

# 2017-2027 Hoonah Economic Development Plan

## October 2016

Adopted by City of Hoonah Resolution 16-11-11, November 22, 2016





## Acknowledgments

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Apologies are extended to anyone inadvertently left off the list of contributors.

All photographs in this plan were taken by Sheinberg Associates unless otherwise noted. Bottom left photo on cover is with permission of Huna Outfitters.



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# 1 Executive Summary

Please see the standalone 4-page summary of the 2017-2027 Hoonah Economic Development Plan available at: [www.HoonahEconomicPlan.com](http://www.HoonahEconomicPlan.com)

Hoonah's 2017-2027 economic development priorities include the following (list is not prioritized, numbers are for convenience only):

1. Upgrade City Sewage Treatment Plant, Connect Icy Strait Point to Sewage Treatment
2. Finish the Hoonah Marine Industrial Center (Area for Marine Service Businesses, Build Freight Dock)
3. Complete Hoonah Long-Range Waterfront Plan and Development
4. Reduce Energy Costs (electricity and heating) –several projects listed, see plan for details
5. Independent Visitor and Small Cruise Ship Tourism Program and Marketing
6. Accomplish High School and Community Career-Technical and Business Education
7. Fisheries Development:
  - a. Support allowing Community Quota Entities (CQEs) to purchase permits,
  - b. Support a King Salmon smolt release Port Frederick,
  - c. Support building a Gallagher Bay fish ladder, and
  - d. Support more value-added processing
8. Conduct a Housing Needs Assessment, Pursue Development of Needed Housing
9. Establish a Public Library
10. Update Commercial/Industrial Land Development Plan

## 2 Introduction

Hoonah is a 1<sup>st</sup> class city in Southeast Alaska. It is 40 miles west of Juneau on Chichagof Island, the 5<sup>th</sup> largest island in the United States. The City of Hoonah was incorporated in 1946. The Tribal Government is the Hoonah Indian Association, the Village Native Corporation is Huna Totem Corporation, and the Regional Native Corporation is Sealaska Corporation. Hoonah (Xu.naa; Huna) means "place protected from the north wind" in the Tlingit language. Huna people occupied the Glacier Bay/Icy Strait area since prehistory.

Hoonah is not part of a borough and is within the Hoonah-Angoon Census Area. The Hoonah-Angoon Census Area includes the cities of Hoonah, Angoon, Tenakee Springs, Gustavus, and Pelican; the communities of Game Creek, Whitestone, Elfin Cove, Funter Bay, and Gull Cove; and all surrounding land and residents (see map on page 4).

The last Hoonah Economic Development Plan was adopted in May 1999. It reviewed community demographics, infrastructure, Hoonah's basic industries and their development potential, set economic development goals, and identified 15 priorities that have now almost all been accomplished or significant progress has occurred<sup>1</sup>.

### 3 Plan Development Process

The City of Hoonah contracted with Sheinberg Associates to assist the Hoonah Economic Development Committee (HEDC) and community set economic development priorities. Work included:

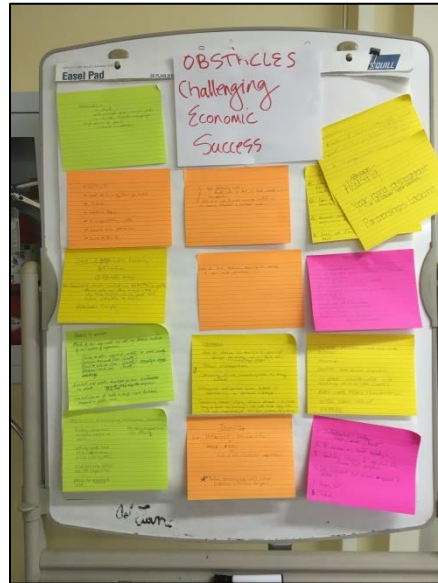
1. **Public Meetings.** Public meetings hosted by the City of Hoonah Economic Development Committee to support preparing this plan occurred on April 22, May 18, June 22, July 20, and September 8, 2016. The HEDC recommended adoption of the 2017-2027 Hoonah Economic Plan to the City Council for approval during the City Council's Committee of the Whole meeting on November 3 and then City Council meeting on November 22, 2016, where it was adopted by Resolution 16-11-11.
2. **Community Workshop.** Hosted a community meeting in April 2016 to review current conditions and how economies diversify, and discuss Hoonah's economic opportunities and challenges and community economic goals. Approximately 25 people attended the meeting that was hosted by the City's Hoonah Economic Development Committee. Attendees discussed three questions, one at a time. For each, they wrote answers on large sticky papers, discussed their answers together, and posted them on a wall. The three questions were:
  - a. How should Hoonah measure economic success? What should Hoonah's economic development goals be?
  - b. What are Hoonah's strengths? What is unique about Hoonah? What makes you proud to live in Hoonah? What does Hoonah do especially well?
  - c. What are the obstacles to overcome or challenges to solve in order for Hoonah's businesses and Hoonah's economy to be stronger and more resilient?
3. **Community Survey and Interviews.** In order to hear from those that could not attend the April meeting, Sheinberg Associates was directed to post the three questions above as a written and online survey and publicize that it was available. The online and paper surveys were available until mid-May. Ms. Sheinberg also attended a Huna Totem Corporation shareholder meeting at Icy Strait Point in May and had paper copies of the survey available. These efforts resulted in 24 more surveys completed, bringing the total to approximately 50

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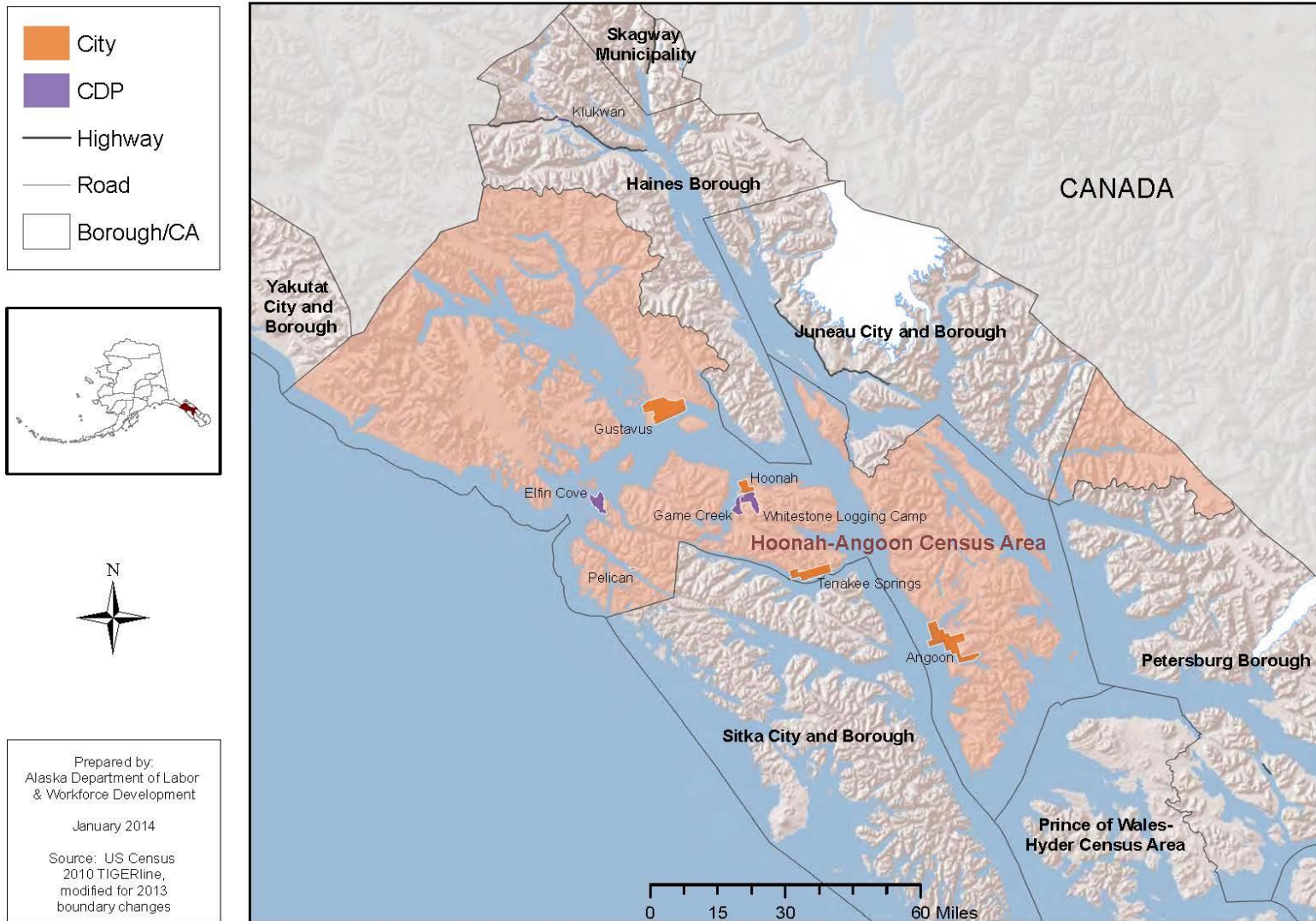
<sup>1</sup> **1999 Non-Prioritized List of 15 Hoonah Economic Development Projects:** 1. Marine Port Facilities Expansion, 2. George Hall Harbor Expansion, 3. Bulkhead and Haul-Out Facility, 4. Medium Size Dock Facility, 5. 1,200,000 Gallon Water Storage Tank, 6. Alternate Energy Sources, 7. Airport Improvements, 8. Clinic Relocation, 9. City Park, 10. City Parking Areas, 11. Cultural Center (Tribal House), 12. Downtown Beautification Projects, 13. Residential Road Paving and Sidewalk Construction, 14. Fire and Emergency Services Equipment and Facilities, 15. Fuel Storage Tank Farm

offering their opinions. In addition, interviews were conducted with approximately 20 business owners or managers and elected officials. The results of these community opinion gathering efforts were issued in a June 2016 paper, and are summarized in this plan.

4. **Hoonah Economic Snapshot.** Prepared and published a baseline report of current economic conditions.
5. **2017-2027 Hoonah Economic Development Plan.** Understanding current economic conditions, and information from the public and business owners, the Hoonah Economic Development Committee oversaw preparation of the August draft and the October final, “2017-2027 Hoonah Economic Development Plan” that identifies economic goals and priorities.



# Hoonah-Angoon Census Area





## 4 Current Hoonah Economy

Growth and economic gain characterizes the last 5-6 years in Hoonah. This section provides highlights from the full “May 2016 Hoonah Economic Snapshot” report, available at [www.HoonahEconomicPlan.com](http://www.HoonahEconomicPlan.com)

Since 2010, Hoonah’s overall population, the number of children, number of homes and electrical customers, number of jobs, total wages, and average annual wages are all up.

