



City and Borough of Wrangell
Wrangell Convention & Visitors Bureau
AGENDA

Wednesday, April 26, 2023
12:00 PM

Location: Assembly Chambers

WORKSHOP

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

PERSON'S TO BE HEARD

CORRESPONDENCE

- [a.](#) April Economic Development Department Report

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- [a.](#) Review and discussion of the design themes for new street banners.
- [b.](#) Review of mobile mapping applications and approval of expenditure.

ADJOURNMENT

Economic Development Department Report

To: Economic Development Committee

Cc: Borough Manager and Assembly

From: Kate Thomas, ED Director

Date: April 14th, 2023

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

New Employee Transitions

- Both Kate Thomas and Matt Henson are on staff, stationed in the Assembly Chambers. Kate and Carol are collaborating on issues and tackling the task-oriented action of the department. Kate has assumed leadership in the Planning and Zoning Commission with Carol's support and will be facilitating meetings with Charter operators and the WCVB later this week, along with the Economic Development Committee. Carol has been notifying all pertinent parties of the staff transition and ensuring operations are handed off as smoothly as possible. There are still items of business to discuss along with physically transitioning out of and into the department's office space.

Matt Henson began work on April 10th. He has been working with Kate to mind map the entirety of the departments operations which will be detailed out into individual work plans for both staff with priority issues having actionable steps to ensure that the structure is developed, and objectives are met in a reasonable and timely manner. Once some of the initial training and on-boarding have been tackled, Matt will assume his permanent station at the Nolan Center, Visitor Center.

To aid in the Economic Development Committee's understanding of the role each staff member plays, job descriptions have been provided in the April 20th meeting packet.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Wrangell Chamber of Commerce Fiscal Status

- Kate Thomas has been in discussions with the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce regarding their current fiscal status. Kate has been present at two chamber board meetings, with a follow-up exchange between Kate and Brittani, Executive Director of the Chamber.

The Chamber is seeking financial support from the CBW. The Economic Development Committee has been asked to review the proposal and supporting documentation to make a recommendation to the Assembly for consideration. Additional information on the proposal is included in the April 20th, 2023, EDC meeting packet.

Economic Development Committee Draft Ordinance

- Staff are currently working on a draft ordinance to bring to the Economic Development Committee (EDC) for review. The EDC is the only board, commission or committee that is not codified. The EDC was originally erected as an ad-hoc committee with a specific purpose, mission and goal of supporting the community during the economic downturn that followed after the mill property closed. Since its inception it has tackled a variety of initiatives. The EDC is guided by a set of bylaws and a work plan. That the committee is not detailed in the code is an oversight that must be addressed. The current committee

members will have an opportunity to review the ordinance before it proceeds to the Assembly as an actionable item. Ordinances undergo a first reading as an initial step, then proceeds to the next scheduled meeting for a public hearing and second reading.

Six-Mile-Deep Water Port

- Staff are preparing a public outreach plan to follow up on input gathered at the town hall meeting before the new year. The initial outline of a public survey has been crafted and is included in the April 20th, EDC meeting. As mentioned below a grant proposal was submitted for funding to assist with planning.

Thrive Community Grant

- Wrangell received a preliminary notice of award for the Thriving Community Grant, a proposal submitted by Carol Rushmore to aid in the planning process for the Six-Mile-Deep Water Port development. Staff will learn more in the coming weeks about the process and how the Economic Development Committee will play a role.

Alder Top Subdivision

- Staff met with R&M Engineering and True North Designs who are putting together the archaeology monitoring plan based on our preferred construction plans. A draft plan has been submitted to us for review. The plan will be submitted to the COE and State Historic Preservation Office in the next week, and we hope it will be approved in early May 2023.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission has developed some new zoning codes for the former Alder Top Village Subdivision area based on the master planning process. The Commission approved the draft codes at their March meeting, and the first reading before the Assembly was on April 11, 2023.

Community Clean Up

- Borough departments are collaborating to host a two-day community clean up event with Parks and Recreation and Public Works Directors at the helm. The event will be held on May 11 and 12, with a focus on cleaning up the downtown corridor. Community members and businesses alike are encouraged to participate. Matt Henson and Parks and Recreation Coordinator, Devyn Johnson are working together to craft the promotional poster as well as direct face-to-face outreach with businesses along front street. Previous community clean up have been very successful with the 2021 event having the most noticeable impact, with a complete overhaul of the garden bed bump outs.

