



October 2, 2019

Members of the Assembly,

The PEDC Board appreciates the confidence the Borough Assembly has in our organization to address these very important issues. We will provide ongoing updates to the Assembly as we establish a strategy. This direction fits in very nicely with the current efforts to develop a tourism management plan, and previous recommendations made in the Petersburg Borough Comprehensive Plan.

ASSEMBY REQUEST: Encourage PEDC and the Chamber to develop a credible, focused plan to encourage new business, including non-fisheries related businesses.

As you likely know, the first steps in creating these plans is to focus our efforts on business opportunities and growth where there is a clear chance for success, and on the strengths of the community. Thanks to the Comprehensive Plan update, we do have a bit of a head start on at least identifying some of the key elements necessary to be successful. We should also acknowledge that adding jobs to existing businesses, non-profits, and government agencies are great examples of economic growth in smaller communities.

ASSEMBY REQUEST: Encourage PEDC and the Chamber to develop a marketing plan to let the “outside world” know about our high quality of life and welcoming business climate.

We need to understand what the Assembly’s intent of “marketing our community” really is all about? Is it to bring new residents and grow the population? Is it to increase our visitor traffic, to help our existing businesses, to attract new business, or is it all the above? Community marketing is expensive and needs to be targeted toward specific audience to be at all effective. Secondly, the direction from the Assembly presumes Petersburg already has a “welcoming business climate”. We believe any plan should also include specific steps to improve the business climate.

Lastly, there must be a clear consensus and support from the Assembly if PEDC (and the Chamber) are going to undertake development and implementation of these plans. By definition, economic development creates change and this change comes in varied forms, including more people visiting, new residents, and new competition to existing businesses.

The PEDC respectfully requests the Borough Assembly engage in an honest conversation to determine its support for economic development and the expected change it will bring to

our community. With very limited staffing to develop and implement these plans, it is imperative we take a focused and deliberate approach with the Assembly as an active advocate and supporter of these efforts. Enclosed please find a general outline that PEDC could develop toward a more focused and actionable plan and a basis for your preliminary discussion if you so choose.

Sincerely,

PEDC Board of Directors

Casey Flint, Glorianne Wollen, Hillary Whitethorn, Brian Lynch, Joyce Cummings, Stephen Giesbrecht, Mark Jensen, Nick Ohmer, Megan O'Neil

enclosure

Encourage New Business/Grow Existing Business

Goal: Strong Base. Support and expand established economic sectors.

STRATEGY	PAST/CURRENT ACTIVITIES	PROPOSED	COMMENTS
Recognize and support the three elements that collectively support the commercial fishing industry: harvesters, processors and community.	- Community Cold Storage - Drive-down dock/Bulkhead N. Harbor Replacement S. Harbor Dredging	Establish a "Processor's Working Group" to identify ways Borough/PEDC can support sector to bring more volume.	
Develop strategies for expanding the Borough's capacity for maintaining the commercial fishing fleet, as well as other types of boats and marine equipment.	Funding design and engineering for Scow Bay haul out. Actively responding to funding opportunities (TIGER, BUILD)	Establish an "Industrial Working Group" to identify ways Borough/PEDC can support expansion of industrial sector.	
Support expansion of forms of tourism that provide local jobs and help protect and sustain resources and Petersburg's authentic character that attracts visitors; focus on small cruise, ferry, ecotourism, independent travelers.	Visitor Industry Working Group is developing a draft Tourism Management Plan. The plan includes various recommendations related to current and future development of tourism.	Finalize, Adopt, and Implement recommendations from the Tourism Management Plan Also, see Marketing below. Consider creating a formal Visitor and Tourism Advisory Board	
Work with the Forest Service and other public land owners, and congressional delegation to support appropriate planned and scaled timber harvests, and associated milling and processing.			
Encourage and provide space for value-added activities.	Established a small space for direct-marketers at the Cold Storage.		

