Road. Hill Street provides access to Whittier Manor and boat storage. 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, man-made pond, and a private camping park. The road is in poor condition.



*Sidewalks and landscaping were included in improvements to the Triangle, summer 2004.*

*Triangle Road*

Triangle Road is named for its distinctive shape. It borders the Small Boat Harbor off West Camp Road. Triangle Road is the commercial hub of the community; accessing on-street parking, the harbor, kiosk, 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 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, 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 poor with numerous cracks and potholes. Although this road provides access to the school, there is no bike path or sidewalk abutting the school, nor a crosswalk. There is, however, 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, parking lot/boat storage, Shoreside Petroleum, and the Emerald Sea boarding dock. Its condition is fair with a lack of definition between the

shoulder and road. 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*

Kittiwake Court branches off Cove Creek Road. It provides access to the harbor, and undeveloped lots. The gravel road is in poor condition with a steep slope leading to the harbor. 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. Along this road are two bridges that were inspected as part of the transportation plan. The engineer found that both bridges, while not in imminent danger of failing, had long outlasted their useful life and should be replaced as soon as possible; particularly if the city plans to develop the Salmon Run picnic area as a tourist destination.

*Bunker Road*

Bunker 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, transfer pumphouse, fire pumphouse, and the harbor. The end of the road opens to a large gravel surface 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*

In 2004, engineers completed the design for an approximately 2-mile road extending from Blackstone Road to the Emerald Bay Trailhead. Construction is anticipated to begin in summer 2006 and could take up to two years to complete. The purpose of this road project is threefold:

- to improve the safety and efficiency of the Whittier road system;
- to provide new and/or enhance existing recreational opportunities in and around Whittier; and
- to assist in the economic development of the community.



*Shotgun Cove Road before improvements*

Shotgun Cove Road provides access to existing public recreational areas used by both residents and visitors to Whittier. Additionally, a scenic pull-off and a picnic area are planned. 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, but this barrier is removed in the winter to facilitate snow removal. Winter pedestrians often take this short cut from the harbor area to the core area, which the railroad discourages because of safety concerns. ARRC constructed a pedestrian pathway under the railroad yard to provide a vital connection from the harbor area to the core area and main residential area. The pedestrian underpass, completed in June 2002, 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, built in summer 2004.

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 currently three major trails in Whittier: the Portage Pass Trail, the Horsetail Falls Trail, and the Emerald Cove Trail.

#### *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.



*Young hiker on Emerald Cove Trail*

## **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. The harbor's berths remain filled, largely with recreational, commercial fishing, and charter boats. There is a waiting list of more than 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. The new private harbor, as well as the proposed expansion of the existing harbor and construction of new harbors at the head of Passage Canal and Shotgun Cove will 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

Construction was completed in 2004 on private marina facilities located west of Harbor Loop Drive 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 from May through September. 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.<sup>9</sup>

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 reducing travel times.

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

### Rail Barge Dock

Barge traffic in and out of Whittier consists of a weekly ARRC/Alaska Railroad Marine Services (ARMS) 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 approximately 32 trips per year, with about 47 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. Products include:

- methanol
- specialty chemicals
- potash
- vehicles
- lime
- machinery and equipment
- propane
- lumber
- salt
- oriented strand board and other building materials
- cement
- steel products
- dimensional loads

CN anticipates expansion of its operations in Alaska and specifically Whittier as resource development such as the natural gas pipeline occurs.

The ARRC reports that in 2003 1,066 units (that is containers or tank cars) of hazardous materials were moved via rail through Whittier. This is approximately 8 to 10 percent of the total volume of rail traffic excluding passengers.

Great Pacific Seafood uses the ARRC dock to unload their fishing vessels. A pump is utilized to remove salmon from the boats.

### 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

<sup>9</sup> alaskaferry.com website of Viking Travel, Inc., contract agent of the Alaska Marine Highway System

Whittier Dock Enterprises LLC. The dock and 20,000 square foot building 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.<sup>10</sup>

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



*Covered loading area for passengers transferring between cruise ships and trains*



*Whittier cruise ship terminal building*

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

With improved facilities at the private marina facility, large day tour operators dock there, as well. Phillips Cruises and Tours, with one 350-passenger vessel and Major Marine Tours, with one 175-passenger vessel, are mooring at a dock near the cruise ship dock. Other large day tour operators include CIRI/Alaska Heritage Tours, Prince William Sound Tours, Cruise West, and Honey Charters. Smaller charter operators provide small groups and individuals with fishing trips and tours, water taxi service for kayakers, and other marine services. At the time of this update, there were 33 small charter operators working out of Whittier.

### **Airport**

Whittier Airport is located approximately one mile northwest of the Whittier core area on land leased for the Department of Defense and the ARRC. It is operated by the ADOT&PF, 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.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.whittiermarina.com/cruisedock/cruisedock.htm>



*Whittier Airport, summer 2005*

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.<sup>11</sup>

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.

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<sup>11</sup> *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, develop 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. Whittier is connected to other regions of Alaska by the Anton Memorial Tunnel. Both railroad and passenger cars pass 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. The following table 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. As shown in Table 10, Whittier’s per capita income level

is greater than that of the state as a whole but below the level of the census area.

