

**INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF PEOPLE  
TO BUILD BETTER COMMUNITIES:  
A MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE  
COMMUNITY BUILDING ASSESSMENT**

**PREPARED FOR:  
UNITED WAY OF ANCHORAGE  
MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**



Research-Based Consulting

Juneau  
Anchorage

**OCTOBER 2003**

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United Way of Anchorage contracted with McDowell Group, Inc., an Alaska research-based consulting firm, to conduct a community building assessment of the Municipality of Anchorage. The assessment is based on a methodology called *COMPASS II®*, *Increasing the Capacity of People to Build Better Communities*. This community building program was sponsored and developed by United Way of America. The primary concept behind *COMPASS II®* is that building the Anchorage community will take individuals, associations, businesses, and organizations “who are motivated to work with others to improve the social and economic conditions in which people live.”

This community-building assessment gathers views about community strengths and community and household challenges directly from Municipality of Anchorage residents, businesses, and “key informants” – the entities that will need to be motivated to work together to meet the social and economic challenges facing the Municipality. This report includes a socioeconomic context of the Municipality, including an overview of existing health and human services, and lessons learned from the household, business, and key informant surveys, and discussion groups.

This project was commissioned by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from United Way of Anchorage, Alaska 20/20, ConocoPhillips, BP, the Municipality of Anchorage Health and Human Services Department, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, UAA College of Health and Social Welfare, UAA Institute for Social and Economic Research, Nerland Agency, Rasmuson Foundation, Alaska Community Foundation, Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Senator Stevens’ Office, Alaska Children’s Services, Youth Development Coalition, and Providence Health System. Generous financial support was provided by several organizations, including United Way of Anchorage, the Municipality of Anchorage Health and Human Services Department, Providence Health System, BP, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.

### Methodology

The methodological design for this project is largely based on the research program designed by *COMPASS II®* and laid out in its *Guide to Community-building*. The Steering Committee guided McDowell Group in the research process. Several methodologies were employed in this study. They include:

- Secondary Data –To construct an overview of the Municipality’s socioeconomic context, data was collected from U.S. Census, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Anchorage School District, and the Municipality of Anchorage.

- Surveys – A survey of 350 randomly selected Municipality of Anchorage households was conducted by telephone during late April 2003. The *COMPASS II*® community household survey was customized to apply specifically to Anchorage, and included questions on community strengths, community and household challenges and issues, and demographics. Additionally, the *COMPASS II*® business survey was customized for a mail out survey to 1,233 Municipality-area wide businesses. A total of 201 businesses responded to the survey. The survey was designed to capture information on business employment practices, community support and leadership, interest in further community involvement, and perceptions of community strengths and challenges.
- Key Informant Interviews – The study team conducted interviews with 32 community representatives. Each informant was asked a series of questions about their own perspectives on their community’s strengths and challenges, community needs, and how to address these needs.
- Discussion Groups – The study team conducted five discussion groups, representing distinct areas of interest in Anchorage. The discussion groups were structured to run two to three hours and cover strengths, challenges, vision for Anchorage, and desired outcomes when meeting challenges.

## Community Strengths

Through the various methodologies employed, – the secondary data, survey, key informant, and discussion groups – research produced a consensus of opinion about Anchorage’s community strengths, including:

- *A solid foundation of health and human community assets:* Anchorage agencies offer a wide variety of health and human services to local residents. These services are predominantly located in the Anchorage population core. Smaller communities located outside this core are not as well serviced, but this is somewhat understandable given their smaller populations and greater distances from the concentrated population Anchorage Bowl area. However, according to key informants and discussion groups, these agencies are largely successful in serving the needs of Anchorage’s residents, and are held in high regard by the community.
- *Solid community perceptions on community-building strengths:* According to household survey respondents, Anchorage residents positively rate statements that measure community strength. These statements, as designed by the *COMPASS II*® methodology, are built upon concepts involving coming together, respecting each other, and ability to work together within the community. Key informants and discussion groups echoed the premise of these statements, believing that people in Anchorage do come together in times of need.
- *Strong community involvement and support:* The findings of the household survey show that the majority of Anchorage residents volunteer, vote, and believe they can affect change in their community. The business survey also supports these findings. Two-thirds of Anchorage businesses (67 percent) are actively involved in encouraging their employees to vote and participate in the political process. Over half are promoting economic development (57 percent), volunteering (55),

good health (54 percent), and youth development (51 percent). The business survey results provide dozens of responses on how businesses are improving the quality of life in Anchorage through their business practices and community involvement. These are strengthening forces in building community support. Statements from key informants and discussion groups noted in several ways that there is considerable citizen involvement in Anchorage, that people can get involved easily, that access to decision-makers is easily reached, and that people can make a difference once they decide to get involved.

- *Powerful images of community characteristics:* Through the survey of businesses, key informants and discussion groups participation, Anchorage was consistently seen as a great place to live with its beauty, recreation assets, openness/friendliness, quality of life, good schools, ethnic diversity, economic opportunities and relatively safe environment. The diversity of Anchorage residents was an especially predominant part of the community's positive image.

## Household Challenges

Three of the top five challenges facing Anchorage households directly concern health care affordability. Based on the household survey results, Municipality of Anchorage residents believe the top five major challenges facing their household are:

- Not having enough money to pay the doctor
- Not having enough money to get medical insurance
- Not having enough money to buy prescriptions/medications
- Finding it difficult to budget for housing, food and clothing
- Having a lot of anxiety, stress or depression

## Community Challenges

With few exceptions, all methodologies consistently reveal similar themes for challenges facing the community, including affordable health care, affordable housing, educational problems, economic diversity, efficient and effective social service delivery, and the perception of lack of constructive planning by either the municipality or the state.

- Based on the household survey results, Municipality of Anchorage residents believe the top five major challenges facing their community are:
  - Shortage of affordable housing
  - Lack of affordable medical care
  - Poor road and/or traffic conditions
  - Overcrowded classrooms
  - Crime

- The business community also recognizes the multitude of challenges facing Anchorage. They provided opinions on needed services centered on children and youth services, educational services, health and social services, government services, housing services, transportation services, and recreation services. Their concerns were largely collaborated by comments made by either discussion group participants, or key informants.
- The five discussion groups were varied in composition but provided some revealing input for the project, as their thoughts were consistent with all of the other research in this report. While major issues varied somewhat from group to group, the predominant challenges and fears expressed by participants were remarkably consistent and included:
  - Economic uncertainty and economic fear about the future of Anchorage and Alaska in general – this was the leading major issue of discussion, even for the teens group
  - The perception of the lack of constructive planning and a vision for the future by the state and the municipality contributes to Anchorage uncertainty
  - Affordable housing in all its forms
  - The ability of the community and the economy to absorb additional population
  - Declining support for social services, perhaps best expressed as, “What will become of the poorest of us?”
  - Youth issues in general concerned all groups. These issues included a perceived decline in the quality of education, behavioral issues interfering with education, economic future for the next generation, declining social civility, alcohol/drug use, and the need for more low-cost youth activities.

## Barriers to Community-building

There were several barriers or obstacles that people mentioned during the key informant interviews and group discussions. These include:

- *The sense of fiscal entitlement by many Alaskans:* Attitudes described as “give me my PFD and public services I want but don’t ask me to pay for them or to help anyone else” were distressing to many participants. They believed this attitude kept the state and Anchorage from planning for the future and from giving Alaskans ownership in how government is managed and operated.
- *Waning of “pioneering spirit”:* A second companion theme was the perception among many study participants of a significant shift from the traditional “independent Alaska spirit (that included helping your neighbor)” to an angry selfishness exemplified by both entitlement demands and a lack of caring for the needs of others. This theme was also expressed as a concern that too much political and fiscal emphasis was focused on “cutting funding” of community services rather than “building services and the community.”

- *Inclusion of diverse community elements:* While diversity within the community, including ethnic, faith, cultural, and social, was embraced as a community asset, creating a welcoming environment and involving these diverse elements “around the community table” was considered difficult and a considerable barrier to building the community.
- *Constant turnover of the population:* The demographic profile of Anchorage shows that residency in Anchorage is relatively short-term. People from outside the state and the nation, and from other areas within the state move into and out of Anchorage at an alarming rate. This creates problems in developing stability in housing, education, health and social service provision. This issue also creates problems in encouraging and gaining commitment from newcomers and potential “short-timers” to Anchorage.
- *Economic diversity and stability:* Issues such as the fiscal gap, economic diversity, widening economic gaps, and stable economic conditions were mentioned by businesses, key informants, and discussion group participants. Many participants believed that until Anchorage can overcome its lack of economic diversity and stability, challenges facing affordable housing and health care, health and human service planning, and stable funding of these programs will be difficult to resolve.

## **Role of a Community-Building Assessment**

The assessment identified both common goals and commonly perceived challenges. Community members tend to have similar concerns about health and human issues. Businesses have indicated they are willing to participate and take a leadership role in economic and community planning, and existing health and human service agencies are posed to coordinate and cooperate in meeting these gaps.

The information collected throughout this assessment is an invaluable resource that can serve many purposes. The information can be used to:

- Identify new opportunities for community improvement and involvement
- Influence public policy
- Support proposals for redesigning systems and programs
- Inform decisions on the distribution of new resources and re-distribution of existing resources, and
- Document the need for increasing resources

## Introduction

A community-building assessment is an important step in a long process that eventually results in improvements to quality of life and to the area being evaluated. This assessment is largely based on a community-building program called *COMPASS II*®, *Increasing the Capacity of People to Build Better Communities*, sponsored and developed by United Way of America. The program is driven by the concept that:

Community building involves people taking action to improve their communities—action that affects people in a neighborhood or those across the larger community. Community building is aimed at those individuals, associations, and organizations motivated to work with others to change the social and economic conditions in which people live. Also, it is intended for those who are striving to reform systems and policies and to facilitate people having easy access to the full range of resources they need to lead fulfilling and productive lives.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this assessment is to gather information about community strengths, challenges and issues, as well as identify how local businesses, associations, individuals, and organizations can play a role in building and strengthening the community of Anchorage.

United Way of Anchorage contracted with McDowell Group, an Alaska research-based consulting firm, to conduct the assessment. This project is a result of financial support from several organizations and agencies in the Municipality, including United Way of Anchorage, the Municipality of Anchorage Health and Human Services Department, Providence Health System, BP, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.

This report includes a socioeconomic context of the Municipality and lessons learned from the household, business, and key informant surveys, and discussion groups.

## Methodology

The methodological design for this project is largely based on the research program designed by *COMPASS II*® and laid out in its *Guide to Community Building*. A Steering Committee was established to guide McDowell Group in the research process. The Committee comprised representatives from United Way of Anchorage, Alaska 20/20, ConocoPhillips, BP, the Municipality of Anchorage Health and Human Services Department, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, UAA College of Health and Social Welfare, UAA Institute for Social and Economic Research, Nerland Agency, Rasmuson Foundation, Alaska Community Foundation, Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Senator Stevens' Office, Alaska Children's Services, Youth Development Coalition, and Providence Health System. A list of Steering Committee members is found in Appendix A.

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<sup>1</sup> Compass II, *Guide to Community Building*, Section 2 page 3.

The Steering Committee reviewed the *COMPASS II*® program, evaluated the assortment of research tools offered, and selected two survey methods as the fundamental components of the community assessment: a community household survey and a business survey. In addition, they provided recommendations for key informants to be interviewed.

McDowell Group met with and provided monthly written progress reports to the Steering Committee to review and customize the pre-designed survey instruments, report research milestones, and receive direction.

## **A Community Profile of the Municipality of Anchorage**

A brief community profile of Anchorage was prepared to provide a context of the socioeconomic dimensions and community assets of the Municipality. Economic, employment, health, housing, education, and population data was collected. Sources of the data include: U.S. Census, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Anchorage School District, and the Municipality of Anchorage.

### **Community Household Survey**

A survey of 350 randomly selected Municipality of Anchorage households was conducted by telephone during late April 2003.

The *COMPASS II*® community household survey was customized to apply specifically to Anchorage, and included questions on community strengths, community and household challenges and issues, and demographics.

The survey's maximum margin of error at a 95 percent confidence level is  $\pm 5.4$  percent.

Table 1 shows the areas of the Municipality that people self-identified as regions within the Municipality where they live. Some regional analysis within the Municipality was conducted. The following self-identified neighborhoods were combined to best capture geographic or socioeconomic regions within the Municipality, as well as to allow for large enough sub-samples for analysis:

- *Downtown:* Downtown, Turnagain, West Anchorage, Fairview, North Anchorage, Government Hill
- *South:* Hillside, Lower Hillside, South, Indian, Bird, Girdwood
- *Midtown:* Midtown, Spenard, Sand Lake, Jewel Lake, Dimond
- *East:* East, Muldoon, Mountainview, Airport Heights, Fort Richardson/Elmendorf
- *Eagle River:* Eagle River, Chugiak, Birchwood, Eklutna

These regional breakouts of the survey data should not be directly compared to regional US census tract information as these regions are self-identified by the person surveyed and may not accurately fit within the census tract boundaries.

**Table 1. Community Household Survey Sample,  
Self-Identified Regions of the Municipality**

	Sample Size	% of Total
South Anchorage	91	26%
East Anchorage	58	17
Eagle River/Chugiak	34	10
Midtown	26	7
Muldoon	25	7
Turnagain/West Anchorage	21	6
Sand Lake/Jewel Lake/Dimond	18	5
Hillside	15	4
Downtown	12	3
Lower Hillside	11	3
Spenard	9	3
Mountainview	5	1
Fort Richardson/Elmendorf	5	1
Indian/Bird/Girdwood	4	1
Fairview	4	1
North Anchorage/Government Hill	3	1
Airport Heights	2	1
Other/Refused	7	2
<b>Total Sample</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Business Survey**

The *COMPASS II*® business survey was customized for the Anchorage business respondent. The survey was mailed to 1,233 businesses selected from membership of the United Way Work Place Campaign, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation, Eagle River/Chugiak Chamber of Commerce, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, and selected Girdwood businesses. The sample was reviewed to assure that geographic and industry sectors were adequately represented. A total of 201 businesses answered the survey, for a response rate of 16 percent. The survey was designed to capture information on business employment practices, community support and leadership, interest in further community involvement, and perceptions of community strengths and challenges.

### **Key Informant Interviews**

The Steering Committee provided a list of suggested community representatives to interview for this project. The study team conducted interviews with 32 community representatives. The selection was based on geographic distribution, as well as community involvement and interest of the key informant. A list of people interviewed can be found in Appendix B.

Each informant was asked a series of questions about their own perspectives on their community's strengths and challenges; community needs in health, social, education and other services; and how to address these needs.

## **Discussion Groups**

In consultation with the project management team and steering committee, the study team conducted five discussion groups, representing distinct areas of interest in Anchorage. They included:

1. Community Change-makers (the Steering Committee) - people who have the skill, influence, and dedication to make change.
2. Mixed Ethnic Group, with Caucasian participants as minority - people who can provide some insight into how to involve or encourage minority participation and leadership in meeting challenges facing Anchorage.
3. Faith Community/Social Service Counterparts - two communities of service provision discussing how to work together in meeting challenges facing Anchorage.
4. Service Providers/Clients - allowing for recipients of services to have a voice on what services are provided and how, and allow for service providers to recommend desired outcomes on how to meet the challenges facing their clients.
5. Youth - bringing together adolescents between 14 and 17 years of age to discuss the issues they face as they live, work, and attend school in Anchorage.