Maintain existing and work to improve transportation options for people and freight coming and going from Petersburg.	Provided financial support to SE Conference AMHS reform project. At one time there was a Borough Transportation Committee.	Create a Borough Transportation Committee	
Promote local agriculture and the sale of local food	Ongoing annual financial support to The Market. Obtained USDA grant to fund Market expansion.		
Advocate to retain federal and state positions in Petersburg.	Raised concerns of FS relocating jobs out of Petersburg and consolidating office to senior staff.	Create and maintain a list of specific state and federal agencies operating in Petersburg with staffing levels over time.	
Goal: Emerging Markets. Support new and emerging industries.			
Seaweed farming, soil and composting, products made from fish waste.	Recently held "seaweed farming workshop".	Use above-mentioned processor's group to discuss opportunities for use of fish waste.	
Telecommuting jobs such as engineering, programming, accounting and other web-based occupations.		Sponsor a targeted survey of professionals involved in these trades to determine specific requirements and triggers to potentially relocating to Petersburg.	
Develop the Petersburg Borough as a hub for health, conferences and education.	Chamber has printed conference planning packets.	Collect and provide specific metrics on the value added by conference attendees as compared to general tourism. Evaluate the cost/benefit of hiring a specific person or firm to market Petersburg to appropriate conferences.	

Encourage residents to consider resource jobs outside of Petersburg; for example, working two weeks on/two weeks off on the North Slope.			
Goal: Land Use. Take advantage of land use planning opportunities to maximize the highest and best use of land.			
Work to sustain a vibrant, compact, diverse and walkable downtown mixed-use commercial and residential core.		Pursue funding to identify potential uses for Ocean Beauty plant and possibly infrastructure improvements.	
Land Selection. During land selection, take advantage of land-based economic development opportunities.			
Create a short policy document to share with the Forest Service to use during their next Tongass Forest Plan update.			
Goal: Quality Workforce. Ensure education, housing and continued quality of life amenities to retain and attract a quality workforce.			
Increase opportunities for Petersburg students to be exposed to different professions and industries, including those outside of the Petersburg Borough.		Work with the School to develop a tracking mechanism of past and current Petersburg graduates and what their career choices have been. Utilize this list to proactively contact former graduates regarding local job opportunities.	
Ensure housing at levels that match wages that can be earned locally,		Determine cost of opening new property for development.	

so young people who grew up in Petersburg, or who might want to live there, can afford to stay and contribute to the future of the community.		Add a workforce development component (i.e. apprentice requirement) to development. Develop shared housing facility to help employed people transition to the community.	
Goal: Present Consistent, Cohesive Marketing Message			
Create an outreach calendar for local, regional, state, and national (and even Norwegian contacts) on which to communicate with newsletters, phone calls, e-blasts, and press releases.		Develop the marketing message and get buy-in from the Chamber, PEDC, the Borough Assembly, etc. Similar to the branding initiative, make it part of all of our communications.	
Use employment opportunities as marketing tool.		Co-op with local business & borough to advertise a "good job" each quarter. Highlight quality of life, etc.	
Goal: Promote a Positive Business Climate.			
Respond professionally to all new business inquiries. Refrain from publicly disparaging a specific industry/business.			
Speak positively about our community, achievements, and local economic development efforts.		Encourage public official (Mayor/Assembly member) to recognize and attend business grand opening, anniversaries.	
Improve communication between business community and borough		Encourage the Assembly to host a quarterly business/borough luncheon to discuss challenges and opportunities.	

		Develop a FAQ about living and doing business in Petersburg. Examples – how do I ship on AML, where do I get propane, what is a SHARC card and how to get one, who ships to Alaska and who does not; how do I have a house built; etc.	
Goal: Improve Wayfinding			
Visitors, conference attendees, new residents need to find their way around town.		Implement digital/app wayfinding system throughout the community. Revisit branding recommendations from the perspective of sign design and messaging. Encourage the Borough to develop and implement visitor kiosks in strategic places throughout the community, including on the trail systems.	
Signage out the road to campgrounds, boat ramps, fishing opportunity.		Develop and implement signage to all local “out the road” attractions with mileage markers, directions, and entry signs. Incorporate this information into expanded local maps of these locations.	