

Kate Huber

From: Joe Prax <joe@prospectoroutfitters.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 13, 2021 2:43 AM
To: Planning Department
Subject: Valdez comprehensive plan

Dear planning and zoning members

I am torn on responding to the comprehensive plan. It is so overreaching that it will implode under its own weight, approved or not it will not succeed. If the only damage was the lost and misguided effort then we might as well not worry and let this end up on the pile of 50 other plans that Valdez has used. However this plan seems to carry more weight and will lead to other damage. Valdez will be misled into thinking that following this nonsense will lead to the stated goals. The problem is NO WHERE in the plan does it mention and costs or opportunity costs. With anything there are options and their costs. Even Valdez can't do it all.

There are 95 actionable items in the plan. How is that even possible? How many people would it take to pull that off? I doubt five things could be accomplished but in reading the plan ALL of it needs to be done and much of it with the force of government.

There is no analysis of why these things have not happened already. If there is a great housing demand why has it not been filled? Let me see. Who owns the most land in Valdez? Who writes the rules for the land use? Who makes the rules for what can be built? Who delays plans? Who uses land right in the middle of town for a trucking terminal, oh I mean a fire department? Who rescues a developer of a piece of land by facilitating turning it into yet another park? Who controls land use and once made a person wait NINE YEARS to get permission to mine the rare earth element known as gravel? What other town values its land so little that it has acres to store snow far in excess of needs? Who requires someone to have a hearing with planning and zoning to build something as simple as a roof over a porch (something you get to deal with at your next meeting)? By now you know the answer, THE CITY OF VALDEZ. It doesn't take a multimillion dollar plan to hold a mirror up and see where 90% of the problem lies.

Not only will none of the above be questioned in the plan it will be expanded and reinforced. In addition even though the plan says that we need lower cost housing it recommends changing the zoning where a large number of people live in trailers thus making the housing problem that much worse. The threat of being in conflict with the plan will prevent people from being able to use their land as they see fit. People will not invest if there is uncertainty. What would the incentive be for people to improve a mobile home park if the city doesn't want that use in the first place?

Did anyone notice another absence in the plan? Is our major employer and economic engine mentioned at all? The best thing Valdez could do is keep whatever economic activity we have now. What can we do to facilitate it? We have waterfront plans for the fishing industry but how about that industry that funds 90% of the city? Were there even any representatives from Alyeska in the process?

I doubt any of you would let me do my Christmas shopping with your credit card but that is essentially what this plan is based on. Humans always have ideas and want more. We want nicer houses, we want more parks, better roads, lower cost of living and on and on. Personally we recognize that all of this has associated costs and you can't do it all.

A comprehensive plan is simply an impossibility. People were asked for endless ideas with no costs and no effort was used in coming up with costs of those desires or even more basically no effort given on why they

have not occurred. There was no reality test applied. What has happened is that Valdez has yet again given money to the Planning Industrial Complex to try and convince us that THIS TIME it will work! Sorry they are not that smart. No one is.

I understand this process has been allowed to proceed with these illusions but the best action would be to recognize the impossibility of the plan in particular and the idea that you can come up with a comprehensive plan of something as dynamic as a city.

For the good of present and future Valdez please stop this effort.

Sincerely
Joe Prax