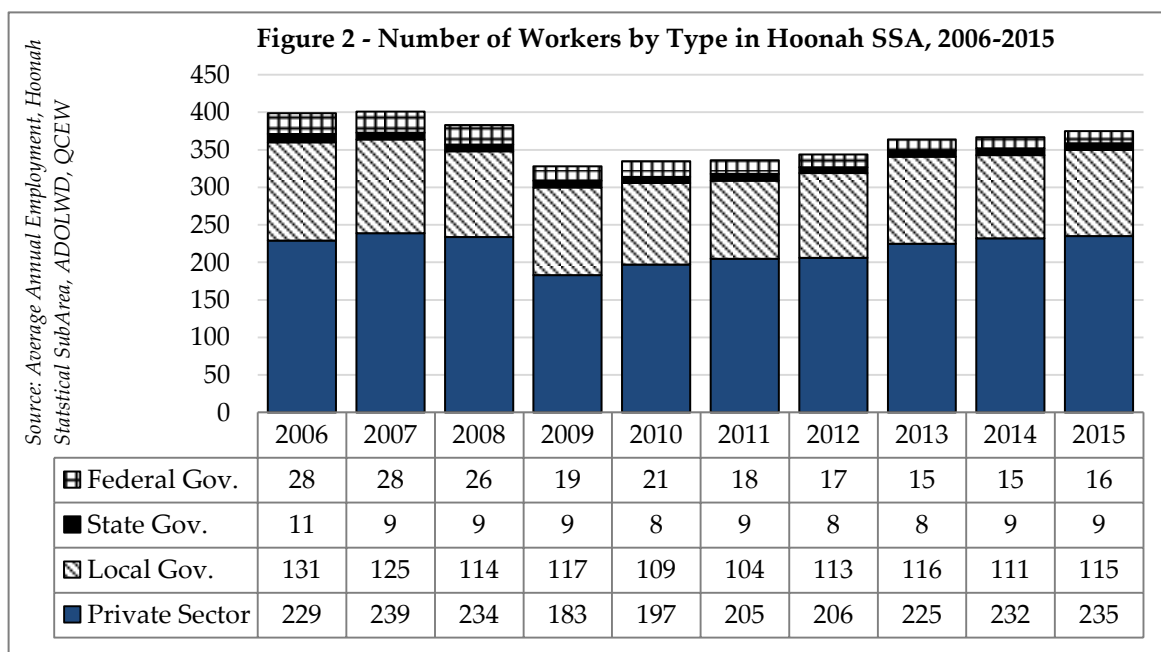
Per capita income in Hoonah is up approximately 7% over the last five years.

The number of visitors, pounds of marine freight being shipped, number of ferry and airplane passengers, and the number of vessel haul-outs at the Hoonah Marine Industrial Center’s 220-ton travel lift all increased during this period.

Growth in 2015 in particular was significant; between 2014 and 2015 there was a 10% increase in wages and a 3% increase in employment in the Hoonah area. This significantly beat the rate of inflation that year in Alaska, which was one-half of one percent (0.005).

Private sector jobs dominate the Hoonah economy providing 63% of all wage and salary employment (Figure 2).

There are 100 individuals who have a state business license for a business physically located in Hoonah. Sales of goods and services in Hoonah that were subject to sales tax in 2015 totaled approximately \$22.5 million.



Despite this generally bright story, the number of residents who are commercial fishing and the amount of revenue generated from local seafood processing is on a downward trend.

Hoonah per capita income was \$26,050 while median household income was \$63,250 in 2014. However, a look at income distribution shows that while 18% of Hoonah households earn \$100,000 or more, 24% earn \$25,000 or less. During the 2015/2016 school year almost two-thirds of students qualified for a free or reduced fee school lunch. To qualify for a free lunch a family of four is earning less than \$39,500. In 2015, the annual unemployment rate in the Hoonah –Angoon Census Area was more than twice as high as the state average.

The nature of work in Hoonah is changing.

Today there are fewer goods-producing jobs like commercial fishing, seafood processing, and timber harvesting compared to a decade ago. Hoonah residents do still have 74 fishing vessels homeported in town (though only three seine boats) and two small mills produce value added products sold around the region and beyond.

Service-providing work now dominates the Hoonah economy. Shifts like this are occurring in many Southeast Alaskan communities. A challenge is that many of these jobs are seasonal and pay less than goods-producing work.

The primary driver is tourism, which brings new money and customers to town and supports jobs that cater to visitors such as those that offer lodging, restaurants (locals enjoy this too), sell goods and experiences like whale watching, guided fishing and hunting, and photography.

The Hoonah Packing Company built a large cannery at Inner Point Sophia that was closed in the 1950s; in the early 2000s Huna Totem Corporation (HTC) redeveloped the area as the Icy Strait Point cruise ship and tourist facility. Icy Strait Point (ISP) is the only privately owned cruise ship destination facility in the country. With the 2016 completion of a new cruise ship dock, owned jointly by the city and HTC/ISP and managed by Hoonah Cruise Ship Dock Company, passengers are now able to disembark directly to shore, which is expected to increase the number of visitors because an estimated 20% won't disembark if they must take a lighter craft. An estimated 15-20% of cruise visitors come into Hoonah while at port to see the community, shop, or take a tour offered by local Hoonah businesses while at Port.

In 2016, over 158,000 cruise passengers visited Icy Strait Point on 78 ships (this does not include walkups or guests from smaller cruise ships or visitors on Neighbor Days). Icy Strait Point (ISP) estimates that with the cruise ship dock it enjoyed an 18-20% increase in number of people getting off the ships and coming onshore, including many more people that went back to the ship throughout the day then came back ashore. In 2015, ISP reports that it employed 138 people for the summer season in 2015, 65% of which were local hires. The reported payroll was approximately \$1.8 million. ISP built a bunkhouse near the airport to help house its nonresident workers, as seasonal or workforce housing is so limited.

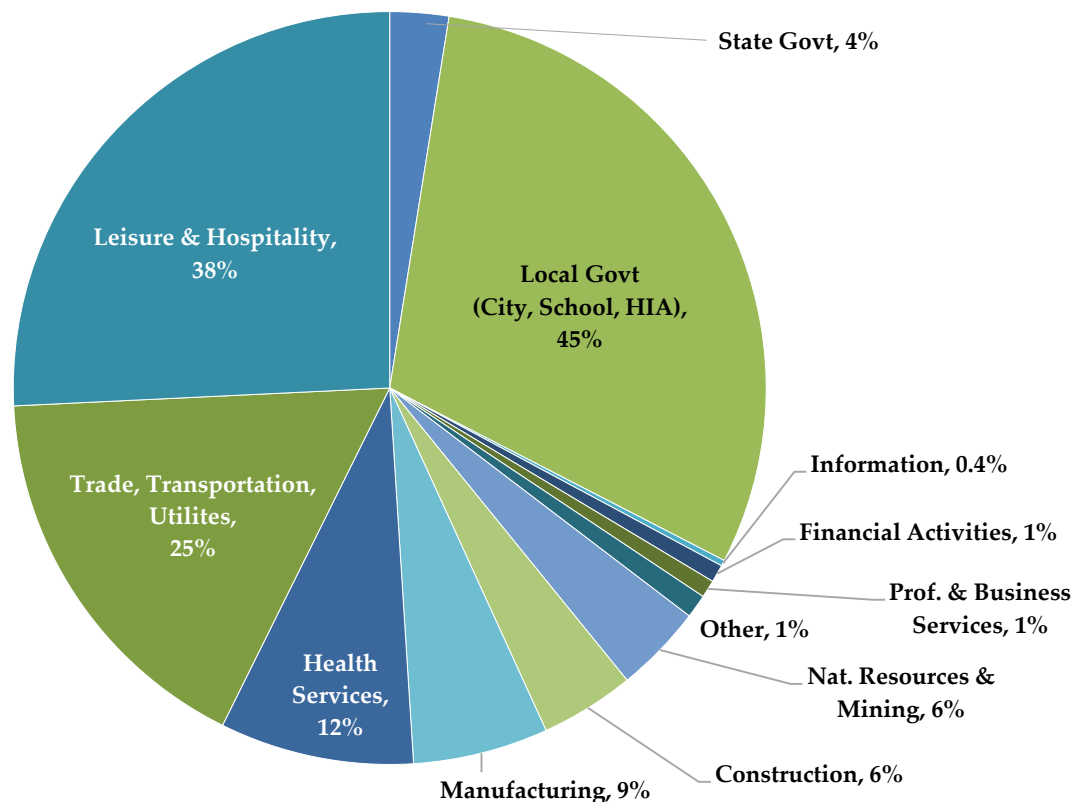
In addition to tourism, providing health services is another important service-providing type of work in Hoonah.

Local governments (the City, Hoonah Indian Association, and Hoonah Schools) collectively are the largest employers. These jobs are funded by locally raised tax revenue as well as state and federal funding.

A data source (ADOLWD ALARI) that shows the Hoonah resident workforce<sup>2</sup> in 2014 (Figure 3) shows that after local government, the most Hoonah residents are employed in:

- Tourism work in the Leisure and Hospitality sector (restaurants, lodging, guides, tours, arts, entertainment, etc.)
- Trade, Transportation, & Utilities sector (stores, airport, air and marine transportation, etc.)
- Health Services
- Manufacturing
- Construction

**Figure 3 - Hoonah Workers by Industry, 2014**



*Source: ADOLWD, Alaska Local and Regional Information (ALARI)*

There are new types of community and economic opportunities happening in Hoonah.

<sup>2</sup> ALARI does not include the jobs of non-residents living in Hoonah (such as seafood processing workers), but it does include Hoonah residents who are working a job elsewhere (such as Juneau) but list Hoonah as home (residency is determined based on PFD applications).

Two recent projects have strengthened cultural identity and pride in Hoonah for all involved, which in turn creates a healthier more resilient community and workforce. A multi-year project created the Huna Tribal House (Xunaa Shuká Hít) with original designed and carved house panels and posts that show and tell the Huna people's Glacier Bay-Icy Strait clan history, stories, and deep connection to the area. It was installed in fall 2016 in Hoonah's ancient home in Glacier Bay. This Hoonah Indian Association (HIA)-National Park Service (NPS) collaborative project was many years in the making and won the NPS's national partnership award in 2016. In addition, two large dugout canoes to facilitate travel between Hoonah and the Xunaa Shuká Hít, were created in the center of town with similar funding, led by Tlingit master carver Wayne Price. The ceremonial return of the Huna people to their homeland in August 2016 was a multi-day blessing, celebration, healing, and learning event. This new tribal home in Glacier Bay is for the use of HIA and its tribal citizens, will also be a place for park visitors to learn about the Huna culture, and many hope will be the beginning of educational and cultural exchange among these communities.

During 2015-2016, a craft beer brew pub opened, and an oyster farm and a commercial greenhouse started up. Icy Strait Point buys both locally made Icy Strait Brewing beer and locally caught Hoonah Cold Storage fish. Chipper Fish restaurant also buys locally caught fish and the new greenhouse is looking to local restaurants to buy its produce.

Both the oyster farm and the main local sawmill are contemplating opportunities that combine their products with tourism in ways that showcase local people, local resources, and local values.

A popular reality TV show has been filming in town for three years that includes a crew of 20-25 young people.

The table on the next page highlights economic change over the last six years (between 2010 and 2015) in Hoonah by summarizing some of the key demographic and economic indicators.

Download the May 2016 Hoonah Economic Snapshot at [www.HoonahEconomicPlan.com](http://www.HoonahEconomicPlan.com) for details and a full review of the current economy.



