

CORDOVA COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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## **BACKGROUND POR PLANNING**

### **I. LOCATION AND SIZE**

Cordova is located on the eastern shore of Orca Inlet near the southeastern entrance to Prince William Sound. The rugged Chugach Mountains to the north, Prince William Sound to the west, the Copper River Delta to the east, and the Gulf of Alaska to the south bound the community generally. Major landowners and managers in the region include the U.S. Forest Service, the Eyak Corporation, the Chugach Alaska Corporation, the State of Alaska, and the University of Alaska.

Most of the development in the greater Cordova area is concentrated in two contiguous locations; the foothills of Mt. Eyak which face west across Orca Inlet toward Hawkins Island and a narrow, low lying divide which extends from Odiak Slough east to Eyak Lake. The slopes of Mt. Eyak bound the latter area to the north and Mt. Eccles to the south. From this central area, thin lines of settlement extend around both sides of Eyak Lake, south along Whitshed Road, and north along Orca Road. Concentrated residential and commercial development has occurred in the Heney Creek area along Whitshed Road and at the 5 1/2 and 6 1/2 Mile areas along the Copper River Highway.

Geographic locational factors play a major role in the development of a community. Prior to the twentieth century, a number of Native Alaskan villages and camps were located in the area because of the abundance of fish and game. A fish processing plant was located on the shores of Orca Inlet. Modern Cordova's early growth and character was related primarily to the discovery of a world class copper deposit in the Wrangell Mountains and the subsequent selection of Cordova as the railroad terminus and deep water port for shipping out the concentrate. The construction of a major airport near Cordova during World War II has also played a major part in the community's development. Finally, Cordova's recent development has been strongly influenced by its strategic location in relation to the productive fishing grounds in Prince William Sound and the Copper River Delta.

At the present time, Cordova has a permanent population of approximately 2,900 residents. However, this number is very deceptive. The fishing and fish processing industries together make up the foundation of the community's economy. The economy is therefore highly seasonal. Every summer there is an influx of transient fishermen, cannery laborers, and support industry workers who inflate the local population to approximately 5,000. In addition, State and Federal resource agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and local research institutes such as the Prince William Sound Science Center and the Copper River Delta Institute bring in significant numbers of seasonal workers, researchers, and students.

Cordova is currently accessible only by air and water however; access to the community is relatively easy. The community is served by the Alaska Marine Highway System and by frequent and convenient air service which includes daily jet service to Anchorage, Juneau and Seattle. There have been a number of proposals and plans to connect Cordova with the State highway system over the past 30 years but this has not yet occurred for a variety of economic, environmental, and political reasons. Work on the proposed Copper River Highway was stopped originally by the destruction caused by the 1964 Good Friday earthquake. Cordova is about 160 miles southeast of Anchorage and approximately 410 air miles northeast of Juneau. The closest community, Valdez, lies 65 air miles to the northwest.

### **II. HISTORY**

The Prince William Sound area has a rich and varied cultural heritage. Before the arrival of western

culture, the area was populated by both Indian and Eskimo groups. Eyak Indians lived in the Copper River Delta area and in the immediate vicinity of Cordova. The Tlingit Indians ranged up the mainland coast from Yakutat Bay at least as far as Controller Bay and Kayak Island where they mixed with Ugalakmuit Eskimos and the Eyak Indians. The most prominent Eskimo group, however, was the Chugachigmuit who occupied most of Prince William Sound to the west of Cordova.

The Eyak Indians were never very numerous, at least in recorded times. Alaganik, Eyak, and a village located where Old Town in Cordova now stands were the main settlements. Alaganik was abandoned in the late 1800's and Eyak was reported to be abandoned at about the end of the century. Many of these people later moved to Cordova. Cordova has also experienced an in-migration of residents from Chugachigmuit settlements on Prince William Sound, including the village of Nuchek which was abandoned in 1929-30. In recent years, a significant number of Native people from the villages of Tatitlek and Chenega have migrated to Cordova as well.

Kayak Island, located southeast of the Copper River Delta, was the first point of Alaska sighted by Vitus Bering. Bering sent a party ashore there on July 20, 1741. He was followed in 1778 by Captain James Cook. Cook spent a few days anchored in Snug Corner Cove on Port Fidalgo to the northwest of Cordova while on his search for the Northwest Passage. Captain Cook conferred names on a number of bays and islands, including Montague and Hinchinbrook Islands. However, Cook's choice of Sandwich Sound was changed back in London to Prince William Sound in honor of George III's third son, William, who later became King William IV.

No major settlements were established by the Russians in the Prince William Sound area. Although there was a fur gathering point at Nuchek on Hinchinbrook Island in 1793. By the time Alaska was purchased by the United States in 1867, the fur resource had been greatly depleted. It was coal, oil, and copper that led to the founding of Cordova. Significant discoveries of these commodities propelled the community's early growth and prosperity.

Oil was discovered in the Katalla area in 1902 and Alaska's first producing well began operating that same year. By 1905, port facilities were needed to serve the 5,000 oil workers and developers of the nearby Bering River coal fields. However, the attempt at constructing a port at Katalla was unsuccessful and the nearest good deep water harbor was determined to be 75 miles to the northwest on Orca Inlet, the site of present day Cordova.

At about the same time, the Kennecott Copper Company syndicate was organized by J.P. Morgan and Simon Guggenheim to exploit their newly acquired copper claims in the Chitina River valley. A transportation link to the coast was needed before development of the mine properties could begin. As a result, the Guggenheim-Morgan interests simultaneously acquired two rights-of-way, one from Valdez through Keystone Canyon, and the other beginning in Cordova and following the route of the Copper River Valley. After a good deal of controversy and drama, the Cordova route was selected and construction on the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad was begun in 1906.

Cordova prospered despite the fact that development of the Bering River coal fields was determined to be economically infeasible. Town lots were sold in 1908 and the community was incorporated as a city that same year. Construction of the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad continued and, by 1911, the 131 miles to Chitina plus a branch line of 65 miles to the Kennecott mines had been completed for a total cost of around \$23 million. By the time the 1910 census was taken, Cordova had a population of 1,152 persons, a gain of 1,102 people in five years if Sheldon Jackson's earlier census was accurate. At the time, this number was exceeded in Alaska only by Nome, Fairbanks, Juneau and Ketchikan.

During the years from 1910 to 1938, Cordova's primary economic function was to serve as the transportation and service center for the Kennecott copper mines. However, other economic activities were becoming increasingly important. The first canneries had been established on Orca Inlet as far back as 1889. Fishing and fish processing increased in economic value to the community as the decades passed. A demand for railroad ties, fish traps, and pilings supported a local forest products industry. Loggers harvested most of their logs from the Chugach National Forest which had been created in 1907. The town also derived some economic benefit from the limited oil production which occurred in the Katalla oil fields.

The Kennecott copper mines proved to be enormously rich. During 1916, the year of greatest production, the output was 120 million pounds of copper ore. By 1925, the Guggenheims had taken about \$175 million worth of copper out of the district. Annual output began to decline in 1927, and by 1934 the known high-grade deposits were almost exhausted. No new high-grade ore was located and the mines closed rather abruptly in 1938. The railroad continued to operate for a short time but was closed and abandoned in 1939.

For almost forty years, Cordova's economy had been dominated by the Guggenheim-Morgan interests. These interests had controlled not only the Kennecott mines and the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad, but also the only shipping company serving Alaska at that time and many of the canneries. With their departure, Cordova was no longer a company town and its residents began to focus on other endeavors.

The Katalla oil fields also closed during the 1930's. The refinery burned in 1933 and there was no economic incentive to rebuild since the field had yielded only about 154,000 barrels of oil in over thirty years of production.

Despite the wealth of the Kennecott mines, Cordova's population did not grow significantly after the completion of the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad. By the time the 1940 census was taken, the community had a population of 980 and the fishing and fish processing industries had replaced mining-related activities as the dominant force in the economy.

Except for a flurry of construction activity which occurred during World War II, including construction of a major airport and the conversion of old railroad beds into roadways, the fishing and fish processing industries have been the mainstay of Cordova's economy from 1938 through the present. The industry has changed since the early days however. Salmon is still the principal species caught and processed here, but other fish and shellfish products are now important as well. The salmon industry has become increasingly dependent upon hatchery reared fish since the late 1970's. The industry has become more community-based over the years and has moved away from being a largely transient, seasonal operation dependent upon imported labor. As a result, Cordova has experienced steady population growth since 1940, with the exception of the period between 1950 and 1960; a decade in which the population declined slightly.

Unfortunately, little of Cordova's past is readily apparent in the community today. The railroad lines have long since been torn up and most of the town's older structures were destroyed in a series of major fires which struck the central business district in the 1960's. There are several historic downtown buildings still standing but most construction in the downtown area is relatively new. In addition, the March 1964 earthquake and subsequent rebuilding efforts have radically changed the face of the community's waterfront. Although little structural damage occurred in town, land in the area rose an average of six feet and this left a number of docks high and dry. Dredging in the vicinity of the boat harbor was needed to make these facilities usable. The dredged materials were used to create a 20 acre industrial park next to the City dock and a new commercial area directly east of the harbor.

Tourism, timber, mining, and science and education offer potential for future community growth. However, the fishing and fish processing industries and an assortment of government agencies presently constitute the foundation of Cordova's economy and are likely to continue to do so in the immediate future.

### III. PHYSICAL SETTING

Prince William Sound is backed by the Chugach Mountains in its central and eastern portions, and by the Kenai Mountains at its western edge. The highest sections of the Kenai-Chugach Range consist of extremely rugged northeast trending ridges from 7,000 to 13,000 feet high. The lower sections consist of massive mountains five to ten miles wide and between 3,000 to 6,000 feet in height. All higher parts of the range are buried in icefields which feed massive valley and piedmont glaciers. The coastline is deeply indented by drowned glacial valleys and there are numerous islands, particularly in the more westerly portions of the Sound. Like the mountain ridges, the major fjords and islands also trend in a northeasterly direction.

The March 1964 earthquake wrought major changes in the physical landscape of the Cordova area. Little structural damage occurred in town and the only fatality occurred at Point Whittshed. However, the tectonic uplift which took place in the Cordova area had a much greater impact upon this community than structural damage had upon some other communities in southcentral Alaska. Uplifts of 6.5 to 7.5 feet were recorded on the tide gauges at Cordova. Extensive coastal tracts of mud flats, beaches, and reefs throughout the area that were formerly exposed only at lowest minus tides became permanently exposed. In the immediate Cordova area, the effects of tectonic uplift were described by the U.S. Geological Survey as follows: "At Cordova, all dock facilities were raised so high that they could be reached by boats only at highest tides. Several nearby canneries had to extend their docks more than 100 feet to permit access. The area in the vicinity of the city dock and the small boat basin was above water at most tides; an extensive and difficult dredging project, together with new breakwaters and dock repairs, was necessary to make the facilities usable. In the course of this work, which was done by the Corps of Engineers, the boat basin was much enlarged, and about 20 acres of new land, eventually usable for industrial purposes, was made from the material dredged from the boat basin. It was also necessary for the Corps of Engineers to dredge a new channel through almost the entire length of Orca Inlet for use by fishermen."

Cordova was once referred to as the clam processing capital of the world. The earthquake effectively eliminated that very important local industry.

In practical terms, the earthquake also ended Cordova's capacity to serve as a deep water port. This had rather significant economic implications for the community. Cordova is presently working on re-establishing itself as a deep water port by building new port facilities at Shepard Point in Nelson Bay; an area approximately six miles north of the present port area.

Although the earthquake did little structural damage in town, it had a devastating effect on the Copper River Highway. All bridges between town and the airport which crossed the unconsolidated deposits of the Copper River Delta were either destroyed or were badly damaged. The roadway itself settled differentially and was cut by fissures. By contrast, the bridge across Eyak River was not damaged because its foundation is placed on bedrock. At the time of the earthquake, construction on the Copper River Highway route had advanced to the Allen River at Mile 59. However, the earthquake destroyed or badly damaged almost all of the bridges between Mile 27 and Mile 49 including the famous "Million Dollar Bridge". This forced the State to re-examine the entire project. Today, some thirty years later, most bridges have been repaired or replaced and it is possible once again to drive to Mile 50.

#### IV. CLIMATE

The Cordova area has a maritime climate which is characterized by cool summers, mild winters, and heavy year-around precipitation. This type of climate is typical of the southeastern and southern coastal areas of Alaska where the ocean exerts a modifying influence and causes relatively low seasonal and diurnal temperature variations. Proximity to the ocean and the frequent lows which develop or move out of the Gulf of Alaska result in heavy precipitation. According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the design snow load factor for Cordova should be 100 pounds per square foot; the highest in the state. In practical terms, it means that people have to guard against excessive snow accumulations on roofs, boats, and airplanes.

Cordova's winters are relatively mild. The coldest month (January) has an average daily temperature of about 23 degrees F., and although temperatures as low as -33 degrees F. have been recorded, extremely cold weather is usually of short duration. On the other hand, summer temperatures in the community tend to be on the cool side, averaging between 50 and 55 degrees F., with daily maximums reaching into the low 60's in July and August. The record high temperature in Cordova is 84 degrees F., a mark set back in 1946.

#### V. VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

Cordova is surrounded by the northernmost reaches of the Pacific temperate rainforest. The timber in this area is characterized by mixed stands of Sitka spruce and western hemlock, with minor amounts of mountain hemlock, yellow cedar, and black cottonwood. Pure Sitka spruce stands usually occur only along river banks, although this species does dominate stands on the glacial flats in the Copper, Martin, and Bering River valleys.

The Copper River Delta flats are a vast tidal marsh with a vegetation cover of salt and freshwater marsh grass and grasslike plants, willow and alder, and a few scattered stands of Sitka spruce and cottonwood. This is a major resting, feeding, and nesting area for migratory birds in the Pacific flyway. The 330,000 acre Copper River Delta Game Management Area was jointly established by the U.S. Forest Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in 1962. The Copper River Game Management Area is now approximately 700,000 acres and managed jointly by the U.S. Forest Service, Alaska Departments of Fish and Game and Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management. It is now designated a State Critical Habitat Area.

The Delta is managed primarily for the protection and enhancement of wildlife, fish and their habitat. The productivity of waterfowl habitat in the area was greatly reduced by the 1964 earthquake which uplifted the beach by about six feet and converted productive brackish ponds into infertile freshwater ponds. To some extent, this loss has been offset by the uplifting of islands and sandbars and their subsequent conversion to prime wildlife habitat.

Big game animals in the Cordova area include black and brown bear, mountain goat, deer, and moose. Moose are not native to this area and the present herd has descended from 26 animals which were transported here in 1949. The habitat in the Copper River Delta is excellent for moose and the herd is very healthy. Sitka Blacktail deer are also not native to the area; they were transplanted to Prince William Sound. They live primarily on islands in the Sound but can also be found on the mainland. The habitat in the Sound is favorable for deer and their numbers have increased dramatically. Furbearers are plentiful in the area and resident populations include wolf, wolverine, lynx, beaver, mink, muskrat, marten, land otter and coyote.

While a number of big game hunters are attracted to Cordova, the area is best known for its waterfowl and bird resources. The largest known concentrations of trumpeter swans in North America nest here, as well as 15,000 to 20,000 Dusky Canada Geese and a variety of ducks, geese, cranes, shore birds, hawks, owls and falcons. Bald eagles are also numerous and there are significant numbers of resident eagles that make their homes within or close to the City limits.

Sea lion and seal inhabit coastal areas in the vicinity of Cordova. The Copper, Bering, and Eyak River systems contain large king, red, and coho salmon populations which are harvested by both commercial and sport fishermen. The Eyak River red and coho salmon runs and several small trout lakes on the Delta are especially popular with local sport fishermen. The waters of Prince William Sound provide excellent fishing opportunities for salmon, rockfish, and halibut. Clam digging remains a popular, though diminishing, recreational activity for many local residents.