Comprehensive Plan

- Staff have been working with various committees on individual chapters of the 2010 Comp Plan to outline issues that need to be addressed in an update. The EDC suggested that with all the economic opportunities the Borough has with the former mill site, the old hospital site and the former Institute Property, a strong proposal should be submitted to the Assembly to fund a comprehensive plan update. The document serves multiple purposes as a direction for community development, investment, and critical for grant applications as well.

Fall Recreation Conference

- The Economic Development, Parks and Recreation and Nolan Center Departments are collaborating to host and facilitate the Annual Alaska Recreation and Parks Association conference in September of 2023 and 2024. Plans to bring in an e-Sports keynote speaker are underway, along with professional development opportunities with the Foraker Group. Community engagement is of focus, with plans to host an e-sports competition and Board Development training that will be open to other agencies. This effort will serve as a pilot to help staff better gauge service needs. The desire is to build the communities visitor economy in the shoulder seasons with locally hosted retreats and conferences for professionals.

TOURISM

Preseason Borough and Charter Operator Meeting

- The annual preseason meeting will be hosted on April 25th @ 1:00PM. Stakeholders will gather at the City Dock cul-de-sac to discuss season priorities, concerns and solutions. Cruise schedules, Tourism Best Management Practices and the site development of the downtown bathrooms will also be discussed.

Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau

- CVB is joining forces with the Wrangell Sentinel to do a joint Travel Planner/Guide this year. This is an experiment to see if this one piece can serve the community for all needs. The new Travel Guide should be available by early May.
- WCVB has begun work on a Tourism Plan that can identify organizational structure for a staff person and/or department, infrastructure needs for improving tourism opportunities and marketing elements to promote the community.

Tourism Best Management Practices

- The WCVB held a public meeting on March 23, 2023, to discuss the draft Tourism Best Management Practices. This document provides general practices to minimize potential conflicts that could arise between the public and cruise lines or tours or other visitor related activities. This is a voluntary program but outlines best practices and provides residents with a means to offer a complaint (or a positive recognition) and a process to mitigate the concern. This is a proactive opportunity. With the increase in cruise ship passenger numbers, the CVB is attempting to put in place a process to address potential conflicts – it does not mean there are problems now. This is a standard process that was created by Juneau over 20 years ago and is being adopted by most Southeast communities. The Convention and Visitor Bureau approved the document as presented to the Assembly on April 3, 2023.

Mobile Application

- Staff are currently soliciting information and pricing on service packages for three different mobile applications. April 11th, staff met with CEO of Wander Maps about their product. Wander's goal is to make traveling and recreation safer and easier by making it as simple as possible for destinations to share their knowledge with visitors through a custom interactive map experience. Wander is useable on, and offline making is very appealing for Wrangell, where Wi-Fi and cellular services are limited. The cost for implementation is a one-time \$2,000 with a subscription cost starting at \$6,000. More

details can be found online @ <https://www.wandermaps.com/>. Staff intend to draft a comparison report for the WCVB to review, with a recommendation to approve a subscription with one of the providers.

Branding Implementation

- Matt Henson is currently working on brand implementation, starting with setting up the font, icons, images, and color schemes into our graphic design online software, Canva. Stakeholders can expect to see the brand reflected in all media publications, socials and otherwise from this point forward. Matt is also gearing up to start designing new street banners to install in the streetlamps along Front Street.

Marketing and Advertising

- Kate and Matt have been working with Carol to learn about the previous marketing tactics and outlets that have supported the visitor industry to date. Following the overall strategy development and workplan of the department in full, staff intend on detailing a marketing and advertising plan to include content acquisition, digital media, printed media, publications, advertising, travel writers and influencer priorities. Staff hope to schedule field trips to various attractions and sites through the spring, summer and fall season to continue building the department's portfolio of assets.

Downtown Restrooms and Amenities

- Borough departments have been working collaboratively to develop a restroom site that is closer to City Dock for visitor use. Materials for the site are slowly arriving in Wrangell with the remainder of the goods coming in the first two weeks of May. By the end of the month the area behind Samson Tug & Barge that faces Angerman's will be home to two portable trailer bathroom units, benches, flower boxes and signage for public use.