The discussion groups were structured to run two to three hours and cover strengths, challenges, vision for Anchorage, and desired outcomes in meeting challenges. A list of organizations and interest groups represented in the discussion groups can be found in Appendix C.

# ***A COMMUNITY PROFILE OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE***

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A community profile of the Municipality of Anchorage provides a factual context to the community's condition, environment, and assets. The following profile provides a background on the Municipality's socioeconomic situation and also highlights key communities within the Municipal area.

## **Socioeconomic Profile of the Municipality of Anchorage**

### **Key Socioeconomic Trends**

- Much like the rest of Alaska and the U.S., there is a notable aging trend occurring in the Municipality of Anchorage. In 2000, the average age of municipality residents had increased to 32.4 from 29.8 in 1990. The number of residents 45 to 54 years of age increased from 10.3 percent of the population in 1990 to 14.9 percent in 2000. This represents a 67 percent increase in the number of persons in that age group. The proportion of the population comprised of children age 5 and under declined slightly since 1990, as did the group aged 18 to 24.
- There were 94,822 households in the Municipality of Anchorage in 2000, an increase of 14.7 percent over the 82,702 households in 1990.
- Anchorage's housing picture is dominated by limited available housing stock and rising housing prices. In 2002, the average sales price of a single family home in the Municipality of Anchorage was \$222,537, an 18 percent increase over the average price in 2000. There were 657 single family homes on the market at the end of June, 2003 compared to 948 in 2000.
- Anchorage is currently experiencing an interesting trend: for the first time in many years, there is net increase in population through in-migration.
- The top three economic sectors – services, government, and retail trade – represent 69 percent of the total employment in the Municipality of Anchorage. Total government employment has decreased since 1990, from 24.1 percent of total employment to 21.4 percent in 2000. Most of the decrease was in federal government employment. Employment in the services industry has increased by 10,400 jobs since 1990. Employment in the retail trade industry has increased by approximately 5,300 jobs since 1990. This represents 19 percent of the total employment in all industries in 2000, compared to 18.2 percent in 1990.
- The number of municipality residents commuting to work increased 10.1 percent between 1990 and 2000. The average 2000 commute time was 18 minutes. Alaska Department of Labor data indicates that 35.4 percent of the labor force residing in the Mat-Su Valley commutes to Anchorage. Consequently, the population of the Mat-Su has increased 50 percent since 1990.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Additional detailed statistics for the Municipality of Anchorage can be found in Appendix D.

## Demographics

The Municipality of Anchorage is the 66th largest city in the U.S. The population increased by 15 percent between 1990 and 2000, from 226,338 to 260,283. This growth during the 1990s was comparable to the 14 percent growth statewide over the same period slightly greater than the 13 percent growth of the U.S. population.

As much as 87 percent of the state's population growth since 2000 can be accounted for by new residents of the Municipality of Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough. DOLWD current population estimates indicate a 3.4 percent increase in the population of the municipality between 2000 and 2002; these additional 8,787 residents increased the population to 269,070 as of July 1, 2002. This growth was due to both in-migration and natural increase of the population (births).

From the early 1990s, Anchorage's growth was mainly due to children being born, but in 2001, more adults began moving to the city. In 2002, that increased to 2,100, according to state labor economists. One explanation is the sluggish national economy, which has probably stemmed out-migration from Alaska and encouraged more people to come to the state, analysts say.<sup>3</sup>

About 28 percent of the municipality's population was non-white at the time of the 2000 Census, a higher proportion than the national average for metropolitan areas. Over 10 percent of the population identified themselves as Alaska Native alone or in combination with one or more races. African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians each accounted for about 6 percent of the population. The population was 49 percent female and 51 percent male in 2000. Thirty-two percent of the population of the municipality was born in the state of Alaska.

The population of Anchorage is younger than the U.S. population as a whole. Seventy-one percent of Anchorage's population was 18 years and older in 2000, compared to 74 percent of the U.S. population. Over 12 percent of the U.S. population was 65 years and older, compared to only 5 percent of the Municipality of Anchorage in this age group.

The Municipality of Anchorage experienced significant change in the age distribution of the population between 1990 and 2000. Most of the increase occurred in the older age groups. The largest increase that occurred was among the residents 45 to 54 years of age, from 10.3 percent of the population in 1990 to 14.9 percent in 2000. This represents a 67 percent increase in the number of persons in that age group. Some of this change is due to the population growth experienced by the municipality, in addition to the natural aging of the population. This is greater than the change in the age distribution of the U.S. population, which experienced a 49 percent increase in the number of persons 45 to 54 years of age from 1990 to 2000.

The number of children age 5 and under declined by 6.8 percent since 1990, from 9.5 percent of the total population to 7.7 percent in 2000. The proportion of the U.S. population in this age group also decreased during this time, from 7.4 percent to 6.8 percent, although the total number of children age 5 and under increased slightly.

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<sup>3</sup> *Alaska Economic Report, No. 14/03, p. 3.*

The percentage of the Anchorage population age 18 to 24 also experienced a slight decline, from 10.6 percent in 1990 to 9.6 percent of the population in 2000. The proportion of the population ages 25 to 44 was 6.8 percent smaller than in 1990, the largest decrease in population of any age group. Some of the decline can be explained by the growth in the age group comprised of persons 45 to 54 years of age. All other age groups increased in population.

The median age of the population in the Municipality of Anchorage increased from 29.8 years in 1990 to 32.4 in 2000. The median age of the U.S. population likewise increased from 32.9 in 1990 to 35.3 in 2000. The median age in the Municipality of Anchorage was higher than the statewide median age in both 1990 and 2000.

## **Business and Industry**

The Municipality of Anchorage is the commercial center for the state of Alaska and is the most diversified economy in Alaska. Headquarters for communications, finance and real estate, government agencies, transportation, and oil and gas industries are located in the municipality.

The top three industries – services, government, and retail trade – represent 69 percent of the total employment in the Municipality of Anchorage. Employment in the services industry has increased by 10,400 jobs between 1990 and 2000. Much of that growth has been in health services, an industry that has added 3,400 jobs in the municipality since 1990. Local, state, and federal government grew by 1,900 jobs, and retail trade grew by 5,300 jobs.

Seventy-nine percent of the people employed in the Municipality of Anchorage in 2000 were private wage and salary workers and 21 percent were federal, state, or local government workers.

## **Employment**

The services industry employed the most individuals in the municipality in 2000, representing 29.2 percent of all employees. The largest sector within the services industry was health services, accounting for 6.8 percent of total employment.

Employment in local, state, and federal government represented 21 percent of the employment in the municipality. Government employment has decreased since 1990, from 24.1 percent of total employment to 21.4 percent in 2000. Most of the decrease was in federal government employment.

Retail trade employed 19 percent of workers in the municipality compared to 18.2 percent in 1990. Employment in the retail trade industry has increased by approximately 5,300 jobs since 1990. The largest percentage of retail trade workers were employed in eating and drinking places, representing 7.1 percent of total employment. Another 11.2 percent of workers were employed in the transportation, communications, and utilities industries. Air transportation comprised the largest portion of this sector at 4.6 percent of total employment. The most commonly held occupations in the municipality were retail sales, followed by office clerks and food preparation/serving workers.

The number of municipality residents commuting to work increased 10.1 percent between 1990 and 2000. Seventy-five percent of workers drove to work alone in 2000, 14 percent carpooled, 3 percent took public transportation, and 6 percent used other means. The remaining 3 percent worked at home. Among those who commuted, it took them on average 18 minutes to get to work. Alaska Department of Labor data indicate that 35.4 percent of the labor force residing in the Mat-Su Valley commutes to Anchorage.

## **Transportation**

The Glenn and Seward Highways are the largest highways serving the Municipality of Anchorage. Most communities in the Municipality of Anchorage are accessible by highway. Bus service is provided to Homer, Seward, Talkeetna, Denali, and Fairbanks. People Mover provides bus service within the city. Airports in the Municipality of Anchorage include Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, Lake Hood Float Plane Base, Merrill Field, and U.S. Army and Air Force facilities.

The Port of Anchorage was ranked the 46th largest port in the country by total volume in 2000 and handles approximately 85 percent of the general cargo for the Railbelt area. A major expansion of the port is planned, including dock widening, development of a cruise ship terminal, barge loading terminal, ferry terminal, bus terminal, dock seismic stabilization, and road and rail access.

A seismic study is being conducted to determine whether the dock construction could withstand a major earthquake. The port expansion is expected to be completed in about six years. A new state agency, the Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority, was created in 2003 to further the development of public transportation systems in the vicinity of upper Cook Inlet with construction of a bridge to span Knik Arm and connect the Municipality of Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The Mat-Su Borough and the Municipality of Anchorage recently initiated a feasibility study, engineering design, and environmental documentation for a commuter ferry system between Port MacKenzie and Anchorage.

The Alaska State Railroad travels from Anchorage to Seward, Whittier, and Fairbanks. A rail study and operating plan for a commuter train between Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley have been developed, but were not presented as part of the Alaska Railroad Corporation's 2003 Program of Projects.

## **Housing**

In 2000, there were 94,822 households in the Municipality of Anchorage, an increase of 14.7 percent over the 82,702 households in 1990. Within that increase was a 30.4 percent increase in the number of owner-occupied homes and a 3.0 percent decrease in the number of renter-occupied housing units. The proportion of owner-occupied compared to renter-occupied housing units has grown considerably since 1990, from 52.8 percent in 1990 to 60.1 percent in 2000. The average household size was 2.68 people.

The low interest rate environment has created strong incentives for home ownership throughout the state. However, average sales prices for single family homes are significantly higher in Anchorage than in other areas due to the lack of available lots for new construction, enticing many to relocate outside the municipality. In 2002, the average sales price of a single family home in the Anchorage was \$222,537, an 18 percent increase over the average price in 2000. A shortage of housing inventory has contributed to the rise in costs. There were 657 single family homes on the market at the end of June, 2003 compared to 948 in 2000. Other factors contributing to the housing shortage and higher prices include a larger pool of potential buyers in the market due to low interest rates, and longer tenure of homeowners compared to prior years. The 2000 Census found that 22 percent of Anchorage homeowners had lived in their house for at least 10 years. In 1980, this figure was 9 percent.

### Household Income

Municipality of Anchorage median household income was \$55,546 in 2000 - 26.4 percent higher than the 1990 median household income of \$43,946. Per capita income rose from \$19,620 in 1990 to \$25,287 in 2000, a 28.9 percent increase.

In 1990, 7.1 percent of the population of the Municipality of Anchorage lived below the poverty threshold<sup>4</sup>, compared to 9 percent of people below the poverty level statewide in the same year. The percentage of the population living below the poverty threshold in 2000 has increased slightly for both the Municipality of Anchorage and the state, to 7.3 percent and 9.4 percent respectively. Eleven percent of children under 18 and 4 percent of people 65 years old and over were below the poverty level in 2000.

**Table 2. Household Income Indicators  
Municipality of Anchorage and Alaska, 1990 and 2000**

	Municipality of Anchorage 1990	Alaska 1990	Municipality of Anchorage 2000	Alaska 2000
Median Household Income (unadjusted)	\$50,098	\$41,408	\$55,546	\$51,571
Per Capita Income (unadjusted)	\$19,620	\$17,610	\$25,287	\$22,660
Number of People Below Poverty Threshold	15,614	47,906	18,682	57,602
Percent of Population Below Poverty Threshold	7.1%	9.0%	7.3%	9.4%

Source: 1990 Census and 2000 Census

### Government

The Anchorage Municipal Charter was established in 1975 when the two local government entities, the City of Anchorage and the Greater Anchorage Area Borough, combined to form the Municipality of Anchorage.

<sup>4</sup> The 2002 poverty threshold for a household with two adults and two children is \$18,244. For more information on how the U.S. Census determines poverty threshold, go to <http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/povdef.html>.

The Municipality of Anchorage is a unified home rule municipality with an elected mayor and assembly. The mayor of the Municipality of Anchorage is elected to serve a three-year term. Following two consecutive terms, the mayor may not be re-elected until a full term has passed. The mayor is also responsible for appointing department heads, including the Municipal Manager. The Anchorage Municipal Assembly is the legislative branch of the Municipality. The 11 members of the Assembly are elected to serve three-year terms. The Assembly is led by a Chair elected annually by the Assembly members. There are seven elected members of the Anchorage School Board. They determine policy to guide the Anchorage School District.

## **Emergency Services**

Emergency Medical Services (EMS), fire and police responses in the Municipality of Anchorage are coordinated through a central 911 dispatch system. EMS services are provided to 1,980 square miles of the Municipality. Firefighter Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and paramedics provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) care and transport. In addition, each fire engine company is trained and equipped to respond to cardiac emergencies as a non-transport Basic Life Support (BLS) unit.

The municipality provides fire service to 100 square miles of the Anchorage bowl. Eleven fire stations staffed with over 280 personnel provide firefighting and rescue service to the municipality. On each shift, there are eight Mobile Intensive Care Units, four tankers, 11 engine companies, four truck companies, one squad and one heavy rescue company. Other specialized units available include dive, foam, Hazmat, mountain, and water rescue units.

The Anchorage Police Department provides police services to the 159 square mile area within the main bowl. There are several specialized units including Canine, Crisis Intervention and Response Team, Homicide Response Team, Hostage Negotiations Team, Bomb Team, Identification Section, Data System Section, Records Section, Traffic and Crime Prevention Unit.

The Municipality of Anchorage has organized an Emergency Operations Center to coordinate responses in the event of a large-scale emergency. As a member of the national Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS), existing Municipality emergency resources can be used to treat large numbers of people in the event of a terrorist attack or other emergency. The Municipality has received over \$300,000 in emergency response equipment to date through the Department of Defense and the MMRS program, coordinated by the US Public Health Service, Office of Emergency Preparedness (USPHS/OEP).

Anchorage also has community patrols. These are volunteer organizations that are trained to work with local community councils, citizens, and police to be the extra "eyes and ears" for police and establish community relationships designed to enhance the safety of citizens, their neighborhoods, children, homes and businesses.

## **Education**

The Anchorage School District is the largest school district in Alaska and the 86th largest in the country. The student population is very diverse; 41 percent of students are from ethnic minority groups, and approximately 93 different languages are spoken by district school children.

The District contains 90 schools ranging in enrollments from 12 students to more than 2,400 students. While the percentage of pre-school and elementary-school aged children in the Municipality of Anchorage has decreased in relation to other age groups since 1990, the district's enrollment has continued to grow to just over 50,000 in the 2002-2003 school year.

The dropout rate for Anchorage School District students in grades 7 to 12 was slightly higher than the statewide rate, at 6.1 percent compared to 5.8 percent statewide. Almost 15 percent of enrolled students participated in special education programs.

In addition to the schools within the Anchorage School District, there are a number of charter schools, alternative schools and private schools within the municipality, as well as home school programs. Over 3,300 students were enrolled in private schools in the municipality in 2002. Due to a lack of reporting requirements, it is unknown how many students were enrolled in home schools.

## **Health Vital Statistics**

The leading cause of death in the Municipality of Anchorage between 1990 and 2000 was cancer. Heart disease and accidents rank as the second and third leading causes of death in the municipality.

