

Public Review Draft Plan DB Land Use Economic Plan  
Personal Comments submitted by Barbara Brease, January 8, 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DB Land Use Economic Plan. This effort will help determine the future of the Denali National Park while laying the blueprint for design that will maintain the quality of life and landscape in the adjacent communities within the Denali Borough. I have put text from the Draft Plan in italics with comments in plain text.

Comments heard at public meetings did not indicate a desire for growth amongst locals. Protecting intangible values such as aesthetics, natural sounds, and opportunities for solitude and inspiration is a critical component in the values and vision shared by the community.

While the residents of DB both enjoy our status as a tourist mecca and enjoy the economic opportunities this creates, we also recognize our status as stewards of the wild environment that makes Denali unique and a UN Designated International Biosphere Reserve. This wilderness is the reason tourists want to come here.

*Goal: Encourage expansion of the tourism industry by increasing fall, winter, and spring travel.*

There is strong concern by many over the potential impacts of shoulder-season/winter tourism. These include:

1. Further strain on community resources i.e. water, sewer and waste from the tourism lodging and infrastructure.
2. Wildlife populations already stressed in a fragile harsh winter environment, i.e. will potentially face significant disturbance affecting reproductive success, abundance, or condition; movement patterns, distribution, or behavior; or avoidance of important habitats such as mineral licks, feeding or birthing sites, or wintering habitat;
3. Damage to landscape from ORVs and Snowmachines.i.e. soil erosion or compaction, or vegetative changes.
4. Reduced quality of life for the community who enjoy the peace and solitude of an Alaskan winter.

*Goal: Explore options for developing a regional airport.*

*A new/improved airport could serve multiple functions, including allowing for reliable, year round emergency medical flights, and providing more opportunities for charter or even scheduled commercial flights for visitors and residents. The Planning Commission identified a possible area for a regional airport (see map below). This goal is outlined in greater detail in the Borough Comprehensive Plan (2015).*

The Comprehensive Plan of 2015 did not quantify need for a new regional airport or offer more details. In fact, The Denali Borough Comprehensive Plan 2015 points out that “the Borough contains numerous private airfields. Floatplanes utilize lakes within the Denali Borough as seasons allow.” The Plan goes on to list nine larger public airfields located within the Denali Borough. Each of these can be used for life flights.

The map of the proposed airport within the Draft Review appear to route departing traffic to the south, directly over Healy. Furthermore, the map also the length of the runway as 2000 feet. The runway length creates possibility for jet turbine aircraft, which produce noise levels that are very unpleasant additions to our soundscape. of life in Healy would be reduced by unwelcome addition of noisy aircraft operation. I feel that an additional airport capacity is unnecessary given the current number of airstrips.

*Goal: Find the balance between protecting the freedoms that come with land ownership while protecting the values and quality of life on adjoining lands.*

I support the use of zoning to protect neighborhoods from heavy industrial use, including gravel mining. As a homeowner who has experienced a disruption in their neighborhood caused by the encroachment of a gravel operation adjacent to our neighborhood I am deeply aware of the impact on lives because of improper zoning.

*Goal: Support effective, easy to use, connected transportation options that benefit everyone who lives in, works in or visits the Denali Borough.*

Our communities would benefit from complete streets. The National Complete Streets Coalition provides this definition:

“Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.”

Additionally, I would like to see the addition of trails/areas where traps and snares are off limit in order to give dogs a place to exercise safely.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment

Barbara Brease

**From:** [TRENA HAUGEN](#)  
**To:** [Marsha Lambert](#)  
**Cc:** [erik.haugen](#)  
**Subject:** DB Land Use Economic Development Plan Comment  
**Date:** Sunday, January 07, 2018 10:26:42 PM

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Hi Marsha,

I plan on attending the 16 Jan meeting, but work can always change my schedule last minute so I would like to get a few comments submitted.

Comments:

Pg. 7 - Personal responsibility -- What services and amenities are desired that we do not already have? With that, is this Development Plan suggesting local property or sales tax?

Pg. 13 - Basic dimensional standards -- As a land owner in the borough I do not want to be told minimum set backs or height limits of my private construction. If someone is developing a gravel pit or junk yard, do they have to register with the borough? If so, you could you enforce safety and visual screening buffers through their business license application and approval?

Pg. 13 - Basic rules on allowed uses -- Again, if registering a business such as employee housing, small commercial gravel pit, or junk yard (where parts can be purchased) the borough could impose business/land rules as mentioned in the below borough-wide conditional use process. I am concerned basic rules leads to covenants on private land and many of us do not want the borough dictating what we can and can't do on our property. Denali Borough is one of the few places where people have general freedom to do what they want on their land. Imposing rules will need to be enforced, and how does the borough plan to do that?