**Table 10 Comparison of economic indicators**

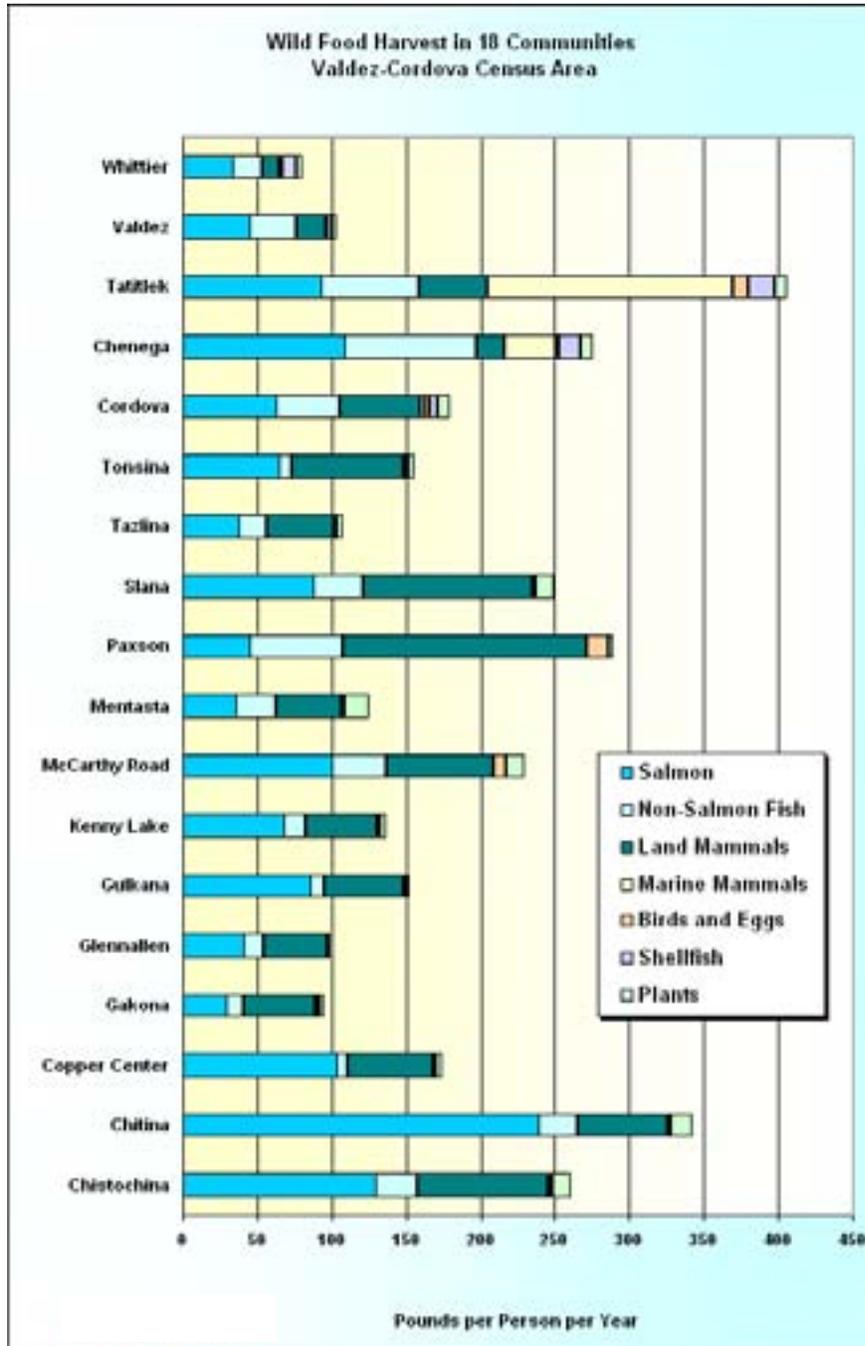
	Whittier	Valdez-Cordova Census Area	Alaska
<b>Population</b>	182	10,230	626,932
<b>Per capita income</b>	\$25,700	\$28,300	\$22,660
<b>Median household income</b>	\$47,500	\$48,734	\$51,571
<b>Potential work force</b>	143		458,054
<b>Total employment</b>	90	5,010	326,596
<b>Unemployed (seeking work)*</b>	17	1,156	27,953
<b>Adults not seeking work</b>	36	4,092	131,458
<b>Below poverty level</b>	13 (7.1%)	1,003 (9.8%)	58,932 (9.4%)
<b>Median home value</b>	\$40,000	\$141,300	\$144,200

Source: [www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca](http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca) and <http://quickfacts.census.gov>

\*Percent of civilian workforce – does not include military personnel

The Whittier economic indicators depict a lower percentage of residents living below the poverty level than the rest of the census area and the state as a whole. This may be attributed to the fact that Whittier has a cash-based economy to a greater degree than the Native villages that comprise much of Alaska’s population. Subsistence plays a large role in village economies and subsistence income is not figured into poverty level statistics; this is not the case in Whittier. Exhibit 7 shows the amount of wild food harvested in Whittier compared to the other communities in the census area.

Exhibit 7 Comparison of wild food harvest



Source: State of Alaska DCEC

**Analysis of current economic opportunities**

Whittier’s primary work force is concentrated in transportation, local and state government administration, fishing, education and construction. The Alaska Railroad Corporation, State of Alaska, City of Whittier and Chugach School District are the largest employers.

The 2000 census reported the total potential work force, age 16 and over, at 143 people. The total employed was 90. Government employs approximately 21 workers, private wage and salary workers number 40, and there are 29 self-employed workers. Per capita income was listed at \$25,700, median family income \$51,875, and median household income in Whittier was \$47,500 in 2000. Thirteen people, 7.1 percent, live at or below the poverty level.

The 2000 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 2000 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.whittieralaska.com](http://www.whittieralaska.com).

**Table 13 Whittier businesses**

Type of business	Number of providers
<b>Tourism related</b>	
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	2
Hotels	2
Restaurants	9
Specialty foods	5
Liquor	1
Information & souvenirs	5
Visitor services	7
Camping	1
<b>Marine services</b>	
Supplies & services	4
Fish purchasing & processing	3
Transportation of goods	
Long distance	3
Regional	1
<b>Services for residents</b>	
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.<sup>12</sup>

**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 nine restaurants or eateries many located in the Triangle 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. Three 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, hunters or hikers who wish to start at more remote locations.

In addition to these large and mid-size day cruise operators, 33 small charter operators offered services

<sup>12</sup> 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.

to small groups for fishing trips, acted as water taxis for kayakers, and took groups averaging six passengers on tours of the Sound in 2004. These small charter operators have the capacity to serve approximately 200 people per day and 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 at Whittier City Dock

**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, as well.

Businesses in Whittier saw an increase in sales in 2004, from which the city gained sales tax revenue. 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 brought business to Whittier. In 2004, 44 cruise ship dockings were scheduled in Whittier. In 2005, this number will increase to 56, six of which will be port-of-call stops rather than as the beginning or end of a cruise. Passengers disembarking for a few hours in Whittier will be looking for activities during their stay. This will provide new 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. In 2003, 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 weekly cross-gulf route that connects Prince Rupert, 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 during the summer season.

### **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 2004, 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 2004, 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.

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 marina is designed to have the potential to expand to 162 slips, plus an inside dry stack moorage system that has the potential to serve 150 vessels. It is anticipated that most users of this marina will be mooring yachts and sailboats. The new marina operates like a condominium complex and individual 40-foot slips are

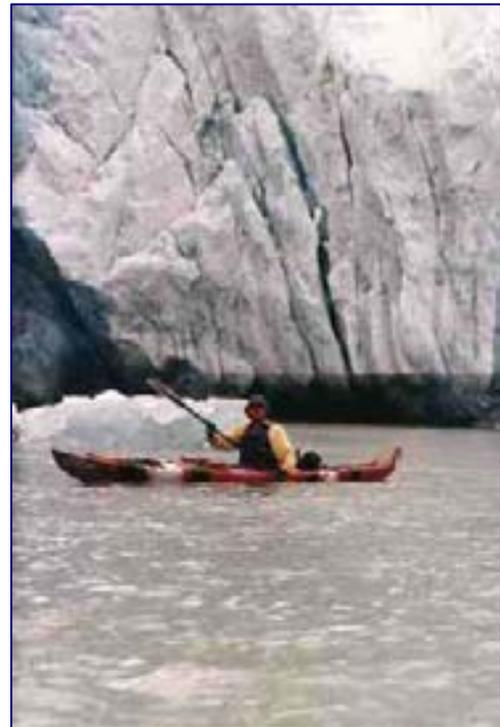
being sold for \$55,000. This is the first business venture of its type in Alaska.



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

### **Other recreational activities**

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



*Many kayak excursions leave from Whittier*

A camping area, west of the school, has been graded and is available for use, although it is still being developed. The manager reported that, although there was no official count, many campers used the area in 2004 and they expect the numbers to grow as amenities are added. The city park, northwest of



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

Begich Towers, was recently improved with facilities for picnicking 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. Cross-country skiers use the Portage Pass trail in winter.

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 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**

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. 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.

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.<sup>13</sup> 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 nonconsumptive 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.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Chugach National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, 2002 Revision <http://www.geographynetwork.com/chugach>

<sup>14</sup> 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.