The birth rate for the municipality was 71 live births per 1,000 women aged 15-44 in 1999, higher than the national average of 66 live births per 1,000. The 1999 teenage birth rate in the municipality, at 51.0 per 1,000 live births, was only slightly above the state's average teen birth rate of 50.6 per 1,000.

The percentage of mothers receiving less than adequate prenatal care was significantly lower for residents of the municipality than for mothers in the state of Alaska as a whole. Eighteen percent of mothers in the Anchorage Municipality received less than adequate care, compared to 29 percent of all Alaska mothers. However, the percentage of babies with low birth weight was higher for the Anchorage Municipality than the state as a whole. The five-year average indicated that 6.3 percent of infants born to residents of Anchorage Municipality in 1995-1999 weighed less than 5.5 pounds, compared to 5.7 percent for the state of Alaska.

## Profiles of Communities within the Municipality of Anchorage

Several communities within the Municipality of Anchorage, including Eagle River, Chugiak, Birchwood and Eklutna, are connected to the urban center exclusively by the Glenn Highway. Girdwood is connected to Anchorage by the Seward Highway. Following are profiles for each of these communities.

### Eagle River

Eagle River is located 10 miles northeast of Anchorage. The population of Eagle River was 22,231 in 2000, a 20 percent increase from 18,481 at the time of the 1990 Census. Minorities represented 14 percent of the population, of which about 3 percent were Alaska Native or American Indian. About 32 percent of the population of Eagle River was under age 18 at the time of the 2000 Census.

The median household income among Eagle River residents was \$72,766 in 2000. The educational, health and social services industry employed the most residents of Eagle River, almost 25 percent of the area civilian labor force; followed by public administration, 16 percent; and retail trade, 11 percent. The mean travel time to work for residents of Eagle River was 27 minutes in 2000.

### Chugiak and Birchwood

The communities of Chugiak and Birchwood experienced a 12 percent population increase, from 6,858 in 1990 to 7,665 in 2000. Almost 70 percent of the population was over age 18 in 2000. Minorities represented 15 percent of the population, 4 percent of whom were Alaska Native or American Indian. Almost 31 percent of the population of Chugiak and Birchwood was under age 18 at the time of the 2000 Census.

The median household income among Chugiak and Birchwood residents was \$74,471 in 2000. The educational, health and social services industry employed the most residents of Chugiak and Birchwood, 18 percent; followed by public administration, 15 percent; and construction, 11 percent. The mean travel time to work for residents of Chugiak and Birchwood was 33 minutes in 2000.

### Eklutna

Eklutna is located 25 miles northeast of Anchorage. The population of Eklutna was 394 in 2000, a 3 percent increase from 381 at the time of the 1990 Census. A federally recognized tribe, the Native Village of Eklutna, is located in the community. About 13 percent of the population is Alaska Native or part Native. About 30 percent of the population of Eklutna was under age 18 at the time of the 2000 Census.

The median household income among Eklutna residents in 2000 was \$77,355. Almost 4 percent of households in Eklutna received public assistance income in 2000. Eklutna residents are employed in a variety of occupations in Anchorage, Eagle River, and the Mat-Su valley. The educational, health and social services industry employed the most residents of Eklutna in 2000, almost 29 percent of the civilian labor force; followed by public administration, 25 percent; and transportation and warehousing and utilities, 10 percent. The mean travel time to work for residents of Eklutna was 34 minutes in 2000.

## **Bird and Indian**

The population of the Turnagain Arm communities of Bird and Indian was approximately 237 in 2000. Approximately 97 percent of the population was white at the time of the 2000 Census. The other 3 percent were Alaska Native or American Indian. Slightly over 35 percent of the population was under age 18.

The median household income among Bird and Indian residents was \$48,906 in 2000. The transportation and warehousing and utilities industry employed the most residents of Bird and Indian, at 27 percent; followed by accommodation and food services, 25 percent; and retail trade, at 12 percent. The mean travel time to work for residents of Bird and Indian was 31 minutes in 2000.

## **Girdwood**

Girdwood is a rural community within the borough of the Municipality of Anchorage. It is located 35 miles southwest of downtown Anchorage. The City of Girdwood was formed in the 1960s, and unified with the City of Anchorage and the Greater Anchorage Borough in 1975. The population of Girdwood was 1,817 in 2000, a 63 percent increase over the 1990 population of 1,115. Over 95 percent of the population was white at the time of the 2000 Census. Approximately 21 percent of the population of Girdwood was under age 18. Girdwood's population is divided between year-round residents, and weekend, second-home, and vacationing residents.

The median household income among Girdwood residents was \$60,688 in 2000. The accommodation and food services industry employed 29 percent of residents of Girdwood, followed by educational, health and social services, 17 percent; and professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services, 10 percent.

## **Military Bases**

Over 11,000 active-duty military personnel were stationed in the Municipality of Anchorage in 2000. Fort Richardson had a total (active-duty and civilian) population of 5,322 in 2000, a decrease of 33 percent from a population of 7,979 in 1990. Median household income at Fort Richardson was \$35,724 in 2000. Elmendorf Air Force Base had a total population of 6,621 in 2000, a decrease of 18 percent over the 1990 population of 8,035. Median household income at Elmendorf AFB was \$41,161 in 2000. Another 1,217 personnel were stationed at Kulis Air National Guard Base. There were 10,280 active-duty and civilian employees of Elmendorf AFB living off-base in 1999, and 239 active-duty and civilian employees of Fort Richardson.

The Anchorage School District has several elementary schools on the local military bases. There are 4 elementary schools on Elmendorf Air Force Base: Aurora Elementary, Mt. Iliamna Elementary, Mt. Spurr Elementary, and Orion Elementary. Elementary schools on the Fort Richardson base are Ursa Major Elementary and Ursa Minor Elementary.

# COMMUNITY HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

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Three hundred and fifty households throughout the Municipality of Anchorage were surveyed by telephone. The *COMPASS II*® program provided a household survey that was customized for communities in the Municipality. The primary forms of information gathered from respondents were:

- Their perceptions of community strengths
- Their opinions about challenges in their communities
- Incidence of specific challenges in their households and their views of how serious are these challenges.

## Perceptions of Community Strengths

Questions regarding perceptions of community strengths focused on how the community gathers, works together on common goals, helps each other out, trusts each other, volunteers, votes; whether they consider the same things to be important; and their opportunities to affect what happens in their community.

### Support of Community Strength Statements

- Anchorage residents generally agreed with statements about residents helping each other, participating together, trusting each other, having common goals, and having the same values.
- The statement that Anchorage residents most strongly agreed with was “people in the community help each other out when they have a problem.” Sixty percent agree or strongly agree with this statement. Only 12 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed on this issue.
- The statement that Anchorage residents most strongly disagreed with was “people consider the same things important.” Less than half of residents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (43 percent) and 18 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.
- Eagle River/Chugiak residents were the most likely to have the highest level of agreement for all statements.
- The racial minority respondents tended to be less in agreement regarding community strengths than the majority white population. Male respondents were also less in agreement than female respondents.

**Table 3. Community Strengths (Community Household Survey)**  
*Cities like Anchorage have strengths that make each community a better place to live.*  
*Please tell me how each of the following statements applies to your community*  
*(5=strongly agree, 1=strongly disagree)*

	% of Total that Agreed (4-5)	% of Total that Disagreed (1-2)	Region with Highest Agreement (4-5)	Region with Highest Disagreement (1-2)
Come together to help each other out when they have a problem.	60%	12%	Eagle River/Chugiak 74%	Downtown and East Anchorage 15%
People who are different from one another participate together in community activities.	53	19	Eagle River/Chugiak 74%	Downtown 25%
Come together to work on common goals.	47	19	Eagle River/Chugiak 56%	Midtown 28%
Trust each other.	45	18	Eagle River/Chugiak 59%	East Anchorage 23%
Consider the same things important.	43	18	South Anchorage 51%	Downtown 30%

### Perceptions of Neighborhoods within the Municipality

Respondents were asked to identify in which part of Anchorage they lived. When asked if they felt this part of Anchorage could be considered a neighborhood, almost nine out of ten said “yes” (87 percent). Younger people between the ages of 18-24, people living in the Eagle River area, and men were less likely to consider where they lived a neighborhood.

### Community Volunteerism

The level of volunteerism within a community is an indicator of community support and desire to help others. The survey addressed this issue by asking households if they volunteer, in what type of arenas they serve, and how frequently they volunteer.

- Volunteerism is somewhat common among Municipality residents. Half of the respondents volunteer in their community. The residents of Eagle River/Chugiak are most likely to volunteer (62 percent), while Midtown and East Anchorage residents are least likely (42 and 43 percent, respectively).
- Volunteering in their church or religious group, in the school, or with other children or youth activities are the three most popular arenas for volunteer involvement in the Municipality.
- Residents that volunteer tend to do so quite often, an average of 6.1 times a month. East residents have the highest frequency (7.4 times a month), followed closely by Downtown residents (7.3 times a month). South residents volunteer the least frequently (4.8 times a month).
- Respondents who have high household incomes are much more likely to volunteer than households with low incomes (60 percent vs. 25 percent).

Respondents who do not vote and respondents in the racial minority are less likely to volunteer (66 percent and 61 percent do not volunteer).

**Table 4. Community Volunteers**

	Yes	No	Don't know
<b>In the past 6 months, have you volunteered in your community?</b>	51%	49%	<1%
<b>If yes, what activities do you volunteer for?</b>	Percent (multiple responses allowed)		
Religious group	29%		
Education group (PTA, in the classroom, UAA)	27		
Children or youth activities	26		
Human service organizations (lower-income people, seniors, homeless)	14		
Neighborhood group (community council)	10		
Sports group	9		
Arts group (music, theater, museum)	9		
Hospital or health group (hospital auxiliary)	8		
Civic group (Kiwanis, Rotary, Elks)	8		
Business organizations (Chamber, professional business organizations)	6		
Environmental group	5		
Cultural group (ethnic associations)	4		
Political group or candidate	3		
Others	13		
Refused	2		
<b>How often did you volunteer in the past month?</b>	% of Volunteers		
None	14%		
1 time	12		
2 times	14		
3 to 4 times	19		
5 to 10 times	23		
Over 10 times	19		
<b>Average number of times</b>	<b>6.1 times</b>		

## Community Involvement in the Election Process

Citizen involvement in the political process is another indicator of community support and strength.

- Eight out of 10 respondents state they vote in elections. While still a high percentage, East Anchorage residents are less inclined to state that they vote (74 percent). Eagle River/Chugiak voters are most inclined to say they vote (94 percent). People who receive public assistance or are in the racial minority are less likely to state they vote (36 percent and 37 percent).
- Actual voting data shows a significantly lower percentage vote, but the survey still indicates community interest in the political process. For example, in the *Statement of Votes Cast for the State of Alaska General Election 2002*, 40 percent of Anchorage residents voted, and in the April Municipal election, 33 percent voted.

**Table 5. Voting**  
***Do you vote in elections?***

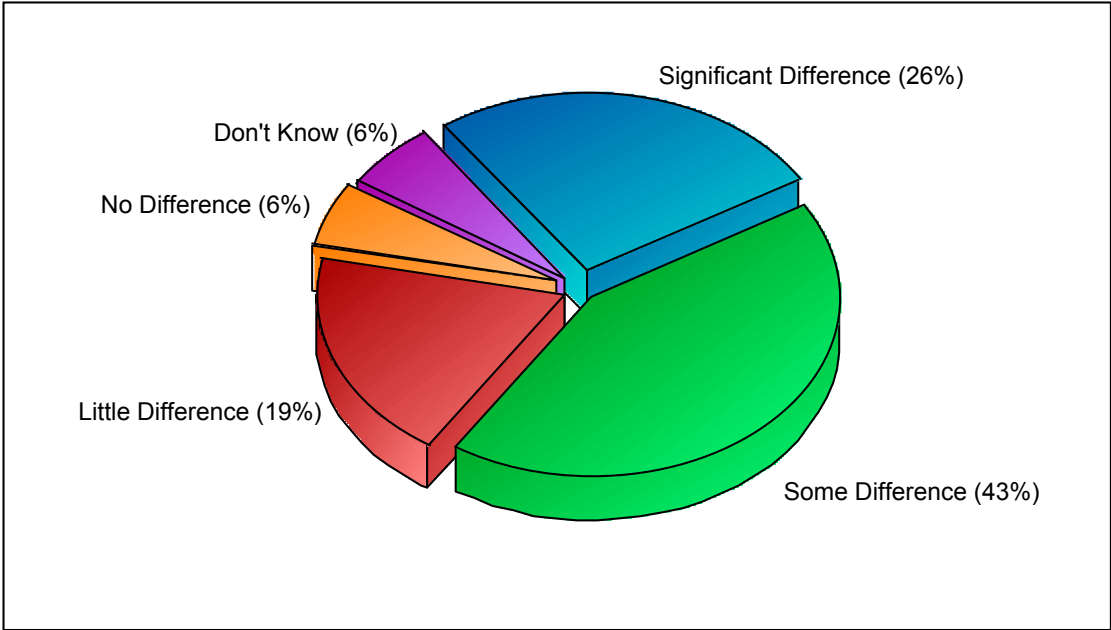
	<b>% of Total</b>
Yes	81%
No	18
Don't know	<1
Refused	1

### Perception of Making a Difference in their Community

Residents were asked how much of a difference they think they can make in their community.

- One-quarter of the Municipality residents believe they can make a significant difference in their community (26 percent). Only 6 percent feel they can make no difference.
- Not surprisingly, people who vote are more likely to state that they think they can make a significant difference (39 percent) or some difference (46 percent).

**Figure 1. How Much of a Difference Do You Think You Can Make in Your Community?**



## Community Challenges

Survey questions were constructed to gather insight into community and household challenges and issues, such as jobs and the economy, education services, environment, health, housing, leisure/recreational activities, safety, social services, and transportation.

- Shortage of affordable housing and lack of affordable medical care are considered the top challenges facing Anchorage. These are followed closely by poor road and/or traffic conditions, overcrowded classrooms, and crime.
- Crime was the top challenge expressed by respondents over the age of 65 (tying at 32 percent with alcohol and/or drug abuse), racial minorities (37 percent), and those with household incomes less than \$20,000 (45 percent).

**Table 6. Community Challenges (Community Household Survey)**  
*Please tell me how much of an issue each of the following is for people in your community (5="major issue," 1="not an issue")*

Issue	Major Issue (4-5)	Minor Issue/Not An Issue (1-2)
Shortage of affordable housing	37%	40%
Lack of affordable medical care	37	43
Poor road and/or traffic conditions	35	45
Overcrowded classrooms	33	29
Crime	33	43
Alcohol and/or drug abuse	32	47
Lack of affordable child care	28	35
Inadequate public transportation	27	56
Shortage of recreational facilities and activities	25	58
Family violence, abuse of children or adults	25	49
Poverty	24	55
Noise pollution	23	60
Teen pregnancy	22	33
Poor snow removal on roads and sidewalks	22	59
Lack of jobs	20	54
Lack of art and cultural activities	20	58
Lack of after-school programs and activities	19	46
Gangs	17	60
Unsafe school environment	17	59
Racial or ethnic discrimination	16	62
Lack of continuing education opportunities	15	50
Mental illness or emotional issues	14	58
Water or air pollution	13	72
Language barriers	12	74
HIV/AIDS	7	57

- The top three challenges for each region of Anchorage are presented in the table below.