## POPULATION

### I. PAST POPULATION TRENDS

Like most non-Native settlements in Southcentral Alaska, Cordova was founded in the twentieth century. Although the Bering River coal fields and the Katalla oil fields played a small role in the community's establishment, the discovery of copper in the Chitina River valley and the subsequent construction of the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad were the primary factors in Cordova's early growth.

Construction of the railroad began in 1906. The 131 miles to Chitina and a 65 mile branch line to the Kennecott mines were completed in 1911. Cordova had a population of 1,151 at the time the 1910 Census was taken. This figure was undoubtedly inflated by the presence of construction workers and other temporary residents. The 1920 Census enumerators recorded a total of only 955 persons living in the community; a figure 17.1 percent below that recorded in 1910. This decline occurred despite the fact that the mines were at, or close to, their peak production level at that time.

Cordova functioned primarily as a transportation and supply center for the Kennecott mines until 1938 when the mines closed. The fishing and fish processing industries, always a factor in the community's economy, then assumed pre-eminence. Despite this major economic shift, Cordova's population remained at a remarkably static level until the 1960's. The 1960 population of 1,176 was only two percent above that recorded in the 1910 census.

Since 1960, Cordova has experienced a period of steady growth. This is due in part to expansions within the fishing and fish processing industries and in the number of government jobs located here. The 1972 annexation of Old Town and Meekerville was also a major factor. Between 1960 and 1970, Cordova's population increased 28.6 percent; from 1,176 to 1,513. Between 1970 and 1980, the population increased by 24.2 percent, from 1,513 to 1,879. Between 1980 and 1990, the population increased by 12 percent, from 1,879 to 2,110.

Population growth during the decade between 1980 and 1990 was modest overall. It should be noted that the figures presented above do not reflect the population "spikes" which occurred during this decade. The population rose during the mid-1980's when economic conditions for the fishing industry were favorable. Cordova experienced another population surge in 1989 as a direct result of efforts to respond to the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

The population figures presented above are provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. The City of Cordova has maintained that its true population is higher than that given by the Census Bureau because of the social and economic characteristics of the community. A large sector of Cordova's economy is seasonal. As a result, many local residents either take long vacations or live part of the year elsewhere. This is a lifestyle preference. Many of these people consider themselves to be Cordovans and would say that Cordova is their primary place of residence.

Since the census is taken in early April, many of these people are not counted because they are not in Cordova at that time. The City contested the Census Bureau's 1990 figure by doing its own population survey using the Housing Unit Method of Population Estimation. The City estimated a population of 2,504 (Within the old City limits). This number was accepted by the State for Revenue Sharing purposes. In addition, there are about 469 people recently annexed into the city limits. Therefore, the population of the greater Cordova area is approximately 2,973. It has been estimated that this number approximately doubles in the summer.

## II. PRESENT POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

This section contains a general description of Cordova's current population. The data used in this description was taken from the 1990 Census (for the old City limits). In general, we can say that Cordova's population is less ethnically diverse, slightly more male, somewhat older, and significantly more wealthy than the State as a whole. Following is a more detailed description of the population beginning with Table 1.

Table 1

Total	Male	Female	City of Cordova Sex and Ethnicity in 1990				
			White	Black	AI, E or A *	A or P1 **	Other
2,110	1,149	961	1,678	8	237	170	17
	54%	46%	79.5%	.4%	11%	8%	1%

\* American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut

\*\* Asian or Pacific Islander

By comparing the data shown in Table 1 with similar data for the state as a whole, we can draw some conclusions about the makeup of the local population. First, it is apparent that Cordova has a higher proportion of males (54%) than the state population as a whole (52%). Second, it is evident that Cordova's ethnic characteristics are significantly different. Cordova has a proportionately larger white population (79.5% to 75%), a much lower black population (.5% to 4%), a lower Native American population (11% to 15%), and a higher Asian or Pacific Islander population (8% to 4%).

Table 2

Age	City of Cordova Age Distribution in 1990	
	Number	Percent
Under 5	186	8.8%
5-16	342	16.2
16-18	38	1.8
18-20	83	3.9
21-24	106	5.0
25-44	910	43.1
45-54	185	8.8
55-59	84	4.0
60-64	62	2.9
65 and up	114	5.4
All Persons	2, 110	
Median Age	31.6	

The data presented in Table 2 illustrates that Cordova has a relatively young population, even though it is older than the population statewide. First, we can see that 52% of the population is in the childbearing years (18-44). This has important implications for future population growth. The median age in Cordova is 31.6 compared to 29.4 statewide.

Finally, we can say that in 1990, Cordova residents as a group were significantly better off economically than residents of the state as a whole. Per Capita Income in Cordova in 1989 was \$23,408 compared to \$17,610 statewide (the figure was much higher than \$23,408 in the newly annexed area). It should be noted however, that the size of this gap may be deceptive and may not reflect current economic conditions in the community. The large gap indicated in 1989 may have been inflated somewhat by the abnormally high incomes some residents earned in 1989 as a result of the oil spill clean-up. This sudden influx of cash filtered through other sectors of the economy as well; particularly the service and construction industries. Some would argue that per capita incomes have plunged since 1990 due to poor fishing conditions.

### III. POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Forecasting Cordova's population in the future is an important component of the comprehensive planning process. Population projections are useful to the policy makers of the community when they make decisions on issues like land use and infrastructure expansions. However, the reader must bear in mind that population projections are only estimates. Population projections are based primarily upon assumptions concerning the local and regional economy. This is a particularly perilous endeavor in Cordova's case because of the number of unknowns that could have a dramatic effect upon the local population. For example, no one really knows if the Copper River Highway and the Deep Water Port will be built, when mining Bering River coal will become economically feasible, how long the timber industry will continue to contribute to the economy, or what will transpire in global fish markets.

The assumptions used in preparing Cordova's population projections are:

1. The population of Cordova will increase steadily but at a very modest rate for the next ten years. The City assumes a very conservative one percent annual growth rate. This assumption is based on population growth over the past twenty years and various regional and local economic forecasts.
2. Cordova will remain a major fishing and fish processing center for Prince William Sound and the northern Gulf of Alaska. Employment in the fishing industry will remain relatively stable and may increase modestly with plans for expansion of the bottom fishing industry, the mariculture industry, the establishment of remote release sites in the eastern part of the Sound, and the emergence of new value-added product processing facilities.
3. The number of jobs with the local, State, and Federal governments is likely to decline slightly due to budget cuts at all levels of government. This sector is the second most important in Cordova's economy in terms of the number of jobs provided.
4. The visitor and recreation industries will increase in Prince William Sound and Cordova. Employment opportunities will increase but not dramatically without a concerted effort.
5. Cordova will gradually become a science and education center with the continued development of the Prince William Sound Science Center, the Oil Spill Recovery Institute, and the Copper River Delta

Institute. Employment opportunities and population in-migration will increase slightly.

6. Timber harvesting in the immediate Cordova area will continue to be a relatively minor component of the local economy for the next ten years unless some type of manufacturing or value-added industry emerges.

It is important for a community to accurately track its population growth or decline on an annual basis. The city receives state and federal funding based on population. Therefore, the City should keep up-to-date records on the housing stock. On an annual basis, a population survey using the "Housing Unit Method of Population Estimation" should be performed. This method is relatively inexpensive and can be performed "in house".

## ECONOMY

### I. A General Description of the Economy

Cordova is located on Orca Inlet in eastern Prince William Sound; just west of the Copper River Delta. This strategic location makes Cordova the center of fishing and fish processing operations for a 38,000 square mile area. The fishing industry is Cordova's leading employer. The local population varies widely during the year due to the seasonal nature of the fishing industry. The greater Cordova area is home to approximately 2,900 year-round residents.

It has been estimated that Cordova's population doubles during the peak of the summer fishing season. Most of these seasonal workers come to Cordova to fill jobs directly related to the fishing industry. Others arrive for jobs indirectly related to this industry such as those in restaurants, shops, and support services. Government agencies located in Cordova also employ a significant number of seasonal workers. These agencies include the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Access to Cordova is currently limited to air and water transportation. However, it is very easy to get to and from Cordova despite the fact that it does not have a highway link to the rest of the state. The community has a large airport with a paved runway capable of handling jet traffic. Cordova enjoys daily jet service to Anchorage, Juneau, and Seattle; as well as two to three commuter flights to Anchorage daily depending upon the season. The community is also served by a number of charter services. The Alaska Marine Highway System serves the community and the M.V. Bartlett and M.V. Tustumena make two to four runs to Cordova a week, depending on the season. The nearest road link to the rest of the state is Valdez; a community located sixty-five miles to the northwest.

Fishing and seafood processing are major sources of employment in Cordova. The economic health of the community is linked to the cyclical nature of the fishing seasons. There are other important sources of employment however. Due to the seasonal nature of the economy, peak employment surges during the summer. Commercial fishing and fish processing together account for approximately 50% of the local economy in terms of the number of jobs provided. Commercial fishing is Cordova's single largest employer.

Government jobs account for a very large segment of the Cordova economy. Local government was the largest public sector employer in Cordova. This includes jobs at the community hospital and the Cordova School District. Historically, government employment has provided an important measure of stability for the Cordova economy. (See Table 4.)

The other important sectors in the Cordova economy include retail trade, service sector businesses, transportation, communications, and utilities sector, and the construction industry. The forest products industry has gradually become a very significant contributor to the local economy. Other notable industries include finance, insurance and real estate, and tourism. Table 4 summarizes Cordova employment and payroll in 1990. It also presents figures for 1988 for comparison purposes (the year prior to the oil spill).

Table 4  
Cordova Employment and Payroll in 1990

	Annual Average Employment		Total Payroll (millions)		Average Annual Salary			
	1988	1990	88	90	88	90		
<b>CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT</b>								
Private Sector								
Manufacturing	(1)	224	361	5.9	10.4	26,339	28,848	
Retail Trade		138	149	2.1	2.6	15,369	17,544	
Services		112	127	1.1	1.8	10,181	14,136	
T.C.U.	(2)	83	95	2.4	3.1	28,835	33,336	
F.I.R.E.	(3)	24	25	0.5	0.6	21,463	26,244	
Construction		19	51	*	1.8	*	35,724	
Government								
Federal		38	49	1.1	1.6	29,941	31,872	
State		90	121	3.5	5.1	39,078	42,348	
Local		174	202	4.8	6.0	27,344	29,640	
Total Government		302	372	9.4	12.7	32,121	34,620	
OTHER EMPLOYMENT	(4)							
Seafood Harvesting		355	*	17.5		49,296	*	
U.S. Coast Guard (5)		61		1.7		27,505	*	
Grand Total			1,360	1,596	41.6	52.2	27,535	30,590

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor  
The McDowell Group  
Alaska Seafood Industry Study: A Technical Report

Footnotes:

- (1) Manufacturing employment is primarily seafood processing. Alaska Department of Labor (ADOL) includes all employment by Cordova based processors, even if the employment occurs elsewhere in Alaska.
- (2) Transportation, communications, and utilities.
- (3) Finance, insurance, and real estate
- (4) This is 1988 data. Figures for 1990 were not available at the time this was written.
- (4) In addition to basic pay, Coast Guard personnel receive allowances for housing and cost of living which varies according to number of dependents and other factors.

In summary, in 1991 we could have concluded that Cordova's economy was growing at a modest rate; similar to the rate of growth it experienced during the 1980's prior to the oil spill, and that it was gradually returning to its pre-spill condition. However, poor fishing seasons in 1991, 1992 and 1993 and a generally bad prognosis for 1994 have shaken the community's confidence. In early 1994, it appeared that Cordova was a community in transition.

## II. Description of Individual Sectors of the Economy.

### The Seafood Harvesting Industry

It has been estimated that the seafood harvesting industry provides about 24% of all employment in Cordova. Activities surrounding the two major Prince William Sound area fisheries, salmon drift gillnet and salmon purse seine, are largely based in Cordova. In 1988, the year prior to the oil spill, 721 commercial fishing permits were fished by 410 Cordova based permit holders. This places Cordova second only to Anchorage, in the Southcentral region, in number of resident permit holders. That same year Cordova was the 11th leading fishing port in the United States in terms of the dollar value of the catch. (See Table 5 and Table 6.)

Table 5

YEAR	Permits Fished		Total Harvest (millions/pounds) (rounded to the 100,000)		Earnings (millions)	
	92	93	92	93	92	93
	Salmon Drift Gillnet	262	260	8.8	9.9	14.5
Salmon Purse Seine	87	55	5.5	2.9	1.2	.5
Salmon Setnet	12	12	.8	.4	.8	.3
Herring Pound	65	65	.3	.1	1.8	1.0
Herring/Spawn on Kelp	97	47	.2	.2	.1	.1
Halibut	89	57	*	*	*	*
Sablefish	28	19	*	*	*	*

Source: Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

These figures are for all permits held by Cordova residents regardless of the district they fish in. They do not just represent the Prince William Sound Fishery. For example, some Cordova residents have permits for Bristol Bay and Southeast.

Asterisks indicate no data available, or information confidential.

Table 6 shows the total number of permits, the total number of permits fished, total pounds of fish landed, and total earnings for Cordova based permit holders in 1992 and 1993.

	Permits Fished	Pounds Landed (millions)	Earnings (millions)
1992	433		
1993	381		

Source: Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

Although employment within the seafood harvesting industry has been relatively stable over the past decade, the industry itself is very erratic. Catch rates vary widely from year to year and price fluctuations within the last decade have been as high as 146% for the gulnet fishery and 264% for the seine fishery. The erratic nature of the industry has direct implications for the incomes of skippers and crew members and for the revenues of the City.

### The Seafood Processing Industry

Employment in Cordova's seafood processing industry over the last ten years has ranged from a high of 325 jobs (annual average) in 1979 to a low of 133 in 1984. It was the third largest employer overall in the Cordova economy in 1990. The sometimes dramatic year-to-year fluctuations in seafood processing employment have become less pronounced in recent years because a larger variety of products are being handled locally. As a result, seafood processing is developing into more of a year-around industry. The trend toward production of new value-added fish products may also contribute to expansion of the processing season. Salmon is expected to continue to dominate the processing industry and, as a result, the seasonal influx of workers will to some extent remain a characteristic of the industry.

### Government Employment

Government is the second largest employer in the Cordova economy. Government jobs are predominantly year-around employment. These jobs have provided a significant amount of stability to the Cordova economy over the years.

Municipal government is the largest employer in the public sector. These jobs are the ones normally associated with city government such as administration, finance, the police department, the school district, the library, and public works. State government is the second largest employer in this sector. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities have significant numbers of employees in Cordova; especially Fish and Game. Other state entities with a presence in Cordova include the Alaska Court System, the University of Alaska, the Department of Environmental Conservation, the Alaska Marine Highway System, and the Division of Youth and Family Services. The federal government also has a significant presence in Cordova. Among the agencies represented are: the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Federal Aviation Administration, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Postal Service.

### Retail Trade

This sector of the economy includes many of the types of retail businesses one would expect to find in a small community. Several grocery stores, hardware stores, restaurants, sporting goods, bicycle repair, automotive repair, storage facilities, boat and building supplies, bars and liquor stores, a pharmacy, a book store, a florist, a pet store, video stores, an electronics store, fabric stores, and a gas station.

### Transportation

Alaska Airlines, ERA, and the Alaska Marine Highway serve the community. There are also a number of charter services, several taxi companies, and a tour bus operator.

### Communications

Local communications companies include: Cordova Cablevision, the Cordova Telephone Co-operative, and the local radio station (KLAM).

## Utilities

The City is the primary employer of utility workers, operating the water, sewer, and refuse utilities. Followed by the Cordova Electric Co-operative.

## Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

There are two banks in Cordova, one insurance agency, and one real estate office.

## Construction

There are a number of general contractors who live in Cordova and do business here. Several of these contractors employ a significant number of workers.

## Tourism

Cordova's tourism industry is a small but potentially important segment of the local economy. The current Alaska resident and nonresident visitor traffic tends to center around outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting, bird watching, etc. There is also a significant amount of business-related travel. Cordova draws visitors through special events such as the Ice Worm Festival, the Shore Bird Symposium, and the Silver Salmon Derby.

## Forest Products

The Eyak Corporation and its partners began a timber harvest in the Sheridan Glacier area in 1988 on a reserve of about 360 million board feet. Eyak has been harvesting at a rate of about 15 to 18 million board feet a year and plans to continue cutting at that rate for the next ten years.

### III. Potential for Economic Development Introduction

This section highlights Cordova's short-term opportunities, that is, the opportunities the community can capitalize on in the next five years. Special emphasis is given to economic sectors which have a realistic potential for growth. At the end, we briefly discuss some long range development options; options which could have tremendous implications for the Cordova economy but which are largely dependent upon economic and political forces outside of Cordova

Activities which support economic growth such as increasing the housing stock, building infrastructure, and lowering power rates are not discussed here, however, they are discussed in Section Four; Goals, Objectives, and Policies. Finally, some economic sectors such as retail, services, finance, and construction are not discussed at all in this section. These sectors are, to a large degree, dependent upon the health of the basic industries. It is assumed that these sectors will prosper if the other major sectors and basic industries are doing well.

#### The Fishing Industry

The fishing industry is, and will continue to be, the mainstay of the Cordova economy. Fish harvesting and fish processing together provide nearly half of all jobs in Cordova. There are a number of good

reasons to expect that this industry has the potential for growth and diversification in the future.

#### Opportunities:

1. Prince William Sound Aquaculture (PWSAC), the processors, Cordova fishermen, and the City can improve their marketing of Cordova fish products both internationally and in the lower 48. This is necessary to maintain and enhance Cordova's share of the market. It is particularly necessary now.
2. The processors, PWSAC, the City, CEC, and individual Cordova fishermen can work together cooperatively to expend more resources on testing the feasibility of producing value-added fish products here. Value-added processing would result in new products that would sell for higher prices. It would also mean an increase in processing jobs. The components for a co-operative effort are already in place. The City has waterfront commercial land which is available for sale or lease.
3. There is potential for diversification, especially in the bottomfish industry.
4. There has been a surge of applications for mariculture (shellfish) permits in the Cordova area. This is a fledgling industry in Prince William Sound. Many of the applicants are Cordova residents. Cordova has the potential to serve as a supply and support base for this industry.
5. PWSAC has plans to increase the number of sockeye salmon produced at its Main Bay hatchery. This will benefit fishermen in two ways. First, it will produce a species which commands a higher price in the marketplace. Second, it will stagger salmon runs and, therefore, spread the salmon season out for a longer period of time. PWSAC can look at further diversifying the species it produces.
6. PWSAC and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game are evaluating remote release sites in eastern Prince William Sound. If part of the salmon fishery could be brought closer to Cordova it would help the local economy because more fishermen would base out of Cordova. Fishermen would spend more money in Cordova between openers and have their boats worked on here.
7. The Cordova boat harbor and port facilities can be expanded to make the City more competitive for fishing-related businesses. The City has waterfront industrial and commercial land that is available for new processors and support industries. It also plans to acquire a new marine travel lift and is working toward construction of a new deep water port facility.

#### Constraints:

1. Many of the forces with the capability of constraining expansion in the fishing industry are beyond local control. These forces include an increase in worldwide salmon production, illegal high seas fishing, environmental degradation, and national and international politics.
2. Projects targeted at upgrading harbor facilities are often at the mercy of funding sources, politicians and prevailing economic conditions.
3. Expansion of the fish processing industry is currently hindered by the high cost of electricity and fuel.

#### Government

Government is Cordova's second leading employer. Government employment is a stabilizing and moderating force in an otherwise unpredictable and seasonal economy. Cordova should work to make the city an attractive place for government to do business and for its employees to reside.

#### Opportunities:

1. Cordova has a great location, particularly for resource agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

#### Constraints:

1. While Cordova is a great location for resource agencies, it has limitations for other governmental agencies. These limitations include the high cost of living and doing business and the lack of highway access. Therefore, the opportunities for expansion of the government sector appear modest.
2. Budgets for government services are currently being trimmed in Juneau and Washington. It is quite possible that the number of government employees will decrease in the next few years. This trend has already begun with the recent announcements of local personnel cuts at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

#### The Visitor Industry

This sector, though currently small, may hold the greatest potential for growth. There is ample evidence that this sector is gaining strength every year and that local entrepreneurs are beginning to recognize the potential and to position themselves to capitalize on the opportunities that exist. For example, the number of bed and breakfasts and charter boat services in Cordova has surged in the past few years. Several of the new bed and breakfasts are organized around a historical theme. Local canneries have been partially converted to tourist facilities.

Various organizations such as the Cordova Chamber of Commerce, the Prince William Sound Tourism Coalition, and the Alaska Marine Highway System are making concerted efforts to promote Cordova. Finally, government entities such as the City of Cordova and the U.S. Forest Service have recognized these trends and are doing what they can to assist. For example, the Forest Service has been spending significant amounts of money on visitor facilities such as trails, boat ramps, interpretive centers, and campgrounds. The City has actively promoted projects such as creation of state parks, recreation areas, and new campgrounds.

#### Opportunities:

1. Cordova has an abundance of natural splendor. Its physical setting is generally regarded as one of the most spectacular in Alaska. Cordova is located between two world-famous ecological systems; Prince William Sound and the Copper River Delta. Outdoor recreational opportunities abound; including hunting, fishing, recreational boating, hiking, skiing, wildlife viewing, summer chairlift rides up Mt. Eyak, and much more. Cordova has two "drive-up" glaciers and is within easy hiking distance of a number of others.
2. Cordova is one of the most historic towns in Alaska. It was the southern terminus of the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad which ran to the world class copper mines at Kennecott. This massive project was completed in 1911 and can be considered as the Alaska Pipeline of its era. Historic attractions include some buildings which remain from that era, the museum, and the famous "Million Dollar Bridge."
3. Cordova's relatively easy to get to. Alaska Airlines provides daily jet service between Cordova, Anchorage, and Seattle. The community is served three to four times a week by the Alaska Marine Highway System.

#### Constraints:

1. Limited access. Cordova is not connected to the highway system and the ferry schedule is

inconvenient for many travelers.

2. Limited camping facilities and hotel rooms during the summer.
3. More development of Cordova's main attractions. In short, Cordova is not yet set up for tourism.

#### Science and Education

Cordova has the potential to emerge as a science and education center. This type of development is desirable because it is environmentally benign, it adds stability to a seasonal economy, and the type of research likely to take place here will directly benefit other industries Cordova depends upon; particularly the fishing and tourism industries. Science and education often acts as a stimulator for the emergence of other spin-off businesses. Finally, this type of development is good advertising for the City and can enhance the community's image.

#### Opportunities:

1. Cordova's location astride two world-class ecosystems; Prince William Sound and the Copper River Delta.
2. Seed money has already been provided for the Copper River Delta Institute and the Prince William Sound Science Center. These institutions are already established and have well-developed expansion plans; plans which include new research projects and the influx of faculty and research staff. An Oil Spill Recovery Institute has been authorized by Congress and is expected to be housed at the Science Center.

#### Constraints:

1. The unpredictability of research dollars.
2. Limited research facilities.

#### Coast Guard Air/Sea Rescue Unit

A permanent Coast Guard Air/Sea Rescue Unit would be very beneficial to the Cordova fishing fleet and to recreational boaters. It would also mean more permanent jobs for Cordova. The City has frequently lobbied for this unit over the years.

#### Opportunities:

1. Cordova's strategic location close to the Prince William Sound and Copper River Delta fishing grounds, and the major shipping lanes in the Gulf of Alaska.
2. Excellent harbor and airfield facilities.
3. The fact that the U.S.C.G. Sweetbrier is already based here.

#### Constraints:

1. Limited Coast Guard dollars and the existence of acceptable facilities elsewhere that are already being used.

#### Deep Water Port

Development of a new deep water port at or near Cordova has the potential to spur development in a

number of economic sectors. The sectors most likely to benefit are fish processing, tourism, and timber harvesting. The economic value of a deep water port would be enhanced if it was coupled with construction of the Copper River Highway or the Bering River Road. Shepard Point is also a strategic location for the staging of oil spill response equipment.

#### Opportunities:

1. A feasibility study has shown that Shepard Point is an excellent location for this facility. It also found that construction of a five mile road to Shepard Point would not be technically difficult.
2. Six million dollars has been allocated by the state for construction of the road to Shepard Point.

#### Constraints:

1. According to the feasibility study, the economic viability of this project is uncertain at this time.
2. The major beneficiary of this project, at least in the short term, is the timber industry. At the time this document was written, (late 1993) it was not clear if the timber interests would continue to harvest trees, for a variety of economic and political reasons.
3. The three participants in the feasibility study, the City, the Eyak Corporation, and the Chugach Alaska Corporation, may have different goals for the development of the port.

#### The Timber Industry

Timber harvesting is a temporarily important part of the economy in Cordova. Virtually all of the timber harvesting is taking place on Eyak Corporation lands. The Corporation planned to average a harvest of about 20 million board feet a year for the next decade.

#### Opportunities:

1. The Eyak Corporation owns a significant amount of commercial forest lands around Cordova

#### Constraints:

1. It is difficult to transfer logs to transport ships in Cordova. An in-water transfer site is currently being used and logs are being rafted to deep water. This is not as efficient as loading from land or a dock and results in lower profit margins.
2. The logging industry, like the fishing industry, is subject to a number of forces outside of its control. These variables can include the timber market, state and federal regulation, public opinion, competition from elsewhere, access to harvestable stands, etc.
3. It is not clear if the community would support expansion of the timber industry; especially expansion onto State or National Forest lands.

## LONG TERM OPTIONS

### Copper River Highway

The completion of the Copper River Highway would connect Cordova to the North American road system. This could have tremendous implications for the economy in Cordova. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared for public review.

Opportunities:

1. Construction of this highway could increase tourism, reduce shipping costs, lower the cost of living, provide access to new recreational opportunities for Alaskans, and provide access to the rest of Alaska for Cordovans at their pleasure.

Constraints:

1. This project is really a state and regional project, not just a Cordova project. Therefore, it is subject to state and federal politics and funding. Given current state revenue projections and the recent cutbacks to DOT/PF's road maintenance funding, the viability of this project is debatable.

Bering River Road

Construction of a Bering River Road would provide access to extensive coal fields, an oil field, and the commercially valuable timber stands that exist in the area. It would also "open up" new and spectacular areas for recreationalists. The conventional wisdom is that these raw materials would be transported to Cordova via this road for shipment to market. Building this road could provide some construction jobs, some mining and logging jobs, and some jobs in the oil fields. Cordova could also serve as a supply and service center to these facilities.

Opportunities:

1. Commercially valuable coal fields, timber stands, and some oil exists near the Bering River. Arco Alaska recently announced its intent to conduct seismic tests in the area.
2. A coal or gas-fired power plant in the area could potentially lower power costs for the community.
3. Outstanding recreation opportunities.

Constraints:

1. These raw materials are located in very remote areas. Access to them and shipment to market is problematic.
2. Whether or not Cordova is selected as the port from which to ship these raw materials is a corporate decision.
3. Whether or not these resources are exploited is, to a large degree, contingent upon market forces.
4. Development of these resources could possibly create problems for the area's existing commercial fisheries.

IV. Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal: An expanding, stable, and increasingly diverse economy.

1. Objective: Aggressively promote economic development and diversification.
  - a. Policy - Economic development and diversification shall be a top priority for the City Council and the City administration.
  - b. Policy - The City shall develop productive working relationships with other organizations working on local and regional economic development such as the Prince William Sound Economic Development Council, the Prince William Sound Tourism Coalition, the Cordova

- Chamber of Commerce, Cordova District Fishermen United and the Cordova Coastal Management Zone.
- c. Policy - The City shall form a partnership with industry in marketing Cordova, and local products, and in creating a mutually beneficial climate for economic growth and vitality.
  - d. Policy - The City shall work to develop a better and more co-operative working partnership with the Eyak Corporation and the Eyak Village Council.
2. Objective: Stimulate growth and diversification in the local fishing and fish processing industries.
    - a. Policy - Support efforts to diversify the salmon hatchery program.
    - b. Policy - Support efforts to aggressively market Cordova fish products.
    - c. Policy - Promote further development of the bottom fish industry in Cordova.
    - d. Policy - Support on-shore processing.
    - e. Policy - Support development of the local mariculture industry (shellfish) when it does not conflict with established uses.
    - f. Policy - Increase incentives for fish processors by working to lower power rates, promote new and value-added products, construct a deep water port, and make the best and most efficient use of remaining waterfront land.
    - g. Policy - Enhance harbor and port facilities by acquiring a new travel lift, building a deep water port, study expansion of small boat harbor, market remaining waterfront industrial land with an emphasis on boat repair facilities such as electricians, fiberglass, welders, etc.
    - h. Policy - Support fishery utilization projects.
  3. Objective: Maintain and Enhance Cordova's position as a Government Administrative Center.
    - a. Policy - Make Cordova a more attractive place for government agencies to do business and for their employees to live by working to make more land available for residential development, assisting agencies in locating seasonal housing, and taking steps to lower the cost of living.
  4. Objective: Promote Development of the Visitor Industry.
    - a. Policy - Support efforts by the Chamber of Commerce and others to create a visitor information center and possibly a visitor's and convention bureau.
    - b. Policy - Develop more visitor attractions in Cordova by creating a historical district, completing the Railroad and Heritage Parks, building an auditorium/convention center, expanding the museum and library, and establishing a state park.
    - c. Policy - Enhance recreational and outdoor opportunities by developing recreation and sportfishing areas, expanding Odiak Camper Park, establishing a state park, encouraging development of more campgrounds, trails, and other visitor facilities.
    - d. Policy - Work toward better and more convenient access to Cordova, including support for building the new ferry staging area, a more convenient ferry schedule, the deep water port, and continued discussion on the cost/benefits of the proposed Copper River Highway.
    - e. Policy - Increase marketing and promotion activities.
  5. Objective: Promote Cordova as a Science and Education Center.
    - a. Policy - Promote and support stability and expansion for the Prince William Sound Science Center and the Oil Spill Recovery Institute.
    - b. Policy - Promote and support stability and expansion for the Copper River Delta Institute.