# Hoonah Community + Economic Indicators

## Six Years of Change: 2010 to 2015

DEMOGRAPHICS	2010	2015	CHANGE
Population <sup>1</sup>	760	783	+ 3%
Net In/Out Migration <sup>2</sup>	+ 14	- 4	
Median Age <sup>3</sup>	44.6	N/A	
K-12 School District Enrollment <sup>4</sup>	124 ('10/'11)	119 ('15/'16)	- 4%
Total PFD Applications <sup>5</sup>	820	846	+ 3%
Child PFD Applications	166	191	+15%
Dwelling Units <sup>6</sup>	399	417	+5%
Seasonally Occupied Dwelling Units <sup>7</sup>	34	N/A	
Number Residential Electric Customers <sup>8</sup>	365	377	+ 3%
EMPLOYMENT + BUSINESSES	2010	2015	CHANGE
Total Employment <sup>9</sup>	335	375	+ 12%
Total Wages	\$10,697,792	\$13,382,631	+ 18%
Average Annual Wage <sup>10</sup>	\$31,934	\$36,912	+ 16%
Percent Private Sector Jobs	59%	63%	+ 4%
Number of Businesses in Hoonah (per AK biz licenses)	-	100	
Unemployment Rate <sup>11</sup>	14.1%	15.0%	+ 0.9%
Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility (% of students) <sup>12</sup>	58% ('10/'11)	62% ('15/'16)	+ 4%
RESIDENT INCOME <sup>13</sup>	2010	2014	CHANGE
Per Capita Income <sup>14</sup>	\$24,426	\$26,050	+ 7%
Median Household Income <sup>15</sup>	\$50,511	\$52,125	+ 3%
Median Family Income <sup>16</sup>	\$54,792	\$63,250	+ 15%
COMM. FISHING & MARINE INDUSTRY	2010	2015	CHANGE
Number Haul-Outs at HMIC	2	120	+ 5900%
Percent Haul-outs that are Not Hoonah Residents	-	77%	
Number of Comm. Fishing Permits Issued <sup>17</sup>	129	113	- 12%
Pounds Comm. Fish Landed by Hoonah Residents <sup>18</sup>	2,533,594	3,429,800	+ 35%
Estm. Gross Earnings Comm. Fishing (Ex-Vessel Value) <sup>19</sup>	\$2,695,176	\$1,740,171	- 35%
State Fisheries Business Tax to City <sup>20</sup>	\$108,022	\$76,574	- 29%
Number Comm. Vessels Homeported in Hoonah <sup>21</sup>	88	74 (2014)	- 16%
VISITOR TRENDS	2010	2015	CHANGE
Cruise Ship Port Calls <sup>22</sup>	63	78 (2016)	+ 24%
Cruise Ship Passengers <sup>23</sup>	122,975	158,650 (2016)	+ 29%
State Commercial Passenger Vessel Excise Tax to City <sup>24</sup>	\$640,015	\$688,980	+ 8%
Sales Tax by ISP to City	\$326,581 (2009)	\$453,642	+ 39%
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT	2010	2015	CHANGE
Total Sales Tax Revenue <sup>25</sup>	\$998,211	\$1,460,208	+ 46%
Local Government Employment	104	111 (2014)	+ 7%
Local Govt. Employment as a % of Total Employment	33%	30% (2014)	- 3%
HOONAH TRANSPORTATION	2010	2015	CHANGE
Airport Passenger Arrivals <sup>26</sup>	8,748	9,780	+ 12%
AMHS Passenger Arrivals <sup>27</sup>	5,040	5,453	+ 8%
Air Freight Arrivals (in pounds) <sup>28</sup>	208,939	178,570	- 15%
Marine Freight (in pounds) <sup>29</sup>	6,915,496 (4/11 -3/12)	8,431,571 (4/15-3/16)	+22%

## 5 “Growing” Hoonah’s Economy

Hoonah is looking to make its community and local economy more resilient. Resilience is about strength + flexibility. If you bend a stick, it will break if it is not resilient; but if it is resilient, it can bend under stress but retain its shape, bounce back, and continue to be strong.

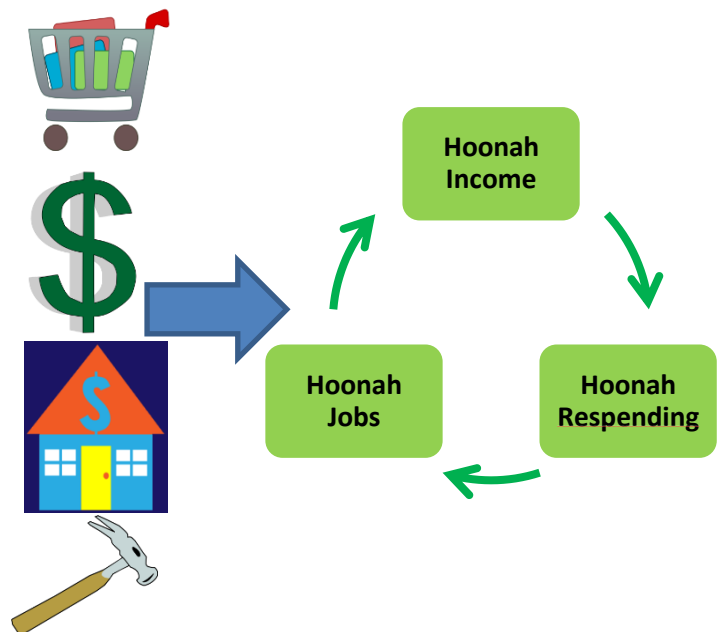
Economies work and grow in two ways: (1) bring money into town, and (2) keep money recirculating around town (and delay it from “leaking out” as long as possible).

### Some examples of bringing money to town are:

- When tourists visit and spend money in Hoonah (including at Icy Strait Point) shops and on local experiences, their money helps create and keep jobs in Hoonah.
- When an entity (e.g. City, Hoonah Indian Association, US Forest Service, Huna Totem Corporation) gets a federal, foundation, or other grant and spends it in town, this creates and keeps jobs in Hoonah.
- When Hoonah Cold Storage buys fish and Icy Straits Lumber harvests wood, and then sells it or adds value to it by turning it into a product and then selling it, the money that is paid for these products is new money brought to town. This money and activity creates and keeps local jobs.
- When someone from Juneau hauls their boat out in Hoonah, this brings new money to town and helps support the city and keeps harbor staff working. When a Hoonah resident hauls their boat out in town their fees keep money re-circulating in town and supports harbor staff. If a local worker is hired by anyone to work on a boat this re-circulates money in town (see below).

### Some examples of keeping money recirculating in town are:

- When someone goes to the SEARHC clinic go for a health care matter (rather than somewhere outside of Hoonah), this spends money in town and creates and keeps jobs in Hoonah
- When someone goes out to the Lodge, Marys, Fish Chipper, the Office, Icy Strait, Brewing, ISP or other local places, this helps support that restaurant so they can keep people employed.
- If that Hoonah restaurant (or store) can buy their food or supplies locally in Hoonah, that recirculates the money again – putting that money “harder to work” and keeping local jobs and opportunities for residents.



**With this basic understanding of local economies, it should be clear that the three ways to make the Hoonah economy stronger and more resilient are to:**

1. **Support Local Businesses** (through individual and group purchases, good word-of-mouth, business-friendly local regulations and policies, etc.)
2. **Bring Additional Money into Town** (for example, increasing visitors that spend money locally, creating more ways/making it easier for visitors to spend money locally, manufacturing and selling local products and services to those that live outside of Hoonah, bringing in funding from outside of Hoonah that supports businesses and jobs, etc.)
3. **Have more Goods and Services Available for Purchase in Town**, to keep money circulating through Hoonah, which supports local businesses and employment.

Everyone has a role to play in Hoonah's economic success:

- Cities can play several roles in supporting economic development, including Leadership, Financial, Tax and Regulations, Land Supply, Research and Coordination, and Outreach and marketing. These are discussed in more detail on page 23.
- Individuals make decisions many times a day on where to buy goods, where to go for needed services, and whether to be positive or not when talking about new or different opportunities and businesses in town. These individual choices add up and make an economic difference.
- Good communication and alignment among Hoonah "entities" (City of Hoonah, Hoonah Indian Association, Huna Totem Corporation, Sealaska Corporation, US Forest Service, ANB/ANS, etc.) makes the economy and community more resilient and stronger. Each entity has a different mission, interests, and responsibilities. It is thus not surprising that alignment can be hard to achieve. However, elected officials and decision-makers pay attention when multiple entities agree on a course of action and speak with a united voice, often translating into political support and funding. Since each has access to different types of funding agreement on a priority can also lead to building upon or leveraging each other's project funding.
- It is not unusual for new enterprises, people, and change to be greeted with doubt - especially in small towns. However, it is important to keep in mind that as individual businesses succeed the economic tide in town rises and almost everyone rises with it; likewise when businesses fail the community's economic tide turns down and the trickle effect will cause others to struggle too. Remember that, "we're all in this together".

## 6 Hoonah's Ten Economic Goals

During the April Community Workshop, in paper and online surveys available through mid-May, and during executive interviews conducted for this project, the public was asked to comment on:

**"How should Hoonah measure economic success?  
What should Hoonah's economic development goals be?"**

Building upon the 1999 Hoonah Economic Plan's goals and the answers to the questions above, the following ten Hoonah Economic Development Goals are set.

### **Hoonah's 10 Economic Development Goals**

#### **BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT**

1. Support local businesses. Increase profitability and success of Hoonah businesses.
2. Increase year-round employment in Hoonah.
3. Encourage new businesses in Hoonah, especially those that bring new money to Hoonah through adding value to area resources (fish, wood, and more) and that bring visitors.  
Encourage businesses that:
  - a. Maintain our clean environment which supports healthy foods for harvest,
  - b. Do not displace local culture, and
  - c. Give back to the community.

#### **INCOME**

4. Raise Hoonah's per capita, household, and family income.

#### **EDUCATION**

5. Teach economics and business at the high school. Show youth career paths for that feed into Hoonah employment and jobs; provide related career technical education and job mentoring.
6. Have small business workshops for the community.
7. Maximize support to Hoonah Schools.

#### **POPULATION**

8. Increase Hoonah's population. Hoonah's employment opportunities bring former residents home.

#### **COST OF LIVING**

9. People can afford to live in Hoonah and buy locally.

#### **CITY GOVERNMENT**

10. A Healthy city government is able to provide core functions.



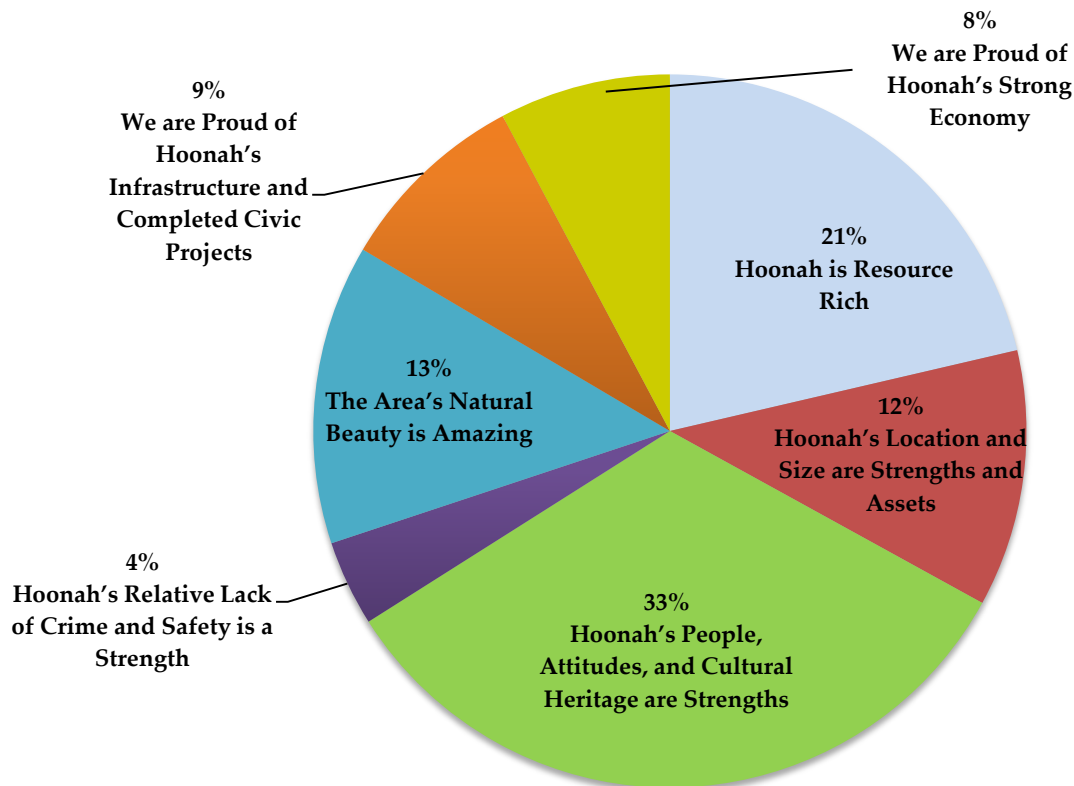
## 7 Hoonah's Strengths + Opportunities

During the April Community Workshop, in paper and online surveys available through mid-May, and during executive interviews conducted for this project, the public was asked to comment on:

**"What are Hoonah's strengths? What is unique about Hoonah? What makes you proud to live in Hoonah? What does Hoonah do especially well?"**

There were 103 total comments, which were organized by common themes. Responses are reported now.