**Table 7. Top Three Community Challenges, by Self-Identified Region within the Municipality**

Issue	Major Issue (4-5)
<b>Downtown (n=40)</b>	
Lack of affordable medical care	48%
Alcohol and/or drug abuse Shortage of affordable housing	45
Poverty	38
<b>South (n=121)</b>	
Lack of affordable medical care	36%
Overcrowded classrooms Shortage of affordable housing Poor road and/or traffic conditions	34
Inadequate public transportation	32
<b>Midtown (n=53)</b>	
Crime	40%
Lack of affordable medical care Poor road and/or traffic conditions	36
Shortage of affordable housing	32
<b>East (n=95)</b>	
Poor road and/or traffic conditions	38%
Crime	37
Alcohol and/or drug abuse	36
<b>Eagle River/Chugiak (n=34)</b>	
Overcrowded classrooms	71%
Lack of affordable medical care	65
Shortage of affordable housing	56

## Household Challenges

- In general, levels of concern about household issues are lower than the concerns about community challenges.
- Three of the top five household challenges directly concern health care affordability: not having enough money to pay the doctor (20 percent), not having enough money to get medical insurance, and not having enough money to buy prescriptions/medications (both 18 percent). Finding it difficult to budget for housing, food and clothing (17 percent state that this a major issue) and having a lot of anxiety, stress or depression (15 percent) rounded out the top five issues.

**Table 8. Household Challenges**  
5 = “major issue,” 1 = “not an issue”

Please tell me how much of issue each of the following is for your household.	Major Issue (4-5)	Minor Issue/ Not An Issue (1-2)
Not having enough money to pay the doctor	20%	74%
Not having enough money to get medical insurance	18	75
Not having enough money to buy prescriptions/medications	18	76
Finding it difficult to budget for housing, food, and clothing	17	74
Having a lot of anxiety, stress, or depression	15	74
Experiencing noise pollution	12	76
Not being able to afford recreational activities	12	79
Not being able to afford entertainment activities	12	80
Not being able to afford legal help	10	82
Not having enough money to pay for housing	9	84
Not being able to find work	9	86
Not being able to find or afford care for a person with a disability or serious illness, or for an elder	8	77
Use of tobacco products	8	85
Living in housing that needs major repairs	8	89
Experiencing air or water pollution	7	87
Children or teenagers experiencing behavior or emotional issues	6	73
Not being able to find or afford care for children	6	77
Not having enough room in your house for all the people who live there	6	92
Children being unsafe at school	5	75
Not being able to get transportation for a senior or a person with a disability	5	82
Not having reliable transportation to your job	4	93
Experiencing household crime	3	95
Experiencing an alcohol issue	2	95
Not being able to communicate in a common language	1	96
Experiencing a drug issue	1	97
Experiencing physical conflict in the household	1	97
Experiencing household threats from gangs	1	98

- The largest household challenge facing people on public assistance is not being able to afford recreational activities (43 percent said it was a major issue) and not being able to afford entertainment activities (40 percent). Finding it difficult to budget for housing, food and clothing (38 percent) was third highest issue.
- The top issues for households earning more than \$50,000 are having a lot of anxiety, stress, or depression, not having enough money to pay the doctor, and not having enough money to buy prescriptions/medications (12 percent).
- By far, the largest household challenge facing younger people (between the ages of 18-24) was having a lot of anxiety, stress, or depression (31 percent).
- Health care affordability is the top issue for both men and women, and racial minorities. Not having enough money to pay the doctor (22 percent) and not having enough money to buy prescriptions/ medications (21 percent) were the top two issues for women. The top issues for men are not having enough money to pay the doctor and not having enough money to get medical insurance (each 17 percent). Racial minorities' top issue was not having enough money to pay the doctor (25 percent).

- The top three household challenges for each region of Anchorage are presented in the table below.

**Table 9. Top Three Household Challenges, by Self-Identified Region within the Municipality**

Issue	Major Issue (4-5)
<b>Downtown (n=40)</b>	
Experiencing noise or other pollution Not having enough money to get medical insurance	20%
Not having enough money to pay the doctor Not being able to find or afford care for a person with a disability or serious illness, or for an elder	18
Having a lot of anxiety, stress, or depression	15
<b>South (n=121)</b>	
Not having enough money to pay the doctor	19%
Not having enough money to get medical insurance	18
Not having enough money to buy prescriptions/medications	17
<b>Midtown (n=53)</b>	
Finding it difficult to budget for housing, food and clothing Not having enough money to pay the doctor	25%
Not having enough money to buy prescriptions/medications Having a lot of anxiety, stress, or depression	21
Not having enough money to get medical insurance	19
<b>East (n=95)</b>	
Finding it difficult to budget for housing, food and clothing Not having enough money to buy prescriptions/medications	19%
Not having enough money to pay the doctor Experiencing noise or other pollution	17
Not having enough money to get medical insurance	16
<b>Eagle River/Chugiak (n=34)</b>	
Not having enough money to pay the doctor	26%
Not having enough money to buy prescriptions/medications Not having enough money to get medical insurance	21
Not being able to get legal help Not having enough money to pay for housing Finding it difficult to budget for housing, food and clothing	18

## Public Assistance Support

- One out of eight Municipality of Anchorage households said they receive some form of public assistance. Those residents between the ages of 18 and 24 are most likely to receive public assistance (38 percent). According to the 2000 Census, 7 percent of Anchorage households received public assistance. Nine percent of Alaska households received public assistance, well over the national average of 3 percent.

**Table 10. Public Assistance Support**  
**Does anyone in your household receive public assistance, such as temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), Food Stamps, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?**

	% of Total
Yes	13%
No	87

## Demographic Information

### Household Income

- Household income is widely disparate in the Municipality. While one out of nine households fall below the poverty income level of \$21,000, almost half make over \$50,000 annually (48 percent). Surveyed residents were more likely to fall below the poverty income level than what the 2000 Census figures indicate (11 versus 7.3 percent).
- The *average* household income of respondents is \$67,700. The highest average annual household incomes are found in South Anchorage (\$82,000). The lowest average household incomes are found in East Anchorage (\$46,300).
- Surveyed residents have a higher *median* income (\$62,500) than the 2000 Census figures for the Municipality of Anchorage (\$55,546).

**Table 11. Household Income, 2002**

Household Income Levels	% of Total
Less than \$10,000	4%
\$10,000-20,000	7
\$20,001-35,000	12
\$35,001-50,000	17
\$50,001-75,000	18
\$75,001-100,000	13
\$100,001 or above	17
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$67,600</b>
<b>Median</b>	<b>\$62,500</b>
Don't know	2
Refused	11

## Age, Household Size, Gender, and Race

- The average age of respondents was 45.8 years old. Two out of five respondents (42 percent) have children under the age of 18 living with them.
- The average household size was 3.0, compared to the 2000 Census of 2.67.
- Women make up a majority of survey respondents (62 percent). According to the 2000 Census, females make up 49 percent of the Municipality of Anchorage population.
- Three-quarters of the respondents are Caucasian. Eight percent are Alaska Native/American Indian. This race distribution is similar to figures from the 2000 Census where 72 percent of the Municipality of Anchorage residents are white and Alaska Natives make up 7 percent of the Municipality population.

**Table 12.  
Respondent and Household Member Ages**

<b>Respondent Age</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
18-24	8%
25-34	15
35-44	25
45-54	25
55-64	14
65 and older	12
<b>Average Respondent Age</b>	<b>45.8</b>
<b>Excluding Respondent, Age of Household Members</b>	
Under 18	42%
18-24	12
25-34	10
35-44	11
45-54	14
55-64	7
65-74	3
75 and older	2

**Table 13. Household Size, Gender, and Race**

	<b>% of Total</b>
<b>Size of Household</b>	
One member	11%
Two members	32
Three members	24
Four members	20
Five or more members	13
<b>Average household size</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	38%
Female	62
<b>Race (multiple responses accepted)</b>	
White	74%
Alaska Native/American Indian	8
Black or African American	5
Asian or Pacific Islander	5
Latino or Hispanic	4
Other	3
Don't Know/Refused	4

# ***MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE BUSINESS SURVEY***

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The *COMPASS II*® tool provided a business survey that was customized for the Anchorage environment. The purpose of the business survey was to increase the understanding of businesses that are already engaged in improving the community, and identify potential participants who are interested in providing a leadership role in developing and implementing a community impact plan. The survey focuses on two ways in which businesses help to improve their community: supporting community initiatives and projects, and directly supporting their employees.

The survey was mailed to 1,233 businesses throughout the Municipality of Anchorage. One-sixth of these businesses (201) responded to the survey, representing six different industry sectors. These sectors include: services, retail, transportation/communication/utilities, finance/insurance/real estate, construction and oil industry/manufacturing. The average business size was 42 full-time employees and 6 part-time employees. Following are key findings from the survey. Detailed results can be found in Appendix E.

## **Supporting Community Initiatives and Projects**

- Businesses offered a wide variety of ways in which they currently improve the local quality of life, including offering competitive pricing, providing local jobs, participating in community events, and making charitable contributions.
- When asked what kinds of services were most needed in the community, business owners made a number of suggestions, including: children and youth services, education, health and social services (i.e., care for the homeless, affordable health care, improved handicapped access, affordable alcoholic treatment), government services (i.e., improved economic development, more police, better litter control, improved library services), housing, transportation, and recreation.
- Two-thirds of Anchorage businesses (67 percent) are actively involved in encouraging their employees to vote and participate in the political process. Over half are promoting economic development (57 percent), volunteering (55), good health (54 percent), and youth development (51 percent).
- When asked what kinds of community initiatives they would like to participate in, businesses are most interested in becoming involved in designing a plan for community development (16 percent), promoting economic development (15 percent), educational reform (14 percent), expanding business and industrial development (14 percent), and increasing neighborhood safety (14 percent).
- Four out of 10 responding businesses are United Way Work Place Campaign contributors (38 percent).

- Anchorage businesses make charitable contributions to a wide array of organizations. Almost half of the businesses that responded contribute to United Way of Anchorage (49 percent). After United Way of Anchorage, Catholic Social Services received the second highest number of contributions (15 percent). The Salvation Army (8 percent) was third. The Muscular Dystrophy Association, Special Olympics, and Boys and Girls Club of Anchorage (each 7 percent) tied for fourth most frequent destination for cash contributions. American Cancer Society, Inc. rounds out the top five (6 percent).
- A quarter of companies that are not participants in United Way Work Place Campaign still donate to United Way (23 percent).
- When grouping organizations by type or organizations (excluding individual organizations that receive more than 2 percent), 18 percent of the businesses contribute to various national health and social service organizations (such as MADD, March of Dimes, American Diabetes, American Heart Association), 11 percent gave to crisis centers (such as AWAIC, HOPE, STAR, Pregnancy Center, etc.), and 9 percent each went to private education (such as Pacific Northern Academy, scholarship foundations, and other private schools or education programs) and local/regional civic organizations (such as ACVB, Fur Rendezvous, Alaska Community Forum, Alaska Humanities Forum, Commonwealth North, etc.).
- One out of twelve responding businesses (8 percent) did not make a charitable contribution in the last year, while three out of ten businesses contribute between \$1,000 and \$5,000 annually. When amounts of total contributions are averaged, responding businesses contributed an average of \$114,161 to local charities. However, when looking at the median contribution, the amount is significantly lower at \$2,500 annually.
- The average in-kind contribution among respondent businesses was approximately \$42,250 with a median contribution of \$2,000.
- One out of three businesses (33 percent) provides meeting space for community groups; while a quarter provide materials and equipment. More than half provide employees who have specific skills to help community groups (56 percent).
- Four out of five businesses make contributions to their community through company volunteers (78 percent). Anchorage businesses contribute an average of 2,350 hours of volunteer support. The median volunteer contribution, however, is 60 hours per year per company.

## Supporting Employees

- Four out of 10 businesses say they reach out to hire people who are trying to transition from welfare to work (38 percent). Slightly more businesses reach out to hire local people who have disabilities (44 percent).

- Businesses are also involved in supporting their community in providing benefits to their employees. Just over three-quarters of the businesses offer health care benefits to their employees (77 percent). All business with more than 25 employees offer health care benefits to their employees. Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) are available with 43 percent of these businesses. Only 8 percent of responding businesses offer childcare services or assistance with childcare. Not surprisingly, the larger firms (more than 25 employees) are much more likely to offer an EAP and childcare assistance.

# **PERSPECTIVES OF COMMUNITY KEY INFORMANTS**

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The study team contacted 32 community leaders who each represented a distinct community or area of interest. Each key informant – from a member of the faith community to mental health provider, from public safety official to school superintendent – offered a different perspective. They each presented a unique snapshot of Anchorage, expressing what they see as the community’s strengths, and where the challenges exist. Further, they made some suggestions for addressing these challenges or expressed their desired outcomes once these challenges are addressed.

The intention of these interviews is not to capture all community viewpoints; rather, they are intended to provide a basis to understand more deeply how each element of Anchorage’s community is operating and provide advice on what each aspect of the community can do to improve their community. Following are key findings from the interviews. A list of key informants and a more detailed summary of interview responses can be found in Appendix B.

## **Community Strengths**

During the interview process, key informants offered many positive statements about their community. These statements centered around general themes of quality of life, the beauty of Anchorage’s natural environment and setting, its small-town feel yet big city amenities, quality schools and good education choices, a “can-do” attitude, a caring community, good economic and career opportunities, relatively easy access to decision-makers, and ready access to world-class recreational opportunities.

## **Community Challenges and Desired Outcomes**

In interviews, key informants explored a wide variety of the challenges that are now facing Anchorage, with three areas of emphasis: health care, social services, education, and housing. Public safety and recreation were also mentioned as areas for concern. Informants were asked specifically about community-building, and were asked what they would change if they could change one thing about Anchorage.

### **Health Care**

Several informants expressed their concern that Anchorage was facing a shortage of both physicians and nurses. Payment for medical care was also a concern, with the Medicare and Medicaid programs posing problems on both the patient and provider end. Some informants were frustrated with the provision of mental health services, with problems including a shortage of psychiatrists, lack of pediatric psychiatry, and lack of programs for severe head trauma.

Suggestions for improving Anchorage's health care system included focusing on health education in schools, strengthening the residency training program to attract new doctors, maintaining public health funding, and providing more outreach to new immigrants.

## **Social Services**

Many informants agreed that Anchorage faces challenges in the area of social services. A common complaint was a general lack of cooperation and coordination, especially in the areas of children and substance abuse. Several informants mentioned that it was especially difficult to access social services outside of the Anchorage Bowl area. Child care was also mentioned frequently, with issues including high caregiver turnover, lack of funding, lack of off-hour care, and the necessity of a good development environment. Informants discussed substance abuse, pointing out that it remains a major problem in Anchorage despite a plethora of programs, and that there is a need for prevention as well as treatment. Senior services was also addressed by informants, who mentioned access to health care and financial stability as areas of concern.

Another problem related to social services was, according to respondents, a lack of coordination and collaboration between faith-based and secular programs. One informant pointed out that it is nearly impossible to get residential programs into many Anchorage neighborhoods, where there is strong local resistance.