**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, eel, trout, char, king crab, tanner crab, and Dungeness crab.

Great Pacific Seafood bought and processed over 11 million pounds of seafood in Whittier in 2003. 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 ARRC dock. Primary processing is largely done at the plant in Whittier, with secondary processing – filleting and freezing – done at the larger facility in Anchorage. 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 2004. Gill-netters are by far the largest portion of the commercial fishing fleet in Prince William Sound. Other fishermen include seiners 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. Although the processing plant is closed in the winter, Great Pacific does continue to buy Pacific Cod in Whittier throughout the year for processing in Anchorage.<sup>15</sup>

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.<sup>16</sup> Other

<sup>15</sup> Telephone conversation with Roger Stiles, Great Pacific Seafood, Seattle, WA. September 27, 2004.

<sup>16</sup> *Economic Impacts of the Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation*, p. 11. McDowell Group, February 2002.

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.<sup>17</sup>

**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. One company provides regional barge transportation throughout western 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 23 residents in the following areas:

Police	3
City Administration	5
Fire/EMS	1
Harbor	8
Public Works	7

There are also several seasonal positions available in the Harbor and Public Works Departments.

<sup>17</sup> *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](http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/ardor/pub/MRAD_ARD_SP_PWS00.pdf)

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 employs a local resident to operate the Post Office, which is open three 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, bakery, piano lessons, handyman services, television repair, florist, 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](http://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:

#### ***Establish a strategy for local hire.***

Many projects are planned or are currently underway in Whittier. The city will benefit from the capital improvements, but the economy will be boosted even more if revenue can stay in the community in the form of wages, which may in turn be spent at local businesses. To make the most use of local labor resources, training programs could be initiated in Whittier to prepare residents to take advantage of upcoming job openings. Incentives could be offered to contractors who hire local applicants. Jobs could be advertised locally before being opened to the general public. It is understood that not every job will have a qualified applicant in Whittier; however, the idea is to use local personnel to the maximum extent possible.

#### ***Capitalize on the economic potential of increased tourism.***

As shown throughout this chapter, tourism is on the rise – particularly ecotourism – 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 rookery or hatchery, 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.<sup>18</sup>

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



<sup>18</sup> 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.

**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 three phases:

- Phase I – Existing Small Boat Harbor Reconfigure and replace aging float system. Add slope stabilization.
- Phase II – Head of Passage Canal Construct new, second boat harbor.
- Phase III – Existing Small Boat Harbor Further enlarge boat harbor basin.



*Shotgun Cove offers many economic development possibilities.*

**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 500 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 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 Federal Government, State of Alaska, City of Whittier, Chugach Alaska Corporation and privately owned and leased lands. See Figure 3 Whittier land ownership and Figure 4 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 Department of Defense dock along the eastern waterfront in the town core area and lands at the tank farm at the Head of the Bay.

### 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 the Bay, with the remainder located along the beginning of the Shotgun Cove Road. About 15 percent of the waterfront is privately held.

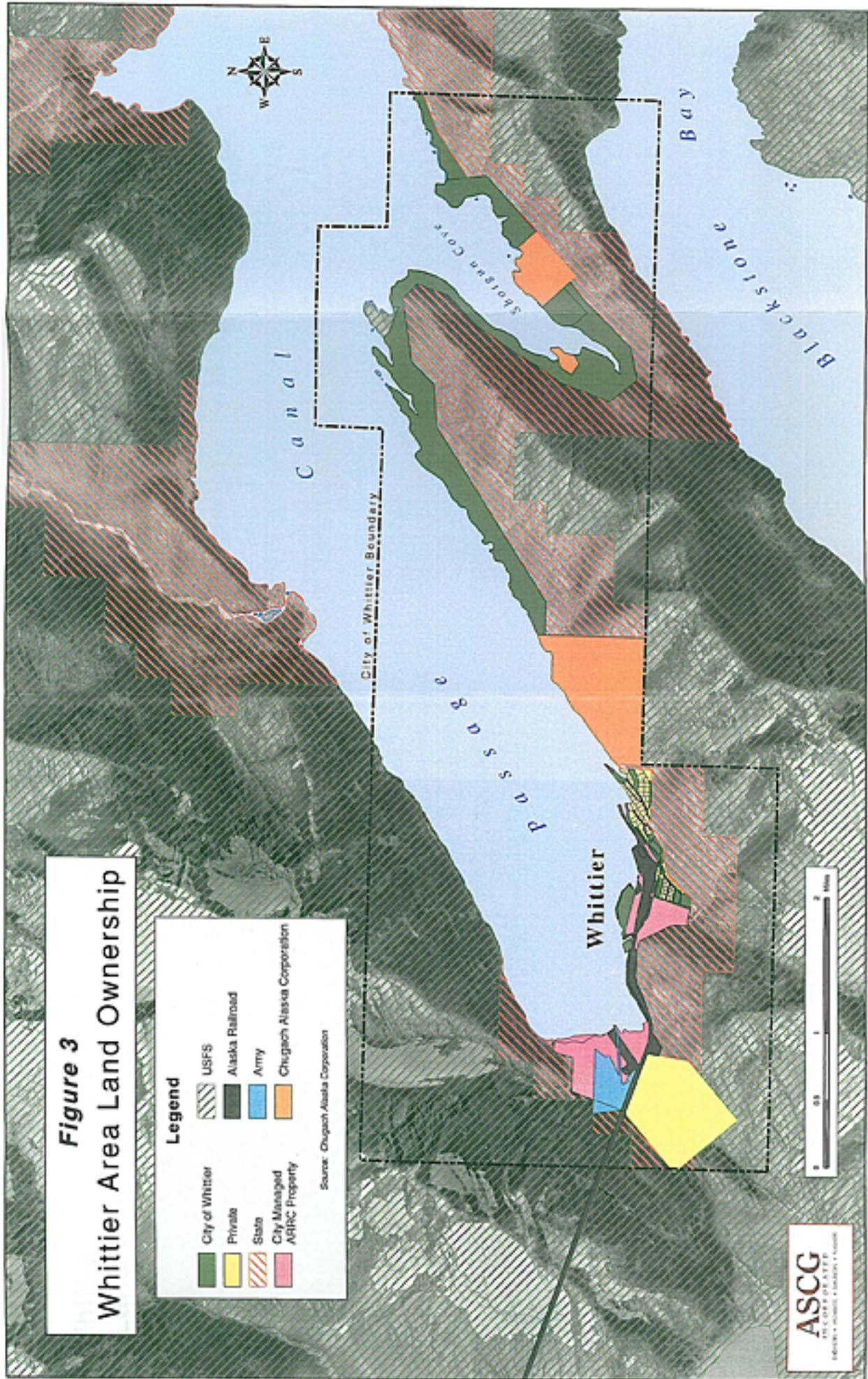
Some Head of the Bay lands are owned by an Anchorage-based developer and were purchased through a GSA auction. Most other private lands were purchased from prior land sales by the City. The City plans to sell some of its lands at Shotgun Cove once the access road is complete.

At the Head of the Bay, 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.