- c. Policy - Support expansion of courses and programs at Prince William Sound Community College.
  - d. Policy - Support and promote acquisition of new education and research facilities and equipment that all three institutions can use, such as laboratories, library facilities, telecommunications capabilities, and computer equipment.
  - e. Policy - Promote efforts to construct facilities capable of handling conventions, symposiums, and conferences.
  - f. Policy - Promote efforts to construct science camps.
6. Objective: Make more land available for residential development.
- a. Policy - Work with private landowners to replat Ski Hill area.
  - b. Policy - Work with University of Alaska and private land owners to assist them in platting and developing their lands.
  - c. Policy - Open appropriate Municipal Land Selection parcels to residential development.
  - d. Policy - Expand City water and sewer services where feasible and prudent.
7. Objective: Lower Power Rates.
- a. Policy - Work with CEC and others to promote projects that would result in lower power rates.
8. Objective: Establish permanent Coast Guard Air/Sea Rescue Unit in Cordova.
- a. Policy - Continue on-going lobbying efforts.
9. Objective: Clean up Cordova, make it more visually attractive.
- a. Policy – Continue to promote recycling.
  - b. Policy – Revise and enforce sidewalk ordinance.
  - c. Policy – Establish auto impound yard.
  - d. Policy – Enforce litter, junkyard, and nuisance laws.
  - e. Policy – Create a Historic/Main Street District.
  - f. Policy – Provide incentives to encourage property owners to fix up their property and buildings.
10. Objective: Support and Assist in the on-going cost/benefit and impact analyses of several big projects which, if constructed, may have important economic implications for Cordova in the future.
- a. Policy - If it is determined to be in the best interest of the City of Cordova, promote construction of the deep water port at Shepard Point for the staging of oil spill response equipment.
  - b. Policy – If it is determined to be in the best interest of the City of Cordova, promote construction of the Copper River Highway, or some other use of the old railbed as a transportation corridor, i.e., a railroad or bike trail.
  - c. Policy – If it is determined to be in the best interest of the City of Cordova, promote construction of the Bering River Road.
  - d. Policy – If it is determined to be in the best interest of the City of Cordova, promote on-shore oil exploration and coal development in the Katalla and Bering River areas.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

### I. INTRODUCTION

The City of Cordova provides a number of important services to residents of the community. Some services are provided directly. Others are provided either indirectly or are funded to some degree by municipal government. Services which are provided directly include education, public safety, fire protection, emergency medical services, emergency rescue, 911 dispatch, road maintenance, snow removal, water, sewer, refuse collection, the harbor, the library, the museum, and parks. Services provided indirectly or funded to some extent by the City include the hospital, alcohol and mental health counseling, and recreational facilities and programs such as the Bidarki Recreation Center, the Bob Korn Pool, and the Mt. Eyak Ski Area.

The City owns and/or maintains a number of public facilities. It both owns and maintains the city hall building, the Library/Museum complex, the Harbormaster building, the city shop, the sewage disposal plant, the water treatment plant, the solid waste baler building, water storage tanks and reservoirs, all municipal streets, and all city parks. Facilities which the City owns but only partially or indirectly maintains include the hospital, the pool, Bidarki Recreation Center, the old Harbormaster building (Prince William Sound Science Center), buildings and equipment in the Mt. Eyak Ski Area, and the sanitary landfill. Finally, the City operates and maintains the harbor facilities which are owned by the State of Alaska.

Utility services are provided by the Cordova Electric Cooperative and the Cordova Telephone Cooperative; utility cooperatives which are owned by the consumers who use their services.

Following is a description of some of the more prominent community services and facilities.

### II. HOSPITAL

The Cordova Community Hospital is located on Chase Avenue just east of its intersection with the Copper River Highway. The 49,621 square foot facility contains a doctor's clinic, offices for the City's mental health and alcohol programs, offices for the State's social services and health nurse programs, 13 acute-care beds, 10 long-term care beds in the nursing home, and a nursery. Cordova currently has two family practice doctors. Specialists serve Cordova on an itinerant basis. Patients travel to Anchorage for specialized care or surgery.

### III. PUBLIC SAFETY

The Cordova Police Department and jail have been, since 1978, housed on the ground floor of the present City Hall. This facility contains a receptionist/dispatcher's office, Chief's office, squad room, interview room, Captain's office, and a three-cell jail.

### IV. FIRE PROTECTION/RESCUE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL

The Cordova Volunteer Fire Department operates out of an annex to the City Hall. The full-time Fire Chief has an office within the Public Safety annex which also houses the Police Department. The fire station consists of four bays housing eight pieces of apparatus and a training room.

The department is currently staffed by 40 volunteers. This includes 12 members who make up the Emergency Medical Service division assigned to the two ambulances. The firefighting equipment consists of four engines, a rescue truck, a harbor fire engine and a tanker/pumper (which is housed in another area). The total pumping capacity of the department is 5,000 gallons per minute.

Cordova has an excellent fire rating for a small community with a volunteer force. The area within the old City limits was given a rating of 4 (on a scale of 1 to 10) by the Insurance Services Office (ISO). This rating is responsible for the low insurance costs building owners pay for their insurance.

Some of the services provided by the Department besides Fire and EMS are: Mountain Rescue, Search and Rescue, Underwater Rescue and Recovery, Medical evacs from remote areas within Prince William Sound, and an on-going public education program.

## V. MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

### A. CITY HALL

City Hall was constructed in 1976. It is a two-story building with approximately 11,700 square feet of usable space. The building is located on Railroad Avenue and it houses the City administrative offices, the police department, and the fire and rescue department.

Although the City administrative offices are becoming slightly crowded, the building can be expected to serve the City's needs for the next 5 to 10 years at least; assuming proper maintenance. The city hall building is located on low-lying landfill that is subject to evacuation during seismic activity; it should be re-located.

### B. BIDARKI RECREATION CENTER

The Bidarki Recreation Center is located at the corner of Second Street and Council Avenue. It is a wooden structure which was constructed in 1935. There are many community and school-related activities which take place at Bidarki. The facility contains a basketball court which doubles as a multipurpose room, an activities room, a weight room, locker rooms and administrative offices.

### C. CITY SHOP

The City Shop is located just off the Copper River Highway near its junction with Lefevre Street and is leased from CEC. The shop facility is a 4,800 square foot metal structure constructed in 1971. It is the base of operations for the City Public Works Department.

The City recently purchased some land not far from the City shop which would be ideal for a new shop complex. The City plans to eventually build a new shop at that location.

## VI. CULTURAL FACILITIES

### A. MUSEUM

The Cordova Museum was constructed in 1967 with the assistance of Alaska Centennial funds. It is

located on First Street immediately south of the downtown commercial district. It is the community's first formal museum, and ranks as one of Cordova's major community assets. A renovation and interior design project was completed there-in 1992. The displays are of high quality, are attractively laid out, and reflect the theme "Where Cultures Meet". Artifacts on display reflect the indigenous Native culture, the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad era, the rise and fall of Katalla, and the history of other Prince William Sound communities including Cordova.

Some of the items on display are on loan from private collections. The remainder are the property of the Cordova Historical Society. The Historical Society sponsors fundraisers and also manages a small gift shop in the museum all proceeds are returned directly to the facility.

## B. LIBRARY

The Cordova Public Library is housed in a 1971 addition to the museum building and ranks with the museum as one of Cordova's major community assets. The building also contains a multi-purpose room that serves as the City Council chambers

The library is open for 40 hours a week. The total number of volumes housed there is now approaching 20,000. The library has an annual circulation (including periodicals) of almost 24,000 and an average daily circulation of about 65 volumes. The library operates a number of programs designed to encourage people to read. The Cordova Library is actually a regional library because it also serves readers at scattered locations throughout Prince William Sound.

## VII. PARKS AND RECREATION

It is important for Cordova to plan for and provide a variety of indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities for its residents. Good parks and recreation facilities and programs are vital to a community's quality of life. This is particularly true in Cordova where heavy precipitation and snow accumulations keep many people indoors. Cordova is fortunate in that it has a wide range of recreational facilities and opportunities for all age groups.

### A. Outdoor Recreation for Small Children

Municipal Park, located next to the High School, is a primary recreation complex for young children. It includes a playground with swings, slides, jungle gyms, and other equipment. It also contains a Little League ballfield, a tennis court, basketball hoops, and a picnicking area. The latter facilities are also used by older children and adults.

A second, smaller playground known as Centennial Park, is located on the west side of Second Street directly behind the library. This area is equipped with swings and a jungle gym. Mt. Eccles Elementary School has a limited yard area and a small gymnasium. A lighted, covered playground is located behind the school. The playground has a jungle gym and other equipment which can be used during inclement weather.

The City recently completed a "tot lot" on the corner of 4th and Browning Streets and another one in Mt. Eccles Estates. Both parks receive heavy usage by neighborhood children.

### B. Indoor Recreation

The Bob Korn indoor swimming pool opened in August of 1974. It is located at the corner of Adams and Railroad Avenues, next to City Hall. Swimming has been a popular addition to the school recreation program and is also popular with adults. A swimming pool is especially important in a fishing community like Cordova, where many people have not previously had the opportunity to learn to swim. It also helps local residents stay in shape during the frequently inclement weather.

The high school has a good gymnasium and most basketball games in town are played there. The gymnasium in the Bidarki Recreation Center is used for basketball games and other types of activities such as volleyball and aerobics classes. The Bidarki Recreation Center offers other forms of recreation as well for all age groups including weight lifting, aerobics, numerous programs for teenagers, and educational activities for groups of young children such as the Girl Scouts.

### C. Other Parks

Cordova has a number of parks which offer general recreational opportunities. One of the most important is Nirvana Park which is located on the north shore of Eyak Lake. This park dates back to the 1920's and at one time featured flowers, walkways, and fountains inset with copper ore. The park's founder, Herman C. Feldman, is buried there. A small graveyard adjacent to the park reportedly contains one Tillie Le Roi, an early Cordova madam known as the "Mucker's Dream". This is also the location of an old Eyak Indian burial site. Today, Nirvana Park is used primarily as a picnicking spot. The City has constructed a picnic shelter in the park and the sand and gravel spit extending into Eyak Lake is used by swimmers and recreational boaters.

Hollis Henrich's Park is a relatively new park which has become very popular with local residents. It is located at the corner of Chase Avenue and the Copper River Highway. The park features Odiak Pond and a large grassy open area with an expansive and spectacular viewshed.

The Mt. Eyak Ski Area is a large tract reserved for recreational use that features a downhill ski area. The "Ski Hill" is located immediately behind downtown. The Mt. Eyak Ski Area includes a 3,200 foot long run with an 800 foot vertical drop. It is equipped with the original Warm Springs lift (Chair 3) from Sun Valley, Idaho. It also features a beginner's hill with rope tow, cross country ski trails, and an equipment rental room. The Ski Hill area also features excellent hiking and mountain climbing with attractions like Mt. Eyak, Crater Lake, and an extensive trail system which connects with other trails constructed by the U.S. Forest Service.

There is a wide variety of additional outdoor recreational opportunities within the Cordova City limits. Ice skating, mountain climbing, glacier travel, kayaking and canoeing, picnicking, hiking, sportfishing, hunting, bird watching, and cross country skiing. The City of Cordova has the good fortune of being situated right in the middle of two world famous recreation areas; Prince William Sound and the Copper River Delta. As a result, recreational opportunities are unlimited. The Copper River Delta ranks as one of the finest bird and waterfowl viewing and hunting grounds in North America, and the U.S. Forest Service maintains a number of recreational cabins, trails, picnic sites, boat ramps, and interpretive centers for public use. The Cordova Planning and Zoning Commission has also recommended additional improvements and expansion of recreational facilities that include: establishment of additional parks, expansion of Odiak Camper Park, development of recreational and sport fishing facilities at Fleming Spit, completion of the Hollis Henrichs and Railroad Parks, continued maintenance and upgrades at existing facilities such as the Mt. Eyak Ski Area, Bidarki and the pool, new bike trails, and creation of a Heritage Park and a Marine Park. Other recreation needs outside Cordova, such as campgrounds, may be met by the U.S. Forest Service and by private landowners.

## VIII. UTILITIES

### A. WATER

Cordova's water supply, distribution, and treatment systems were greatly upgraded and expanded in the early 1980's. There is now only a small portion of the old City limits which is not served by municipal water. The City diverts and treats water from four sources. These sources are Heney Creek, Murcheson Creek, Orca Creek, and Eyak Lake.

With the recently completed expansion and improvements to the water system, Cordova now has the ability to provide enough high quality water for domestic and industrial uses. Since Cordova's economy is based on fishing and fish processing, it is critical that the City be able to provide enough water to serve the processing plants, both now and into the future. The City is currently planning for and implementing future improvements to the system. The City also recently conducted a leak detection study and was able to isolate areas where water was being lost through leakage.

The City has contracted with an engineer to develop an overall water master plan. This plan, when completed, will assist the City in addressing future water needs and new facilities. An important part of the work going into the plan is identifying potential new sources of municipal drinking water. Long-term planning is particularly important now because of the new Environmental Protection Agency regulations which require filtration systems for all surface water drinking sources. It is also important because the residents of the newly annexed areas have identified municipal water as a service they want the City to provide.

### B. SEWER

An adequate sewer system serving all developed areas of a community, together with sewage treatment, is essential to good community development. A community-wide sewer system is of critical importance in Cordova because sub-surface conditions prevalent here limit the effectiveness of septic tanks. The sewer system has been extended to most of the developed areas within the old Cordova city limits. A new Copper River Highway sewer line extension is also planned.

The City completed a four million dollar Infiltration and Inflow (INI) project during the summer of 1991. This project has greatly reduced the amount of storm water which enters the sewer system. As a result, the burden on the treatment plant has been reduced and its capacity to treat municipal sewage has been increased. The plant is currently running at about fifty percent of its design capacity. Therefore, it has the ability to handle a significant amount of additional sewage; an important factor in the City's ability to encourage future community growth. This is also important because many residents of the newly annexed areas have stated that they wish to be connected to the public sewer system.

### C. ELECTRICITY

Electric power in Cordova is provided by the Cordova Electric Cooperative (CEC). Electrical power is expensive in Cordova because CEC uses diesel oil to generate it. CEC operates two power plants, one on Eyak Lake in the eastern portion of town and one on Orca Road near the Ocean Dock industrial area. Each power plant has two base load engines capable of meeting the town's entire electrical needs. Cordova has sufficient generation capacity to meet its summer peak load of 5,000 KW. The new plant at Orca is more advanced and the plant at Eyak will gradually be phased out and used as a backup.

The distribution system has received major upgrades over the past several years and it is now approximately 75 percent underground. The conversion to underground lines will continue over the next several years. CEC is currently looking for financing to extend its distribution system further south along Whitshed Road; possibly as far south as the Hartney Bay Subdivision.

CEC recently completed construction of its new Humpback Creek Hydroelectric Power Plant which is located about seven miles north of Cordova. The plant came on-line in June of 1991. The plant will have an installed capacity of 1250 KW and should produce approximately 3,900,000 kwh per year, or approximately 17 percent of Cordova's current energy needs.

Cordova has experienced a long-term increase in electric consumption over the past ten years. The number of service connections has been rising at a rate of almost ten percent per year. CEC and the City of Cordova are actively searching for a long-term solution to the high cost of energy in Cordova. Items under investigation include:

1. The installation of a waste heat facility to utilize heat from the diesel generators. This heat would be made available to local users.
2. Construction of additional small hydroelectric sites in the immediate Cordova area.
3. Construction of an underwater or overland transmission line to Valdez or the Copper River basin to connect Cordova to a statewide electric grid.
4. More efficient use of the existing diesel generators.
5. Cheaper ways of getting fuel to the community.
6. Coal or natural gas electric power generation at Katalla.

CEC continues to study these alternatives to determine what is most feasible and prudent for Cordova. In the meantime, the State Power Cost Equalization Program makes residential electric bills more affordable. However, this program has been targeted by some lawmakers in Juneau for the budget ax. It would be a serious blow to Cordova if this program were eliminated since the high cost of electricity is already a barrier to attracting new businesses to locate here. It is imperative that energy costs be reduced if Cordova hopes to be competitive with other maritime communities.

#### D. TELEPHONE

Telephone service in Cordova is provided by the Cordova Telephone Cooperative (CTC). The Company is equipped to serve a maximum of 2,500 customers. CTC utilizes the latest in switching technology including the digital DM5-b switch. CTC has the capability to provide full telecommunications services to the community of Cordova and the surrounding Prince William Sound area.

### IX.

GA

#### RBAGE DISPOSAL

The City of Cordova is presently responsible for both garbage collection and garbage disposal. The present sanitary landfill (balefill) is located along Whitshed Road, adjacent to Odiak Slough. The expected useful lifespan of the balefill is two to four years assuming current operating conditions. The City recently constructed a solid waste baler facility. Solid waste is hauled to the baler and compacted into 4' by 5' x 2-1/2' bales. The bales are then hauled to the bale-fill site for disposal.