Suggestions for improving Anchorage social services included: work towards publicly-funded daycare; maintain funding for state alcohol and drug programs; focus on prevention of alcohol and drug use; improve transportation for seniors; support senior employment; plan for sustainability and diversify the social services funding base; and make it easier for residential programs to be set up in neighborhoods.

## **Education**

Many informants spoke positively about Anchorage's educational system, although some were concerned about the ability to maintain its standards with impending budget cuts. One informant was particularly concerned with the standard of pay for district employees, saying that it is getting harder and harder to retain them. Other concerns included large class sizes, lack of after-school programs, and the lack of consideration for the large number of families for whom English is the second language.

Suggestions for improving Anchorage's education system included more trade schools, cut back on special programs until basics are improved, reduce class size, reach out to parents from ethnic minorities, build the relationship with the police department, and build a new high school in Eagle River.

## **Housing**

Several informants were concerned about the state of housing in the Anchorage area. Low-income housing is a strong need, according to interviews, as well as low-income housing that is well-integrated into other neighborhoods. Several people commented that many of the newly-build developments were unattractive, while one was concerned that they were also poorly constructed.

Informants made several housing-related suggestions for Anchorage: for example, introduce more safe houses for people in transition, and develop more coordination of housing organizations to leverage resources better.

## **Community Building**

Interviewees pointed out a variety of obstacles when it comes to community building. The separation between the military and the rest of Anchorage was seen as a major challenge by one informant. Another feared that outlying areas would become bedroom communities of Anchorage, weakening the sense of community. Several informants expressed frustration with partisan politics and felt this was damaging to community building. The state's struggling economy was cited as another challenge, as well as the lack of economic diversity.

Several informants offered suggestions for improving community building, including: encourage parents to model community building activities to their children, build relations with the faith and ethnic communities, and develop a community hall.

## **Number One Desired Change for Anchorage**

Informants were asked, if you could change one thing about Anchorage, what would it be? Responses varied widely, from improved access (by-pass from Glenn to Seward Highways, another Eagle River access road) to more attitudinal changes (more open-mindedness, less divisiveness, return of the pioneering spirit, taking responsibility for oneself). Other suggestions included curb-side recycling, improved education, and improved housing availability.

# **PERSPECTIVES OF DISCUSSION GROUPS**

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Five discussion groups were conducted with various groups of Anchorage residents to secure first-hand opinions about life in Anchorage. The group sessions were held between July 22 and 24. Participants joined in a two to three-hour facilitated discussion group. A United Way of Anchorage representative attended each discussion group and opened each session by introducing participants to the project and the concept of community-building. The five specific groups were:

- Social Service Providers and Recipients
- Anchorage Teens
- Steering Committee
- Faith Representatives
- Ethnic Group Representatives

The facilitator asked participants in each discussion group to assess the strengths and challenges of Anchorage, identify their major fears about life in Anchorage in the near future, and offer suggestions, solutions, or desired outcomes to the major challenges they identified. It is not surprising that the dynamics of each group differed; consequently, the facilitation and agenda became tailored to match each group's dynamics. For instance, some groups discussed a community vision for Anchorage, while others did not.

Participants were recruited by United Way of Anchorage staff. Attendance was excellent though no incentive was offered. Group size ranged from 8 to 18 participants. A list of organizations and interest groups represented in the discussion groups can be found in Appendix C. Following are summaries of the discussions of each group.

## **Discussion Group I: Social Service Providers and Recipients**

Eighteen people attended this group. About half of the participants were service providers representing various health and human service fields, including disability services, low-income and transitional housing services, food banks, Municipality of Anchorage social services, care for abused and/or homeless children, and health care. Service recipients included disabled representatives, homeless people or people in transitional housing, and a person with Downs Syndrome.

### **Positive Aspects of Anchorage Life**

"Good place to raise kids", "People are warm and friendly", "My neighbors tolerate me", "People are giving", "I can be involved in Anchorage", "Recreational opportunities, especially the Coastal Trails", "A lot of activities that make for a great quality of life," "People are interested in getting started (and have) lots of initiative," "You can do things here if you work hard," "the level of passion, people are deeply committed on an individual basis, people walk the walk," and "I actually want to read the (local) paper here," were all positive comments when service providers and recipients were asked what they liked best about living in Anchorage.

“A positive local political environment,” plus, “ its small enough to make change,” coupled with “little municipal money committed to social services,” presented a paradox for this group. “A good volunteer social services community” was also considered an asset for Anchorage.

## **Community Challenges Facing Anchorage**

### **Housing**

Housing was a very important issue for both providers and service recipients. The group assessed Anchorage as significantly lacking in affordable housing, housing for the disabled, options for housing for the homeless, and monitoring of landlord practices regarding the poor and disabled. Accessibility for the disabled was viewed as un-enforced and unregulated by either the state or municipality and was primarily enforced through the court system, if at all. The community lacks enough alternatives (affordable or not) for assisted (intermediate) care – meaning the wide range of housing needs between independent living and full nursing care. Many disabled people are quite capable of caring for themselves to some degree but do need some assistance.

The brightest light in the housing discussion was the Safe Harbor Inn – the only non-profit hotel in Alaska specifically for people needing transitional or permanent housing for any reason. The development is full and they are doubling capacity to accommodate an extensive waiting list. The group recommended establishing a “property bank” of properties that could be purchased or leased and converted into residential hotel units. The Safe Harbor Inn is an independent non-profit that is open to all with housing needs and is not restricted by various government program compliance limitations. Several members of the group agreed with one participant’s statement, “residential hotel living is a great solution. It is the single-best resource for affordable housing.” Recommendations for affordable housing for lower-income families and for disabled with assisted care needs were also group priorities.

Other solutions included advocating city plan review and enforcement of housing accessibility, voicing affordable housing needs to the AHFC, advocacy of Title 21 changes, adopting meaningful zoning policies that help neighborhoods, and “removing the nursing home bias,” by establishing intermediate care housing.

### **Medical Care Access**

The group emphasized the large and growing number of uninsured and underinsured that do not have the financial means to seek adequate medical care. They also recognized the counterproductive payment policies of Medicare and Medicaid as detrimental to securing available care for the poor and some of the disabled. One participant commented, “Diabetes, obesity and arthritis are in epidemic proportions in the Anchorage community and the area lacks comprehensive prevention, education and care programs for these increasingly serious public health threats.”

Medical providers are particularly affected by the inability to recruit adequate qualified medical staff and all levels, including primary care physicians. One participant asked the group, “whose job is it to recruit primary care providers to Anchorage?” Several in the group suggested the city take a lead role in doing so.

Advocating more federal and state health care dollars to intermediate care in addition to full nursing care was a key suggestion for improving medical care and related housing. The issue of mental health came up in several comments by participants, including “Because of the (mental health) stigma, we don’t treat it well in our community.”

### **Transportation**

The group viewed the community’s transportation infrastructure as deteriorating and one participant gave, “transportation and accessibility a low grade.” A major issue was no clearing of ice and snow on street shoulders and sidewalks for children, disabled people and those without their own vehicles. Especially for the disabled, this represented both high physical risk and actual denial of access. Solutions include the City of Anchorage grading sidewalks and roadsides and getting the bus system to run on time – a major problem for people totally dependent on public transportation. Joining the Alaska Mobility Coalition, campaigning and voting for People Mover bonds, a ride-free zone, and 24-hour public transportation were offered as solutions.

### **Child Abuse and Parenting**

Care providers cited example after example of the most abusive practices and the high number of young people who are not living at home (according to school district officials, 2,000 homeless youth attend Anchorage schools, however, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation’s Homeless Service Providers Survey identified approximately 1,300 homeless people in Anchorage in 2002), mostly due to abuse and lack of adequate parenting. Many homeless youth have some medical, emotional and substance abuse issues that require intensive professional attention that is not always provided. Teen pregnancy is a major issue in terms of the young mothers’ inability to support themselves financially, lack of parenting skills, and lack of other support for child-raising.

Education for parenting skills (“give parents an avenue to get help”), prevention of teen pregnancy through parenting and other means, and improving case management and court procedures for young social service recipients were recommended. One participant advocated for “quality and affordable child care.” Another participant commented that, “we can’t forget about hunger, especially for children and families.” Another participant mentioned the need to focus on prevention programs, stating, “put pennies in the playpens, rather than in the penal colony.”

### **Economy**

Economic issues and fears were predominant themes throughout this group’s discussion of all issues. A poor job market for jobs with adequate pay and a substantial number of employed households in Anchorage “living on the very edge of poverty” and “living life as a beggar” with no safety net of either dollars or services were discussed.

A number of participants shared the fear of having no financial reserve and unstable rental and employment situations. However, perhaps the most significant statistic cited by the group is a 65-70 percent unemployment rate among the disabled who are capable of some form of productive employment. The group recommended that re-employment of the disabled be addressed. Creating living-wage jobs, fostering a wide-spectrum of employment opportunities, public assistance for education investment, social service resource coordination and efficiency, affordable insurance and health care, and affordable childcare were offered as solutions to economic stress.

### **State Fiscal Policy**

Some of the group's major economic fears were triggered by what they saw as a complete lack of long-range fiscal policy and planning on the part of both the State of Alaska and the City of Anchorage. The City's apparently meager commitment of local government dollars to financing social services – as one participant put it, "MOA doesn't have the funding base to support social services" – and the state's apparent "machete" method of fiscal planning were sources of distress for both service providers and especially the disabled and homeless in the group.

According to one participant, organizations are "operating on razor-thin margins." "Lack of vision" and "No long-range planning" were quotes by participants when discussing their economic fears. "Bring back the Longevity Bonus," was recommended by the group. One participant observed recent state cuts affected everyone, and did not just target social services. One participant stated, "The political structure is pretty bleak" and another added, "Policy-makers don't feel the pain to do something about it."

### **Recreation**

Several comments were made about recreation, "in these times, people forget recreation," particularly in the winter when it is difficult to ride bikes and walk around town.

### **Fears for the Future in Anchorage**

Economic fears due to lack of fiscal planning by the state and the municipality was the leading fear for both recipients and providers. Personal safety and Senator Ted Stevens' good health were also major fears. Allocation of law enforcement primarily into the poor neighborhoods was an issue of discussion and a fear by one participant. Future health care availability and loss of workplace insurance were also issues for participants. One participant stated their fear for the future rather bluntly, "that it would be exactly like today."

The perceived decline in the former "strong sense of community" was cited by several participants. One leader identified Alaska's lack of attention to the basic building blocks of society – health care, transportation, healthy families, meaningful attention to substance abuse and child abuse prevention, good quality education, and public infrastructure – as a source of fear in the near future, particularly when, as one participant put it, "more people are falling off the edge," while adding later, "we continue to fragment and competition creates a bigger disconnect, in spite of the larger and larger center of need."

Much discussion centered on the perceived decline in the sense of community. Mentioned were “Alaska’s independent values have turned inward to selfishness,” and the “entitled” attitude of some Alaskans that think they shouldn’t have to pay for the government services. As one participant put it, “the sense of entitlement that they don’t have to pay for anything.”

## **Discussion Group II: Anchorage Teens**

A group of 8 teens – ages 14-17 – were recruited by United Way of Anchorage staff through the “Parachutes”, a teen center in Dimond Mall. The group included an honor student, alternative and home-school attendees, a drop-out, youth with and without plans to go on to college, and young people from a variety of family and economic backgrounds. West, East, and Dimond High Schools were represented in the group.

### **Positive Aspects of Anchorage Life**

Young people primarily focused on “my friends” and “people” in general, as the best thing about living in Anchorage. However, other positive statements included: “Wide-open areas and trees,” and “Areas untouched by society.”

### **Community Challenges Facing Anchorage**

This group of young people focused on the identical issues that adult groups identified as key to a better Anchorage. Several of these participants mentioned some stressful personal family situations, including single-parenting, divorced or separated parents, drug use by parents, disabled parents, neglect and abuse, living in poverty, and unstable employment and housing situations. Priority community issues included the economy, jobs, housing, health care, education, transportation, and personal safety.

#### **Economy**

At the top of the list were the uncertain economy and other economic issues. The number one priority for their families was jobs, or better paying jobs, for their parents. Most of these young people had jobs but a major issue for them was getting jobs without prior experience or being considered for more-than-menial jobs they are capable of performing. They were acutely aware of the economic stresses of affordable health care and the problems of families – such as many of their own – that are uninsured or underinsured. One 17-year-old woman worked full time and paid her own health care because her parents’ jobs (her father was disabled, her mother worked for a modest salary) didn’t cover her.

#### **Housing**

The second leading issue was housing for their families. One young man lived with friends because he said if he joined his mother in assisted housing she was charged more rent for an additional occupant and she couldn’t afford it. One young person had lived in 16 different dwellings.

Several participants talked about crowded housing conditions at home and their parents' desire for more affordable housing and there was none to be found. One participant mentioned that his recently separated mother had problems with her credit report and therefore was not eligible for renting in a specified housing complex.

### **Safety**

"The bums scare me. I don't feel safe in my neighborhood because I don't know what the bums are going to do." Many of the participants mentioned specific situations where they felt unsafe. None of the young women felt safe jogging or walking alone. All of the participants mentioned safety as an issue in schools ("bomb threats," "trash can fires," "stink bombs" "bullies," "rivalry, discrimination between schools") and many thought the schools didn't deal with offenders strongly enough. One girl told of a young friend who was raped and murdered in the last year in Anchorage. Some of the boys felt safe but said they always had to be on the lookout for trouble around town and in the schools, and that they felt they need to watch out for their girlfriends' safety. One participant mentioned there "should be more cops."

### **Transportation**

Many participants used the local bus system but were critical of busses not running on time - sometimes early, sometimes late. "The roads are full of cracks and pot-holes," said one participant. Several participants mentioned using the bike trails; however, one male participant expressed his fear of riding on the trails at night after getting off of work.

### **Education**

Schools and teachers got fairly good marks and it was clear that, compared to some of their homes, school was a better place. The teens generally agreed that class size was too large and that "15-20 students with more individual student-teacher (one-on-one) time" would be much better. Limited offerings in college prep advanced courses were a problem for the honors student who had ambitions in math and science but couldn't get all the courses she wanted. One participant expressed the desire for "more programs for dropouts to get their GED, like New Direction," offered at Covenant House. "Better lunch areas" and "better food" were also suggested improvements for schools.

### **Health Care Access and Social Services**

Several participants were affected by health insurance limitations in their families. It was surprising how well-versed some young people were in the intricacies and problems of getting adequate health care and paying for it. For example, at least two participants were knowledgeable about regulations to qualify for Denali Kid Care. One participant mentioned the need "for more places for people who can't afford prescriptions."

One participant with experience with DFYS and foster care was highly critical and said, "Make DFYS do their job. Case workers do not do their job." The participant cited specifically, "If parents mess up twice, then they shouldn't get a third chance. They (DFYS) need to take the kids away."

## **Youth Activities**

Participants engaged in a major discussion of available (or “not enough places to hangout”) youth activity opportunities. In addition to lack of opportunities, several participants mentioned financial considerations: “We really need free activities because most young people don’t have money and many of our families do not do as well.” “Indoor swimming pools, pool hall, giant lounge for teens, video games and free concerts,” were mentioned. One participant stated that they like the “Parachutes because it was free.”