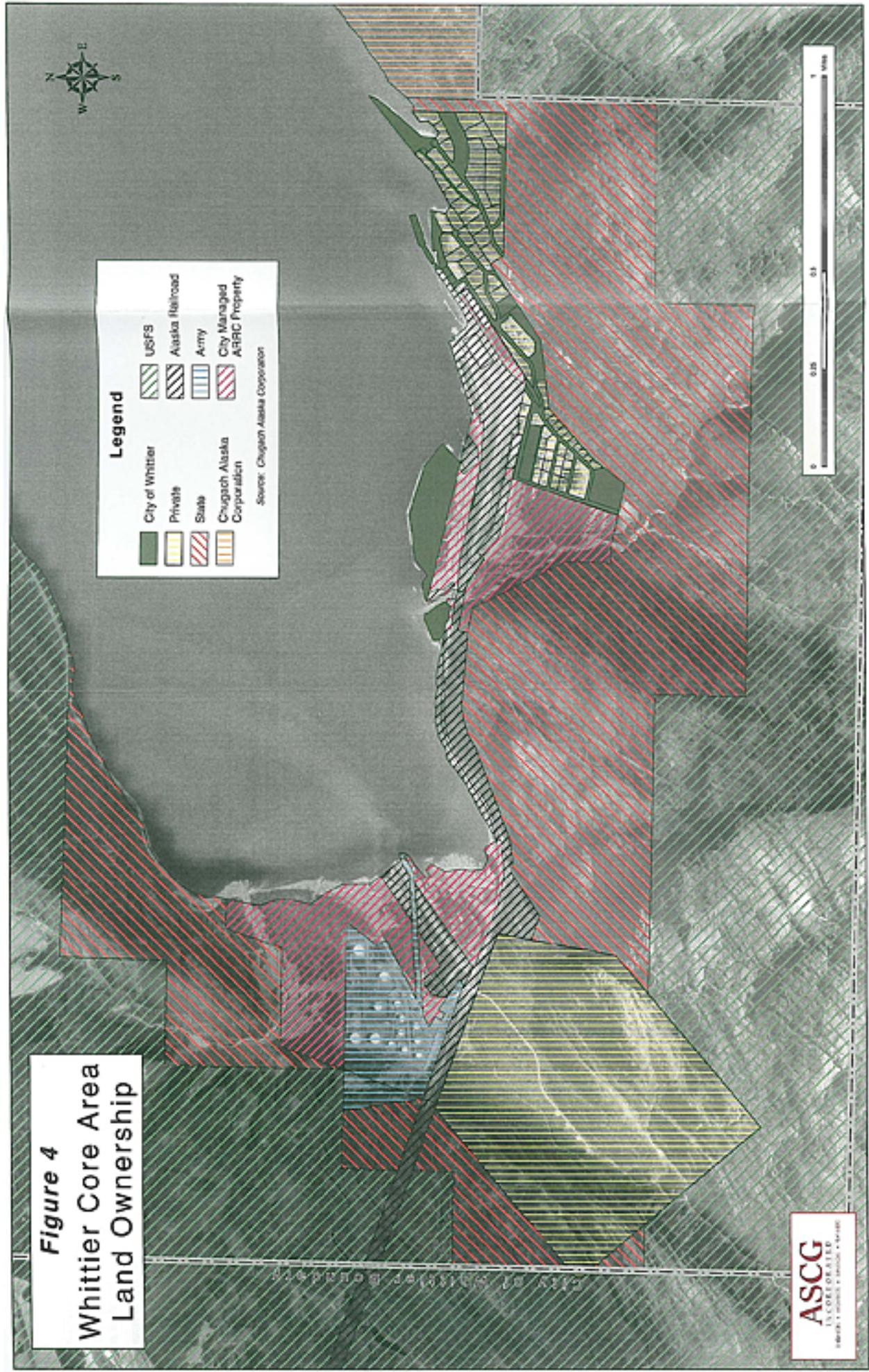
**Figure 3**  
**Whittier Area Land Ownership**

Legend	
	City of Whittier
	Private
	State
	City Managed ARTC Property
	USFS
	Alaska Railroad
	Army
	Chugach Alaska Corporation

Source: Chugach Alaska Corporation



**Figure 4**  
**Whittier Core Area**  
**Land Ownership**



In addition to the Alaska Railroad leases, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service leases about 38 acres in the Head of the Bay, adjacent to the U.S. Air Force storage tank farm, to the City.

A parcel of approximately 10 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. Lands outside of the core area and Head of the Bay 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 the Bay.

Major industrial uses include the following:

- the tank farm at the Head of the Bay,
- 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 and 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.

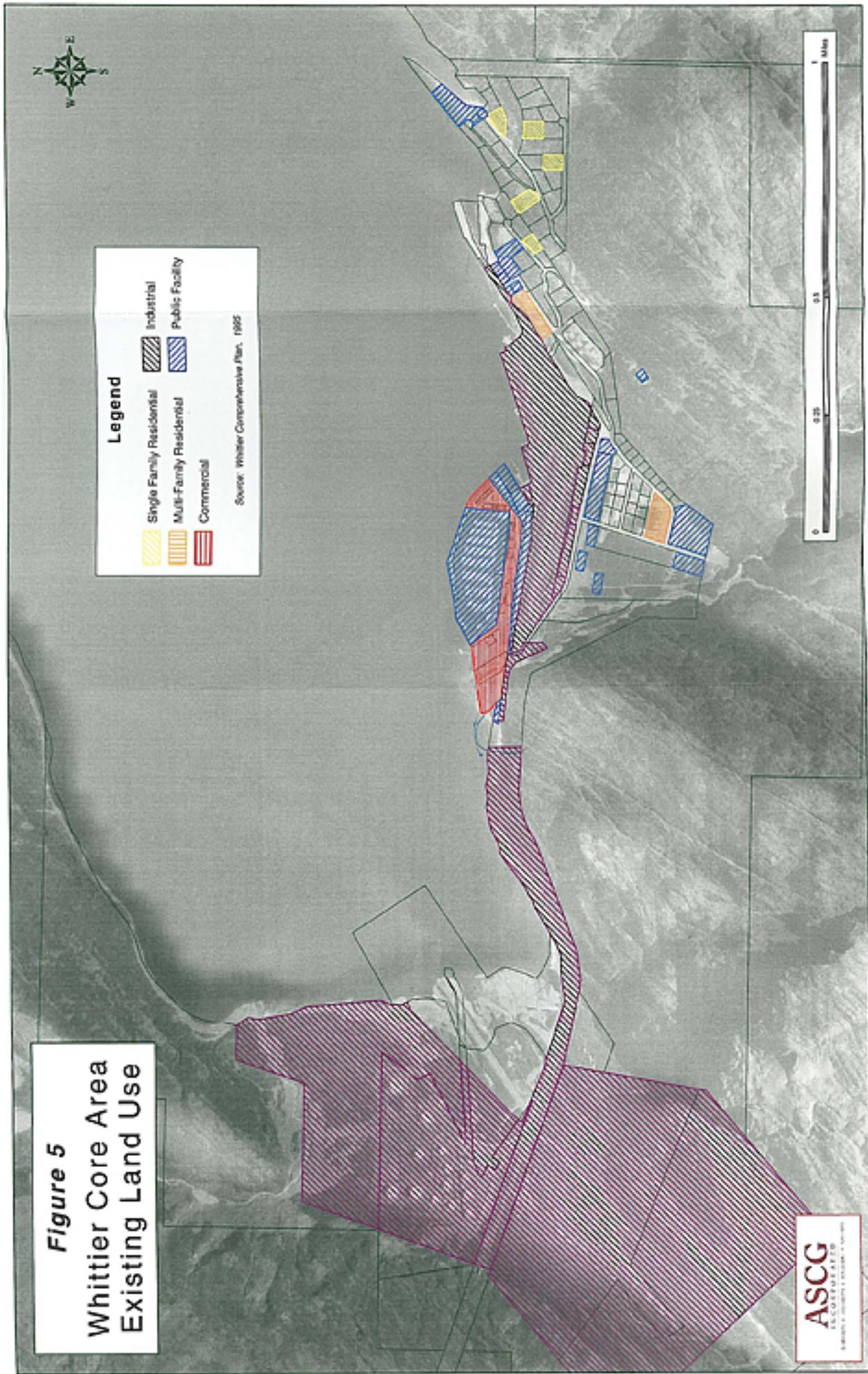
Smitty's Cove, located east of DeLong Dock, is used as a camping area, barge ramp, kayak launch and diving area. As an area with year-round water access, it is often used in diver and search and rescue certification and training.