The City has a number of pressing solid waste problems that need to be addressed in the near future. It

recently secured funding for and has begun the process of drafting a Solid Waste Management Plan. This plan will address the City's solid waste problems in a comprehensive manner and will specifically address issues such as recycling, reducing the waste stream, handling of hazardous materials, possible alternative methods of disposal, costs of operations, costs of opening a new balefill site, and site selection for a new balefill. The City, in association with various volunteer groups, recently began a community recycling program. The program has been very successful and the City received an award for its efforts from the State of Alaska in 1993.

## X. SNOW REMOVAL

Snow removal services are provided by the Cordova Public Works Department. Cordova receives an average of 116 inches of snow per year. This, coupled with steep grades in much of town, makes efficient snow removal essential to the community's well-being and its ability to function normally.

Snow is dumped at a number of points around town. The City has designated some of these points as snow dumps. A number of snow dumps have been lost in the past few years due to development and pressures to use the land for other purposes. It is very important to the Public Works Department that it not lose more snow dumps. Hauling snow long distances for disposal is time consuming and prohibitively expensive. The Planning and Zoning Commission has suggested that long-term planning for snow dumps be undertaken and that snow dumps be designated on the City's Zoning Map.

## XI. EDUCATION

As a home rule municipality under Alaska Statutes, Cordova has the responsibility of operating its own public school system. This includes building and maintaining the necessary buildings and other facilities. The school district boundary coincides with Cordova's corporate limits. The state contracts with the Cordova Public Schools for bus service for children living farther than 1-1/2 miles from town and provides an additional payment for students who must travel through hazardous areas to get to school.

Administratively, the Cordova Public School System is divided into an elementary school (kindergarten through 6th grade) and high school (7th through 12th grade). This administrative division is also a physical division.

### A. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Mt. Eccles Elementary School occupies a 35,000 square foot site which is bounded by Second Street, Third Street, and Adams Avenue. All elementary school functions are housed within this single two-story structure. This facility provides space for seventeen classrooms, two multi-purpose rooms, a kitchen, a teacher's lounge, offices, and a storage area.

With the exception of the addition of five classrooms to the second story in 1963, a covered play area in 1983, and some remodeling work completed in 1991, no major modifications have been made to the elementary school building since construction. Although there is an indoor play area and a small playground available across the street, a gym may be needed. A swimming pool, located two blocks away, is used for the swimming program.

The 1994-1995 enrollment at the elementary school was 314 students. All class room space (17 classrooms) is currently utilized.

## B. HIGH SCHOOL

The Cordova High School is located at Second and Fisherman Avenues. This facility contains 14 classrooms, including one for special education, a woodshop, bandroom, multi-purpose gymnasium, library, audio/visual equipment room, dark lab, nurse's room, teacher's lounge, offices, welding/auto shop, home economics room, storage area and a cafeteria/kitchen.

The 1994-1995 enrollment was 212 students. All classrooms are currently in use and needed. In fact, from a programmatic point of view, additional space is needed according to school officials. The High School was constructed without adequate space for science, computer and library rooms and without a lunchroom/cafeteria.

The high school's need for more space was eased somewhat with the addition of two modular classrooms which were placed behind the school in 1976. This temporary measure relieved an overcrowded condition but did little to create the specialized area needed for individual programs. In the fall of 1986, a cafeteria/kitchen was constructed where the central administration offices had been located. The central offices were moved to one of the two modulares located behind the High School. The City and the School District have discussed the possibility of building a new school at a different location as a solution to the space problem.

On-site recreation space for high school students is limited since an estimated 75% of the site is occupied either by buildings or by streets and parking area. To some extent, this limited outdoor recreation space is off-set by the presence of tennis courts and the municipal ballpark adjacent to the school site. However, additional space is still needed. The High School gymnasium and the community swimming pool are utilized for indoor activities and physical education. Both facilities are heavily used.

## C. ENROLLMENT TRENDS AND FORECAST

The overall enrollment of the Cordova school system has fluctuated over the past ten years, however, the general trend has been slightly downward. The number of students enrolled has rebounded slightly during the past two school years (1989-90) due to increases at the Elementary School.

## D. FUTURE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Requests for facility expansion based on increased enrollment should be conservative and studied carefully. Facility expansion based on program needs is governed by the educational offerings of the district and the desires of the community. At this time, recommending new facilities based on program needs is probably the more viable argument. Overall enrollment forecasts are difficult to make because future population characteristics are contingent upon a wide variety of social and economic variables. The best projection for future school enrollment is probably moderate growth. In the meantime, the City is examining ways to reserve land for future school sites.

## XII. PORT AND HARBOR

Several disasters along the Cordova waterfront have played a large part in shaping how the area looks today. The March 1964 earthquake caused a bottom uplift of about 6.5 feet in the Cordova harbor area, leaving the harbor and most docks high and dry. The Urban Renewal Project which followed resulted in a major revamping of the community's port facilities. (However, as extensive as the restoration efforts were,

they did not restore Cordova's ability to serve as a deep water port). In 1968, the destruction by fire of the city's main dock created the need to construct the present Ocean Dock complex. These disasters had a positive outcome because Cordova's port facilities today rate among the best in Alaska.

Cordova's existing port facilities include three docks for large vessels, two boat ramps, a three tier dock, a small boat harbor, and a few piers associated with the cannery complexes. All three docks are owned by the City of Cordova. The small boat harbor facilities are owned by the State and are operated by the City.

The Municipal Dock (Ocean Dock) is located approximately threequarters of a mile north of the small boat harbor just off Orca Road. Ocean Dock is Cordova's main commercial port facility. The dock's outside face is 408 feet long with an average draft of approximately 25 feet. The inside face of the dock is 325 feet long with an average depth of 16 feet. The dock is equipped with a 140 ton mobile crane, potable water, and gasoline and diesel fuel pumps. The Alaska State Ferry Terminal is located at the southwest end of the dock. This dock is utilized primarily for the transfer of petroleum products and general cargo as well as freight and passengers arriving via the ferry system. Immediately east of the north end of the Ocean Dock is the Ocean Dock Subdivision; an approximately 12-acre fill area currently used as a staging area and open storage area for shipping containers and fishing vessels. This is also the site of the proposed new ferry staging area.

The City Dock is used primarily by the U.S. Coast Guard for moorage of the buoy tender "Sweetbrier". The dock is located at the west end of Breakwater Avenue and immediately north of the harbor entrance. The seaward face of the City Dock is 280 feet long with an average draft of 23 feet. The dock is equipped with two 1-ton hoists, electricity and potable water.

The North Containment Dock is located on the west face of the Jim Poor Industrial Park; a fill area reserved for waterfront industrial uses. The area features a boat ramp and is a proposed site for a new marine travel lift. This is Cordova's newest dock. The dock's outside face is 213 feet long with an average depth of 19 feet. The dock is equipped with two 1-ton hoists, electricity, and potable water. It is used mainly for the transfer of fishing gear and light cargo.

The Cordova Small Boat Harbor has 840 slips available within a basin approximately 30 acres in area. Electricity and potable water are provided on most floats. The quantity of slips by length is as follows:

Table 9

Boat Harbor Slips

Number of Slips	Length of Slips (ft)
326	20
228	30
152	40
93	50
28	60
13	70
<hr/> 840	

In addition to these moorage facilities, the harbor provides a four-slip airplane float, approximately 700 feet of transient boat space, a 180-foot, 90-ton timber grid, and a 160-foot, 250-ton steel girder grid, to

facilitate in-harbor boat repair and maintenance. A single boat launch ramp which extends to -3 feet is located in the southeast corner of the harbor. Firefighting equipment is provided on all the floats in the harbor. There are ten 150 pound dry-chemical extinguishers distributed throughout the float system.

The Harbormaster's office is located in the northwest corner of the South Fill Commercial Park on Nicholoff Drive. It provides a center for Harbor Department office space and equipment storage.

The fleet using the harbor is dominated by commercial fishing vessels, most of which engage in salmon fishing. During the salmon and herring seining season, there is a significant influx of transient fishing boats. The commercial fleet is expected to remain essentially stable over the next few years. There is a small possibility that a local bottom fishery will be established here, however, this would have little effect on the small boat harbor since most of these boats are too large to use it.

The future demand for slips for recreational boats remains unknown. At this time, it is premature to make predictions about future needs for slips for recreational boats. A stable fleet size of approximately 1,000 user vessels of every nature can be reliably predicted. Following is a projected fleet mix for the immediate future:

Table 10 - Projected Fleet Mix

Craft Use	Boat Equiv.	Av. Length	Av. Width	Av. Draft	Governing Draft
Salmon	390	34	10	4	-8ft MLLW
Crab	12	80	24	8	-10ft “
Halibut	11	80	26	12	-14ft “
Utility	288	20	6	8	-10ft “
Heavy Commercial	50	68	22	14	-11ft “
Bottom Fish	20	80	30	14	-16ft “
Recreation	86	22	6	2	-8

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

From this data it would appear that, barring any significant growth in the fishing industry or in the visitor industry, Cordova's harbor facilities are adequate for the near future. However, because of the inherent nature of the fishing industry, it is very difficult at best to make predictions concerning the demand and need for harbor expansion. Further, as noted above, projections regarding the demand for slips for recreational boats is also highly speculative.

The fishing industry is critical to the economic survival of Cordova. The community is hoping that the visitor industry will also become a significant component of the economy in future years. Both industries

are unpredictable and both could require additions to the community's port facilities in the future. The City should position itself to be able to respond quickly to any demand for harbor expansion by identifying site locations and initiating permitting and preliminary planning.

### XIII. Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal: To provide the facilities and services necessary for maintaining and enhancing the general health, safety, education, and welfare of the community.

#### Medical, Social, and Public Safety Services

1. Objective: To provide adequate facilities for short-term and long-term medical care.
  - a. Policy - maintain current staffing levels at the hospital.
  - b. Policy - support hospital administration's efforts to build a long-term care facility.
  - c. Policy - support the efforts of the local volunteer fire department and emergency services.
  - d. Policy - continue support for community mental health services.
2. Objective: Promote Public Safety
  - a. Policy - Continue working to reduce ISO fire rating.
  - b. Policy - Upgrade Tsunami Warning System.
  - c. Policy - Revise Flood Ordinance and Flood Maps.
  - d. Policy - Update Emergency Preparedness Plan.

#### Municipal Buildings

1. Objective: To provide maximum benefit from municipal buildings and prolong their useful life.
  - a. Policy - Develop a comprehensive municipal facilities maintenance plan.
  - b. Policy - Complete necessary plans to relocate City Hall.
  - c. Policy - Begin financial and architectural planning for a new shop complex.
  - d. Policy - Examine the necessity and feasibility of either replacing the present library or relocating it to another site.
  - e. Policy - Make necessary repairs to museum building. Including problems with leaks and temperature and humidity controls; and correct safety code violations.
  - f. Policy - Expand museum exhibit space and collections; complete new interior design.
  - g. Policy - Examine feasibility of relocating museum or expanding present facility.

#### Parks and Recreation

1. Objective: To provide an excellent system of parks and recreation programs.
  - a. Policy - Continue maintenance and upgrading of existing parks, playgrounds, and the pool.
  - b. Policy - Draft and adopt a 10-Year Parks and Recreation plan.
  - c. Policy - Work toward establishment of local area state parks.
  - d. Policy - Develop the Fleming Spit area as a recreation and sportfishing area.
  - e. Policy - Add improvements to Hollis Henrichs Park.
  - f. Policy - Complete the Railroad Park.
  - g. Policy - Begin planning for proposed Heritage Park.
  - h. Policy - Develop a Marine Heritage Park.
  - i. Policy - Complete pocket park system.
  - j. Policy - Privatize Odiak Camper Park.

## Utilities

### Water and Sewage Systems

1. Objective: To assure adequate supplies of safe drinking water for both current and future needs.
  - a. Policy - Protect existing and potential watersheds and sources through land use regulation or acquisition of important parcels.
  - b. Policy - Complete and implement the Water Master Plan.
  - c. Policy - Continue upgrades of the existing system.
  - d. Policy - Plan for system expansion to the newly annexed areas.
2. Objective: Maintain and upgrade the sewage collection and treatment system so that it has the capacity to handle present and future demand.
  - a. Policy - Build the Copper River Highway sewer line extension.
  - b. Policy - Complete the INI project by continuing to eliminate stormwater infiltration. Incorporate findings of the recently completed drainage study.
  - c. Policy - Investigate future sewage disposal needs in problem areas such as the north shore of Eyak Lake and in areas likely to develop such as the Ski Hill area.
  - d. Policy - Plan for system expansion into the newly annexed areas.

### Solid Waste

1. Objective: To provide adequate solid waste disposal into the future.
  - a. Policy - Complete and implement the recommendations of solid waste master plan.
  - b. Policy - Continue to develop recycling capacity.
  - c. Policy - Acquire land and permits for new landfill.

### Electric and Telephone Services

1. Objective: To provide an inexpensive, reliable source of electrical power and reliable and expanded telephone service.
  - a. Policy - Support efforts to reduce the cost of electrical power.
  - b. Policy - Support efforts to expand electrical service south to Hartney Bay and elsewhere.
  - c. Policy - Support efforts to expand telephone service into Prince William Sound.

### Education

1. Objective: Provide for adequate school facilities and excellent education programs for local residents.
  - a. Policy - Expand school district facilities as dictated by enrollment and/or program requirements.
  - b. Policy - Continue funding school district at adequate levels to assure quality educational programs.

- c. Policy - Identify land for a new high school and begin conceptual planning.
2. Objective: Provide adequate post-secondary education opportunities for local residents.
- a. Policy - Encourage continued development of Prince William Sound Community College.
  - b. Policy - Encourage continued development of the Prince William Sound Science Center and the Copper River Delta Institute.

### Harbor and Port Facilities

1. Objective: Provide adequate port and harbor facilities for present and future needs.
- a. Policy - Continue to evaluate and promote the Deep Water Port at Shepard Point.
  - b. Policy - Complete upgrade of Ferry Staging area.
  - c. Policy - Acquire travel lift.
  - d. Policy - Add float to boat ramp at Jim Poor Industrial Park.
  - e. Policy - Examine feasibility of expanding small boat harbor.
  - f. Policy - Adequately maintain all harbor facilities. Develop a maintenance schedule.
  - g. Policy - Upgrade and make necessary repairs to cathodic and fender systems.
  - h. Policy - Implement the Waterfront Master Plan.

## LAND USE

### I. Existing Land Use Inventory

The overall land use pattern in Cordova today has been heavily influenced by four factors; its physical setting, its past dependence of its industries on a waterfront location, and the 1964 earthquake. Topography is perhaps the most important factor. The townsite is surrounded by steeply rising mountains and mountain ridges. These mountains come right down to the sea and to Eyak Lake. Most of the town's development is located on the foothills of Mt. Eyak and an area of low-lying flat land bounded by Mt. Eyak, Mount Eccles, Eyak Lake and Odiak Slough. Together, these two areas form the core of the townsite. Outside of this core, development is, for the most part, greatly restricted by topography. Consequently, the remainder of the development in Cordova is concentrated along roads leading out of town. The majority of this development is along Whitshed Road to the southwest of town, along both sides of Eyak Lake to the east, and along the Eyak River.

Cordova's origins as a company town are also reflected in its current land use pattern. The Copper River and Western Railroad tracks followed a route roughly approximating that now taken by a combination of the Copper River Highway and Railroad Avenue. In most Alaskan coastal communities, the main business district developed in close proximity to the main commercial dock. In Cordova however, the waterfront was occupied by railroad uses and as a result, the business district is located further uphill.