### Hoonah's Economic Successes + Strengths *(103 comments)*



### **Hoonah's People, Attitudes, and Cultural Heritage are Strengths** (34 comments)

**The answer will always be culture. We have strong cultural pride, both present and in our history. The Tlingit culture is alive and a strength for residents and visitors. We share our culture and our heritage with others and teach protocol which Hoonah Tlingits still practice today.**

- The Native voices of Hoonah are its strength.
- Our original history belongs to the Huna Tlingit bloodlines, place names, family names, songs, dances; knowledge of seasons, tides, landscape, ancestral ties to Huna territory and each other. Visitors expect Tlingit to be active and visible. We are the new gold.
- Proud of our Veteran's history.

### **Hoonah is friendly, full of hospitality and kind people.**

**The cross-cultural brotherhood of men and women is at a high-level.**

- We are adaptable. The spirit of survival that transfers from one to another is very helpful.
- Hoonah is family-oriented. Citizens of Hoonah take pride in our children.
- People are so giving and willing to help other; this is where you can truly say it takes a village. We help each other and stick together when needed.
- There are many citizens who can think creatively about Hoonah.
- Hoonah GIVES to locals/neighbors/families; it is a very generous community.

### **There's No Place Like Hoonah! A strength is that people that live here year round really do love the community.**

**Our strength is our people; we're all in this life together!**

- The will of Hoonah people is strong. We have pride. We can have a strong "frontier mentality" and be tenacious in our ability to argue and fight.
- Hoonah residents have an independent nature.
- We have so many talented, intelligent people here to share what they know with others throughout the year. Our diverse population has many skills.
- Hoonah has always been a progressive community that looks forward while keeping its heritage in mind.
- Proud to be a part of a place that sticks together when things get tough; people roll with the punches once they fully understand the big picture.

### **Hoonah is Resource Rich** (22 comments)

**There are an abundance of natural resources available to us:**

- Hoonah should be able to develop a strong economic base around the fish, wilderness, and other natural resources in the surrounding area.

- A Hoonah strength and asset is our proximity to resources that can provide jobs for locals. We are surrounded by natural resources, fishing, timber, pure drinking water, clean air, wildlife, scenery, terrain conducive to clean energy (like hydro, tidal, solar, geothermal, or wind powered hydro lifting reserve power). With the right investment we could literally live off the grid and harvest nearly all our own food.
- Hoonah has abundant natural resources including ocean products, Tongass Forest and timber, untapped minerals.
- We have a lot of rock readily available for building and construction.
- The highest temperature geothermal site in the state is nearby at Pegmatite Mountain.
- The surrounding environment and the opportunities we have to hunt and gather food without a CROWD! The opportunity to gather our resources and work together.
- Land is an untapped resource. The ANCSA land settlement added to the Huna Tlingit's land ownership which also includes the Town Site and Native Allotments under U S Federal "Trust". This legal ownership extends from individuals to tribal to corporate Tlingit ownership. Land = power, authority. These strengths NEED to begin to benefit us rather than every other "national" interest in this U S.
- Our natural resources provide many opportunities for hunting, fishing, gathering and processing of foods and medicinal items. The subsistence bounty is a great strength. We have abundant fish and wildlife right at our doorstep.

### **The Area's Natural Beauty is Amazing** *(14 comments)*

**Without a doubt the sheer beauty of our environment is among our greatest strengths.**

- The most overwhelming comment from tourist is how beautiful and peaceful Hoonah is when they are visiting.
- Hoonah doesn't have lots of shops everywhere selling tacky tourist junk. It's a real community. What makes it unique is all the beautiful scenery and being right on the ocean and all it provides.
- The unique and natural beauty of our place, land, water, wildlife is spectacular.
- The beauty of the area, the strength of the people, and our size which allows everyone to work together.
- Hoonah is beautiful but remote.
- I think what is really special about Hoonah is the complete natural beauty it possesses. We as a community should strive to preserve its natural beauty so that it is not ever developed so that natural resources are not lost.
- We have pristine nature and environment literally right outside our door. We are minutes, perhaps even seconds, away from the wilderness experience. We have preserved the Garden of Eden here.

### **Hoonah's Location and Size are Strengths and Assets** (12 comments)

#### **Our location and size are envied!**

- What makes it unique is all the beautiful scenery and being right on the ocean and all it provides.
- Hoonah strengths are the location we have and resources here. Build on the strength of Hoonah's location and resources, if we do that then the sky is the limit.
- Port Frederick is a natural asset.
- We are the 1st occupants that settled here "protected from the North wind" in a place that also provided the natural resources needed to build a good life. We are People of Glacier Bay,
- The surrounding environment and the opportunities we have to hunt and gather food without a CROWD!
- Location is both a plus and minus.
- Fairly easy access from Juneau, an urban center, is an asset. Proximity to Juneau and Glacier Bay, i.e. location on established cruise routes with potential for future tourism.
- The beauty of the area, the strength of the people, the size of the community which allows everyone to work together.
- Hoonah's strength--relative to other SE Alaska communities of less than 1,000 people, is that it has an economy that supports businesses and generates tax revenue to fund other critical services.
- We have small town charm

### **We are Proud of Hoonah's Infrastructure and Civic Projects** (9 comments)

#### **We have amazing high-quality infrastructure for community of 800 people such as airport, haul-out, hydropower, paved roads, sidewalks, brewery, sewer and water.**

- Transportation infrastructure and options including the airport, harbor, ferry, and miles of logging roads.
- The road system on Chichagof Island is an underutilized asset that could be better utilized.
- Hoonah does well at getting grants - the city, the school, HIA. We have a new dock, a fairly new ferry terminal, a new health clinic, a fairly new boat haul out facility, new waterline project, etc.
- Hoonah has been able to adjust to current economic circumstances and advocate for itself at the State and National level. The proof is the large civic projects that have been completed since 1999. Hoonah has always been a progressive community that looks forward while keeping its heritage in mind.
- The harbor is a strength and asset



- Our haul-out facility, fish plant and Icy Strait Point are economic assets that should be leveraged in the future.

### **We are Proud of Hoonah's Strong Economy** *(9 comments)*

**A huge differential vis-a-vis other rural Southeast Alaska communities is that Hoonah has significant private sector investment. Hoonah has a vibrant, sustainable tourism industry. It has robust employment. Hoonah has flat or increasing population. There are significant municipal revenues from sales taxes & cruise ship passenger vessel fees compared to other Southeast cities of like size.**

- Relative to other SE Alaska communities of less than 1,000 people, Hoonah has an economy that supports businesses and generates tax revenue to fund other critical services.
- Hoonah's haul-out facility, fish plant, and Icy Strait Point are economic assets that can be leveraged in the future.
- The road system on Chichagof Island is an underutilized asset that could be better utilized.
- Icy Strait Point is a means of attracting visitors. Obviously ISP/Huna Totem has helped this community. The visionaries of the past made some awesome choices by buying the old Wards Cove XIP cannery and turning it into a tourist attraction and Cruise Ship destination.
- Proximity to Juneau and Glacier Bay, i.e. location on established cruise routes with potential for future tourism. This is also an opportunity for maritime activities.
- Tourism and all the visitors to our area is a strength.
- No property tax attracts retirees.
- Hoonah does well at getting grants - the city, the school, HIA. We have a new dock, a fairly new ferry terminal, a new health clinic, a fairly new boat haul out facility, new waterline project, etc.

### **Hoonah's Relative Lack of Crime and Safety is a Strength** *(4 comments)*

#### **Lack of crime, comparatively safe**

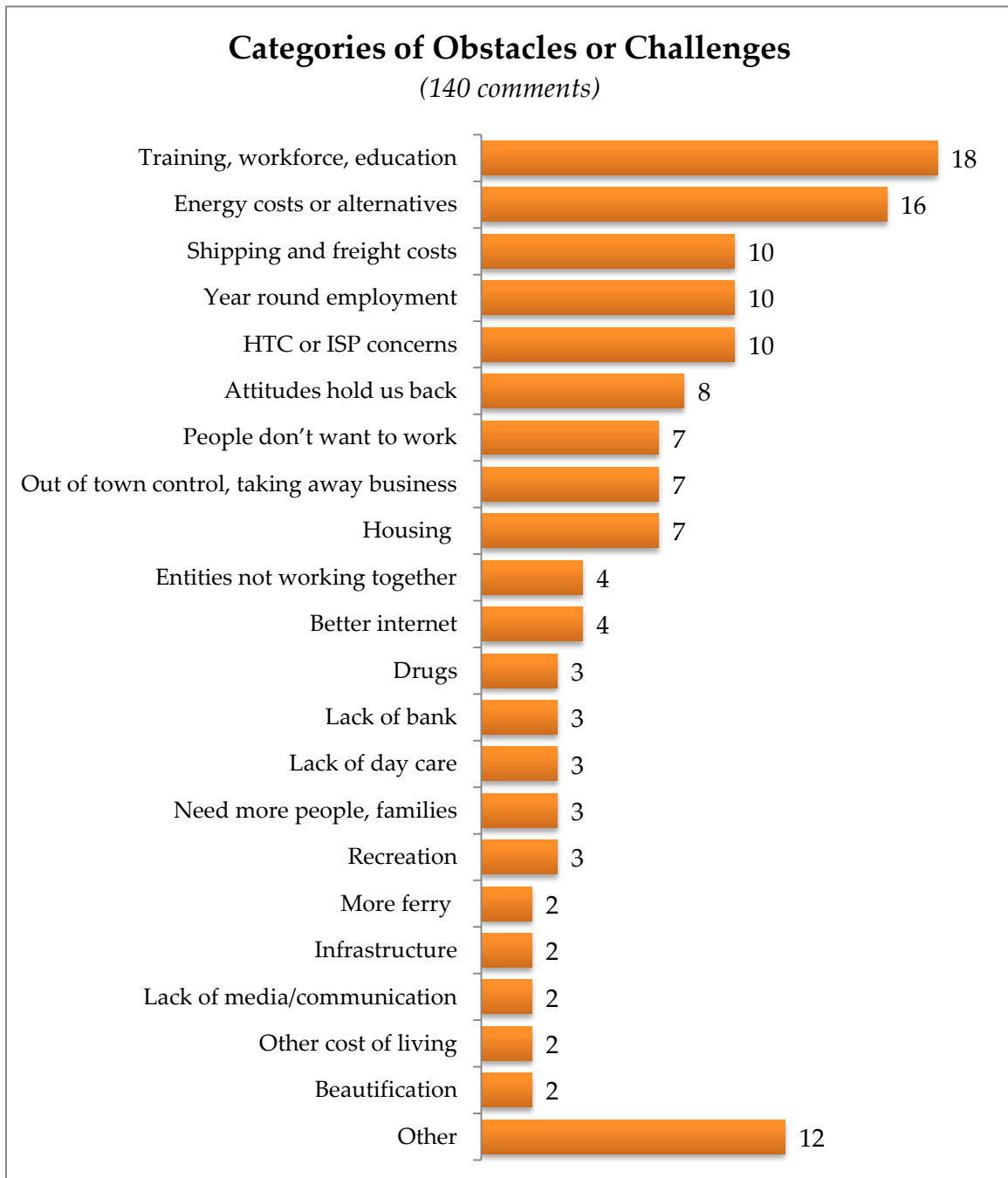
- Good public safety presence and maintenance on our city streets.
- Hoonah has low level of law enforcement

## 8 Hoonah's Economic Challenges + Obstacles

During the April Community Workshop, in paper and online surveys available through mid-May, and during executive interviews conducted for this project, the public was asked to comment on:

**“What are the obstacles to overcome or challenges to solve in order for Hoonah’s businesses and Hoonah’s economy to be stronger and more resilient?”**

There were 140 total comments, which were organized by common themes. Responses are reported now.