Additional major public facilities include the school complex (about 5 acres), fire station, 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 the Bay. Approximately seven acres of developed land is dedicated to public facilities.

**Open Space/Recreational Uses**

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

**Figure 5**  
**Whittier Core Area**  
**Existing 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 gazebo in the Triangle provides information to visitors and will continue to be an important public space. Construction was completed on a new private marina, in 2004 located in the core area near the Cruise Ship dock. With potential for expansion, this facility could serve over 200 vessels.

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.

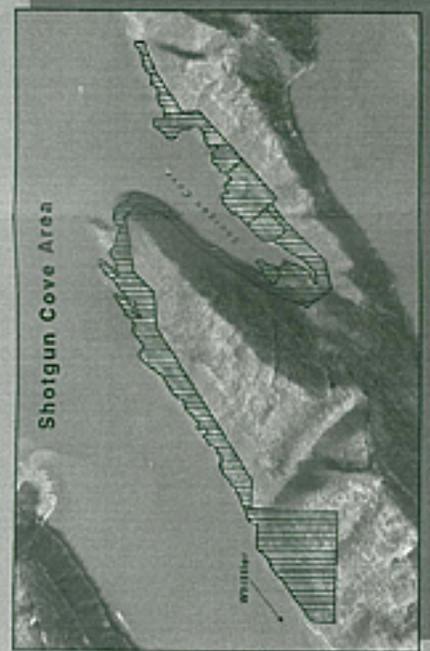
At present, virtually all residents live in the Whittier core area in Whittier Manor, Anchor Inn Annex or Begich Towers. The City envisions these buildings continuing to be used for this purpose. Single-family residential development will be encouraged to be located in the Whittier core area and along 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.

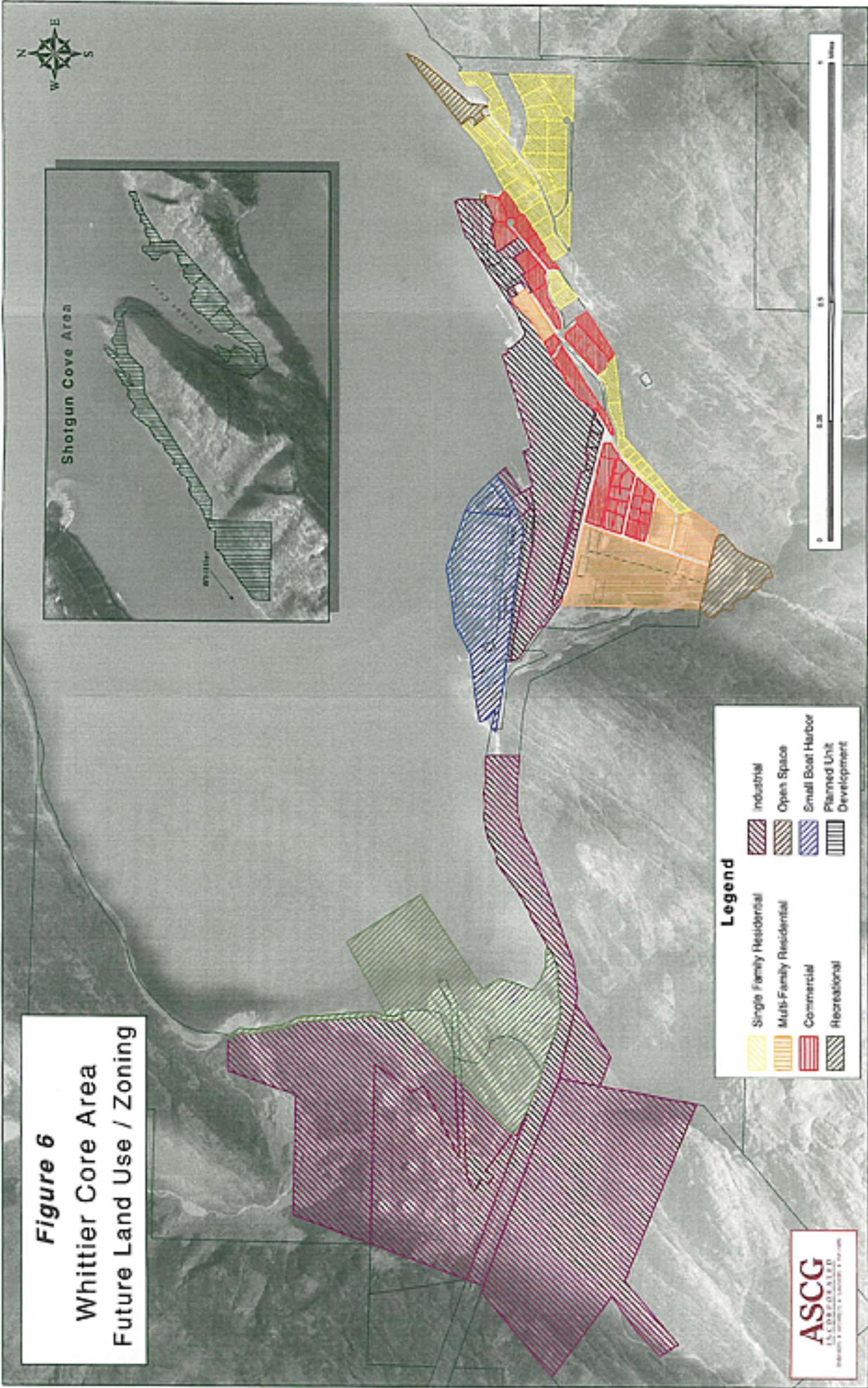
### **Future Land Use at the Head of Passage Canal**

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.



**Figure 6**  
**Whittier Core Area**  
**Future Land Use / Zoning**



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 and breakwater for fishing. Light commercial uses included a small boat repair shop and a seasonal open market or regular Whittier Fair for summer visitors. 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, similar to the one located in the core area, 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.



View of Passage Canal from the head of Passage Canal

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.