The 1964 earthquake had a significant long-term impact on the use of waterfront lands and tidelands. The earthquake caused an uplift of 6.5 to 7.5 feet in the land mass around Cordova. South of the boat harbor in the Odiak Slough area, parcels that had been accessible by water were now surrounded by tidal mud flats. They were therefore rendered unusable for waterfront-related industrial purposes. In addition, new or upgraded dock facilities were required for general freight delivery and for the fish processors because the old docks could only be reached at high tide. On the positive side, the uplift made the development of additional commercial and industrial lands possible. Dredged materials from the boat harbor and Orca Inlet were used to create the Cordova Industrial Park which is located immediately of the boat harbor. They were also used to create Tidewater Development Park, the Waterfront Commercial Park (South Containment Dike), the Jim Poor Industrial Park (North Containment Dike), and the Ocean Dock Subdivision.

The City conducted a land use inventory in 1985. The land use inventory served a number of purposes. First, it was designed to provide information on the amounts of land that were being used for industrial, commercial, residential, recreational, and public and quasi-public uses. It also provided information on the amount of vacant land. Second, it provided information on the amounts of land available for future development of each of the above-mentioned types of uses. Third, it provided information about the housing stock and about the amount of land available for residential development. This is very important for planning purposes because housing has been an on-going concern in Cordova; particularly seasonal housing and the availability of land for new construction.

The data compiled in the 1985 land use survey appears in Table 11. No comparable land use survey has been conducted in Cordova since that time. Even though this information is now somewhat

dated, it is still useful because it shows the proportions of utilized land for each type of land use relative to the total area of developed land in the City. These percentages have remained fairly stable even though there has been a significant amount of building and development in Cordova since 1985. Table 11 therefore gives us a reasonably accurate snapshot of the land use pattern today. New development since 1985 will be discussed in each of the specific land use sections below.

#### A. EXISTING COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Cordova's main commercial district has traditionally been concentrated on First and Second Streets between Davis and Adams Avenues. This area is now known as the Central Business District. The Central Business District was devastated by fire in 1963 and again in 1969. The block lost in the 1963 fire has been rebuilt. The block-long area on the west side of First Street, which burned in 1969, has not yet been rebuilt. There are a number of other lots in this district where buildings have been torn down and not replaced. As a result, there are quite a few vacant lots in the Central Business District.

Since the earthquake, a number of waterfront-related commercial uses and associated business zones have been established on fill areas surrounding the boat harbor. The first area to be developed was the Tidewater Development Park which is bounded generally by the harbor on the west, the Front Street right-of-way on the east, Breakwater Avenue to the north, and Nicholoff Way to the south. The second area to be developed was the Cordova Industrial Park. This area is directly north of the boat harbor along Breakwater Ave. About one-third of this area has been zoned for businesses and commercial uses. The most recent addition of commercial land is the Waterfront Commercial Park known locally as the South Fill. This area is zoned for water-related commercial and retail uses and is located just south of the boat harbor along Nicholoff Way. Most of the commercial development in Cordova since 1985 has occurred on these fill areas. This includes the Napa and Area E stores and the new Alaska Commercial store in the Waterfront Commercial Park.

Unlike many Southcentral Alaska communities, Cordova has avoided the pitfalls of scattered commercial development. The Central Business District has always been the focal point of commercial activities in Cordova. The newer business zones on the fill areas around the harbor share common boundaries which intersect with each other and the Central Business District, thereby creating a rather large and contiguous business zone. The strong central commercial area is a major asset to the community. There are a few other small business zones scattered around the community but they generally encompass one or two businesses and are not areas of major activity.

TABLE 11  
Existing Use of Lands & Tidelands

Land Use	City of Cordova, 1985 Land Area (acres)	Percent of Total Developed Area
Residential	95.55	18.05
Single Family	58.28	11.02
Duplex	3.19	.60
Triplex	2.01	.38
Multi-family	11.98	2.26
Mobile Homes on Lots	4.97	.94
Mobile Home Parks	15.12	2.86
Business	7.65	1.44
Industrial	139.96	26.45
General Industrial	126.86	23.98
Light Industrial	10.22	1.93
Utility Sites	2.88	.54
Public	281.12	53.13
Eyak Airport	32.00	6.05
Ski Hill	208.58	39.42
Other Public	40.54	7.66
Quasi-Public	4.79	.91
Total	529.07	100.00

Source: Cordova Community Development Department,

1985 50

## B. EXISTING INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

At the present time, fishing and fish processing is the only major industry in Cordova. The location requirements of this industry are quite specific. Fishermen need a protected harbor where they can keep their vessels. The processing plants require a waterfront location which is accessible at all times for tenders and other vessels delivering fish. Convenience to commercial dock facilities is also highly desirable, since most fish products are shipped from the community. In short, the majority of Cordova's industrial development is necessarily located along the waterfront.

The 1985 land use survey tabulated approximately 140 acres of industrial land and tideland in productive use (Table 12). Most of this acreage (127 acres) was being used for general industrial purposes. These lands are concentrated within three distinct waterfront locations. They are the former Chugach Fisheries complex, which occupies approximately 27 acres of land and tideland at the north end of Orca Road, the area between the old Alaska Packers plant and the Ocean Dock, where about 33 acres are currently taken up by a combination of seafood processors, oil tanks and dock facilities, and the Cordova Industrial Park and adjacent boat harbor area, where close to 35 acres are being used by seafood processors, boat harbor, and dock facilities. Since 1985, the City has completed the Jim Poor Industrial Park. The Jim Poor Industrial Park is located adjacent to and immediately north of the Cordova Industrial Park. The Jim Poor Industrial Park contains about 16 acres of industrial land. A large storage complex is located there.

Fire has played a major role in modifying the use of industrial land in Cordova. A major fire in 1968 destroyed the main commercial dock and the Standard Oil Company fuel dock and warehouse. The Ocean Dock, a new ferry terminal and the Ocean Dock fill area were then constructed by the City a short distance north of the old facility. This construction had the effect of making The old port area more efficient for seafood processing operations. It also provided a more efficient port facility with ample space for open storage. Most major warehousing facilities are located in the downtown business district. Most light warehousing activity is located either in the vicinity of the small boat harbor, or near the junction of Lefevre Street and the Copper River Highway.

## C. EXISTING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

A total of 95.55 acres were in residential use in Cordova at the time of the 1985 land use survey (Table 12). A very significant amount of residential development has taken place since 1985 in terms of the number of housing units available (see Table 14). The City does not have an estimate on how this translates into additional developed acreage, however, it is clear that this total has increased.

The highest density residential development in Cordova in terms of the distance between houses occurs within the three-block area north of Council Avenue between First Street and Railroad Avenue. (Observation Hill). In addition to this area, residential development is most concentrated in the area uphill from the business district, on the peninsula north of Odiak Slough, in the old railroad housing area known as Railroad Row, in the Vina Young subdivision, and in the low-lying flat area which contains Old Town and the Odiak Park Subdivision. The whiskey Ridge subdivision is located along Whitshed Road.

Fire has also been a factor influencing the pattern of residential development in Cordova. The May 1963 fire which razed an entire block in the central business district destroyed 47 apartment units. Very few of these units were replaced when this block was rebuilt. However, a number of multi-family structures have been constructed since that date, mostly in the area uphill from the Central Business District. In addition, the Alaska State Housing Authority completed 16 units of low

income housing on Chase Ave. in 1980, North Pacific Rim constructed a large apartment complex on Lake Ave, and the Coast Guard has multi-family units for its employees uphill from Lake Avenue. In 1994 the North Pacific Rim built five new 4-plexes (20 units) in scattered locations in and around Old Town. The most recent multi-family complex to be completed is an eight-unit facility located along Chase Ave. Therefore, the 1963 fire contributed to a wider distribution of multi-family housing throughout Cordova's developed area. It should be noted that the majority of new housing is tax-exempt and therefore not reflected on the City's property tax rolls.

Buildable land suitable for residential development is in short supply in Cordova. This is due to a combination of topography, poor drainage, poor platting practices, and land ownership patterns. Platting problems are best illustrated in the north and northeast sides of the city where lots were platted in a strict grid pattern: a pattern which ignored the topographic constraints to construction. This area alone, known locally as the "Ski Hill", accounts for 36.19 acres of the privately owned vacant land in the city.

Despite the barriers to construction, significant increases have occurred in all categories of housing types since a 1975 housing survey (Tables 12 and 13). The total increase in housing stock over the 16-year period from 1975 to 1991 is 298 units.

TABLE 12  
Housing Inventory  
City of Cordova 1985

	1985 # of Units	(1) % of Total		1975 # of Units	(1) % of Total
Housing Type					
Single Family	317		8.0		
Duplex	66		4.1		
Triplex	34		23.8		
Multi-Family	197		1.9		
Group Housing	16		3.7		
Mobile Homes on Lots	31		20.1		
Mobile Homes in Courts	166				
				132	
				35	
				28	
				92	
TOTAL UNITS	827			585	

- (1) Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding
- (2) Includes triplexes

Source: Alaska Consultants, Inc. 1975  
City of Cordova Community development Dept. 1985

TABLE 13  
HOUSING INVENTORY  
AUGUST 1991

	UNITS
single Family	366
Multifamily	320
Mobile Home	197
TOTAL UNITS	883

(2)  
2  
2.6

6.0  
15.7  
4.8

NOTE: These data were compiled by examining building permit applications on file since the time of the 1985 Land Use Survey. They were confirmed by the information contained in the 1991 Housing Needs Assessment Study conducted by the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

D. EXISTING PUBLIC AND QUASI-PUBLIC LAND DEVELOPMENT

Planning for the location and development of lands reserved for public use, including lands for recreational activities and quasipublic institutional uses is a very important component of the Comprehensive Development Plan. Permanent open space, parklands, playfields and quality institutions are an integral element in a community's overall physical and mental well-being. These lands and facilities help define a community's quality of life.

The 1985 land use inventory revealed that about 41 acres were being either used, or were reserved for, public parks, tot lots, cemeteries, playfields, conservation areas and public parking. This does not include the Tripod Hill Ski Area, the Eyak Lake Airport, and Eyak Lake itself. Quasi-public land uses, which include churches, hospitals, and government administrative functions, accounted for about 5 acres (Table 11).

E. VACANT PUBLIC LAND

Another very important aspect in the formulation of the data base for land use planning is the amount of land currently in public ownership which is vacant. This is the amount of land that is available for future development under the variety of land use activities which have been discussed previously. Land which is "reserved" for permanent open space does not fall into this category because it is already being used for the type of use it was designated for.

The factors which determine what vacant public land will be used for in the future include the zoning district in which the parcel is located, the perceived need for a particular use, compatibility of the proposed use(s) with adjacent uses, the physical characteristics of the land itself, and the contribution of the proposed use toward the realization of the stated objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

The 1985 land use inventory tabulated a total of 53.32 acres of public land in vacant status. Of this

total, the Jim Poor Industrial Park covered about 12 acres and the Ocean Dock Subdivision covered about 5 acres. These areas are located adjacent to areas of general industrial uses and are logical areas to be used in the future for industrial expansion and other water-related activities. In addition, the Waterfront Commercial Park comprises about 13 acres total and is largely vacant. At the time of the survey, a 5 acre tract around Odiak Pond was counted as vacant public land, however, this has since been dedicated as parkland. In addition to the 1985 total, the City is about to receive title to about 132 acres of Municipal Selection Lands from the State. Most of this land has been "Tentatively Approved" and is, in effect, City land. This land is broken up into a number of parcels scattered around the City. These parcels are suitable for residential and industrial purposes.

## II. CHANGES IN LAND USE: 1975-1985

The total area of developed land within the city limits of Cordova increased significantly during the ten years between the writing of the 1975 Comprehensive Plan and the 1985 Draft Comprehensive Plan (Table 14). The 1975 land use survey tabulated 418 acres of land under some kind of use. The 1985 inventory tabulated 529 acres being used. This represents a 27 percent increase in developed land area.

The most significant increase occurred in the amount of land used for industrial activities. This increase can be attributed to development in the Cordova Industrial Park which was vacant at the time of the 1975 survey, the addition of the Eyak Lake water treatment plant; the recently completed solid waste baler facility; and the emergence of several other industrial uses along Whitshed Road.

Land being used for residential purposes increased by about 26 acres. This represents a 1.2 percent gain with respect to the total acreage developed. Increases in residential use can be attributed primarily to development in the Odiak Park Subdivision and the Whiskey Ridge Subdivision. Another factor contributing to the increase was new construction along Whitshed Road and the Copper River Highway.

Land being used for business purposes increased only slightly; about .6 acres. The construction of the Frontier Building in 1985 accounts for the increase in developed area.

Quasi-public land uses increased approximately three acres. This can be attributed to the construction of the new community hospital and the new administrative offices of the telephone and electric cooperatives.

The 30 acre increase of land for other public uses is the result of the construction of the Civic Center complex, the fact that the South Containment Dike is being used for public parking, construction of public parking lots on City-owned land in the Central Business District, expansion of the High School grounds, and the Odiak Camper Park on Whitshed Road.

TABLE 14

## Existing Use of Lands and Tidelands

Land Use	City of Cordova, 1975 and 1985		1985 (2)	
	1975 (1) % of Land Area Developed (acres)	Land Area Developed Area	1985 (2) % of Land Area Developed (acres)	% of Area
Residential	70.11	16.80	95.55	18.05
One and Two Family	45.31	10.80	61.47	11.62
Multi-family	6.72	1.60	13.99	2.64
Trailers on Lots	3.55	.80	4.97	.94
Trailers in Courts	14.53	3.50	15.12	2.85
Business	7.00	1.70	7.65	1.44
Industrial	88.40	21.10	139.96	26.45
Light Industrial	8.30	2.00	13.10	2.47
General Industrial	80.10	19.10	126.86	23.98
Public	251.08	60.00	281.12	53.13
City Airport	32.00	7.60	32.00	6.05
Ski Area	208.58	49.80	208.58	39.42
Other Public	10.50	2.50	40.54	7.66
Quasi-Public	1.85	.40	4.79	.91
Total	418.44	100.00	529.07	100.00

(1) Source: Alaska Consultants, Inc. 1975 Cordova Comprehensive Plan

(2) Source: City of Cordova; Community Development Department

### III.

### FUTURE LAND USE NEEDS

#### A. COMMERCIAL SPACE

Cordova's existing business districts appear to be large enough to accommodate a significant amount of growth in the future. The 1985 land use survey showed that there were 61.22 acres zoned for business in the community. Of this total, only 7.65 acres of land were actually occupied with commercial uses. There is a great deal of open, vacant space in the Central Business District. In addition, the Waterfront Commercial Park is still largely vacant. This area has been zoned for marine-related commercial services and tourist and recreation related retail businesses; the types of businesses expected to expand the most in the future.

The retention of a single dominant business district is advantageous both to shoppers and retailers. A strong commercial area benefits shoppers because it encourages competition between businesses and promotes the establishment of specialty stores. In addition, because stores "share" business by being located in a major shopping area, individual retailers can realize a greater volume of trade than if they were in a more isolated location. This gives the retailer the option of carrying a greater variety of products which, in turn, provides incentives for consumers to do their shopping in Cordova. In addition, a strong central business district encourages a more efficient use of limited land.

The primary problem that will have to be addressed before the Central Business District can develop significantly is parking. Parking has been a major problem on First Street over the years; especially in the summer. Last summer it became a serious problem on Second Street as well, due to the establishment of several new businesses there. The main problem appears to be that employees of local businesses and residents of downtown apartments are parking on the main streets. This makes it difficult for customers to park near the stores they want to patronize. This problem will get much worse if the vacant land in the area becomes occupied with new buildings. The City currently owns two parking lots and leases another downtown. Combined, these lots provide about 45 parking spaces. Only one of them is used frequently. The Planning and Zoning Commission has recommended that the City draft a downtown parking plan in anticipation of increased activity associated with the expanding tourism industry, and the possible completion of the Copper River Highway.