Pg.13 - A borough-wide conditional use process -- I concur with implementing a conditional use for large businesses, and leaving small use as "by-right", not subject to review. What is the borough's proposed thresholds for "Large-Scale" or businesses that would fall under this category? For instance take a gravel pit. A person should be able to dig a gravel pit on their property if they need the gravel, but would the threshold be size or if the gravel is used for resale?

Pg. 13 - Provide for different types of trail use, including motorized and non-motorized. -- Leave this to the BLM, DNR, NPS, or other appropriate agency to regulate. Denial Borough should leave recreation open to all uses and not try to regulate it. How would the borough enforce this anyway?

Pg. 16 - Explore opportunities to build bike and pedestrian infrastructure along highways and major roads. -- This is long overdue. We need safe paths for foot and bicycle traffic between the major hubs such as Three Bears, CARQUEST, the school, and the Tri-Valley community center. Borough residents know how much foot and

bicycle traffic there is along the road in the summer, and this is a safety hazard. Had the borough tried to team up with HAP or seek grants to build these paths? Please make this happen.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please call me with any questions.

V/R

Erik Haugen  
Healy Resident  
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**From:** [kate weber](#)  
**To:** [Marsha Lambert](#)  
**Subject:** Denali Borough land management plan 2017  
**Date:** Monday, December 18, 2017 7:29:07 AM

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Hello Marsha ,

I just saw this plan on facebook but not in my mailbox ? I live at the end of Lester Road and have been watching the changes on that road since 1999 . I have taught school 30 yrs. I've done several jobs in the area and even up on the slope.

I have some points of concern :

" cluster of cabins ". How many people does one acre of tundra fit in ? I know this example of a cluster of cabins well. Many people in one small space. Very little aesthetics other than inside the cabins side by side and more and more trees get cut along with all the trees cut for 3 bears along with all the trees cut next to my land and Dave Talericos . Now it is a amphitheater of sound pollution. Now my other neighbor who collects recycle items that look like junk puts more and more stuff in his one acre every time this example of a " cluster " puts one more cabin in. I see trucks instead of trees out my deck window. And my other neighbor who cut a lot of trees then made a work pad that looks right into every one of my windows. ? Now another neighbor down Lester Road is pushing the land seller across from " shanty town " to have a gravel pit right across from all these spendy cabins. ". This is right across from shanty town. And this example of a cluster of tourist cabins . A gravel pit across from tourists ? Well those neighbors are selling anyway .

There is a sign of " land for sale ." It's on a tree . I called the phone number posted on the tree. This nice man answered saying he wanted a cabin for himself to have and wanted to sell off the rest of the land that goes right to the highway. He said that some other neighbors were pushing him to sell to a gravel operation. He said he wanted to be more thoughtful to the neighborhood than that but that here is a secret cabin with tons of gravel underneath it. I cannot imagine much more light and sound pollution but it appears that is not a consideration. Now another neighbor rents out 4 wheelers along with the rental and 4 wheelers like to " spin" in my driveway. If I myself cut one more tree there will be NO sound barrier. Last summer when neighbors had a big wedding celebration on dry creek the one thing that kept me from. Having to go live somewhere else for a few days was the trees I have left uncut. The other side of my land has lost at least a thousand trees. And then some and it keeps on going. The fox families we really all enjoyed were scared away by the employees down at this " cluster " of tourists and employees. The kids kept throwing stones into the dens. Now. No fox. Zip line ? That scared all the moose into the highway or sometimes they zoom through my back tundra in fear.

Skiing ? I love to cross country ski and see one thing. Plowed Park Roads. " ski tours ". Is that vehicles taking tourists into somewhere ? If there is one thing this Healy pollution needs it is to exersize and get out if the car. Cars don't even turn off in the summer. Perpetual motion.