The lack of athletic opportunities for youth who are out of middle school but not on the varsity teams in high school, or who are in alternative or home schooling, was discussed. Some of the more affordable private health clubs for working out had “poor equipment” for use by young people. Boys and Girls Clubs exclude teens, said some participants; however, another participant stated, “Boys and Girls Club are great people and it’s relatively inexpensive. I would just like to see them do sports activities for kids in high school.” “Hardly any skate parks, no 4-wheeling and no pegs on bikes (for doing tricks on them)” were mentioned.

## **Volunteerism**

Several of the participants mentioned that they volunteer and know that “the opportunities are out there to volunteer.” Some organizations were the participants volunteered included: Kids Kitchen, Habitat for Humanity, hospitals, sports programs, and Freedom Frog and Intervention Helpline, Inc. (an organization working with families to confront and overcome addictive behavior).

This particular discussion group did not cover participants’ greatest fear about life in Anchorage or solutions or their desired outcomes to meet identified challenges.

## **Discussion Group III: Steering Committee**

Twelve members of the Steering Committee participated primarily in the capacity as a group of active and interested citizens; it was not possible for them to completely divorce from their Steering Committee role. However, the reasons for conducting a discussion group session with this group were that the Steering Committee contains an ideal mix of knowledgeable, dedicated and active community-builders, with intense interest in the priority issues of the Anchorage community.

As a group, these leaders had a broader focus than other groups. Near the end of the session the group engaged in a creative process for how they as individuals – with the United Way of Anchorage as a strong community leader – could best bring the community together to proactively tackle solutions to Anchorage’s major issues: economy, health care, affordable housing, education, transportation, local government policy, developing sense of community ownership, and child nurturing and parenting.

Participants were asked to address the assets, challenges and issues of the community from a personal and professional standpoint rather than as members of the Steering Committee. They were also asked to share their fears about the next five years. Some discussion was held about a community vision.

## Positive Aspects of Anchorage Life

Participants found much to appreciate about living in Anchorage. Common themes were quality of life, recreational opportunities both within Anchorage and in the area around Anchorage, and quality schools.

Some examples of positive comments about Anchorage life include the “abundance of Alaska-style recreation opportunities in the city,” particularly the trail system. Anchorage provides “great wilderness opportunities,” including “an opportunity to forage for food.” “Nothing compares to this place,” it’s “paradise,” with plenty of “personal growth opportunities” and “professional challenges.” It’s the “land of opportunity,” where “career limitations are worth the trade for sane living and a good life.”

Other positive aspects mentioned were “its diversity—there are 92 languages represented by our school children,” its “good but bureaucratic schools,” and it’s a good environment for raising children,” having the benefits of urban amenities, yet still having a small city feel.

Of particular importance to the community-building objective were these comments:

- *Anchorage is a very caring community.*
- *Anchorage is very open and encouraging about being involved.*
- *It’s so easy to become part of the community.*
- *There are lots of community involvement opportunities.*
- *Community involvement action very accessible.*
- *The feeling that I can make a difference.*
- *It is a lot easier to make a difference here.*
- *I am able to get involved and make a difference.*
- *Accessibility to the powers that be is easier than anywhere I have lived.*

## Community Challenges Facing Anchorage

Participants were quite open about other community challenges, including the issues surrounding the entitlement mentality, the economy, health care, long term government planning, education, transportation and safety.

### Sense of Entitlement

A dominant theme in the discussion was the perceived sense of “entitlement” on the part of some (perhaps many) Alaskans about not only expecting not to pay for the government services they utilize and demand but in fact for the government to continue pay them through the Permanent Fund Dividend and other subsidy programs. One participant related this attitude to one of a teenager, “give me my allowance, but don’t tell me how to spend it.”

A second companion theme was the perception among many of a significant shift from the traditional “independent Alaska spirit (that included helping your neighbor)” to an angry selfishness exemplified by both entitlement demands and a “‘survival of the fittest’ philosophy, while ignoring those in need. Some participants added comments to this theme, like “the abdication of public responsibility to help those in need,” “marginaliz(ing) those in need” and their frustration with “successful Alaskans ‘getting theirs’ and then leaving the state, contributing nothing.”

### **Economy**

Several comments were made about the concern for a “large number of people living on the economic edge,” and the lack of “family-wage middle-income jobs.” It was recognized by one participant that Anchorage “lacked economic diversity and (had an) uncertain economic future,” while another participant added there was, “denial or dissociation” from impending and current economic and social crises.

### **Health Care**

Comments about health care challenges largely centered on cost and accessibility, and the “large and growing number of uninsured, under-insured and immigrant populations (who are not eligible for public medical assistance).”

### **Long-Term Fiscal and Municipal Planning for Services and Development**

One participant mentioned their concern for “the impacts of state and municipal budget cutting on families and their incomes,” and the “fiscal ills” of Anchorage due to a lack of long-range fiscal policy and planning for both the state and the city. The group agreed that there was a need for fiscal leadership and priorities setting needed to take place. They expressed their concern for the little amount of and increased competition for local government money dedicated to social services and little to none dedicated to health services.

They also were particularly concerned about the lack of city planning that lead “to an ugly city.” One participant profoundly noted, “We can never write enough words to do good things. There has to be a desire.” Some members of the group continued the discussion about planning, the revision of Title 21, their desire for more sidewalks, parks, and no more site condominium developments.

Other specific concerns were mentioned about lack of planning to deal with the homeless issue, and, in particular, the 2,000 homeless children who attend Anchorage schools and the seniors.

### **Education**

Several participants commended the school district in providing choices in schooling and a high quality of education; however, they also recognized that “behavior management issues (in the classroom) were detracting from education,” and that there were concerns of the “personal entitlement of uncivilized behavior, both in the schools and in public.” Some of these behavioral issues were attributed to the societal decline in family and social values.

One participant stated the “dramatic change in recent years in student needs and the lack of home support.” Another participant mentioned that there seems to be lots of program support for children at either extremes – the special needs, and gifted and talented children – yet “kids in the middle and kids who don’t fit the norm can be ignored.”

Once children graduate from high school, one participant mentioned that “Anchorage does not provide an environment for opportunities, especially for next generation,” and that it was hard to get their kids back to Anchorage after they had left the state for their education and career. As one participant frankly put it, “I have a fear of not affording an opportunity for my kids to return to Anchorage.”

### **Transportation and Safety**

Some participants expressed their concern that the transportation system and its infrastructure was in decay and the opinion that it “seems like there is more traffic.”

One participant mentioned, the “loss of the sense of safety is a big thing.” Several participants commented that they would not travel certain parts of the trail system alone for fear of being assaulted and having to lock their doors, something they did not use to have to do. Another participant pointed out the “hideous substance abuse rate in this state, which leads to higher crime rates and risks in our community.”

### **Fears for the Future in Anchorage**

When asked about their greatest fear for the future in Anchorage, many responses were given; however, the discussion largely focused on the Alaska and Anchorage economy, that “the lack of economic diversity will intensify,” the increasing economic uncertainty and disparity, the longevity of Senator Ted Stevens’ ability to bring federal dollars to the state, and “people not being aware and not planning for an economic crisis.”

Considerable discussion was also held about the fiscal situation and the lack of adequate fiscal planning and the “unwillingness to pay for our needs.” A portion of the discussion centered on the need for taxes, particularly income taxes. There was no group consensus on this issue; however, the majority seemed to support an income tax. One participant stated that, “people are unwilling to invest in government, because they don’t trust how it will spend the money,” particularly when one looks at past spending fiascos (such as the grain elevators in Valdez and the Alaska Seafood Institute).

Several participants focused on the condition of Anchorage’s youth, fearing that that the high schools were too big, students had too many personal safety issues, there were poor prospects for jobs upon graduation, and the lack of a supportive family home environment.

Other comments about fears for the future included the:

- *Potential man-made disasters, both national and local security*
- *Lack of desire to do good*
- *Rural Alaska fiscal shortages and hardening of the rural/urban divide*
- *Increasingly less civilized behavior and the increase in misdemeanors,*
- *More pan-handling*
- *Lessening safety net*
- *Increasingly negative social indicators*
- *Ignoring the growth in social service needs*
- *Complacency of people to vote*

- *Lack of inclusive politics*
- *Lack of vision and the lack of long-term planning that can create crises*
- *Not addressing basic building blocks of society*

## **Finding Solutions to Address Identified Challenges**

The Steering Committee initially struggled with how to frame the solutions discussion because of their wide range of knowledge about the community and the difficulty of defining solutions for such overarching priorities as the economy, safety and education. Then the committee launched on a very productive discussion about which major issues need to be addressed. These issues included: the economy, education, safety, local government policies that affect all facets of life in Anchorage, how best to develop ownership and the community participation it creates, child nurturing and parenting, affordable housing, rural sustainability and the equitable distribution of benefits, health care, and overcoming the hurdles of community-building when so much of Anchorage's population turns over each year.

After brainstorming, a number of solutions were mentioned. They included:

- A fiscal plan: Long-term fiscal plan for both state and city is needed. New taxes are necessary for citizens to demand accountability from government. A financial base of support by citizens investing in their government and community needs to be created. This will result in economic stability. Political will and public discussion will result from this investment. A fiscal plan will require leadership, vision, and community-building for community support to overcome the reluctance to invest in government.
- Bring kids in treatment outside home to Anchorage for healing.
- Develop a health and social services plan for a better Anchorage.

This discussion group suggested several specific actions that could be taken toward these solutions:

- Leverage community-building resources revealed in this study to make a better Anchorage
- Build a coalition for human services
- Make personal and professional commitments among Steering Committee members
- Create real awareness of difficult social, health and cultural conditions as a stimulus for community action
- Bring other people with us in community-building, build a grass-roots campaign
- Contribute trust and security in return for effort and donation money dedicated to social services
- Have an investment campaign to convince citizens to invest in a better Anchorage and Alaska
- Have an "Above and Beyond" campaign that helps define specific issue so people can choose to go above and beyond their normal level of effort in the specific issues of their passion

- Get out of the victim mode, where the greatest strength is found when we focuses on ourselves rather than on what people are doing to us
- Build a “giving values brand” for Anchorage – build a giving culture
- Find important problems and strategically approach how to fix them
- The fundamental building block for all others is carrying the community-building message

## **Discussion Group IV: Anchorage Faith Community**

Ten representatives of the Anchorage faith community participated in a discussion group. About a third of these participants represented faith-related social service organizations, the rest were leaders of several denominations within the Anchorage community.

### **Positive Aspects of Anchorage Life**

These discussion group members echoed other positive aspects mentioned in other discussion groups. They centered on: the ability to be an individual, the pioneering spirit, innovative and “can-do” attitude of the people which sometimes can also be naïve. One participant mentioned, that “Anchorage overachieves for its population because of its individualism and people here don’t like to be told, ‘no’.”

The strength in “cultural diversity, not cultural dominance,” the beauty of the land, the trails system, lots of options for schooling, the “big town with a small town flavor,” where “you can get to know people,” and how Anchorage people care for others” were positive statements made. As one participant simply put it, “There is caring that happens here.”

Other positive statements had to with good access to decision-makers, “lots of people who are not afraid to speak out,” and the true asset of social services agencies collaboration and the number of helping organizations.

### **Community Challenges Facing Anchorage**

There were plenty of challenges brought up in the discussion. One participant mentioned that they didn’t like “being away from family and feeling more isolated.”

#### **Economy**

There was expressed concern about the “widening gap,” between the, “‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’,” and that there was “no understanding of the extent of poverty and large numbers living on the edge in Anchorage.” They expressed concern about future economic uncertainty. As one participant put it, we need to “wake Alaska up to the social and economic crisis that is upon us now.” “There are so many thumbs in the dike that one worries about the stability of the dike,” states another participant.

It was expressed by one participant that the number one challenge is centered on economic issues including: state budget, personal household financial issues, low wages, affordable safe housing, and health care costs. One participant estimated that, “one-third of the population is in economic crisis and 30 percent are living beyond their means.”

## **Sense of Entitlement**

Similar to other discussion groups, this group focused a portion of the session on the issue of entitlement, the “survival of the fittest,” and the “‘I got mine’ mentality.” A participant noted their concern with the attitude of “Give me my PFD, but don’t ask me to pay for what I want or for anyone in need.”

One participant stated that “Alaskans are the cheapest givers nationally,” and are “not philanthropic.” Some discussion was held about the pervasive NIMBY (Not in my back yard) attitude.

## **Education**

Several participants mentioned their concern about inadequate education funding, particularly for early childhood education. One participant also mentioned they were concerned about “the loss of cultural education in schools, in particular the loss of Native languages.”

## **Substance Abuse**

One participant mentioned, “Alcohol abuse is a major issue, especially for kids,” adding, “it is a rock core issue, affecting one out of four people in this community.” The group readily agreed with this statement. One participant added, “The access to alcohol and drug counseling is bizarre.”

## **Population Shifts**

It was noted by one participant, that “high turnover in population makes community-building hard and it impacts long-term planning as well.” Much of this turnover comes from dislocated rural residents moving to Anchorage, as well as the apparent difficulty in finding affordable housing that ultimately affects the ability of students to stay enrolled in the same school. Another participant that, “there is a huge influx of immigrants with huge families coming here, but we don’t have the economy to support them.”

One participant relayed a story about a recent neighborhood street party where they discovered that they had lived on the street for the longest period of time – 8 years – and the next longest dwellers were there for only three years. This constant turnover of population makes it difficult to build and retain a congregation, and it is understandable why new residents, who do not expect to live in Anchorage for long, do not invest or make a commitment to their church or community.

Other concerns expressed included:

- An auto-based place that is not designed for walking and poor accessibility for the disabled
- Social anger – people’s inability to manage anger, particularly for men
- General erosion of any community Sabbath – no time for rest. People are not spending quality time as a family. How many days a week do families eat together?
- No restorative justice
- No treatment for people with traumatic brain injury
- No supportive community for gay and lesbian people. There is reluctance in this community to have that conversation.

## Fears for the Future in Anchorage

This group mentioned several fears about the future in Anchorage if things do not change. They feared a stagnant and uncertain economy, budget cuts that hurt the most needy, increasing demands on emergency services, the influx of poor people that the economy cannot support, lack of long term planning for community funding of social services, the growing reliance on and acceptance of gambling, a political system that does not hold the needy in highest priority, and ever increasing anger in society borne out of a fear for survival and lack of self-esteem.

One participant expressed concern for social services moving from a collaborative mode into a competitive mode as funding continues to dwindle, and that we will opt for funding treatment rather than prevention. One participant mentioned their greatest fear being that “people will continue to solve their own problems that prevents the ability to build a community. People need to understand that they can be part of a community and don’t have to be by themselves.”

## Finding Solutions to Address Identified Challenges

When addressing the challenges within Anchorage, the group generally agreed that the first step was to help people in disadvantaged situations out of their crisis so that they become empowered to participate in community building. This empowerment can be done by encouraging them to vote and getting their participation in planning.

The group also agreed that there needs to be more education of the general population about people in crisis. They want to see the promotion of a core value where the question is always asked of policy-makers, “How will this policy affect the poorest among us?”

They feel the core issue is spiritual: bringing faith-based solutions into the world. The faith community needs to better communicate the true nature of their community’s good works and overall consensus values. The participants believe they share universal core values with the secular community that “we are all together and we all share some basic values.” One participant added, “the whole issue about faith-based funding is political, but it should be about values.”

One participant went so far as to say, the solution is in “repentance and renewal – a change of orientation and direction from the selfish to the helpful.” We need to “address ‘blaming’, helping the community out of the ‘victim mode.’”