The City completed the Waterfront Commercial Park (South Fill) in 1985. This new subdivision is adjacent to the small boat harbor and contains 17 lots with an average size of 10,000 square feet. The area has been zoned for marine-related retail and wholesale businesses. The subdivision has several parking lots reserved to provide off-street parking for harbor users. As of December 1993, the South Fill had two permanent commercial buildings on it and a new 20,000 square foot Alaska Commercial store was under construction. There is still significant room for expansion there. However, this is very valuable waterfront land and demand for it could increase suddenly. The City should consider adoption of a Waterfront Master Plan to determine and maximize future development in this area.

The Planning and Zoning Commission has recommended that the two commercial districts (Central Business District and South Fill/Tidewater Development Park District) be linked by one or more pedestrian walkway/stairways. There are two or three platted rights-of-way that would be suitable for this purpose. New pedestrian access routes would make it easier to travel between business districts and would benefit both consumers and individual businesses.

There are several other parcels scattered throughout the community which are zoned for business. Further rezoning, or zoning of unzoned land for commercial purposes, should be discouraged, especially within the old City limits. Scattered business zones serve to detract from the neighborhood, and also tend to draw business away from the central business district. Areas of town with conflicting uses should be examined and possibly re-zoned in order to best maximize future land uses within these zones.

## B. INDUSTRIAL SPACE

The amount of space available for waterfront industrial expansion in Cordova is adequate for the near future. However, the demand for industrial space in the next 10 years is potentially large. One of the community's economic goals is to establish itself as a service port for the fishing industry; particularly the bottomfish industry which is emerging in the Gulf of Alaska. This would mean developing the ability to service much larger boats and perhaps attracting a new bottomfish processor. The City is closely examining the feasibility of acquiring a travel lift to handle larger boats. It is hoped that a travel lift will be an incentive for boat repair businesses such as welding and fiberglass shops to locate here. The Jim Poor Industrial Park is the most likely existing location for these activities to take place. The Jim Poor Industrial Park still has a number of large lots available to accommodate this growth, however, if a travel lift were acquired and a new processor were to locate here, this area could reach its capacity for growth quickly.

The State of Alaska is considering completing the Copper River Highway. This would initially be a rough "pioneer" road and would gradually be upgraded to Federal highway standards. If this project is completed, it could spur a variety of new industrial activity here. This would be particularly true if this project was coupled with the construction of a deep water port at Shepard Point and/or construction of a Bering River access road. Shipping freight could become much easier and less expensive and it is likely that Cordova would become a trans-shipment point for the loading of natural resources such as coal and timber. The increasing demand for industrial land will probably be associated with uses such as warehousing, bulk fuel farms, and staging areas for storing timber, coal and other commodities.

The exploitation of Bering River coal and Katalla oil is still not feasible because of current world market conditions and the cost of accessing these resources. However, the U.S. Forest Service recently commissioned an Environmental Impact Assessment for construction of a Bering River access road. If this road is built, it could make exploitation of the nearby coal fields more attractive. It will also provide access to large stands of marketable trees. It is likely, although not certain, that Cordova would be the preferred deep water site for shipping these resources out. This would be another incentive for the City and private landowners to build the deep water port at Shepard Point. If this occurred, the need for waterfront industrial space could increase significantly. Upland acreage suitable for a staging area at Shepard Point is very limited (approximately 14 acres).

There are a number of steps the City can take to prepare for the anticipated increase in demand for industrial space. These steps can be taken gradually because the increased demand is not expected to occur quickly or in the immediate future. One step the City can take is to begin looking at the feasibility of creating more waterfront industrial land. This process should begin immediately because it will involve the filling of significant tracts of tidelands. Getting the permits to do this in the current regulatory climate will be a long and arduous process. The most likely areas for new industrial lands are ATS 1004 which is immediately north of the Ocean Dock industrial area, the stretch along Orca Road north of Fleming Spit, and Shepard Point; the site of

the proposed deep water port. Filling ATS 1004 and areas north of Fleming Spit would be relatively easy because the City owns the uplands. These uplands contain rock that would be excellent for fill material. Removing this material would also create more usable land. Currently, however, portions of ATS 1004 have been identified as a possible tourist-related sport fishing and recreation site.

The expansion of industrial uses north of town will be limited by the existing road system. Because of Cordova's topography, there are only two roads which run from the north, through town, and out of town toward the Copper River Highway and the airport. One of these roads, First Street, runs directly through the center of the central business district. This is not an appropriate route for heavy truck traffic. The other route, Railroad Avenue, runs through the Tidewater Development Park adjacent to the boat harbor. This is not a desirable route either, however, it is preferable to the main street. If the amount of truck traffic through town increases significantly, it should be directed toward Railroad Avenue. Before this can happen however, the City will have to significantly upgrade the road including widening it and rebuilding the road *base*.

The City must continue its search for land to accommodate industrial uses that do not require a waterfront location. Land that would be suitable for this type of activity is extremely limited. Additional industrial land will be required in the future if the Copper River Highway, a Bering River access road and the deep water port are built. It is not inconceivable that certain types of manufacturing activities could locate here in the future. It would be beneficial to identify this type of land now so that existing industrial uses located in inappropriate locations could relocate.

### C. RESIDENTIAL SPACE

The Draft Comprehensive Development Plan written in 1985 projected the population of Cordova to be 3,483 by the year 2,000. The community has experienced sustained but very moderate growth since that time, however, it is not growing at the rate predicted. The 1990 Census counted 2,110 people within the corporate limits. The City has disputed this figure and believes the correct number to be at least 400 people more.

The census number reflects only people living within the old corporate boundaries; it does not count the approximately 400 people who live close to town but were technically outside the city limits at that time. Although the City has not grown as fast as predicted in 1985, it could still easily reach the predicted level for the year 2,000; especially if some of the major construction projects mentioned above are realized. There was a housing shortage in Cordova in 1990 and 1991, especially for seasonal or transient workers. There was also a shortage of affordable housing for year-around residents. This situation has eased somewhat as a result of the current economic conditions.

It is expected that most new residential development, at least in the immediate future, will occur within the old city limits. This is a convenient place to live for many people because everything is within walking distance and because water and sewer services are readily available. Topography and drainage problems limit development elsewhere except for certain areas along Whitshed Road and in the Mile 6 area along the Copper River Highway. Additional development can be expected in these areas; especially if a solution can be found for the sewage and water problems. The Eyak Native Corporation owns large tracts of land near the Mile 13 Airport and at the end of Whitshed Road which may be suitable for large scale residential development. It is expected that a surge in demand will spur development in these areas.

Vacant land suitable for residential development within the original City limits is limited. Therefore, it is imperative that the City use the land it has efficiently. A new and updated zoning map will be passed in conjunction with the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan (See figure 7). This map clearly shows the areas to be zoned for medium and high density housing. This zoning scheme should take care of the City's housing needs for the near future. However, the City should also prepare a map showing neighborhoods suitable for higher density housing should there be a sudden surge in demand.

To a large degree, the efficiency of future residential development in Cordova will depend on the extent to which portions of town can be re-subdivided. Much of the presently undeveloped property uphill from the business district will be extremely difficult or impossible to develop unless new rights-of-way are dedicated and the lots are replatted to reflect the natural topography. A good share of this presently undeveloped area is owned by a small group of people. It is very strongly recommended that the City work with this group to develop a new subdivision plan for the entire area. In addition, the Planning Commission should closely examine proposed subdivisions in Old Town and all other areas within the community to evaluate not only the adequacy of a particular development, but also its potential impact on neighboring parcels of land.

There are a number of other steps the City can take to ease the shortage of housing and vacant land suitable for residential development. These steps include assisting private landowners who are interested in subdividing and developing their land, expanding the infrastructure system; particularly roads, water, and sewer systems, and subdividing and developing suitable lands the City has acquired through the municipal selection process. All future commercial, residential, or industrial new development should be carefully assessed to assure adequate off-site parking and snow storage.

#### D. PUBLIC and QUASI-PUBLIC LANDS

Cordova's needs for additional public land in the future appear to be relatively modest. Some needs which have been identified include pocket parks in Old Town and the North Railroad Addition, increased parking in the Central Business District, and more snow dumps. It is recommended that the City continue to require pocket parks in new subdivisions if one is not already nearby.

Future needs for quasi-public lands include land for a new school, a new museum and/or library, a convention center, a new landfill, and a new cemetery. A new landfill site is a crucial need and should be addressed immediately.

## VI. COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM PURPOSE

Cordova has coastal resources of great value. These resources include beaches, clean water, fish, wildlife, aquatic plants, shellfish, deepwater port sites, views, floodplains, estuaries, and marshes. The needs for housing, industry, recreation, and commerce result in competing demands for use of the shoreline. Some types of shorelines are unsuitable for some uses but suitable for others. Some uses are incompatible with others. Haphazard development of shorelines often results in expensive and unnecessary costs to the community later on. It is also a poor allocation of a scarce resource and places limits on growth opportunities. Without prior planning and the implementation of enforceable land use policies, it will be difficult for Cordova to manage development along the shoreline in an efficient and logical manner.

Under the Alaska Coastal Management Program, local governments are authorized to plan for the use of their own coastal areas. Although Alaska's coastline contains resources of major state and national value, it is recognized that the prime responsibility for stewardship rests with local communities. The planning and zoning authority of local government provides a systematic means for communities to ensure the highest and best use of resources. At The same time, it is recognized that the fulfillment of local goals and objectives should be balanced with state and national needs. This program has been structured to achieve this balance within the overall goal of ensuring the rational and responsible use of Cordova' S shorelines.

In 1980, the City of Cordova undertook the preparation of the Cordova Coastal Management Plan (CCMP). The City worked closely with several state and federal agencies during the preparation of the CCMP. The CCMP proposed the following coastal management objectives:

1. Coastal lands should be developed or preserved to promote the orderly balance of water-related or water-dependent uses.
2. All uses should be located, sited, and managed so they do not cause unnecessary or substantial adverse effects to other appropriate shoreline uses and the physical environment.
3. Proposed changes in use should be suitable for the specific site in terms of, but not limited to, physical geography, geology, available utilities and access, and the Cordova Comprehensive Plan.
4. Shoreline uses which enhance coastal areas or employ innovative features for purposes consistent with this program should be encouraged.
5. New economic development should be encouraged to locate in areas already developed with similar uses.
6. Renewable natural resources should be managed on a sustained yield concept.
7. Aesthetic and recreational qualities of natural and developed shorelines are valuable social resources, and should be given adequate protection.
8. Access of the public to all types of shorelines should be encouraged, provided that private rights, the public safety, and natural shoreline features are preserved.
9. Visual access to shorelines and tidelands should be protected.
10. Development and management of recreational areas should include provisions for adequate conservation of all affected natural resources.
11. Shoreline features of significant historic, cultural, archaeological, scientific, or educational value should be protected and made accessible to public or private organizations.
12. Restoration of shorelines marred by pollution, derelict, improper or abandoned development, or hazardous features should be encouraged.
13. Areas managed for the purposes of preserving or conserving valuable, unique, or fragile coastal resources and processes should be acquired by public purchase or other techniques to avoid excessive restrictions on private land holdings.
14. Subsistence usage of coastal resources, where occurring, shall be considered equally with other competing demands in determining use allocations.

The "coastal zone" is delineated into four management classification zones. Uses and activities which are proper or improper for each management classification are described in a matrix. The land use and platting regulatory powers of the City of Cordova are used to implement the coastal management program.

The Cordova Coastal Management Program (1986 ed.) and the Eyak Lake Area Meriting Special Attention Cooperative Management Plan contain detailed analysis of the coastal zone and the policies and guidelines regulating development within the coastal zone. The Cordova Planning and Zoning Commission is working on revisions to the Municipal Zoning Map. It is doing this

with an eye toward making it more consistent with the zoning provisions in the Cordova Coastal Management Plan.

## V. SOURCES OF MUNICIPAL LAND

Through the Municipal Entitlement Act of 1978, the City of Cordova is eligible to receive 235 acres of land from the state. To date, the City has received tentative approval to approximately 132.58 acres. Much of this land borders Orca Road north of the Ocean Dock. Other parcels are located along either side of Eyak Lake and on the Ski Hill. These lands are all undeveloped except for one parcel which has a rock quarry on it. The City should work to acquire the patent to all of its municipal selections.

Another method of receiving patent to state land is through AS33.05.810. These lands can only be used for public purposes. It is recommended that the City take an inventory of all State land in and around the City and match the list up with the City's projected needs for public land in the future.

The third source of land available to the municipality is through Section 14(c)3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. The City has done this and is awaiting approval of all parties.

## VI. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal: To guide the use of land in a manner that provides for the orderly and efficient growth of the community, protects property values, and enhances the health, safety, and quality of life for present and future generations.

1. Objective: To provide a sufficient amount of land for future expansion and growth in the commercial sector and to encourage the efficient, productive, and best use of commercial land.
  - a. Policy - Keep the primary business district centralized in the downtown and harbor area through use of zoning laws.
  - b. Policy - Connect the main business zones by constructing covered walkways/stairways between First Street and the harbor area and a walkway between the new and old harbors.
  - c. Policy - Develop an overall parking plan for the Central Business District and/or encourage construction of a parking garage.
  - d. Policy - Encourage development in the Central Business District using strategies such as tax incentives, tax increment financing, marketing, drafting a business plan for downtown, utilizing the Certified Local Government Program, etc.
  - e. Policy - Encourage the most productive and best use of the Waterfront Commercial Park; retain a sufficient number of lots for new permanent commercial buildings.
2. Objective: To provide a sufficient amount of suitable waterfront industrial and general industrial land to accommodate future growth and development and to encourage the most efficient, productive, and best use of industrial lands.
  - a. Policy - Identify and zone new land for industrial uses that do not require a waterfront location.
  - b. Policy – Study the feasibility of creating more waterfront industrial land by filling ATS 1004 and extending the Ocean Dock Subdivision industrial area.
  - c. Policy - Encourage the most efficient, productive, and best use of the remaining land in the Jim Poor Industrial Park for permanent industrial or commercial buildings

- consistent with the Waterfront Master Plan.
- d. Policy - Continue discussions with private landowners regarding the development of Shepard Point for industrial uses.
3. Objective: To provide a sufficient amount of land for future residential development and to encourage the efficient use of the limited land that is available.
    - a. Policy - Assist private landowners in replatting and developing the Ski Hill area.
    - b. Policy - Assist private landowners in replatting the Railroad Row and Old Town areas.
    - c. Policy - Assist and encourage private landowners who want to subdivide their land for residential development.
    - d. Policy - Zone, subdivide, and dispose of City lands that are suitable for residential development.
    - e. Policy - Identify residential areas that are appropriate for higher density housing should this become necessary due to a sudden or higher than anticipated population surge.
    - f. Policy - Prepare a plan for paving and residential streets including curbs and gutters.
    - g. Policy - Discourage the siting of non-compatible uses next to residential neighborhoods.
    - h. Policy - Promote infrastructure expansions to the newly annexed areas.
    - i. Policy - Develop standards for streets and utilities.
    - j. Policy - Discourage spot zoning. Areas with conflicting uses should be zoned correctly so that future land use maximizes property development within the constraints of the intended zone.
  4. Objective: To provide a sufficient amount of land appropriately located to accommodate the community's need for public and quasi-public facilities.
    - a. Policy - Develop an overall parks and recreation plan.
    - b. Policy - Implement the five-year Parks Development Plan.
    - c. Policy - Identify land for a new school.
    - d. Policy - Identify land for a new library/museum/city hall building.
    - e. Policy - Draft a comprehensive parking plan for the Central Business District.
    - f. Policy - Compile a map which shows which lots around town should be retained for snow dumps.
    - g. Policy - Conduct a needs assessment for land necessary for other public purposes such as cemeteries, ball fields, hydro plants, and watersheds.
  5. Objective: To provide for the future expansion of municipal services and for the infrastructure necessary for overall community development.
    - a. Policy - Conduct a new land use survey.
    - b. Policy - Conduct a new housing inventory survey.
    - c. Policy - Zone all lands within the City limits which are currently unzoned.
    - d. Policy - Amend zoning laws and/or the Cordova Coastal Management Plan so that they are consistent.
    - e. Policy - Acquire needed state lands where appropriate by securing the patents for Municipal Selection lands, and by petitioning for the conveyance of tidelands and uplands needed for public use.