### **Training, Workforce, Education** (18 comments)

- Lack of local technical training to develop year-round workforce
- Professional skills development is needed
- Workforce training for high school kids coupled with a summer hire program
- Some Hoonah businesses have a hard time finding reliable and capable people willing to work.
- Finding competent reliable people to work
- Internships and mentors needed; we have a lack of training opportunities
- Limited pool of local skilled and motivated labor both contribute to slow growth.
- The younger generation is not returning to Hoonah to contribute their skills to the community. Maybe the community needs to open up jobs or more businesses need to be created?
- Need to retain and entice our youth following college &/or initial employment/skills development gained elsewhere in Alaska.
- Hoonah School graduates need to be better-rounded and have vocational skills that are in demand in Hoonah.
- More economic education needed for general public, lack of understanding of economic development principles.
- Perception (or reality) of parents that their children will be better served attending school outside of Hoonah.

### **Energy Costs or Alternatives** (16 comments)

- High electricity costs mentioned by 13.
- Lower cost sustainable energy is needed for private business to grow. Businesses don't have PCE, high energy costs is a jobs killer.
- For Hoonah's economy to improve Hoonah needs a much lower price for electricity.
- We need to develop and utilize more sources of alternative energy (not so reliant on carbon fuel sources).
- Our biggest challenges are housing and the cost of utilities.
- City needs to find a source of revenue so that it does not need to charge its residents high utility rates.
- Businesses need Power Cost Equalization.
- I thought Gartina Falls was supposed to immediately benefit Hoonah?

### **Shipping and Freight Costs** (10 comments)

- High cost of freight and lack of direct Seattle/Tacoma-Hoonah shipment adds to high cost of doing business and living.

### **Other Cost of Living** (2 comments)

- High-cost of living and price of goods

### **Employment** (10 comments)

- We need year round full time jobs.
- Incentivize creation of year round jobs.
- At this time there are too many families just barely existing on seasonal work and part time employment. If the tourism jobs were expanded to year round employment the community as a whole would benefit. The seasonal and part time jobs often don't provide many fringe benefits or pay increases that keep up with the cost of living increases; therefore employees exist at the poverty level.

### **Our Attitudes Hold Us Back** (8 comments)

- Need to realize that there is enough to go around. Quit acting like nothing is possible or that someone else will get ahead, be grateful because growth will help everyone. We just need to become a team and the rest will come!
- If we can overcome obstacles such as favoritism, dishonesty, gossip/rumor, "promising the moon" with no viable back-up, racism and goal toward integrity and the Golden Rule, I think we've got a shot at being a Premier City.
- "Locals only" attitude is an obstacle.
- Fear of failure, lack of embracing and or accepting diversity, or new ideas - including new people – holds us back.
- Unwillingness to truly partner
- Fear of development
- Not all businesses are treated equally
- City government could be more responsive to business

### **HTC or ISP Concerns** (10 comments)

- Obviously Icy Strait Point (ISP)/Huna Totem Corporation (HTC) have helped this community. The visionaries of the past made some awesome choices by buying the old Wards Cove XIP cannery and turning it into a tourist attraction and cruise ship destination.
- Resentment expressed over high salaries of HTC officers.



- Fear that control or ownership of ISP will go to 3rd parties. Fear that HTC will sell off ISP and leave Hoonah with nothing.
- Does HTC really have a desire to put the community of Hoonah or Hoonah residents first? ISP seems like a missed opportunity.
- Desire a renewed and restated agreement between ISP and the City of Hoonah that promotes the business health of the people, the community, the City and ISP - in that order.
- Woosh J'een (lets work together) – why does it sometimes feel like HTC shareholders are a nuisance?
- HTC and Hoonah need to reconcile in a meaningful way; big money has divided us.
- Cruise ship companies should not be told that dock is privately owned when it is owned by a private/city partnership.
- Resident states that shore excursions must be booked through ISP or use of dock is denied; this is resented.
- Why does ISP import workers from Europe; these workers take income with them when they leave.
- HTC offices should be in Hoonah.
- Huna Tlingit land ownership and interests are being minimized to accommodate other business interests that will expand the City's economic base, thanks to ANCSA.

#### **People Don't Want to Work** (7 comments)

- Lack of motivated Labor. Lack of desire to work, and other issues results in too much poverty and too many on welfare in Hoonah.

#### **Out Of Town Control, Taking Away Business** (7 comments)

- Out-of-town businesses are opening up in Hoonah and not hiring locals. Business income then goes out-of-town without benefiting community.
- Out-of-towners that fly in to work for the week then leave for weekend are taking jobs from full time residents.
- Availability and price of groceries, fuel, and hardware is controlled by Seattle based business.

#### **Lack of Affordable Housing** (7 comments)

- Our biggest challenge is housing and the cost of utilities. Some houses have 3-4 families living in them. Houses are condemned that people are still living in. We need housing - with housing comes jobs with jobs comes money with money come a stronger community and a happy community

#### **Entities Not Working Together** (4 comments)

- Entities not working together and working in isolation is an obstacle to economic and other opportunity
- Hoonah's major players (City, HIA, HTC, School District) tend to do things in isolation. Biggest economic drag is inability of HIA/HTC/COH to work together.
- Because many of the people of Hoonah wear many hats it appears that we are sometimes spinning our wheels.
- Partnerships are lacking

#### **Better Internet** (4 comments)

- Better technology will allow businesses and families to grow
- Businesses all need access to Internet; there is low Internet bandwidth plus limited access.

#### **Drugs and Substance Abuse is a Problem** (3 comments)

#### **Lack of Bank** (3 comments)

- Not having a bank in Hoonah is a hardship for citizens and businesses. It is wrong to send money to Juneau and have employees send out Hoonah money.
- A bank can do so much for the community.
- A Federal Credit Union would be a blessing and help keep money in Hoonah.

#### **Lack of Child Care is Limiting Ability to Work** (3 comments)

- Day care facilities. In this day and age where women are a force in the working industry we need to provide a means to secure that growing infrastructure.
- Day care is a challenge in the community as many people want to work but their resources are tapped out to pay for day care (it was previously available, now not available).

#### **Need More People and Families** (3 comments)

#### **Infrastructure** (2 comments)

- How will we upgrade infrastructure with declining federal and state funding?

#### **Lack of Media/Communication** (2 comments)

- A challenge is for the community to actually get the whole truth on different projects that we have had in town. Who is actually responsible and who is benefitting, etc. A lot of information is hard to understand and it needs to be clearly presented (and in writing) - especially when a lot of money is being spent.
- A newspaper and radio station would be great.

### **Beautification** (2 comments)

- Offer free junk car removal. We should "paint the town red". If folks want to have their homes painted we as a city should try to do that.
- Lack of way to resolve ownership conflicts on numerous dilapidated and abandoned houses.

### **Ferry Service** (2 comments)

- Wish federal ferry funding could be spent on operations not just buildings.

### **Recreation** (3 comments)

- Hoonah needs focus on making the community a better place for residents through recreation and the arts; if it can figure out how to make its young people want to stay, visitors will also benefit.
- Wish path around park had not been asphalted, hard on joints.
- Flood a natural area in winter for outdoor ice skating rink (Haines and Gustavus do this)

### **Other**

- An obstacle is having the upfront resources to make investments in people and structures that will pay us back over time.
- Too many fishing regulations.
- Lack of quality health care.
- Confusion between cultural heritage and old ways and current culture and ways of being.
- Complacency: ultimately, Hoonah isn't that unique relative to other parts of Southeast Alaska. It is beautiful and has amazing wildlife--as do many places--but it does not do any one thing so well that it can stop working to improve. Other tourist destinations (Sitka, Haines, Juneau, Skagway, Seward, and Ketchikan) offer more for visitors to do. Hoonah needs focus on making the community a better place for residents through recreation and the arts; if it can figure out how to make its young people want to stay, visitors will also benefit.
- Over-commercialization: Vendors should be restricted to a certain density. Beware of turning into Homer Spit, which is an example of an explosion of tourism vendors run amok, as are businesses outside of Denali National Park ("Glitter Gulch"). Rather than see the beauty of the land you see gaudy business signs, everyone trying to have the biggest sign.

## **9 2017-2027 Hoonah Economic Development Priorities**

### **City of Hoonah Roles to Make Its Priorities Happen**

The roles and actions that the City of Hoonah will use to accomplish the Economic Development Priorities in this Plan are:

#### **LEADERSHIP**

- Set city and community short and long term priorities. When the Mayor, City Council, appointed officials, and staff support and lobby for a position or project this has influence and carries weight.

#### **FINANCIAL**

- Make strategic investments in infrastructure, or acquire/ provide a match to obtain private, state, federal, or NGO financing or grants to accomplish priorities.

#### **TAX AND REGULATIONS**

- Set stable tax rates, pro-business regulatory policies, and equitable permitting procedures.

#### **LAND SUPPLY**

- Use city owned land to ensure there is an adequate supply of residential, commercial and industrial land available.

#### **RESEARCH AND COORDINATION**

There are many competing demands for elected official and staff time so prioritizing time to help accomplish economic development priorities is a real contribution to project implementation. This includes:

- Research - Prioritizing time to research and investigate an opportunity or path to accomplish an economic development priority
- Coordination and Communication – Prioritizing time to communicate with potential funders, partners, residents, and businesses to help educate, build awareness, and accomplish an economic development priority.
- Making city facilities available for meetings of local business alliances, like the City's Hoonah Economic Development Committee, the Hoonah Economic Development Council, and others.

#### **OUTREACH AND MARKETING**

Efforts to market Hoonah as a good place to live, work, raise a family, start a business, and visit. These can be general or targeted efforts, which the city does alone or in conjunction with others.

# Upgrade City Sewage Treatment Plant, Connect Icy Strait Point to Sewage Treatment

## City Roles

Financial - Infrastructure Investment, Staff time, Coordination

## Context

These are two separate, but related projects.