The group felt the faith community can take particular steps in improving and building the Anchorage community by:

- *Taking action on volunteer recruitment*
- *Communicating the collaboration needed for action*
- *Having a role as a catalyst and coordinator, playing a support role and encourage policies that help those in need*
- *Inviting outreach from the social service community*
- *Participating in the Title 21 revision process*
- *Developing a common community language that respects our pluralism and our differences*
- *Talking about our values in ways that are respectful of others*

- *Addressing the faith-based initiative in a manner that is inclusive of all faiths*
- *Coordinating with secular organizations, not competing*

In summary, the group spoke unanimously in favor of a guideline for fiscal decisions being the answer to this question: “How does it affect the poorest of us?” The group also wondered why the current and impending social and economic crisis was not a major issue and they concluded, “Past social service programs have done their job of sheltering others.” As a result, Alaska society has yet to experience the worst consequences of decreased support for social services and lack of prevention.

A consistent comment in this group and all others except the teen group was the overwhelming sense of fiscal entitlement felt by many Alaskans and the NIMBY (Not in my back yard) syndrome. They also were very concerned that the current social and economic crises were not visible to the overall community. They viewed Anchorage as having many assets such a caring people, big city with small town flavor, good access to decisions makers and a beautiful environment with many recreational opportunities. They approached solutions very constructively and as a group wanted to use the assets of the faith community for the betterment of all of Anchorage and named many solutions for better communication by the faith community playing a catalyst role in helping overall.

## **Discussion Group V: Anchorage Ethnic Diversity**

Eight representatives of several ethnic communities, a United Way of Anchorage representative and a representative from Bridge Builders attended this group. Four participants had immigrated to this country, later moving to Anchorage.

### **Positive Aspects of Anchorage Life**

The members of this discussion group mentioned a multitude of positive aspects of living in Anchorage, including its clean air and beautiful environment, lots of good restaurants, access to distant air travel, quiet lifestyle, and comforts of a home-town atmosphere.

Several participants mentioned that they felt less prejudice here than in other places they have lived and that people are more open and friendly in Anchorage, particularly the traditional Alaska Native community. They all view the diversity of the population as a positive.

They felt Anchorage offered many opportunities for the willing and that jobs were available. They felt it was a “place to give back” and “easy to know.” Several participants mentioned that they had more access to local government decision-makers here. They mentioned there was good agency collaboration and lots of services available.

### **Community Challenges Facing Anchorage**

There were several challenges mentioned. Perhaps the greatest challenge was in finding affordable housing and no bilingual/elderly care housing. Health care coverage and access were also significant issues, including medical and dental care for adults and children.

Education was also a major theme. In particular, they mentioned they felt the school system was deteriorating, the “standard education teaching template doesn’t fit our diverse students,” and “minority students do not have enough role models in schools.”

Other challenges included:

- Winter transportation
- Vehicle pollution
- Growing number of single parents
- Child sexual abuse
- Budget cuts
- Affordable recreation
- Isolation of new immigrant women
- Substance abusers and homeless have no housing

### **Fears for the Future in Anchorage**

The greatest fears expressed by this group included their fear that housing will be getting even more expensive which will lead to a housing crisis, the economy will not keeping up with population growth, and the crisis in health care coverage will worsen.

Several participants also mentioned their fear that a breakdown in community is coming and Anchorage is not prepared for an influx of a more diverse population and “diversity tensions may increase.” Like other groups, they also expressed their concerns that the “sense of community is being lost and there is less compassion,” and the “have and have-not divide is increasing.”

They are also concerned about:

- Very limited resources for men with difficulties
- Quality of education for future children
- Budget issues
- Turn inward and turning on one another
- The minority population not investing in the basic building blocks of society

### **Finding Solutions to Address Identified Challenges**

Participants in this discussion group offered many solutions to address challenges in Anchorage. They wanted to make appreciation of diversity an Anchorage value, “living in balance to share a commonality as a community while respecting diversity.” Several participants expressed there needs to be more awareness of diversity by providing information to help overcome the problem of ignorance and lack of certainty about differing cultures.

They also recognized their minority communities need to support our schools with a plan to attract more minorities to the teaching profession and other areas of professional diversity. Participants stated they needed to develop a spirit of ownership in the community and recognize that solutions involve bringing together all the players.

Other suggestions for solutions or desired outcomes included:

- Developing a city-wide resource list – all inclusive – that can be used by the disadvantaged and create more comprehensive paths for service delivery
- Developing a fitness campaign
- Creating support groups for new immigrant women
- Community planning for life quality – insure green space
- Creating teen activities by age group as preventative measures
- Develop life skills training for children who don't get it at home
- Create more winter city activities
- Start preparing for population increase with good planning
- Create a safe environment with a stable economy

Overall, the group expressed many of the same hopes and fears expressed by all other groups. There was more discussion about diversity as a special asset of the Anchorage community. Most of the group viewed the community as open friendly. Affordable housing, transportation, education and long-term planning for population growth were very significant issues. Probably more than any other group, this one had the most discussion about education concerns and offered many constructive solutions.

## Summary of Discussion Groups

Though the groups themselves were very diverse – teens, faith, ethnic, service provider/recipient and Steering Committee – the near unanimity of response about Anchorage, their fears, hopes and solutions was astounding.

Anchorage was consistently seen as a pretty good place to live with its beauty, recreation assets, openness/friendliness, good schools, diversity, economic opportunities and relatively safe environment.

The city's challenges focused on educational problems, affordable housing, transportation issues, economic concern, social service delivery and the perception of lack of constructive planning by either the municipality or the state.

The sense of fiscal entitlement by many Alaskans (“give me my PFD and public services I want but don't ask me to pay for them or to help anyone else”) was a dominant theme. It distressed many group participants who felt this attitude kept the state and Anchorage from planning for the future and from giving Alaskans ownership in how government manages the state and the city.

In terms of fears for the next five years, economic uncertainty based on state fiscal problems and apparent lack of fiscal planning for the future was clearly the leader. Even people living comfortably at the time were quite worried about the near economic future. Fear of social and educational crises were expressed as funding and apparent political support for helping people in disadvantaged situations declines. Increased social anger (anti-social behavior), loss of a sense of community and caring for others were frequently expressed fears.

Solutions were many and very constructive. A stable financial base for community building and long-term fiscal planning by both the state and the city were key items. Appreciation of diversity to the point of marketing Anchorage's multi-cultural community was mentioned. Having a policy guideline for policy decisions being, "How will it affect the poorest among us," received support. Many powerful solutions for educational improvement were also presented.

## **APPENDIX A: LIST OF STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

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### **Chairs**

- Mary Barber, Co-chair
- Alicia Iden, Co-chair

### **Members**

- Chuck Barber, Youth Development Coalition
- Carla Beam, BP
- Michele Brown, United Way of Anchorage
- Delisa Culpepper, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Joan Fisher, Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center
- Rosylind Frazier, ISER, University of Alaska Anchorage
- Virgene Hanna, ISER, University of Alaska Anchorage
- Marcia Hastings, Alaska Community Foundation
- George Hieronymus, Rasmuson Foundation
- Kameron Holloway, Cook Inlet Tribal Council
- Fred Jenkins, United Way of Anchorage
- Jewel Jones, Department of Health and Human Services, Municipality of Anchorage
- Karen Kluesner, Nerland Agency/ United Way Board of Directors
- Jim Maley, Alaska Children's Services
- Marie Nash, Office of U.S. Senator Ted Stevens
- Dr. Ken Osterkamp, Alaska 20/20
- Rebecca Parker, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
- Ann Peltier, ConocoPhillips
- Barbara Symmes, Providence Health System
- Beth Sirles, College of Health and Social Welfare, University of Alaska Anchorage
- Heather Wheeler, Department of Health and Human Services, Municipality of Anchorage

## **APPENDIX B: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS**

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### **List of Informants**

- Eleanor Andrews, Owner, The Andrews Group
- Dr. Bruce Chandler, Medical Officer, Municipality of Anchorage
- Carol Comeau, Superintendent, Anchorage School District
- Ella Craig, Retiree, former social worker, Chairman of Pioneers Home Advisory Board and Board Member of Alaska Commission on Aging
- Sherry Dugan, business owner and resident of Girdwood
- Katherine Gottlieb, President/CEO, Southcentral Foundation
- Dr. Brian Green, Executive Director, Cornerstone Clinic
- Juliana (Julie) Guy, Retiree, Former President of Alaska Public Radio Network, Chairman of Anchorage Seniors Center
- Rabbi Johanna Hershenson, Congregation Beth Shalom
- Cynthia Hull, Executive Director, Child Care Connection Inc.
- Susan Humphrey-Barnett, Assistant Administrator, Providence Health System
- Karleen Jackson, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Dept. of Health & Social Services
- Jeff Jessee, Executive Director, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Dr. Harold Johnston, MD, Alaska Family Practice Residency
- Dr. Bruce Kieesling, MD, PrimaryCare Associates
- Dennis McMillian, President, The Foraker Group
- Mary Jane Michael, former Chief Executive Officer, Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services/ Anchorage Mutual Housing Association
- Walt Monagen, Chief of Police, Anchorage Police Department
- Brenda Moore, Community Liaison, Christian Health Associates
- LTC Peter Mulcahy, U.S. Army assigned to Alaskan Command
- Gloria O'Neill, President/CEO, Cook Inlet Tribal Council,
- Tom O'Malley, Anchorage School District teacher and resident of Girdwood
- Debbie Osslander, former Anchorage School Board member and Chugiak resident
- Jim Palmer, President, The Palmer Group and resident of Eagle River
- Cathryn Rasmuson, Vice Chairman, Rasmuson Foundation
- Gilbert Sanchez, Journalist, Intercambios, KSKA
- Dr. Brian Saylor, Professor, Department of Health Sciences, University of Alaska Anchorage
- Nancy Schoepfoester, Manager, Philanthropy and Community Services, ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.
- Sheila Selkregg, Community Planning Consultant
- Jim Seller, Executive Director, Akeela Inc.
- Chuck Spinelli, President, Spinell Homes, Inc.
- Candance Winkler, Associate Executive Director, Child Care Connection Inc.

## Summary of Interview Responses

### Community Strengths

- People are passionate about helping in Anchorage and they really like to see tangible results of their giving.
- It's the people and that old-time pioneer spirit. Incredible people that really want to see Anchorage succeed. People feel capable of solving problems.
- We have wonderful programs for children and opportunities for community involvement.
- There is no rigid tradition that prescribes how things have to be done.
- There is diversity and different types of people that create an interesting energy to make things happen.
- Seniors, the disabled, and people with modest means can be successful homeowners.
- Highly educated and highly qualified labor force.
- We have a huge volunteer force in the community.
- There is no graffiti and it is very inviting and conducive to raising children.
- It's easy to get anywhere in the world from here.
- As a woman, I have had glorious career opportunities that I never had anywhere else I lived.
- We have a strong, non-profit community. They are the ones that make this community a good place to be.
- Relatively young population and an excitement about living here.
- Open spaces and the trail system -- such good living and emotionally important in an area.
- Anchorage has diverse neighborhoods where people can find a place to fit.
- I see prejudice is being broken down here.
- We have fantastic health services in this community. Good long-term care facilities. Excellent medical facilities and very talented doctors.
- Really like our community school program. It is an important element of our community.
- I see good collaboration and solid relationships developing within the social service sector.
- This is no Podunk place. We have lots of amenities available here, particularly in the arts.
- We have talented educators, offer a lot of public school choices, and have made major commitments to maintain and upgrade our school facilities.

## Community Challenges and Desired Outcomes

### Health Care

Several informants expressed concern that Anchorage was not attracting new physicians. Some stated this was related to a national problem. Many of Anchorage's medical staff was recruited by the Indian Health Service and the military. As one informant describes it, "Alaska wouldn't have the medical staff that they have now without IHS and the military, but these people came thirty years ago and they are now retiring. Who will replace them?" One informant expressed concern for medical provider gaps, stating we "don't have enough in primary care and general internal medicine." The nursing shortage was also of keen concern to several informants.

Tackling the Medicare reimbursement constraint is difficult and doctors have had to make difficult choices about not accepting Medicare patients, said informants. "Medicare patients can't find a medical doctor. They have to wait six months to get an appointment," commented one informant. Another cited, "Doctor fees in Alaska are high...because Medicare and Medicaid don't pay full cost, so this raises prices for other people."

An informant stated that while they understand the difficulty patients had with paying, they pointed out that, "Good medical care is a partnership, with mutual responsibility between the provider and the patient," meaning "patients need to take personal responsibility for their health, like eating right, stop smoking, get exercise, and take other preventative actions. Ultimately, this is what lowers the costs for people."

One informant was frustrated that some specialists in Anchorage will not accept Tri-Care, the military's medical insurance, for payment. As a result, there have been cases where soldiers or their dependents had to seek care in the Lower 48, "not because the specialty or service was not available in Anchorage, but because certain providers did not accept Tri-Care."

Military and off base social services providers, particularly those dealing with domestic violence, have been "real slow in cooperation and sharing of information." A key informant speculated that it is due to confidentiality issues, but also wondered if the off-base social services were concerned about the added pressure on their services.

Challenges with regard to mental health service provision were also mentioned. These challenges included enough psychiatrists to manage dual diagnoses, pediatric psychiatric need and programs for severe head trauma.

When asked what they desired or what would work best to meet community health needs, several ideas were put forth. They include:

- Improve health education in our schools so that we are raising healthier children. We need to improve healthy behaviors of kids.
- Take personal responsibility for their health.
- Support Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center. It is a big part of the solution, especially for Medicare patients. One informant suggested, "Double the size of Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center."

- Strengthen our residency training program to attract new doctors to Anchorage.
- Gain local control over our health services, similar to the county model.
- Remain focused on public health. Don't let homeland security distract from the larger purpose of public health that includes infectious diseases, sexually transmitted diseases, and health education. We need to maintain our funding of public health.
- Add more interpreter services to help providers and patients communicate in a common language.
- Provide more outreach to the ethnic communities (new immigrants) about the health and social services available, using media tools, like the radio, television, publications, and the Internet.

### Social Services

There were several social service challenges mentioned. A viewpoint supported by several informants is there "is much area for improvement in the social services field. We need to get rid of territoriality and figure out who is willing to collaborate, cooperate, and compromise." An informant suggested that the agencies working with the homeless "are probably some of the better ones at working collaboratively. However, the areas of children and substance abuse are not well coordinated." One other informant added that "the non-profit community has been undereducated and there has not been enough capacity-building and partnering."

In the geographic areas outside of the Anchorage Bowl, several people mentioned that the social services are not as readily available. As one informant puts it, "if you don't have a job, money, or a car, it can be pretty difficult out here." Specific programs people living in these areas would like to see more of include: Hospice, public health nursing, mental health services, and domestic violence support.

In the social service area of childcare, several challenges were mentioned, including, "Everyone knows that off-hour care is a shortage. No solution has been worked out. There is no growth in this area." Anchorage is "losing programs because of lack of funding, especially for infants and toddlers." Other issues revolved around workforce issues, "Most centers can't afford to pay more and parents can't afford to pay more. Yet this is such a critical time to have caregivers who are skilled and trained to provide a good development environment. Until we resolve this issue, we will continue to have high (caregiver) turnover."