## TRANSPORTATION

### I REGIONAL HIGHWAYS/EXISTING AND PROPOSED

There is currently only one highway route by which travelers can reach Prince William Sound. The State of Alaska is proposing to increase highway access to the Sound by converting old railway beds into roads. This would give travelers a much more convenient link between the Sound and the Anchorage area. One project is the proposed construction of the Copper River Highway to Cordova. Three options have been identified for this road: 1) a route to Chitina using the old railroad right-of-way; 2) a route up the Tiekel River valley; and, 3) a route following the Tasnuna River. The Copper River Highway today is completed to Mile 49.

The proposed road to the Bering River area is another project which might result in a highway of regional significance. This road would provide access to privately owned commercial timber stands, the Bering River coal fields, and the Katalla oil fields. It would also provide Cordovans with access to prime hunting and fishing areas presently accessible only by plane or boat. The highway could also provide easier access for commercial fishermen fishing the Bering River area.

### II. WATER TRANSPORTATION

#### 1. Ferry System

Highway connections between most communities in Southeast Alaska and between the coastal communities in Southcentral Alaska are not feasible because of extremely rugged terrain. In recognition of that fact, the Southeast and Southwest marine highway Systems were inaugurated, in 1963 and 1964 respectively, to provide a service which would be an acceptable substitute for regular highway travel. Cordova is the only major community on Prince William Sound which is not directly connected to the rest of the State by either road or rail.

#### 2. Other Shipping Services

Two barge companies, Sea-Land Services Inc. and Samson Tug and Barge serve Cordova. These companies handle the bulk of Cordova's freight requirements.

Fuel delivery service is provided by a Petro-Marine barge. All the barge lines and fuel suppliers use the facilities at the Ocean Dock. Other fuel suppliers have recently expressed an interest in Cordova

### C. AIR TRANSPORTATION

Most Alaskans find it convenient to travel around the state by air because of the distances involved and because the highway system is very limited. A high proportion of Alaska's freight is also transported by air.

Cordova has exceptional airport facilities and airline service for a town of its size. The community has two state-owned and maintained airports. The Mudhole Smith Airport (Mile 13 Airport) is located at Mile 13 of the Copper River Highway. It is Cordova's primary airport and it features a 7,500 foot paved runway capable of accommodating jet traffic. Currently Alaska Airlines and ERA maintain regularly scheduled traffic between Cordova, Anchorage, and points south. The Eyak Lake Airstrip (Municipal Airport), located on the north shore of Eyak Lake, has a 1,950 foot gravel runway which is used by small private planes and several commuter and/or charter services. The town has three heliport pads; two at the Eyak

Lake strip and one at the community hospital. Finally, Eyak Lake itself serves as a float plane base. It has a 10,000 foot landing area which is used by both float planes and planes equipped with skis, depending on the time of year. The Eyak Lake strip is heavily used, primarily because of its proximity to town. The Eyak Lake float and wheelplane facilities are a vitally important part of the Cordova economy and provide for a needed degree of safety separation between small aircraft and the large commercial jets using the Mile 13 airport. DOT/PF plans to consolidate these facilities with those at Mile 13. They must consider the effects such action will have on air traffic safety, commerce, and the viability of existing businesses located at Eyak Lake.

II. Local Transportation

When planning road systems, it is useful to first classify streets according to their primary function. By distinguishing between streets which will carry large amounts of through traffic and those which will mainly carry local traffic, a community is better equipped to develop an interconnected system for through traffic, and to limit traffic on residential streets. Such a distinction is also valuable when choices concerning expenditures for street maintenance and improvement must be made. By classifying streets and planning for future street construction, the City can establish funding priorities for those projects which will benefit the greatest number of people. In this plan, streets have been classified using the following definitions:

Major Thoroughfares: Streets which extend across the entire community, providing the main route between outlying areas and the center of the city.

Collector Streets: Streets which link various areas of the community and connect with major thoroughfares, or with major points of traffic origin and destination.

Local Streets: Streets used primarily to provide access to individual properties.

A.

MA

JOR THOROUGHFARES

The Copper River Highway and its northern extension, Orca Road, is Cordova's only major thoroughfare. This route enters town along the south shore of Eyak Lake and swings northward past the high school and through the heart of downtown where it is known as First Avenue. It then continues north to the ferry terminal at the Ocean Dock. Beyond the Ocean Dock, the road is called Orca Road. It follows the shore of Orca Inlet for almost two miles and terminates at the old Chugach fish processing complex at Orca Creek. The Copper River Highway is paved between the ferry terminal and the Airport at Mile 13. The section through town is improved to urban standards with curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. DOT/PF plans to repave the highway during the summer of 1995. The work will include constructing a bike trail from Mile 0 to Mile 6 and a better pedestrian crossing at Odiak Slough.

In general, the Copper River Highway/First Street/Orca Road route fulfills the requirements of a major thoroughfare. It connects one side of town with the other and provides a convenient link between major transportation points. In the event that traffic passing through town increases significantly, it is recommended that the City be prepared to convert Railroad Avenue to function as the major thoroughfare. Doing so could increase the efficiency of both the commercial and industrial districts.

B.

## LECTOR STREETS

Cordova has no well-developed system of collector streets, due primarily to the constraints imposed by topography. At the present time, several routes within town function to some extent as collectors. These are Lake Avenue, which leads from the downtown area to the Eyak Lake airstrip and beyond; Railroad Avenue, which connects the Cordova Industrial Park and small boat harbor area with the Ocean Dock to the north and the Copper River Highway to the south; Whitshed Road which runs from the Copper River Highway south toward Point Whitshed; and portions of Council and Adams Avenues, which link the downtown and waterfront areas.

C.

LO

## CAL STREETS

Local streets should be designed and located to provide convenient access to residential properties without encouraging unnecessary through traffic. In areas where the topography is uneven, grades should also be an important consideration in street design. Cordova currently maintains 11.2 miles of local streets within the old City limits. These streets are mostly substandard and in need of repair.

Many Cordova streets were not developed in any systematic manner, particularly in the area south of Lake Avenue, including the peninsula where the high school is now located. Streets, where they exist, often have narrow and irregular rights-of-way. Many interior lots in the Wolf Hill and Old Town areas do not have any public access at all. As a result, a complex network of paths, driveways, easements and stairways has developed which serves the access needs of local residents.

The resolution of Cordova's platting problems and the development of a reasonably efficient system of local streets is not likely to be either easy or inexpensive. Much of the platted area uphill from the commercial district would be developable if it were resubdivided. Fortunately, a small group of individuals holds title to a good deal of this area. Re-subdivision could be accomplished fairly easily if the property owners so desired.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goal: Air, water, and surface transportation systems that allow economical and efficient movement within the City and between the City and the rest of the state.

### 1. Objective: Improve Marine Highway Service to Cordova

- a. Policy - Promote and support construction of new ferry staging area and terminal.
- b. Policy - Keep Ferry Committee intact and continue to lobby for scheduling and rate improvements.
- c. Policy - Promote re-establishment of ferry route connecting Prince William Sound with Southeast Alaska.

### 2. Objective: Upgrade the freight handling facilities in Cordova

- a. Policy - Promote and support the construction of a new deep water dock and staging area at

## Shepard Point.

### 3. Objective: Upgrade local streets.

- a. Policy - Support the upgrading of local streets by widening, paving, replatting, acquiring land etc. where feasible and prudent.
- b. Policy - Support revision of City's subdivision regulations to include standard details for residential streets, sidewalks, and drainage.
- c. Policy - Support revision of subdivision regulations to require that all newly constructed collector streets have a R.O.W. of at least 60 feet and that all new residential streets have a R.O.W. of at least 50 feet.
- d. Policy - Implement the comprehensive drainage study and prepare a plan to improve drainage. The plan should consider drainage options in areas likely to be developed in the future.
- e. Policy - Draft parking plan for downtown

### 4. Objective - Upgrade state maintained roads in Cordova and the surrounding area.

- a. Policy- Promote the widening of Whitshed Road in the area of Odiak Camper Park. Request walking path/biketrail from camper park to Copper River Highway.
- b. Policy - Promote the installation of guard rails on the Copper River Highway along Eyak Lake.
- c. Policy - Promote an upgrade of Power Creek Road. Widen it and pave it at least to the airport.

### 5. Objective: Develop and enhance bicycle trails and walking path network.

- a. Policy - Seek funding to construct at least one covered stairway between Railroad Avenue and First Street.
- b. Policy - Promote construction of a bicycle path along the Copper River Highway between the ferry dock and the Mile 13 Airport.
- c. Policy - Construct a walking path along the breakwater in the small boat harbor.
- d. Policy - Revise and enforce the sidewalk
- e. Policy - Work to rebuild and repair the network of stairways already in place.

### 6. Objective: Continue to evaluate the on-going cost/benefit and impact analysis on pending and proposed regional transportation projects.

- a. Policy - Support regional transportation projects that are found to be in the best interests of the City of Cordova.

## FUTURE PLANING ISSUES

### I.

#### duction

Intro

At the time the first draft of this plan was being reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, there were two emerging developments looming on the horizon which had the potential to significantly alter the social, economic, and political fabric of the community. One of these developments was the possible completion of the Copper River Highway, which would connect

Cordova to the rest of the state highway network. The merits of the Copper River Highway are still being debated. The other was the proposed annexation of additional territory. Annexation has been achieved.

The merits of the Copper River Highway are still being debated. The City's request to annex additional territory has been officially approved.

The first six chapters of this comprehensive plan do not discuss the planning issues associated with either of these developments in detail. These issues were omitted because the Copper River Highway project was still pending and because the newest residents of the City have not had adequate time and opportunity to participate in the planning process for their areas. The purpose of this section is to discuss some of these issues briefly and to suggest a framework under which planning could take place. Preliminary goals and objectives are presented; especially for the newly annexed territory.

Comprehensive development plans should be updated at least every five years. It is recommended that this plan be updated within two years because, by that time, it will be more clear what the infrastructure and service needs are in the newly annexed areas. More information regarding whether the road is going to be built should also be available by then. Both projects are discussed in more detail below.

## II. The Copper River Highway

The construction of the Copper River Highway is a project that has been studied, analyzed, and debated since the railroad ceased operations in 1939. A formal Environmental Impact Statement (E.I.S.) on this project is currently being prepared. Four route alternatives and a "no-build" option are being evaluated. If the project survives the E.I.S. process, the road could be built using Federal transportation funds.

A long list of legitimate and substantive arguments, both for and against this project, has been presented by the proponents and opponents of completing the highway. The City should carefully identify the potential impacts associated with this project and develop a plan to assist in the transition to a new social and economic era. The transition plan should outline strategic steps the City can take to both mitigate any adverse impacts and take full advantage of the economic opportunities that might emerge. Some of the planning questions that will need to be addressed are:

1. How many visitors a year can Cordova expect and what services will they require? Will infrastructure improvements such as expanding the boat harbor, building campgrounds, developing more parking facilities and building other visitor facilities be necessary and if so, how soon and to what scale? Will police, hospital, garbage collection and other services need to be expanded?
2. What other "spin off" economic activities besides tourism are likely to emerge? How will the highway interface with other development projects such as the deep water port? Will these and other projects complement each other and what will the cumulative social and economic impacts be for Cordova?
3. Will completion of the highway influence more people to live year-around in Cordova? If so, what will this mean for real estate prices and the demand for housing and developed land? What will it mean for the school budget and for other services? What infrastructure improvements such as the extension of water and sewer lines will be necessary?

4. infrastructure improvements be financed? Who will pay for them?

How will

5. individual business people position themselves to take full advantage of the economic opportunities that will occur should the highway be completed? How can potential negative impacts be alleviated? What level of growth management or control, if any, does the community desire?

How can the City and

The City of Cordova should stay fully engaged in the debate over the merits of completing the Copper River Highway. It should carefully evaluate the Environmental Impact Statement when it is available and participate actively during the public comment period. Hopefully, the E.I.S. will assist the community and the state in deciding whether this project is in the overall best interest of the city and the region.

If the decision is made to build the highway, the City should immediately seek a planning grant or other source of revenue that would enable it to begin the planning process. The Copper River Highway will be a state and regional road, not just Cordova's road. However, Cordova is likely to see the greatest impacts of any community along or near the highway corridor.

As a result, much of the financial burden for building the necessary infrastructure and providing additional services will fall upon the taxpayers of this community. Cordova's budget is relatively small and the local economy is currently in a downturn. The community cannot afford to absorb these impacts on its own. It is the state's responsibility to assist the community in this regard. The City should seek commitments from the State of Alaska to help it with the planning process, infrastructure development, and provision of services that will be required.

## Goals and Objectives

The goal of the planning process should be to develop a transition plan that would serve as a blueprint or roadmap for guiding the community into a new social and economic era. The planning process should have three primary phases; listed as objectives below:

Objective I: Conduct a thorough social and economic impact analysis focused specifically on Cordova. This study should identify the social and economic impacts the City can anticipate, both good and bad. This study will give the community good baseline information which will form the foundation for informed planning and decision making.

Objective II: Develop a Transition Plan. Based on the information gathered during the social and economic impact assessment, the transition plan should present a strategy for adapting to the new reality that the social and economic characteristics of the community may soon be evolving. The transition plan should provide the community with strategies to mitigate adverse impacts, strategies to maximize economic opportunities, and provide a roadmap for a smooth evolution into a new socio-economic era with a minimal amount of economic dislocation and social disruption. The plan should also include timetables for infrastructure improvements and strategies on how to pay for them.

Objective III: Develop an Implementation Plan: The Planning process is only useful if there is meaningful follow-up. It is very important that the City and State stick to the plan once it is agreed upon. Cordova should work hard to secure funding for the projects identified in the transition plan. This plan, along with the Comprehensive Development Plan, are two very

important tools the Council can use when it develops its budget, C.I.P. List, and lobbying agenda each year. The City should seek commitments from the state at the very beginning of the planning process for assistance with infrastructure and service delivery improvements.

### III.

### Annexation

The City of Cordova finalized annexation of approximately 60 square miles of the surrounding area into the City limits in 1994. Following are some broad objectives the City has for the newly annexed area.

#### Goals and Objectives

Goal: Incorporate and Integrate the Newly Annexed Areas in a Fair and Equitable Manner That is Beneficial and Acceptable to All Cordovans.

#### Objectives:

Objective 1: Creating working maps for the newest areas of the City. Incorporate these areas into a new computerized mapping system.

Objective 2: Revise and update the Cordova Coastal Management Plan to include the newly annexed area. Update the Eyak Lake AMSA Plan to reflect the fact that the entire lake is now within the municipal boundaries.

Objective 3: Gradually educate new residents about and implement other land use regulations now in effect such as building codes and platting regulations.

Objective 4: As appropriate and necessary, develop and implement zoning regulations.

Objective 5: Gather information and establish a work plan for capital improvements; particularly infrastructure expansion such as new water and sewer lines and road upgrades.

Objective 6: Monitor Service delivery to the newly annexed areas and gather input regarding residents satisfaction with the level and quality of service received.

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