I've never seen any good cross country trail or place to ski . In the 70s. I lived in the canyon and skied every day from the princess bank into the park. It was exquisite. It was safe. Not down in the trees with skijourdogs. So these are my concerns. The wild animals are scared away. This has been the nicest quietest neighborhood of thoughtful people. They all work hard. Lots of little happy children !!! Last summer I saw this whole fireplace built on the tundra on the stampede side. It was " claimed " and gated off with a rope. It stayed there quite awhile. Every year the kids with nothing to do see dry creek as their place to drive out a vehicle. Play loud music and throw around glass at their big fires. I have had to talk to the " cluster of cabins " people and sometimes the kids get pretty arrogant about their rights to store wood on the bank. Etc Drive out trucks. Bring out lots of wood. This creates big mucky mud sinks. Bike trails ? I would not feel safe driving down my Lester Road on a bike. Troopers create areas right at the bottom of that road. Their cars block ones view and each time a new unaware trooper parks in that already tight zone it is an accident ready to happen. Troopers have been known to fly into this neighborhood with sirens on. Only to Prk in my driveway to talk on cell phones. So I would ask this committee to think about how many people is a good number of people to put into one acre of tundra in a neighborhood. I actually thought it was " a bad example " because I have watched what this has does to the people around. The guests now walk up the access line. Are they going to ski , walk , 4 wheel right up the electric line access areas now ? They already do from this cluster of cabins. So if 3 or 4 more people put 30-60 people as guests , tourists , gravel pit , etc. There will be no safe neighborhood. I do not understand why this area would be pointed out . This very owner Kevin and I talked about the concept of too many employees in be place causing a problem. 1999. So now it is tourists "

and " employees all in one space off of " shanty town ." It IS a lot of cash put into one space . This is a glitter gulch all over.

Another concern I have is the idea I have heard of " the loudest amusement park EVER where music will sound for miles and miles right on Otto Lake.

So I want to thank you all. I personally know two people only on your committees. Ford Reeves was a neighbor in the 70 s and Steve Jones who had a tasteful aesthetic " cluster " of cabins up in the hills. I am 72.

I would help if you need it. This is the first time I saw any chance to put in any input. I have gone to the LNG meetings. I have gone to the princess meetings. They say one thing over and over. " there are not many of you. We know where all the gravel and aquifers are. No we are not contributing to the infrastructure we are using it. ". No the gas is not for you is is for Asian investment but using your infrastructure ".

This is quite a challenge because I do get along pretty well with the most invasive scenes around me. I do walk out on dry creek a lot. I hear the scenes . Troopers and fire dept seem hesitant about dry creek and who should monitor it or not. Last year the kids or someone tore off my private property sign. They had to have a big tool to do that. These folks who come in also will walk into your area and take anything . I now lock

everything just to run and get the mail because people prowl in cars in that Lester Road neighborhood.

So I would ask this committee to think about 3 bears and what that has done and will do to this Lester Road neighborhood. Of course it will be constant trucks of shelf food coming in. Of course it will warm up the air and fowl the air along with all the coal being burned by a few neighbors. So pretty soon there will be very little fresh air to breath and no place for anyone to walk to . The guns for sale at 3 bears. I already hear random shooting on dry creek. It's a matter of time before that actually hits a person unaware that dry creek is also a shooting range.

Public transportation was denied yrs ago in the Healy community. Dave Talerico himself said it could have saved the school lots of money. People could have shuttled in and out of Fairbanks on any day for about \$20. It was so awesome but rejected.

Recycle bins. ? What a nice concept to teach the school kids. Teens on trucks collecting things for bins made by the kids. ? It looks like the great grants that the Denali Village people have been getting would be an

option for some nice things. Nice things in the Healy area. I have nothing but nice things to say about Ben Shaw. And Talericos and Jeff who builds for Kevin. But it's too bad with as big as Alaska is why this little space has to turn into industrial / tourist/ workers / machines / coal burning / 4 wheel runners ..... That's not a quiet peaceful neighborhood. It's a roar of sound and light pollution no planner would want to live next to.

Sent from my iPad

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*Our Culture Unites Us; Our Land Sustains Us; Our People are Prosperous*

December 19, 2017

Marsha Lambert  
Denali Borough  
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Healy, AK. 99743  
Sent Via Email: [mlambert@denaliborough.com](mailto:mlambert@denaliborough.com)

**Re: Public Comment – Denali Borough Land Use and Economic Development Plan October 2017**

Dear Ms. Lambert:

Ahtna, Incorporated (Ahtna) is pleased to submit the following comments in response to the Denali Borough Land Use and Economic Development Plan, the “Plan”.

## **I. Introduction**

Ahtna is one of the thirteen Native regional corporations established by Congress under the terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), Pub. L. No. 92-203, 85 Stat. 688 (1971), *as amended*. Ahtna is one of the largest private landowners within the Denali Borough with a land entitlement under ANCSA of more than 85,000 acres. Ahtna's Denali Borough land holdings extend from the Nenana River in the north to the southern boundary of the Denali Borough in the south and west from Denali National Park and Preserve to approximately milepost 116 on the Denali Highway.

Voting shares of stock originally were issued to approximately 1,079 Alaska Natives who represent the indigenous people of the region and whose ancestors have inhabited the region for thousands of years. Today, Ahtna has more than 2,000 shareholders. Many of Ahtna's shareholders reside in semi-remote villages with few economic opportunities.