The City of Hoonah and Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium prepared an updated 20-year Hoonah Sanitation Facilities Master Plan in August 2015 to address residential and commercial needs. Regarding the city's solid waste treatment plant, built in the late 1960s, the Master Plan found, "The existing Wastewater Treatment Plant is operating well beyond its design life and treatment capacity." A sequencing batch reactor treatment facility is recommended and, "it is questionable as to whether the existing wastewater plant can be retrofitted" (Hoonah Sanitation Facilities Master Plan Update, 2015, page 38).



Icy Strait Point (ISP) currently has an internal sewer system, but with increased visitation the system can't handle the waste surges, generating offensive odors that negatively impact visitor and employee experiences. The system is complex, requiring careful organism farming/oxygen, etcetera. One possible solution for ISP and for the environment is to connect via pipeline to the city's sewage treatment plant or another treatment facility. A less expensive though less desirable alternative due to odors, timing, and complexity is to acquire a sewage sludge pumper truck and pump and truck waste from ISP to the City treatment plant.

## Economic and Community Benefit

ISP is a major employer in town. Its visitors are the customers who purchase goods and services from many Hoonah businesses. Being a successful cruise port is competitive, and ISP's success is important to and significantly linked with Hoonah's economy, businesses, and seasonal employment.

## City's Economic Goals Addressed

- Support local businesses. Increase profitability and success of Hoonah businesses
- Encourage businesses that maintain our clean environment which supports healthy foods for harvest.
- A healthy city government is able to provide core functions.

## Order of Magnitude Cost

- Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrade estimate: \$3.85 million
- Extension of line to ISP estimate: \$1.11 million

Note that improving wastewater treatment at ISP including the potential extension of the city system to ISP and ensuring treatment plants are adequately sized to include ISP waste is a good use of state cruise ship passenger fees that the city receives.



## **Finish the Hoonah Marine Industrial Center (Area for Marine Service Businesses, Build Freight Dock)**

### **City Role**

Financial - Infrastructure Investment, Staff time, Coordination

### **Context**

Finish the Hoonah Marine Industrial Center (HMIC), which includes readying the area across the road for lease to marine service providers and tradespeople, and build a Hoonah Freight Dock and barge landing. These are standalone elements of the larger Hoonah Waterfront Plan Priority.

The 3-acre HMIC is located between the city's marine warehouse and the state ferry dock and new (2011) ferry terminal. It provides a safe, secure, and environmentally sound place to haul out and work on marine vessels. Another purpose is to facilitate freight transshipment. The HMIC 220 ton haul-out is the largest in northern Southeast Alaska; in 2015 there were 120 vessel haul-outs generating \$120,000 in revenue. Close to 80% of the haul outs were made by non-Hoonah residents, bringing non-local spending to town that wouldn't be here without this facility.

When boats are hauled out for short term or long-term storage, boat owners typically want to inspect, re-paint, re-zinc and perform other repairs. This creates demand for marine service jobs. There are a growing number of marine service providers in town; however, the demand is greater than the supply and some services are missing altogether. Now, the haul-out is a "do-it-yourself" place, the intent of this improvement will allow the marine service center to be a place where marine tradesmen can be hired to help. This project will provide space for marine service businesses at the rock quarry across Gartina Highway, which needs shot and dumped rock removed and rock walls stabilized. (Also see Business and Career Technical Education Priority)

Approximately 98% of all freight arriving or departing Hoonah does so either on cargo vans aboard the AMHS ferry, via the Alaska Marine Lines (AML) freight dock (owned by the City), or by private landing craft/barges. The remaining 2% comes or goes by air. Hoonah does not have a full-tide landing facility for barges. One is needed to allow year-round economical and efficient freight handling and delivery. The dock would also be open to all, potentially attracting additional shippers. The intent is to build this at HMIC.



### **Economic and Community Benefit**

Hoonah has made significant investments over the last decade in its well run and maintained harbors and ports. This benefits residents, businesses, visitors, and the fishing fleet

### **City's Economic Goals Addressed**

- Encourage new businesses in Hoonah, especially those that bring new money to Hoonah through adding value to area resources (fish, wood, and more) and those that bring visitors.
- People can afford to live in Hoonah and buy locally.

### **Order of Magnitude Cost**

- Space to clear/secure lease area for marine service businesses: \$200,000
- Freight dock: \$5.5 million

*AMHS dock at left, with adjacent Hoonah Marine Industrial Center and City haul-out / boat repair area/ freight landing area. Rock cut behind it is designated area for marine businesses to locate in future.*





## **Complete Hoonah Long-Range Waterfront Plan and Development**

### **City Roles**

Leadership, Financial Investment, Regulatory, Land Supply

### **Context**

The ability for cruise passengers to walk onshore rather than be forced to lighter via boat is increasing the number of customers at Hoonah businesses, the amount of foot and vehicle traffic in Hoonah, and the number of visitors and business at Icy Strait Point. One can see and feel that the saying, “success breeds success” is happening. This is creating a demand for more commercial space for businesses to operate along the waterfront between ISP and town, and in town. This is also creating infrastructure needs such as a place(s) for tour buses and vans to drop off and pick up passengers in town, turnaround, and park; better sidewalks and signage to help disperse people through town and the waterfront; places for parking; a clear waterfront walk, and more<sup>3</sup>.

As the City, property owners, and community responds to these demands – that sometimes have top dollars behind them – how will they ensure that the qualities that are important to Hoonah residents that define the town’s sense of place, history, and culture remain? With relatively little waterfront remaining, it is a good time to exert planning and control to maintain Hoonah’s unique character. A Hoonah Long Range Waterfront Plan, with a logical, phased development sequence, will help accomplish this. The planning area should include uplands, waterfront, and marine activity and infrastructure from the ISP property line to the Small Boat Harbor (including the playground and point), to the Icy Strait Lodge.

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<sup>3</sup> It is expected that the following separate waterfront elements and improvements would be addressed as part of overall waterfront planning: public waterfront and beach access; important viewsheds; motorized and non-motorized transportation movement and improvements; HMIC and a freight dock and barge landing; the City dock approach that needs replaced; Phase 2 harbor expansion; a work float for commercial fishermen; land for commercial development around the harbor and between the Liquor Store and The Office; a waterfront walk that weaves in and out of commercial areas and the harbor with interpretative signage; vehicle including tour bus parking; a welcome/visitor center; and design and landscaping elements.



### **Economic and Community Benefit**

This plan will assist the Planning Commission, City Council, and business and property owners. It will help the City make informed thoughtful decisions on waterfront infrastructure improvements, land to sell or acquire, zoning, and parking. This will help foster a stable business environment.

### **City's Economic Goals Addressed**

- Healthy city government able to provide core functions.
- Support local businesses.
- Encourage new businesses in Hoonah, especially those that bring new money to Hoonah through adding value to area resources (fish, wood, and more) and that bring visitors.

### **Order of Magnitude Cost**

- Hoonah Long-Range Waterfront Plan with logical, phased development sequence and preliminary environmental review on environmental impacts: \$120,000
- Developments will have varied costs, depending on scale and scope.

Note that waterfront improvements that facilitate the flow of cruise visitors and the vehicles that transport them is a good use of state cruise ship passenger fees that the city receives.



# Reduce Energy Costs (electricity and heating)

## City Roles

Leadership, Coordination (with HIA, IPEC, Southeast Conference, REAP, SSP, and others), Outreach, some Financial Investment

## Context

The three key projects here are:

1. City and other government/public facility owners lead and set an example on building weatherization and conversion to low-energy consuming appliances and lights.
2. Increase the percent of Hoonah's energy that is from non-diesel, renewable resources (currently about 30%).
3. Partner with Hoonah Indian Association (HIA) and other entities to implement the HIA's May 2016 10-Year Strategic Energy Plan. Develop an Energy MOA between City & HIA, establish an energy committee to work on:
  - Increasing energy from renewables from current 30% to 100%. Projects could be community-wide or for district loops. Options: hydro (Water Supply Creek, Elephant Falls), waste to energy, wind, solar, bio-mass, air/ground source, geothermal)
  - Establish community's energy usage. Implement electric & heat efficiency measures in every household.
  - Weatherize buildings, install LED lights.
  - Technical Energy Research & Reporting Work:
    - Bring IPEC into the Waste to Energy Loop.
    - Research in-line turbine(s) for water system; share with Energy Committee.
    - Draft Business Plan for the Clean Energy Center for Energy Committee Consideration.
    - Draft study on biomass district heating & greenhouse.
    - Complete study of the Woody Biomass startup.



## Economic and Community Benefit

Reduced percentage of household and business income spent on energy.

## City's Economic Goals Addressed

- People can afford to live in Hoonah and buy locally.
- Support local businesses. Increase profitability and success of Hoonah businesses. (Businesses do not get Power Cost Equalization (PCE) electric subsidy, they therefore bear the highest electric rates in town.)



## Order of Magnitude Cost

Costs will vary by project

# Independent Visitor and Small Cruise Ship Tourism Program and Marketing

## City Roles

Support, Staff time, Outreach and Marketing (could be in conjunction with marketing haul-out and harbors)

## Context

Cruise visitors are often heard saying things like, “You have an airport, you’re kidding?” “If I wanted to come back to Hoonah, is there anywhere I could stay?” The idea to ‘convert’ cruise visitors to returning independent visitors is a regular and successful marketing and outreach strategy of many cruise port communities. Travel Juneau (formerly the Juneau Convention and Visitors Bureau) estimates that 15-20% of independent visitors to Juneau visited previously aboard a cruise ship, and that about 10% of Juneau’s cruise visitors will return as an independent traveler at some time. This means for example, that 2016’s one million cruise visitors to Juneau will translate to 100,000 independent visitors to Juneau at some point. One of Travel Juneau’s purposes is to assist its members with marketing. Both Icy Strait Point and the Gustavus Visitors Association are members of Travel Juneau and take advantage of Travel Juneau’s cooperative marketing.

Hoonah is also visited by both independent yachters and small cruise ships (UnCruise, Adventure cruise, Alaskan Dream cruise, etc.). Both dock at City Harbor facilities and have guests who are looking for a smaller, more personalized and intimate understanding of place and culture. And, they often find this in Hoonah<sup>4</sup>.

Finally, Hoonah is attracting more small conferences. For example, in late 2016 the Sustainable Southeast Partnership held its annual meeting in Hoonah, and in 2017 the Salvation Army Congress will be in Hoonah. These conferences bring visitors who purchase lodging, food, and things to do during meeting breaks.

Attracting small cruise ships, independent and yacht visitors, and small conferences has happened through the efforts of individual businesses, organizations, the Harbormaster, and through word-of-mouth/organically. There are many individual piecemeal efforts toward this goal occurring now, but increasing this type of tourism will take a coordinated outreach effort. This would include developing goals and a strategy, working with businesses and neighboring communities to develop sample itineraries, and then marketing Hoonah to potential independent visitors and small cruise companies.