PLANNING AND ZONING

Ordinances

- Ordinances for the Alder Top Village subdivision are going before the Assembly for the second reading on April 25th.
- The Commission is working on draft codes for Accessory Dwelling Units and Planned Unit Developments.
 - There is currently nothing in the code that supports either of these two aspects of planning. The CBW has received several requests for permitting to development Accessory Dwelling units. With the increase popularity of tiny homes and "mother-in-law" units, staff would like to continue with the code development with the expectation that the code is finalized by the year end if not sooner.

New Secretary

- Matt Henson has transitioned into the Secretary role for the Planning and Zoning Commission, replacing finance staff Robert Marshall. This will allow Matt to aid and support this division of the department, while creating some synergies in the process of recording minutes and other official documentation.

Agenda Item A Items of Business

Street Banner Design Comparison

Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau AGENDA ITEM April 26th, 2023

Information: Matt Henson, Marketing and Deveopment Coordinator has drafted three different design themes for street banners to be installed along the downtown corridor. The existing banners are aging and in need of replacement. This is a great opportunity for us to implement the brand into some of our community infrastructure. Since the street banners are only installed throughout the visitor season, it is appropriate to weave the brand into the design.

Matt will provide an oral overview of the banners, thoughts behind the design and potential variations that would be easy to adapt within the current themes. Staff are seeking positive and critical input from the CVB to help guide the final design product.

The goal is to have the design finished by the end of April, so that an order can be processed for delivery. Installation of the new street banners would be an immediate priority following their arrival. Historically, Wrangell Municipal Light and Power has conducted the installation. Staff look forward to working with them again this year.

Recommendation: Review the design themes prior to the meeting and prepare positive and critical feedback to help refine the final version.

Attachments: Links are provided below to access the draft designs in Canva. Contact Kate or Matt directly if you are unable to access them.

1. [Downtown Street Banners with Image](#)
2. [Downtown Street Banners with Textures](#)
3. [Downtown Street Banners with Icons](#)

Map Solutions Comparison

	 Google Maps	 CONCEPT3D	 Attractions.io	 Visit Widget	 AllTrails	 The all in one platform for destination experiences
Destination Gets Ownership/Whitelabel	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Destination Analytics	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓
Offline 3D Terrain	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Web, Mobile Web, App	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
Affordable For all Destinations	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Visitor Data Collection	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Curated by and for the destination	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Agenda Item B Items of Business

Mobile Application Comparison

Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau

AGENDA ITEM

April 26th, 2023

Information: Staff have been conducting research to learn more about mobile application service providers that are popular among Destination Marketing Organizations. During their recent travel opportunity for the DMA West Tech Summit in Salt Lake, staff were able to meet face to face with different companies. Following a return to Wrangell, Matt Henson met with two companies to share information about Wrangell and undergo a demonstration of their respective products. Matt drafted the summary of Wander Maps and Widget below. An additional comparison sheet created by Wander has been included in the packet.

Wander Maps is the preferred provider as its features parallel more closely what Wrangell is looking for. Their mapping systems ability to work offline is critical since much of Wrangell Island and the surrounding recreation sites are not within cellular service areas. Wander also allows staff to update and modify data points more easily independently of direct technical support.

The fees associated with a service agreement with Wander is as follows:

- One-time \$2,000 implementation fee
- Basic service plan \$6,000 annually
- Add-on features \$2,000
- Total of \$10,000 for the first year, \$8,000 every year thereafter

Wander Maps is a user-friendly mapping software designed for State Parks, Private Destinations, and Destination Marketing Organizations. Their platform allows users to navigate a 3D interactive map on a web browser, as well as access an offline version downloadable through their app. Primarily catering to outdoor recreation and attractions, Wander Maps has also gained popularity in municipalities such as Bentonville, AR, Decatur, AL, and Heber Valley, UT. Additionally, the platform can be effortlessly integrated into existing webpages, promoting increased user engagement.

Visit Widget is a mapping software tailored for urban environments, effortlessly integrating as a widget onto Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) websites. The user-friendly interface is designed for planning visits to local businesses and attractions. The platform empowers DMOs to personalize the widget in line with their branding for a cohesive integration on their webpages. Although offering limited offline capabilities, Visit Widget primarily focuses on urban

commercial experiences. Optionally, for an extra fee, DMOs can have a custom app developed for their destination, enabling users to locate nearby points of interest and continue planning their journey on the go.

Recommendation: WCVB members are encouraged to review the sites of both Widget and Wander, along with other mobile mapping application providers to learn more about this software.

Staff are seeking approval from the WCVB to spend up to \$12,000 on a mobile application for implementation and the first year of services.

Attachments: Wander Maps comparison sheet