Ahtna's mission is to promote the economic and social well-being of our present and future shareholders, to strengthen the Native way of life of our Alaska Native shareholders, and to protect and enhance our land and resources, reflecting from the mission statement; our Culture unites us, our Land sustains us, our People are prosperous. In furtherance of this mission, and pursuant to the terms of ANCSA, Ahtna operates a diverse family of companies, including numerous businesses across Alaska and the nation in the areas of oil pipeline services, utility management, security,

engineering management, land and natural resource development, facility management, construction, and tourism.

As further elaborated below, Ahtna's comments in response to this Plan primarily concern the customary and traditional uses (primarily hunting, fishing and gathering) socio-economic and future land use designations.

## **II. Comments**

### **A. Customary and Traditional Use.**

The Ahtna-Athabascan Indians have used the area within the Denali Borough for subsistence purposes and minor and major trade routes for thousands of years. The Ahtna people permanently settled in the area during the Alaska railroad construction period in the 1920's. Ahtna people have fished, hunted, gathered and traded within the sub-region for thousands of years, dating back to the post-ice age period.

Any borough-wide planning documents must incorporate land use designations specific to the continued harvest of fish, game and plants with specific requirements subject to local involvement and the impacts associated with more users of the land. This may include limiting development within, or adjacent to known wildlife travel corridors, calving and seasonal use areas, etc. and their historical uses.

### **B. Land Use.**

Within the Plan advisors and the public identified certain issues, challenges and opportunities associated with developing a Plan to address certain landscape diversity and socio-economic conditions while still maintaining a unique place to live and work. While the identified Goal of balancing development with land protection to ensure certain personal values and quality of life, it can be a rather simplistic way to suppress future growth opportunities for private landowners and/or their investors.

The Plan identifies three basic approaches to "balancing" future development:

1. Basic Dimensional Standards – setbacks from property lines; building height limits; commercial development, etc.
2. Basic Rules on Allowed Uses – primarily in residential areas (?) owners and/or developers would be required to live on-site to conduct certain activities with their business.
3. Borough-wide Conditional Use Process – limiting certain activities on private land with all other activities being subject to "uses by right" with limitations on access, hours of operation, etc.



The above "approaches" may appear benign to the resident or small operator, rather it appears like the initial stages of land zoning where current and future residents or developers will invest in other areas of the State, especially if these requirements are not known in advance and if, or when the zoning requirements can be increased or manipulated by developers who can afford to lobby for their interests. These types of limitations/restrictions could very well impact the Goals in the Economic and Fiscal Health of the Denali Borough more than anticipated and should be considered only with a conservative approach.

### **C. Transportation.**

We encourage the Denali Borough planning team to build on opportunities from existing plans. We also encourage the Borough to include the proposed Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline within a separate transportation corridor locale with access to, from and across the pipeline in future plans.

It is also recommended to begin the process of acquiring easements from public and private landowners to access Borough lands for future uses.


### **D. Conclusion and Recommendation.**

Ahtna is committed to assisting with Denali Borough Land Use Planning currently or in the future. For any planning projects it would be recommended for the Denali Borough Assembly, Planning Commission, Staff and residents to have access to quality maps and imagery showing specific land types and forms, ownership, geography, etc. to allow easy viewing, familiarization and substantive knowledge of lands within the planning area.

As Benjamin Franklin stated "If you fail to plan, you are planning for failure".

Thank you for consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Joe Bovee

VP Land and Natural Resources

**From:** [james gauvin](#)  
**To:** [Marsha Lambert](#)  
**Subject:** Land Use Draft Comments  
**Date:** Monday, January 08, 2018 9:19:52 PM

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Hello Marsha and Happy New Year,

I have read the draft of the Land Use and would like to add some comments. Under Land Use (page 10) "smart use of Borough owned land" there are no suggestions on next steps other than:

***Possible Next Steps:*** Continue to develop tools for the management of borough owned land by using the newly revised Title 4 of borough code.

I would like to see some sort of time line associated with this suggestion.

Thanks, James Gauvin  
Sent from my iPad

**From:** [ford reeves](#)  
**To:** [Marsha Lambert](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Land Use and Economic Development Plan- Public Review Draft  
**Date:** Thursday, January 04, 2018 12:41:29 PM

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Marsha:

I have read the draft. Here is my statement:

I am in favor of land use regulations which have included enforcement capabilities. Without some manner of enforcement any land use plan may be meaningless in its attempt to protect residents of the Denali Borough from commercial sprawl and development.

The existing employee housing units which dominate the Healy landscape are an example of development without any regulation.

If the plan doesn't give us useful tools to help build a community which we want, why bother?

Thank you,  
Ford Reeves

Sent from my iPhone