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<sup>4</sup> See the Marianne Scott’s articles in the June and August 2015 issues of Northwest Yachting <https://issuu.com/nwyachting/docs/june15/58> and <https://issuu.com/nwyachting/docs/august15> “...Our Hoonah visit was outstanding. Two cheerful totems with wild red paint stand in front of the equally red school building. People say hello on the street. They take their time. They stop their cars even if there’s no crosswalk ...” (June 2015) “...We have the fondest memories of Hoonah and its friendly citizens, of all the towns and villages we’d visited, this was my favorite.” (August 2015)



Work with local businesses to develop sample itineraries, activities, and weekend special events/festivals<sup>5</sup>. Consider teaming with Travel Juneau and Gustavus Visitors Association to develop sample 5 and 7 day itineraries to jointly market. Develop an independent-visitor oriented 10-20 page booklet about Hoonah; make it widely available including at the City, Icy Strait Point Visitor's Kiosk, at businesses around town, at the airport, harbor office and ferry terminal, and in places in Juneau and Gustavus with kiosks where information like this is displayed. Another idea is to upgrade the well-visited Hoonah Visitor website <http://www.visithoonah.com/visitorinfo.html> to make it more interactive, add links to video feed, and similar items.

Determine who will coordinate and lead this effort, does HEDC or an individual want to take the lead or form a Visitors Association?

### **Economic and Community Benefit**

Independent visitors generally want to know and understand a place and its culture; they spend more time and money at local businesses in town than cruise ship visitors.

To work toward more year-round tourism related employment, one emphasis could be on “shoulder” season travel and opportunities that are before and after cruise season, and also on festival/events (Haines has done this very well) that bring visitors in for the special event.

Will increase sales and bed tax revenue.

### **City's Economic Goals Addressed**

- Support local businesses. Increase profitability and success of Hoonah businesses.
- Encourage new businesses in Hoonah, especially those that bring new money to Hoonah through adding value to area resources (fish, wood, and more) and that bring visitors.
- Increase year-round employment in Hoonah.

### **Order of Magnitude Costs**

- Volunteer (or paid?) time by a coordinator and volunteer time by businesses
- Funding for printing, web work: \$500 - \$5,000
- Join Travel Juneau (when ready): approx. \$310 annually
- Possible city staff time to assist with marketing and outreach



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<sup>5</sup> Ideas discussed include cooking and local food retreats/tours; art and cultural experiences and workshops in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institute, Sealaska Heritage; retreats; hiking/mountain biking enthusiasts; sport shooters - clay pigeons, etc. Other ideas were to work with the USFS to develop trails and fireside programs to enhance our community and visitor's options.





## **Accomplish High School and Community Career-Technical and Business Education**

### **City Roles**

Support and Leadership, be a Partner (with businesses, Hoonah City School, HIA, Huna Totem, UAS, others)

### **Context**

During interviews with Hoonah businesses and on the community survey two types of education needs were identified to benefit local businesses and the Hoonah's economic future:

1. Training for potential and existing small businesses on how to write a business plan, how to start and grow a business, basic accounting, financing options, how to improve credit score, how to balance checkbook, etc., and
2. Career technical education for Hoonah high school students and young adults that are linked to job opportunities in Hoonah so that young people can see Hoonah career options and an education path to get there. Mentorship opportunities with businesses should be part of this. Career technical pathways and education should be in marine services and trades (welding, fiberglassing, diesel technology, etc.), construction, health care, hospitality and customer service, and fisheries and forestry sciences.

It was suggested that Hoonah youth don't understand the careers and jobs available in Hoonah. Local youth and young adults need to see how their skill sets can tie into local businesses (marine trades, customer service, marine and forestry science; business education and skills) then learn about the career pathways and make connections.

Need a "champion" or leader to coordinate these efforts, form taskforce, etc.

### Economic and Community Benefit

These two education-oriented economic development priorities will help make local businesses more successful, encourage residents to open businesses, help fill current and future jobs with Hoonah residents, and help develop meaningful career opportunities for Hoonah youth and young adults.

### City's Economic Goals Addressed

- Teach economics and business at the high school. Show youth career paths for Hoonah employment and jobs; provide career technical education.
- Have small business workshops for community.
- Maximize support to Hoonah Schools.

### Order of Magnitude Cost

Unknown, these are generally partnership opportunities waiting for an organizer(s) to lead and coordinate. Some business owners have expressed an interest in participating. It is not expected that the city would be lead; they would promote and support these efforts.

### Resources

- The Alaska Small Business Development Center (“we provide no-cost and low-cost business resources”) offers many webinars and has a Juneau Office. <https://aksbdc.org/>
- Haa Aani <http://www.sealaska.com/what-we-do/economic-development/haa-aani-llc> For example, Haa Aani and Sustainable Southeast Partnership <http://sustainablesoutheast.net/> ran a small business “Boot Camp” on Prince of Wales in July 2016 that was attended primarily by young adults - just those Hoonah desires to stay/return and invest in the community.
- Alaska State Small Business Assistance Center <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/ded/DEV/SmallBusinessAssistanceCenter.aspx>
- Huna Heritage Foundation is interested in youth career development opportunities and natural resource leadership.
- An agreement was signed recently between the USFS State and Private Forestry Division and Alaska DNR to provide workforce development for “jobs in the woods” including second growth inventory, how to do forest inventory work, and similar matters. Contact DCCED, Division of Economic Development.



## **Fisheries Development (several projects)**

- a. Support allowing CQEs to purchase permits,**
- b. Support a King Salmon smolt release Port Frederick,**
- c. Support building a Gallagher Bay fish ladder, and**
- d. Support more value-added processing**

### **City Roles**

Leadership, Support; City of Hoonah Community Fisheries Cooperative (HCFC) is lead for City.

### **Context**

Only a few communities in Alaska participate in the federal Alaska Community Quota Entity (CQE). Hoonah has been proactive in this area for a long time. The Hoonah Community Fisheries Cooperative (HCFC) is the local CQE. The HCFC owns and leases four charter halibut permits to resident charter operators, and can purchase commercial halibut quota and lease it to Hoonah residents, though the rate of return on investment and economics of this are currently challenging given the high price of halibut and sablefish quota. The HCFC also addresses other fishery development and enhancement matters.

The four recommended actions listed in the title will each benefit Hoonah fisheries and fishermen.

### **Economic and Community Benefit**

Support Alaska Legislative change to allow CQE money to be spent to purchase commercial fishing permits (in addition to quota); this is a more economic and realistic action with a higher rate of return for the Hoonah CQE.

Establish a remote hatchery release of King Salmon smolts in Port Frederick. This will benefit Hoonah's May-June commercial and sport fisheries. DIPAC is reportedly ready to assist.

Support building a Gallagher Bay fish ladder. This fish ladder will remove an obstacle to salmon migration and open up 6-8 miles of good fish habitat.

Support more value-added processing; support local businesses that want to add value to local fish and seafood (winter kings, oysters, kelp, etc.). This will create or sustain Hoonah jobs and income.

### **City's Economic Goals Addressed**

- Support local businesses. Increase profitability and success of Hoonah businesses.
- Encourage new businesses in Hoonah, especially those that bring new money to Hoonah through adding value to area resources (fish, wood, and more) and that bring visitors.
- Encourage businesses that: a) Maintain our clean environment which supports healthy foods for harvest, b) Do not displace local culture, and c) Give back to the community.

### **Order of Magnitude Cost**

Travel costs and time to testify and meet with officials to enact these recommendations.

Other: Note that the Hoonah Fish Company business and processing infrastructure is currently closed and sitting idle.

# **Conduct a Housing Needs Assessment, Pursue Development of Needed Housing**

## **City Roles**

Financial Support (Housing Assessment), Land, Regulatory, Leadership

## **Context**

The following housing needs have been identified by residents and businesses: 1) Rental housing for seasonal workers, 2) Affordable rental and for-sale housing.

Hoonah wants to attract and support people who want to work, especially former residents and those with a tie to community. But, if there is no housing, or no affordable housing, then seasonal businesses cannot be successful and new residents cannot move here. If Hoonah desires population growth, there must be housing available for residents. But what type of housing, where, how much, and what is keeping private sector from responding to demand? What is the actual need for worker housing? Is it rentals or for sale housing that is needed? What does “affordable” mean in Hoonah?

To move from anecdotal housing concerns to a systematic review of local needs, the City and HIA could team to conduct a Housing Needs Assessment to identify housing stock and condition, current and expected future housing needs (resident & business), local income levels (needed to determine what residents can afford to rent or buy), the need for senior-oriented housing, etcetera.

## **Economic and Community Benefit**

There is concern that lack of worker and affordable housing is stifling economic and population growth.

## **City’s Economic Goals Addressed**

- Increase Hoonah’s population; Hoonah’s employment opportunities bring former residents home.
- People can afford to live in Hoonah and buy locally.

## **Order of Magnitude Cost**

Housing Needs Assessment: \$30,000

## **Resources**

Tlingit Haida Regional Housing Authority may have funding to support a Housing Needs Assessment.

## **Establish a Public Library**

### **City Roles**

Leadership, Financial

### **Context**

The Esther Greenwald School Library is housed at the Hoonah School. In the past, it has been open to the public on a somewhat regular schedule for reading, research, book check-out, copying materials, internet access, and similar library services. It is the only library in Hoonah. Residents and business owners have mentioned that the lack of a library and library services is a challenge personally and professionally.

Accomplishing this project could occur by providing reliable and regular public access to the Esther Greenwald School Library or by including a library as part of another existing or new facility. Building a new standalone facility seems less advised due to the current fiscal challenges operating the existing facility, but could be considered in the future if attractive capital funding and reliable operating funds were identified.

To accomplish regular public hours at the School Library after the school day has ended, issues to address are additional janitorial costs, ensuring access to school records are “firewalled” from public internet access, and having two volunteer or paid staff at library that have whatever security clearance is required.

### **Economic and Community Benefit**

Businesses and residents need internet access, and a place to research, read, learn, and use typical library services.

### **City’s Economic Goals**

#### **Addressed**

- Healthy city government able to provide core functions.

### **Order of Magnitude Cost**

Estimated at approximately \$15,000 annually







## **Update Commercial/Industrial Land Development Plan**

### **City Roles**

Land, Financial Support, Regulatory; the Planning and Zoning Commission would lead this effort for the city.

### **Context**

A few years ago the City platted Coho Creek Subdivision with ten commercially-zoned, 5-6 acre lots off a very steep road with no utilities. All the lots but one have sold (mortgage payments made directly to City).

Businesses interviewed and survey respondents commented that there is little land available to own or rent for a business in the commercial area of downtown. And, others desire lots where they can have a building to store their business assets and inventory. The HEDC members note that there is a need for additional commercial and industrial land in locations *in addition* to the waterfront (waterfront needs would be addressed in the Hoonah Long-Range Waterfront Plan).

A systematic review of commercial and industrial land is needed to support decision making on future land sales or leases and infrastructure investment. This would include a review of current commercial and industrial land use and zoning, how much commercial or industrial land is privately owned but undeveloped, discussions with landowners about why that land is undeveloped, a determination of how much land is needed now and in the next 10 years to meet demand, a review of what size parcels are needed, any procedural or code changes needed to help encourage land to be used and not sit undeveloped, and similar matters. A review of current zoning to determine if more “mixed-use” development could meet current needs should be considered too.

### **Economic and Community Benefit**

Without commercial, industrial, (or mixed-use) zoned land available people can not open businesses.

### **City’s Economic Goals Addressed**

- Encourage new businesses in Hoonah, especially those that bring new money to Hoonah through adding value to area resources (fish, wood, and more) and that bring visitors.
- Support local businesses. Increase profitability and success of Hoonah businesses.



### **Order of Magnitude Cost**

Estimated cost for a commercial and industrial land study: \$35,000



## 10 Other Community + Economic Development Projects

The following economic opportunities or projects were identified and discussed during this plan's development. They are not listed as top priorities because either:

- The City of Hoonah would have a limited or secondary role,
- The project has not been fleshed-out enough to determine its exact nature yet or level of priority yet, or
- It was felt that, depending on the project, either the Hoonah Indian Association or individual entrepreneurs would more naturally be the project leader.