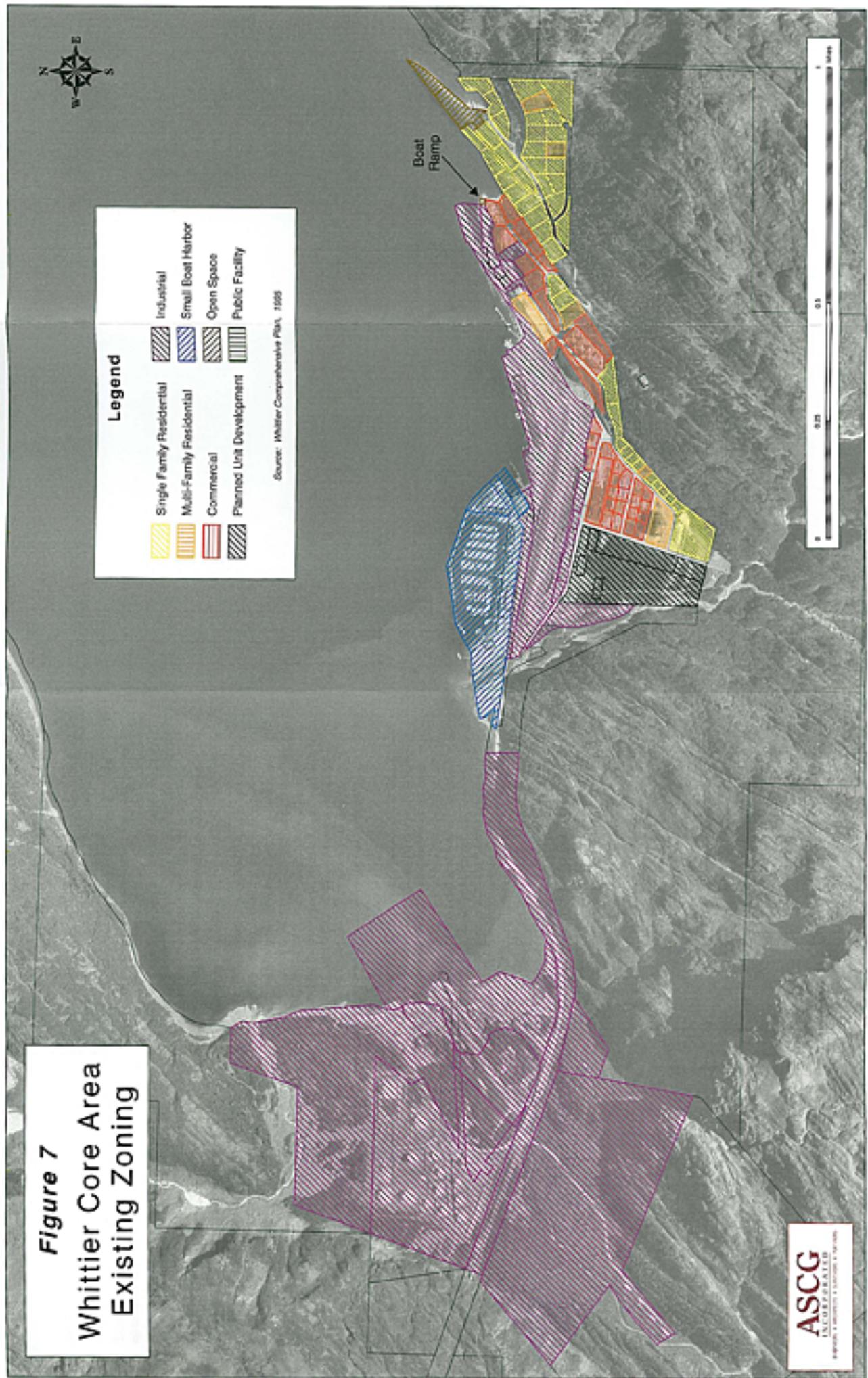
Alaska Statute 29.40.040 further requires, in part, that in accordance with a comprehensive plan and in order to implement the plan the City shall adopt zoning regulations restricting the use of land and improvements by geographic districts.

**Zoning Ordinance**

The present zoning ordinance, adopted in October 1984, uses a multi-district zoning approach and has seven districts. These districts are: single family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, small boat harbor, open space and planned unit development. The ordinance is based on a system of permitted and conditional uses for each of the seven 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 is currently working on revising their program to meet the new regulations.

**Figure 7**  
**Whittier Core Area**  
**Existing Zoning**



**Legend**

Single Family Residential	Industrial
Multi-Family Residential	Small Boat Harbor
Commercial	Open Space
Planned Unit Development	Public Facility

Source: Whittier Comprehensive Plan, 1995

## **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.



*Businesses at the Triangle lease land from 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.

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 the Bay, 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.

#### **Communication**

Increased communication capability is desired to allow Whittier to maintain connection to Anchorage and the rest of the state in the event of an emergency. This could include better radio and satellite communication facilities.

## 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.

### Sustainable Economic Development for the Prince William Sound Region, 2004 Final Draft

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 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.”<sup>19</sup>

The plan focuses on tourism, eco-tourism, fast ferry access, and Prince William Sound fisheries.

### Whittier Water System Master Plan, November 2004 65% Draft

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

The updated plan will review the City’s existing water system; give an analysis of water system needs related to increased cruise ship dockings, tourism activities, and overall community growth and commercial expansion; review water system needs for development at Head of the Bay and Shotgun Cove; discuss existing water source quality and treatment requirements; and analyze alternative water well locations.

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<sup>19</sup> Fay, Ginny, et al. Sustainable Economic Development for the Prince William Sound Region, November 2004.

## 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.

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\\_do\\_csl.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach/forest_plan/plan_do_csl.html)

### **Forest Plan Interactive website:**

This website contains links to the Forest Plan, Forest Plan Maps and the Final Impact Statement.

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

The Revised Forest Plan is based on the Preferred Alternative as described in the FEIS and modified in the Record of Decision (ROD). No lands are identified as suitable for timber production in this alternative. This analysis is summarized in the FEIS, Chapter 3, Production of Natural Resources, Forest Products.

### **Landscape Assessment**

The Forest Service is currently studying potential issues affecting the Glacier District of the Chugach National Forest in the Western Sound Landscape Assessment. The purpose of the landscape assessment is to develop an understanding of the important resources, processes, patterns and interactions occurring on the assessment area. It will be used as a tool to managers, resource specialists and interested publics, to aid in the synthesis of available information and identification of topics of interest or concern. The assessment will focus on the issues and key questions identified for this area.

This study is anticipated to be completed in September 2005.

### **Prince William Sound Human Use Study**

The Forest Service is also conducting a human use study to determine types and distribution of human use in Prince William Sound; monitor and predict use and distribution over time; and evaluate impacts of human use on the resources in Prince William Sound. This study will evaluate who is going where and what they are doing in the national forest.

This study is expected to take two years and will be available after September 2006.

### **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 and

the Alaska Soil and Water Conservation District. The Council is currently working on developing bylaws for the group. It is anticipated that the Council will proceed with requesting that a resource inventory of the watershed be conducted for the area. 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 Planning Project, 2004**

The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) is pursuing several projects to make passenger and freight operations in Whittier more safe and efficient. The ARRC operates a large freight yard and both freight and passenger trains in Whittier. ARRC also operates marine facilities including a freight barge slip and two docks. In addition, the Alaska Marine Highway Whittier Terminal is located on ARRC lands within the vicinity of the railroad's other marine facilities. (ARRC also has long-range plans to remove and replace the condemned Marginal Wharf, which would provide additional large ship dock space).

