



Haines Comprehensive Plan Revision

Land Use Stakeholder Dialogue

June 20th, 2023, 10 AM – 12 PM

Aspen Hotel and via Zoom

Stakeholders invited: Bureau of Land Management, Haines Borough, Takshanuk Watershed Council, Haines State Forest, Chilkoot Indian Association, Haines Development Office (Roger Schnabel), Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Sustainable Southeast Partnership, Chilkat Indian Village, Haines Huts and Trails, Haines Real Estate, DOWA Alaska, Chilkat Custom Contractors, Alaska State Parks, University of Alaska Land Management, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Land Office

Stakeholders present: Haines Borough (Doug Olerud, Annette Kreitzer, Alekka Fullerton, Richard Clement, Debra Schnabel, Andrew Conrad, Rebecca Hylton, and others), DOWA Alaska (Liz Cornejo), Haines Chamber of Commerce (Lee Zion), Chilkoot Indian Association (Harriet Brouillette), Takshanuk Watershed Council (Derick Poinsette, Stacie Evans), Lindsay Johnson (Haines Huts and Trails)

Other stakeholders and residents present, in person or online: Gershon Cohen, Clay Frick, Carol Tuynman, George Figdor, Lex Treinen, Eric Holle, Anny Myren, Tom and Liz Heywood, Tammy Piper, Patty Kermoian, and others.

Planning Team: Shelly Wade (facilitator) and Meg Friedenauer, Agnew::Beck; Meilani Schijvens, Rain Coast Data; Chris Mertl, Corvus Design.

Purpose

To convene landowners, managers and other land use leaders and representatives to identify and discuss key trends, challenges, and opportunities in the Haines Borough. This input will inform revised land use goals, strategies, and actions in the Haines Borough Comprehensive Plan.

1. Review of land use action plan from 2012 Comprehensive Plan includes goals with several objectives and strategies (see attached “Land Use Action Summary”).

- **What is the purpose of this comprehensive plan revision process?**
 - The starting point is the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Goals, Strategies, and Actions. This an opportunity to revisit the 2012 plan, to drill down and find and identify what has changed or what has not changed? What is the vision and goals for the community for the next 10 years?
 - The categories of land use, transportation, utilities, economic development, and housing were chosen by the Borough as the areas of focus for this update because it was thought that those area and the community’s attitude or thoughts on those areas have changed the most in the last 10 years.

- **Stakeholder Questions & Discussion:**

- **Question:** What about partners and landowners missing from the table today, for example, BLM, the University, the State?
 - **Response:** They were invited, but some of them are not in attendance today. The planning team is still making those connections with them. They won't be left out.
- **Question:** How does the planning team weigh the input they receive in the final draft of the plan? How is it determined what ideas and issues rise to the top versus other input?
 - **Response:** All the input, community survey, and data will be considered. Themes and priorities emerge from all those inputs put together. There are parallel planning efforts happening, like with recreational economy opportunities, and that work will feed into the comp plan update process, as well as other existing plans.

2. From the agencies and stakeholders present, what are your short- and long-term land use goals and strategies that would affect land within the Haines Borough?

- **Alaska Mental Health Trust (Britt Williams, Leasing and Land Sales Manager and Jeff Hermanns, Senior Resource Manager for Forestry)**

- The Trust landholdings in Haines are primarily in the Mud Bay Area. The Trust is interested in being part of this process to hear what kind of things the community would like to see on those properties, and what the community thinks is the best use of those properties.
- The Trust is mandated by law to raise revenues for its beneficiaries, and there are Trust beneficiaries who live in Haines. The Trust continues to manage a longtime small timber sale program within the borough. The Trust is also beginning to explore a carbon credit program for its timber properties. The timber in Haines isn't high quality market timber, so a carbon credit program may be one way to capitalize on those properties.
- **Stakeholder Questions & Discussion:**
 - **Question:** Can the Trust revenues from Haines be used specifically for Haines projects, like camps or facilities that serve Haines?
 - **Britt Williams:** That is a complicated issue, but it is being explored. For example, the Trust is working with the Sitka Homeless Coalition to secure trust lands for a homeless shelter. It's a different kind of process than the Trust is used to, but it's possible.