It is expected that other parties may accomplish these during the 2017-2017 period, and that the City of Hoonah will have a role in some. Others may be elevated in importance during the 2017-20127 time period as they are better defined or conditions change.

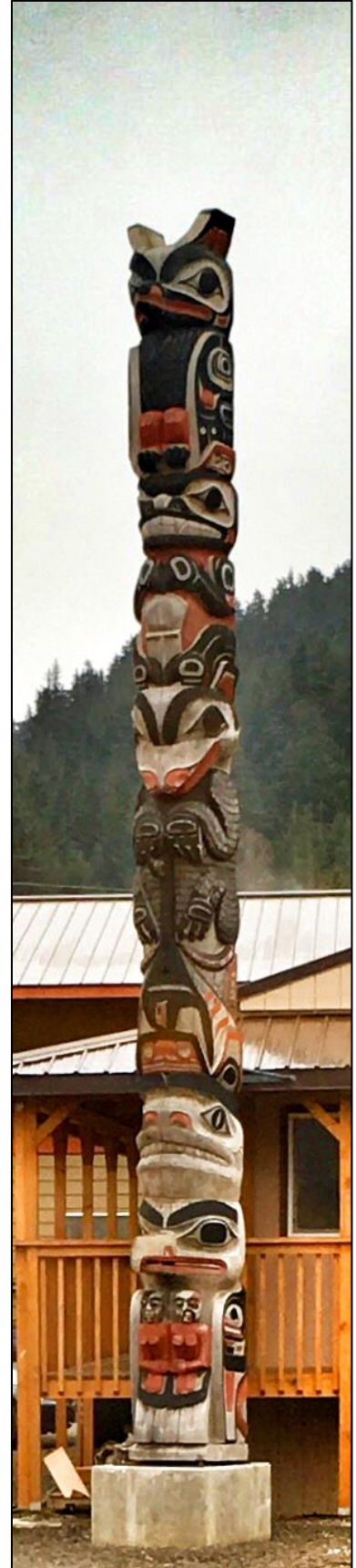
The Hoonah Economic Development Committee wanted to list them all as many are important ideas or economic/business needs.

### Celebrate and Promote Hoonah's Heritage, Culture and Arts

As noted on page 7 of this plan, there has been a cultural resurgence in Hoonah that has created art, pride, healing, and strength. With the completion in 2016 of the Xunaa Shuká Hít (Huna Tribal House) and dugout canoe carving, there is interest in the next opportunity or project.

These projects have multiple economic implications: strengthened cultural identity and pride in individuals coupled with the canoe project's emphasis on sobriety creates a healthier more resilient community and workforce. Icy Strait Point visitors have commented that the carving shed/canoe carvers in town has provided an authentic Alaskan experience that gives guests a positive overall impression and amazing time in Hoonah.

Ideas and developing concepts that have been discussed during this plan's development include:



### **Huna Cultural Heritage Center/ Museum/Tribal House**

A place in Hoonah is needed for proper storage, interpretation and some display of repatriated collections and clan regalia, for celebrating and telling Huna Tlingit stories, to provide a clean workspace for carving and other arts etcetera. The Hoonah Indian Association is investigating this need and opportunity. With displays and information on Hoonah's history, art, culture, and things to do this could also be a destination for visitors, residents, and school groups.

### **ANB/ANS Hall Renovation**

The ANB/ANS Memorial Hall is a culturally and historically important building and place in heart of town that needs renovation. This would be a community facility/community enhancement project. This is



Hoonah history and pride. Project cost is estimated at \$3-5 million. ANB/ANS Camp 12, the Hoonah Tlingit and Haida Community Council, and Huna Totem Corporation are interested in this project.

### **Clan Houses Restoration**

These would be community enhancement projects. This is Hoonah history and pride.

## **Establish Child Care Businesses**

There is no organized daycare in Hoonah and several mentioned this during the interviews and survey as a need. This would allow parents to enter the workforce and supports their ability to work.

Of note, in 2016 in neighboring Gustavus a licensed child care business open for the first time. It operated all summer for ages 0-12 and is now continuing during the school year. A grant from the city and an art grant from the state have supplied partial funding. The entrepreneur that started this business may have helpful information.

## **Improve Internet Access, Speed and Cost**

During the surveys and interviews there were many complaints about slow internet speeds, limited access, and high costs. It is impeding business and commerce, learning (reported hard to do online classes at the school), and personal communications. More and faster bandwidth is needed to further business transactions and communication, online and technical services for education, technology, media, training, AP classes, higher education, etc.

The term broadband commonly refers to high-speed Internet access that is always on and faster than the traditional dial-up access. Broadband can include transmission technologies such as digital subscriber line (DSL via phone lines), cable modem (via cable TV), fiber optic cable, wireless radio link repeaters, and satellite. In 2015 the FCC changed the technical definition of broadband to be that which is at least 25Mb/s down and 3Mb/s up. Very few places in Alaska except urban centers have broadband speeds under this revised definition.

There is no cable access in Hoonah; internet is available via satellite (Hughes Net) or via wireless providers such as SnowCloud, AT&T or ACS (in some locations). GCI does not provide internet in Hoonah except to the school. Reportedly all service is coming via Alascom. More research into the data limitations and options is needed and then collaborative work with providers. Of note, the Juneau office of Byte Networking LLC <http://new.bytenetworking.com/> provides fibre-microwave internet services to Gustavus and is interested in providing this in Hoonah if it can obtain permission to install a repeater.

## **Manage Hoonah's Abundant Forestlands to Support Local Businesses**

There are current and future work and business opportunities related to Hoonah's USFS, Sealaska, and Huna Totem Corporation owned forests.

There are two small commercial sawmills in Hoonah that, depending on the year employ up to 25 people in the summer and support the business owners year round. Less than a million board feet a year of spruce, hemlock, and yellow cedar is locally processed now in Hoonah. These goods-producing jobs are higher paying than service jobs and help diversify the Hoonah economy as well as utilizing and adding-value to a local resource. There are all qualities that are of linked to several of Hoonah's Economic Development Goals.



*Hoonah Native Forest Partnership at work in the Woods. Photo by Southeast Sustainable Partnership*

Today significant value is added to each board foot by creating finished products for retail sale such as lumber for custom homes and commercial buildings, cabin kits, trail boards, wood for fish ladders and stream restorations, picnic tables, furniture, boxes, art pieces, wood for fine musical instruments, and more. Icy Straits Lumber (ISL) installed a kiln (supported by the U.S. Economic Development Agency) that assists it in producing value-added, kiln dried, dimensional lumber and other wood products. A 2010 fire that destroyed ISL's larger mill has challenged its ability to meet the demand for some products.

Perhaps the most pressing concern is that the owners of ISL are, like the rest of the Baby Boom generation, aging. They are invested in business growth and pursuing diverse opportunities, but are also beginning to think about business exit strategies like many of their peers. In order to stay in



business in Hoonah ISL has had to evolve and be creative. Consideration should be given to the local impact if the main local sawmill and value-added wood industry in Hoonah closed and whether any strategic assistance is needed to maintain the local value-added timber industry.

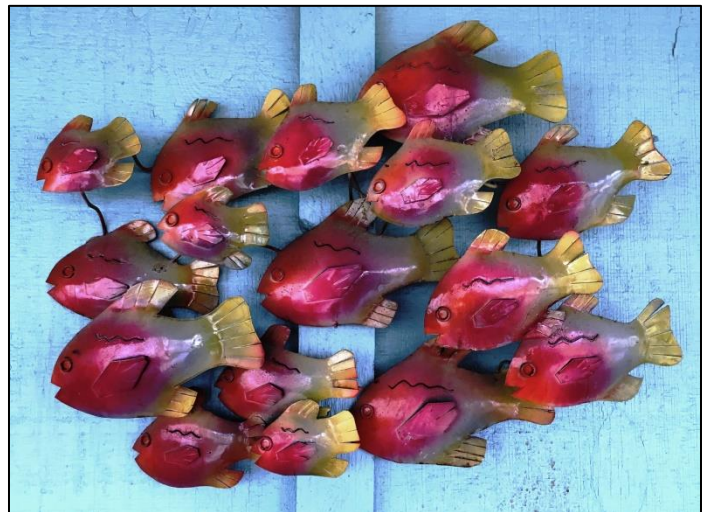
Other forest related work in Hoonah includes:

- Commercial tree thinning that Hoonah Indian Association (HIA) has been conducting under contract to landowners with mostly local crews.
- The Hoonah Native Forest Partnership (USFS, Sealaska, HIA, HTC), that is developing a scientific and local knowledge based understanding of the watershed and forest it supports to provide better management. One issue they will consider is developing forest resource based jobs and businesses. The goal is by 2018 to have a land management plan complete. In summer 2016, the Partnership will continue surveying streams, roads, habitat, and vegetation. In 2015, 25-30 miles of roads and the watershed they cross were surveyed.
- Harvest of blueberries and spruce tips for commercial purposes.

No specific business or economic development project linked to the local forest was identified during this plan's development. If one did come up, it is unclear what the City's role would be. However, given the local resource and the importance of these higher-paying non-tourism jobs, perhaps some attention should be directed this way.

## Support Food-based Businesses

New food based businesses have been opening in Hoonah, including businesses that grow, harvest, process, add value to, and sell local food (finfish and shellfish, berries, water, medicinals, vegetables, etcetera.) There is also concern over the high price of groceries. A city role could be to ensure city codes allow and do not discourage resident and commercial food growing and production, chickens, etc.



## Market and Use Hoonah's Abundant Rock

Hoonah has abundant, easily accessed, and already stockpiled rock and gravel resources. Marketing the availability of rock is one of the many duties of city staff.



## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- <sup>2</sup> Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- <sup>3</sup> 2010 US Census
- <sup>4</sup> Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
- <sup>5</sup> Permanent Fund Division Annual Reports
- <sup>6</sup> 2010 US Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-yr Estimate
- <sup>7</sup> 2010 US Census
- <sup>8</sup> Inside Passage Electric Cooperative
- <sup>9</sup> Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- <sup>10</sup> Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- <sup>11</sup> Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- <sup>12</sup> Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
- <sup>13</sup> As defined by the US Census Bureau, "Income" includes "the sum of the amounts reported separately for wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips; self-employment income from own nonfarm or farm businesses, including proprietorships and partnerships; interest, dividends, net rental income, royalty income, or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); any public assistance or welfare payments from the state or local welfare office; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and any other sources of income received regularly such as Veterans' (VA) payments, unemployment compensation, child support, or alimony."
- <sup>14</sup> US Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-yr estimate
- <sup>15</sup> US Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-yr estimate
- <sup>16</sup> US Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-yr estimate
- <sup>17</sup> Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission
- <sup>18</sup> Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission
- <sup>19</sup> Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission
- <sup>20</sup> State of Alaska Department of Revenue, State Shared Taxes and Fees Annual Reports
- <sup>21</sup> Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, Vessel Characteristics and Statistics by Alaskan City
- <sup>22</sup> Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska
- <sup>23</sup> Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska
- <sup>24</sup> Alaska Department of Revenue Shared Tax Annual Reports
- <sup>25</sup> City of Hoonah Financial Audits, Alaska Department of Commerce and Economic Development
- <sup>26</sup> US Bureau of Transportation Statistics
- <sup>27</sup> Alaska Marine Highway System
- <sup>28</sup> US Bureau of Transportation Statistics
- <sup>29</sup> Personal communication, Alaska Marine Lines