

BUSINESS COMMUNITY MEETING #2 SUMMARY

DATE: March 19, 2018

TIME: 6:30p - 8:00p

LOCATION: Valdez Civic Center

Kimley»Horn
NORTH STAR



Meeting Summary

On March 19, 2018, the City of Valdez held the second Business Community Meeting for the Valdez Visioning and Branding Plan at the Valdez Civic Center. The purpose of this meeting was to build off of the previous input received during the Visioning Week Business Community Meeting and to continue the dialogue with new attendees. The Business Community Meeting brought together a collection of local business owners and employees who have an interest in bettering the local business community.

After a brief presentation of previous work efforts during the visioning process and the timeline for events that will take place over the next two years, meeting attendees engaged in an open discussion with members of the project team. These conversations provided additional local insight into the business atmosphere within Valdez, including some of the potential challenges. The conversation also began to explore potential solutions to identified issues. This conversation will continue at the next Business Community Meeting as the team ensures that as much community feedback as possible is incorporated into the planning process.

This conversation was a free-flowing exchange of ideas and is summarized in the bullet points below:

General Comments

- People are stuck home
- Team up and support each other
- Need a push for hometown pride
- Fishing crews come from elsewhere and stay on the boat
- Tagline should address perception of community as inaccessible

Transportation

- Cost of utilities and transportation
- FSA – CAT transportation
- Ferry service is too expensive
- Discussion on potential to purchase the ferry service
- Create the vision that we are accessible
- Town is “rolled up”
- Grant Air – airline service that left

Wage/Staff Discussion

- \$9.84 min. wage – wait staff
- \$15 for retail clerks
- Hard for non-profit to pay wages
- Fishing wages – cause people to leave
- Hard to find staff for local businesses in general due to competition with higher paying employment
- J-1 students have been good workers

Tourist Attraction

- Need more winter things
- Winter king run
- Improve the hatchery

Permits and City-Relations

- Fees process – not necessarily an issue
- Fee process has gotten a lot better in the past

few years

- Building permits/timing was easy
- Need positive education –
- 10 ways to do something instead of 10 ways why I shouldn't
- City out of touch with businesses
- City doesn't operate like a business
- No business people on Council
- Work in City Hall – no perception of what's going on outside
- Regular meetings between the City and business owners would be beneficial
- City should procure more locally, sometimes does not look for a local option
- No avenue for feedback
- City doesn't always communicate with businesses that are being affected when taking action

Communication

- No good way currently to get the word out
- Should establish online tools for engagement and information
- Need to establish consistency and easy navigation of processes
- Communication w/residents isn't a priority
- Vision, leadership and focus

Alyeska

- Alyeska – what can we do for you?
- No one else has Alyeska
- Alyeska – taken for granted?
- Extend an olive branch

Comprehensive Plan

- Is comp plan actually adopted
- Avoid an environment of negativity in the comp plan
- In comp plan – establish a section that speaks to the ramifications of the policy
- Last process – we were meeting'd out!!
- A plan of inclusion, not exclusion
- Inclusive and flexible