The Railroad contracted with Peratrovich, Nottingham and Drage, Inc., an Anchorage engineering firm, to perform the Intermodal Planning Study. (Passenger related amenities are only one part of the study. The Master Plan is intended to address ARRC's business needs in Whittier for the foreseeable future. As Whittier is ARRC's connection to the rail systems in Canada and the Lower 48 states, by way of rail barge, the overall business strategy in Whittier is important to the continued vitality and growth of the railroad as a whole.)The study also considers present and future freight operations, evaluation of existing facilities, conceptual development of rehabilitated or new marine facilities, including the potential for large cruise ships to call in Whittier. Major goals of future development include increased rail passenger and pedestrian safety, increased passenger service, segregation of freight and passenger operations, and construction of a new passenger terminal and maintenance facilities.

This study will allow the railroad to move forward with development having a clear understanding of the primary goals.

#### **Status**

- Draft plan will be distributed for public comment in late 2004.
- \$512,500 budget for study and conceptual design, funded 80 percent by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and 20 percent by ARRC.

#### **State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities**

##### **Prince Williams Sound Transportation Plan, 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. 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 2004 - 2006**

Whittier had a project listed in the Final STIP for Fiscal Years 2004 – 2006. The project titled Terminal: Whittier Improvements was to construct ferry terminal facilities to accommodate AMHS operations. The project cost approximately \$7,500,000 and was completed in 2005.

### **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. 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.

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

**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.**

- 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.
- 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.
- Action 1.1.3            Pursue expanded and improved Alaska Marine Highway (AMHS) service to Whittier.

**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.
- Action 1.2.2            Submit local road projects to the Alaska Department of Transportation (ADOT) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.
- Action 1.2.3            Explore the possibility of the RS2477 route over Portage Pass.
- Action 1.2.4            Continue to seek funding to complete a road toward Decision Point State Marine Park.

Action 1.2.5 Provide shuttle service within Whittier.

Action 1.2.6 Provide shuttle service between Portage and Whittier.

**Policy 1.3 Improve pedestrian circulation within Whittier's core area.**

Action 1.3.1 Improve pedestrian crossing at Whittier Creek.

Action 1.3.2 Integrate pedestrian trails and/or sidewalks with ongoing highway improvements.

**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.

Action 1.4.2 Construct paved parking lots.

**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.

Action 1.5.2 Develop a parking plan with recommendations for walkway, street crossing, and beach access as well as shared parking where feasible.

**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.

Action 1.6.2 Promote the construction of a new tunnel facility.

**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.

Action 1.7.2 Promote the design and construction of a helicopter pad to serve the Whittier community.

**Policy 1.8 Improve quality of road system for sustainability.**

Action 1.8.1 Institute a program to rebuild the roads to appropriate standards.

Action 1.8.2 Develop programs to pave gravel streets.

**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 – at location of the existing west boat ramp.
- Action 2.1.2 Research funding opportunities to repair and upgrade the public works facility.
- 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; city, state and federal administrative facilities; library; health and recreational facilities.
- Action 2.1.4 Provide modern, maintained public restrooms and shower facilities.
- Action 2.1.5 Establish a major maintenance and repair fund and a major equipment fund for replacement of public works equipment when necessary.

**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.
- Action 2.2.2 Expand and upgrade the existing Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program, including the addition of an EMT III or Paramedic to support community health care. Try to qualify as many residents as possible for these positions.
- Action 2.2.3 Document and publicize the importance of Whittier as an emergency medical center for western Prince William Sound.
- Action 2.2.4 Support the efforts of agencies responding to waterborne emergencies.

**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.

**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.
- Action 2.4.2 Repair and expand the existing sewer and water systems as needed.

- 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.
- Action 2.4.4 Develop and implement a storm drain management plan.
- Action 2.4.5 Explore and encourage the use of alternative energy sources.
- Action 2.4.6 Research solid waste alternatives and develop and implement a solid waste management plan.
- Action 2.4.7 Encourage additional internet/cable providers to serve Whittier's residents.

## **Municipal Government**

**Goal 3            The municipal government will serve its citizens through a strategy of responsible stewardship of its environmental, economic and human resources.**

**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.

**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.

**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.

Action 3.3.2            Attend statewide meetings to stay involved with other agencies.

Action 3.3.3            Examine alternative means of service delivery, such as privatization of services and contracting existing city services.

**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, Coastal Zone Management Plan, and subdivision and zoning ordinances.
- Action 3.4.2 Coordinate with state and federal agencies for environmental protection and permitting.
- Action 3.4.3 Develop a checklist of agencies and resources to provide guidance for responsible development.

**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.
- Action 3.5.2 Develop a schedule to review and update and practice emergency evacuation plan for Whittier area.
- 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.
- Action 3.5.4 Develop a plan to deal with potential hazards such as fire, earthquake, flood, hazardous material spills, etc. Develop a plan to deal with potential hazards such as fire, earthquake, flood, hazardous material spills, etc.

**Policy 3.6            Support recreational opportunities by providing local governmental assistance.**

- Action 3.6.1 Develop a land use plan for parks and trails.
- Action 3.6.2 Provide support for agencies and groups for pass through grants.
- Action 3.6.3 Develop a recreational area map and designate use areas.
- Action 3.6.4 Establish a volunteer and community work service program to provide recreational enhancement labor.

**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.
- 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.

**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.
- Action 4.2.2 Identify City owned properties and designate uses in a City Land Use Plan.

**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.
- Action 4.3.2 Prepare an economic development feasibility study for Shotgun Cove development.
- Action 4.3.3 Zone available areas for land development.
- Action 4.3.4 Finish Phase II & III of Shotgun Cove Road to facilitate future growth in the area.

**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.
- Action 4.4.2 Designate and provide access to areas for public use.
- Action 4.4.3 Designate potential recreational sites in the Passage Canal area.

**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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Action 4.5.4 Explore opportunities to acquire publicly held lands for development by City of Whittier or for private development.

**Policy 4.6 Develop a strategy for the tank farm.**

- Action 4.6.1 Acquire the tank farm property.
- Action 4.6.2 Develop a land use plan for the tank farm property.

**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 Improve Whittier's trail system using but not limited to the following means:  
\* 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 Cove Creek 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.

Action 5.1.2 Work to provide increased marine recreational facilities and activities including but not limited to the following:  
\* Establish a kayak launch area and ramp;  
\* Construct a creek- and salmon-viewing platform at Shakespeare Creek;  
\* Designate fishing areas for non-boaters

Action 5.1.3 Seek funding for and construct an indoor recreation facility and adjoining park area to include but not be limited to the following facilities:  
\* Community swimming pool;  
\* Sports and recreation facility  
\* Ice skating rink:

Action 5.1.4 Set aside areas to provide for recreation use.

Action 5.1.5 Work with state and federal agencies to assist in constructing the Shotgun Cove small boat harbor.

Action 5.1.6 Promote Whittier as a shore-based recreational center for hiking, camping, berry picking and sightseeing.

Action 5.1.7 Encourage the development of camping and day-use facilities.

Action 5.1.8 Pursue funding to design and construct a youth center for Whittier residents.

**Policy 5.2 Promote regional recreational events and competitions.**

Action 5.2.1 Coordinate with various groups to encourage events in Whittier.

Action 5.2.2 Encourage guided walking tours and facilities for self-guided tours.