- **Department of Natural Resources: Kaitlyn Raffier**

- New DNR Resource Manager. Long term goal is to continue supporting the public through the state land authorization process and be a resource to the community any way it can be.

3. What are the potential issues or challenges with existing land use in Haines today?

- **Stakeholder Questions & Discussion**

- The relationship between landowners and subsurface rights; do people or organizations with subsurface rights have the right to say that property cannot be accessed by anyone else, even if they don't own the land?
- One challenge is that the borough can't do land use zoning on non-Borough land. The Haines Borough is a large land base with multiple subsurface uses and multiple land agencies owners.
- Something unusual to note in the Haines comp plan is the multiple land use category; that is an unusual category of land use and seems to lead to complexities and conflicts.
- The revised comp plan needs to delineate use areas to reduce the number of land use conflicts that seem to perpetuate. We need stronger language that's clear. The Haines' general use designation doesn't seem to work anymore. We also need clarity on what can and can't happen in residential areas.
- The Haines Highway corridor is an example of potential conflicts; it is used for many different purposes including tourism, recreation, and industrial. Those varieties of uses can cause challenges for residents along the corridor and in looking at adjoining land uses.
- Eric Holle, Lynn Canal Conservation on the organization's short- and long-term land use goals and strategies:
 - Maintaining ecosystems that support people, protecting water quality and watersheds. An example of conflicts is when the community went through a Tier 3 water application process a few years ago and it became contentious. Ongoing mining in the upper valley and recreation are also conflicting uses.
- Existing land plans and legislation, especially from the State, are decades old and its likely attitudes and communities have changed. There is also concern about the short amount of time we must look at all of this, think about it, and develop a draft.
- When is the Borough required to update the comp plan?
 - They are typically 10-year plans.
- Concerns about the speed of this process; some community members want the process to be slowed down, especially considering the recent election to make the planning commission an elected board; the entire planning commission will be up for election in October.
 - There are parallel planning efforts happening, like with Haines Economic Development Corporation and the recreational and trails planning that can feed into this process to complement it. Those efforts have brought this process up to a level that helps us meet the timeline set by the borough.
- This type of planning effort isn't for those who are participating today but for the next generation and future generation; how can more youth be engaged in this process?

- Native allotment selection; Chilkoot Indian Association has maps of preferred land selections and those should be considered in this planning effort.

4. Additional Discussion (presented by topic):

Land Use

- Recreation discussion needs to be at the economic level, not just a trail but understanding and embracing the whole picture.
- Watershed integrity needs to be a land use designation priority.
- General Use Zone needs to be quantified and better defined. This zoning creates conflicts with residents. Hopefully this discussion prompts us to figure out what is allowable in a general use area and if some of those areas need to be rezoned.
- Need to re-evaluate land use annually and what's occurring on the land. Need to understand what's happening on the ground. P&ZC needs new information on what's happening on the ground and what's coming down the pipeline, so P&ZC are informed and make the best decisions.
- Diversity is a strength and should not be seen as a cause for conflict. The valley has long been a place of diverse land uses. Maybe diversity is a strength and doesn't have to be a conflict.
- Local control and decision making of land use needs to be a priority. Locals need to have the ability to control and guide other land managers within the borough.
- Implementation is good but evaluation of the land and its qualities should be used to guide land management decisions, strategies, and policies. Need to include environmental NGOs and Tribes at the same level as borough and other land managers.
- Most of the conflicts the planning commission has dealt with recently seem to involve residents living in newly developed residential neighborhoods and the conflicting uses that come up. Neighborhoods and residential communities need input on this process.
- Chilkoot Indian Association has neighborhood and wants to protect the quiet quality of life of area and access to surrounding resources.

Comprehensive Plan Process:

- Who is not showing up at the meetings and the survey needs to reach out to these people and get their input.
- Summer planning may exclude the fishing industry. Need to include these people in process.