## **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.
- Action 6.1.2 Enhance downtown boardwalk system, especially along the waterfront.
- Action 6.1.3 Install interpretive and informational signs to enhance visitors' experience in Whittier.
- Action 6.1.4 Promote annual community clean-up kick-off days and on-going clean-up efforts.
- Action 6.1.5 Create architectural standards.
- Action 6.1.6 Continue to pursue a solution to derelict structures such as the Buckner Building and USFS Building (near Anchor Inn).

#### **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.
- Action 6.2.2 Research and apply for grants.
- Action 6.2.2 Research incentive programs for landscaping and beautification projects.
- Action 6.2.3 Encourage recycling efforts throughout the community.

## **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.

#### **Policy 7.2**

**Capitalize on the economic potential of increased tourism.**

- Action 7.2.1 Create a tourist information center.
- Action 7.2.2 Promote growth of small business tourist industry.
- Action 7.2.3 Foster a friendly and inviting attitude towards visitors.

- 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.
- Action 7.3.2                Pursue obtaining economic development grants from the state and federal governments.
- Action 7.3.3                Ensure that there are adequate land use areas for commercial and economic development.
- 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.
- Action 7.4.2                Construct new harbor facilities at Shotgun Cove.
- 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.
- Action 7.5.2                Research the feasibility of and, if feasible, support the development of natural gas liquefaction at the Head of the Bay.
- 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.
- Action 7.6.2                Attract commercial development that serves local community needs.
- Action 7.6.3                Pursue grant funding for infrastructure development, such as utilities, transportation/access improvements, recreational and other public facilities.

## **Appendix A : City Rates**

Equipment Rental Rates

Whittier Small Boat Harbor Service Charges and Fees

## Equipment Rental Rates

Equipment	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	Hourly (dry)	+\$50 (wet)
650 Lincoln Welder	460.00	155.00	39.00	n/a	n/a
Autocar Dump Truck 8 yd	1,398.00	395.00	148.00	40.00	90.00
Bobcat	3,890.00	1,220.00	350.00	60.00	110.00
Case 580 Backhoe	4,412.00	1,470.00	368.00	69.00	119.00
Case W24B Loader	2,553.00	702.00	175.00	45.00	95.00
Cement Mixer 6cu 8hp	460.00	155.00	39.00	n/a	n/a
Clark 125B Loader	3,320.00	912.00	280.00	45.00	95.00
DC7 Cat	5,610.00	1,845.75	493.55	109.98	159.98
Dynapac Compactor	4,412.00	1,470.00	207.00	69.00	110.00
Ford Dump Truck 10 yd	2,313.00	649.00	145.00	40.00	90.00
Hatachi FX300 Excavator	9,350.00	3,125.00	775.00	130.00	180.00
Hubar 13G Grader	2,760.00	775.00	254.00	45.00	95.00
JD 450 Dozer	4,412.00	1,470.00	368.00	69.00	119.00
Snowblower	2,760.00	775.00	254.00	45.00	95.00
Vacuum Truck	n/a	n/a	150.00*	n/a	n/a

\* With operator only

## WHITTIER SMALL BOAT HARBOR SERVICE CHARGES and FEES

SERVICE/FEE	DESCRIPTION	RATE	W/TAX	PER
PREFERENTIAL		\$33.00	\$ 33.50	ft.
ANNUAL MOORAGE		\$33.00	\$ 33.50	ft.
TRANSIENT MOORAGE	Daily	\$0.55	\$ 0.57	ft.
TRANSIENT MOORAGE	Monthly	\$10.72	\$ 11.04	ft.
BOAT LIFT	Short	\$165.00	\$ 169.95	1hr.
BOAT LIFT	Normal	\$148.50	\$ 152.96	1hr.
BOAT LIFT	Rail Car Lift	\$192.50	\$ 198.28	1hr.
Each Additional	Half hour	\$60.50	\$ 62.32	
LAUNCH RAMP	One Way	\$6.60	\$ 6.80	Time
LAUNCH RAMP	Round Trip	\$12.62	\$ 13.00	Time
LAUNCH RAMP	Seasonal	\$79.20	\$ 81.58	Year
LAUNCH RAMP	Single Kayak	\$6.41	\$ 6.60	Time
LAUNCH RAMP	Group Kayak	\$18.15	\$ 18.69	Time
LAUNCH RAMP (JET SKI)	PW-CRAFT	\$8.25	\$ 8.50	Time
HOIST	Minimin 1 hr	\$22.00	\$ 22.66	1hr
GRID	All Vessels	\$1.10	\$ 1.13	ft.
			\$ -	
DRY STORAGE	Vehicle and Trailer	\$5.50	\$ 5.67	Day
DRY STORAGE	Vessel	\$1.87	\$ 1.93	ft.
DRY STORAGE	Clean up fee	\$55.00	\$ 56.85	Hour
			\$ -	
WHARFAGE	Commercial	\$5.08	\$ 5.23	Ton
WHARFAGE	Raw Fish	\$7.62	\$ 7.85	Ton
			\$ -	
MISCELLANEOUS			\$ -	
SHOWER		\$3.30	\$ 3.40	Time
LABOR FEE	Harbor Staff	\$55.00	\$ 56.65	Hour
CHARTS	*	\$21.00	\$ 21.63	Each
BAD CHECKS	*	\$25.00	\$ 25.00	
ABSORBENTS	*	\$1.94	\$ 2.00	Each
COPIES	*	\$0.29	\$ 0.30	Page
COPIES BERTH HOLDERS		\$22.00	\$ 22.66	Each
COPIES ANNUALS		\$22.00	\$ 22.66	Each
COPIES WAIT LIST APPLICANTS		\$22.00	\$ 22.66	All
COPIES OF WAIT LIST		\$5.50	\$ 5.67	Per List
FAX	First Page	\$3.30	\$ 3.40	
FAX	Additional Pages	\$1.65	\$ 1.70	EACH
OWNER/AGENT ASSIST		\$55.00	\$ 56.65	
SNOW REMOVAL/EMERGENCY		\$110.00	\$ 113.30	Time
PUMP RENTAL		\$33.01	\$ 34.00	
PUMP OUT		\$55.00	\$ 56.65	

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**WHITTIER SMALL BOAT HARBOR SERVICE CHARGES and FEES**

SERVICE/FEE	DESCRIPTION	RATE	W/TAX	PER
<b>MISCELLANEOUS, continued</b>				
TOW		\$55.00	\$ 56.65	Hour
USER FEE (WMC 12.18.040F)	\$1.00 discounted 4%	\$0.96	\$ 0.96	Per/Head
WAITING LIST		\$33.01	\$ 34.00	Year
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
<b>UTILITIES</b>				
			\$ -	
ACCOUNT INITIALIZATION		\$22.00	\$ 22.66	
KWH	no charge	\$0.09	\$ 0.09	
MONTHLY SERVICE CHARGE		\$9.00	\$ 9.27	
			\$ -	
<b>COMMERCIAL USED OIL AND WATER COLLECTION FEES</b>				
			\$ -	
Pure Used Oil	Per Gallon	\$1.10	\$ 1.13	
Used Oil and Water	Per Gallon	\$4.40	\$ 4.53	
Used Oil and Water	Less than 5 Quarts	No Charge		
*Round-off factor.				
<b>Used Oil and Water Contaminated With Anti-Freeze WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!</b>				

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