Several informants shared the viewpoint that substance abuse is a "monumental problem in Anchorage." "We have plenty of programs, but the problem isn't going away. It is getting worse," stated one informant. However, the informant added, "this isn't an Anchorage-specific problem, and we need to develop a comprehensive plan for the state...that includes prevention and not just treatment."

The substance abuse field is also constantly challenged in preventing or staying ahead of new addictive drug trends and their impact in society. One other gap expressed was the lack of residential addiction treatment for high-functioning or professional people with addictions.

Challenges related to senior services include the ability to live in dignity, have financial stability, and enjoy access to health care. One informant stated they see a conflict within the senior community between “craving independency” and also believing they have “entitlements.” A couple informants mentioned the difficulty for seniors in paying for prescriptions and how the loss of the Longevity Bonus will affect those people who used it to pay for their medications. Additionally, a few informants felt there needed to be better understanding in the senior community about other cultures. The Anchorage Seniors Center was specifically mentioned as “not knowing how to integrate and don’t know how to welcome (minorities or low income people).” A few informants felt the biggest challenge for seniors was transportation. The weaknesses with the public transportation system included “schedules are not convenient, need to schedule in advance, and some penalties if you cancel.”

An informant mentioned that there are a growing number of social service providers that have certifications that are recognized by the faith community, but not by the secular community. One informant stated they “don’t want to see mistrust (between the secular and faith service providers), but it is hard to bridge between the two and that’s when conflict comes up.” This same informant added, “Churches could be doing better jobs of working with people, especially people with disabilities. They don’t necessarily know how to help and it is a little intimidating.”

One informant cited “a huge, huge, huge problem – the total inability to get supported residential programs into a neighborhood.” The city’s zoning laws and the NIMBY (not in my backyard) issues make it practically impossible to establish a residential program. Thus, residential programs tend to “get ghetto-ized in neighborhoods such as Mountainview, Fairview, and Muldoon because there is less neighborhood resistance.” One informant pointed out that because of this issue, there is “an exodus out of Anchorage to the Valley, where there are no zoning issues to deal with.”

Other needs mentioned by informants include: the state needs to send away about 400 children out of state for mental health care; and “we need to do more for Native women who are victims of violence and abuse.”

Suggestions to improve provision of social services and desired outcomes include:

- *Child Care Services:* Alaska should start looking at publicly-funding daycare. It is being done elsewhere in the states and all over the world. We need to appreciate the impact of the child care industry as a major force in our economy. They are small businesses that hire a lot of people. It is important for the community get involved to support this industry. We need to make an investment in our caregivers and provide them incentives so we don’t lose them to better paying jobs. We need community investment in the system and to stabilize businesses, through subsidizing or supporting models like BP’s and Providence’s workplace daycare centers, and expanding public support to get state and local level investment in the industry.

- *Substance Abuse Services:* “We need to get it together and figure it out.” We have too many programs and we need to drop our territorial issues at the door. This requires leadership. “We need to make sure the Division of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse stays funded so it can keep up with the latest techniques and research.” We need to “focus on prevention – the earlier we reach people the better.”
- *Senior Services:* We need more funding for seniors transportation. We need a better safety net and more education on acceptance of seniors as people. We need more money for gerontology programs offered at the university. We need to teach young people at the elementary, middle, and high school level about career opportunities working with seniors. Coordination is key. This is not a money issue. We have gone from not enough to almost too many programs. We have become competitive rather than be cooperative. We need to hear what seniors have to say. We hear too much from providers and not enough from participants. We need to support employment of seniors.
- *Issue of Leadership:* Several informants stressed that leadership is vitally important. While they don’t necessarily know who the leader(s) should be, they recognize that without effective leadership, cooperation and coordination is much less likely to occur.
- *Concept of a Think-Tank:* We need to develop an Alaskan think tank that develops the most collaborative and creative solutions. We need to look for “best practices.”
- *Long-Term Planning:* We have to plan for sustainability of resources, diversifying the funding base for social services. This involves developing the ability to measure results. The work of organizations, such as the Foraker Group, is the key in elevating the sophistication and education of non-profits on how to work smarter.
- *Faith Community Assets:* Map out strengths and assets in the faith community. Faith communities deliver direct and indirect support in the community, yet it has never been inventoried (such as marriage enrichment, children/youth camps, fellowship). Implement a faith-based program to recruit and support foster parents.
- *Residential Programs:* The city needs to make it easier for residential programs to be established in neighborhoods, by establishing stringent requirements the provider needs to meet. These requirements can include safety, security, 24-awake staff, alarms, and contingency planning. But once you meet these requirements you are allowed to set up your program. Additionally, there is some land in Anchorage that is zoned for Public Land and Institutional use. We need to get access to this land for residential program development.

### Education

One key informant mentioned that when they moved to Anchorage, they got “negative feedback on the Anchorage School District;” however, the more the informant looked into the issue, the more it was apparent that so much of this sentiment “couldn’t be further from the truth.” They added Anchorage is “one of the Top 10 districts for a community our size in the nation...and Central (Middle School) is in the top 100 middle schools in the nation.” The informant wanted to “turn that perception around.”

According to one informant, the number one issue affecting education in Anchorage was the issue of “financial reliability – knowing what the budget is going to look like for each year.” Several informants praised Anchorage on its wide choices for education; however, one informant suggested that “we shouldn’t have any more special programs until we can prove we can provide a basic education. These programs are really an expensive use of public funds. If you want a special program then parents should pay for it or get involved in some other way. The school district needs to make sure they have ESL (English as a Second Language) before special Japanese immersion. We are creating (social) classes.”

The biggest challenge in another informant’s mind is about “parental involvement.” This involvement includes working with children at home, but also “parents need to interact with kids properly.” “Kids are neglected and ignored...Parents can’t be their (kid’s) buddies; they need to be their parents...Parents need to respect the teachers, and not talk badly about them in front of the kids”

Some informants mentioned they wished their “children didn’t have to be bussed to Anchorage for high school.” And that the “bussing schedules were cruel to start so early.”

Another informant thought, “The school district was so goofy, unbelievably, outrageously goofy, the bureaucracy was stupid. ASD doesn’t care about children.” They added, their own “biggest concern is that it isn’t child-friendly.”

One informant believed, “We don’t pay district employees enough and are not competitive any more. We are finding it harder to attract and retain employees.” Other weaknesses cited included “classes are too big,” “we don’t have enough after-school programs to provide academic support,” “mobility within the district is difficult on teachers and for planning.” One informant mentioned that by 2006, it is expected that the student population will be a minority majority, yet “a major weakness is not effectively working with parents who don’t speak the English language. There just are not the resources.”

Several suggestions were made on how to address some of the education gaps. Most suggestions centered on the Anchorage School District.

- More trade schools. We need to strengthen the sentiment that being in a trade is honorable.
- We need to focus on the education basics before spending new money on special programs.
- Reduce class size. Without more money, however, this issue cannot be resolved.
- Reach out to the parents from ethnic minorities. Use the faith community to provide a safe and comfortable place for dialogue between the district and parents. Programs like Bridge Builders can also play a part.
- Listen to the youth about their quality of life. We need to assure these young people that the community appreciates them or else they are going to leave and not come back.
- Further build the cooperative relationship with the police department to provide safety nets for students and staff in our schools.
- Build a new high school in Eagle River.

## Housing

Plenty of concerns about housing affordability were made; however, as one informant puts it, “affordability is an issue in every price range; it isn’t just an issue for low-incomes.” Another informant mentioned the challenge about “providing lending programs and have loan funds for low-income people.”

One person mentioned that, “we need to better plan to fit in and integrate low-income housing with other neighborhoods ... segregated housing doesn’t work. The stigma follows these people.”

“Developing low-income housing without garages is a problem,” stated an informant.

Several people expressed their concern about new housing developments that were particularly unattractive. One informant put it bluntly, “we have a serious problem with out of control, un-controlled housing development. We have inexcusable outcomes that produce cheap bad housing, a quick buck for bad developers.” One informant challenged these comments, by stating that they could “show people ugly, just go one street of Benson (an old section of town).” A couple informants living outside of the Anchorage Bowl mentioned they would like to see more low-income housing in their areas.

A few desired outcomes were offered:

- More safe houses for people in transition.
- More coordination of the housing organizations for planning and to leverage all of our resources.
- The Community Development Department should promote affordable housing.

## Public Safety

One informant felt that, “police were not visible,” and was frustrated that there was “little to no will to stop people running red lights.”

Several suggestions on how to deal with public safety issues were made:

- Public safety is not the responsibility of one department (the police), it belongs to everyone. If you have better roads, you have fewer accidents. If you have more parks and recreational opportunities, then teenagers are less likely to get in trouble.
- Focus on prevention rather than enforcement. Prevention is always cheaper.
- Work closer with the faith communities, ethnic communities, and the school district to develop more understanding and build cooperation.
- Continue supporting youth court.

## Recreation

One informant felt there was a challenge in expanding organized recreation areas. Referring to the Bicentennial Park ball park development, “it is an atrocity that a community who says it wants open spaces, yet when it comes to recreational needs, they can’t give up their special interests. How are we going to develop a community that doesn’t have enough recreational areas for the population?”

## Community Building

One informant elaborated on the difficulty of getting involved in the community, when “so many here seem to place highest regard for who has been here the longest.” It is “like you need to prove you are committed to staying here before people will accept you.”

Another challenge to community building exists between the military and the rest of Anchorage. One informant mentioned they wanted “(off-base) people to understand that there are people, including kids, that live on-base,” and “it isn’t just about all the hardware.” They questioned, “But how do we do that?”

Some concern was expressed that communities outside of the Anchorage Bowl would just become bedroom communities of Anchorage and that while some felt it had not negatively affected their community yet, they were concerned that it could weaken their strong sense of community. They also were concerned that these areas could not overcome the feeling that they were “stepchildren of Anchorage.”

When asked about the challenge of community building, one informant thought it “was part of a broader national phenomenon where people don’t take the time to get involved in the community like our parents did. People are too busy and don’t take the time to go to community meetings, Lions Clubs meetings. We rush in and out of our Rotary meetings.” They suggested one way to overcome this is “adults need to model for kids that community involvement is really important.” This will help people “get over the feeling that they are really powerless when in fact they aren’t. When people understand that a lot of decisions are local and it doesn’t take a lot of people to change it, then people see the value in community involvement. It is the most profound and immediate way to change people’s level of involvement. They understand that they can make a difference.”

Several informants felt community building could happen if we worked harder at building relations with the faith and ethnic communities. One informant suggested, “We need faith and secular social services to value each other.” Yet one informant was cautious about giving people “false hope,” about how far this relationship could go. They added, “It’s a bullet, but this isn’t a silver bullet to solving our problems.” Another informant added, “We have a unique challenge to get these (diverse) people to really feel committed.”

One suggestion was to “develop a community hall that is affordable to rent, a friendly place, conducive to social get-togethers, not like the Egan Center, so people can come together.”

Several informants expressed their frustration with partisan politics and felt this was damaging to community building. As one informant stated, “We need to come together like we did in the old days.” Others expressed their concern of the lack of leadership and that “very few people step up to the plate.”

Several informants referred to the state of Alaska’s and Anchorage’s economy as a barrier to community building. They saw the lack of economic diversity, the overdependence on government spending and the lack of intellectual capital in the community as major obstacles.

One informant thought it was important that “people continue to build connections. It’s the hardest part of community works. It is a constantly moving, shifting target. It is also the biggest opportunity to improve Anchorage.”

### If you could change one thing about Anchorage, what would it be?

Some key informants were asked the question, “If you could change one thing about Anchorage, what would it be?” In response to this question, several interesting responses were given:

- *I wish people felt that they made a difference in finding solutions and getting things done*
- *We need to build a by-pass from the Glenn Highway to the Seward Highway.*
- *Bring back the pioneering spirit.*
- *We need to come together and leverage (our resources) so we could really build a strong, sustainable, and not confusing system.*
- *There are sufficient resources in this community to improve and move forward, but we haven't put it together in a plan. We need a plan.*
- *I would like to see curb-side recycling. Too much is being thrown away.*
- *We need to be more open-minded.*
- *I would like to see the “good ol’ boy club” go away.*
- *I would like to see improved quality of education in Anchorage for all children.*
- *We can't shut people out because they may be different or have different perspectives. I would like to us be less divisive and rise above the petty stuff.*
- *I would like to see another access road to Eagle River.*
- *We would have all the available, quality houses for those people that choose Anchorage as their home. And that this wouldn't be so hard to do.*
- *People took responsibility for their own lives.*
- *Our economy could change to be less resource-based and more non-government based.*
- *Go back to the early '70s and change the zoning and wouldn't allow any buildings that are tacky or ugly. That we had good zoning laws and enforcement.*
- *Either re-work the Permanent Fund or begin a tax for community service, particularly for use in the schools. We run a responsible budget.*
- *I would like to change the concept for the tribes (to understand) that Anchorage is the largest tribe in the state. We are tribal too, and are a resource and are strong. We have tribal roots and heritage as well.*

## **APPENDIX C: LIST OF DISCUSSION GROUP REPRESENTATIVES**

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United Way of Anchorage staff recruited discussion group participants and at least one staff member attended each discussion group, providing introductory comments to each group. In some discussion groups, United Way staff were active participants.

### **Steering Committee Representatives**

- Anchorage School District
- Municipality of Anchorage
- Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center
- University of Alaska Anchorage (2)
- Alaska Community Foundation
- Nerland Agency
- Alaska Children's Services
- US Army, Alaskan Command
- Alaska Department of Health and Social Services

### **Mixed Ethnic Group Participants**

- Bridge Builders
- Eight people represented the Hispanic, Gambian, Korean, and Japanese cultures

### **Faith Community/Social Service Group Representatives**

- St. John United Methodist Church
- St. Mary's Episcopal Church (2)
- Congregation Beth Shalom
- The Salvation Army
- CSS/St. Francis House
- Food Bank of Alaska
- New Hope on the Last Frontier (Church of Nazarene)
- Southcentral Counseling

### **Service Providers/Clients Group Participants**

- Safe Harbor Inn
- Access Alaska (2)
- Mayor's Office, Municipality of Anchorage
- Challenge Alaska (3)
- Covenant House Alaska
- Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center (3)
- F.I.S.H.
- Weed and Seed East Anchorage
- Providence Health System

### **Youth Group Participants**

- Eight teenagers between the ages of 14 to 17

## APPENDIX D: COMMUNITY SOCIOECONOMIC DATA

### Municipality of Anchorage and Alaska Socioeconomic Indicators

Municipality of Anchorage and Alaska Socioeconomic Indicators	Municipality of Anchorage	Alaska
<b>Population</b>		
Total Population	260,283	626,932
<b>By Age</b>		
Age 0 - 19	83,063	208,117
Age 20 - 34	57,807	129,365
Age 35 - 59	98,253	236,424
Age 60 +	21,160	53,026
Median Age	32.4	32.4
<b>By Race</b>		
White	72.2	69.3
Alaska Native or American Indian	7.3	15.6
Black	5.8	3.5
Asian	5.5	4.0
Hawaiian Native	0.9	0.5
Other Race	2.2	1.6
Two or More Races	6.0	5.4
<b>Housing Characteristics</b>		
Total Households	94,822	221,600
Avg. Household Size	2.67	2.74
Owner-Occupied Housing	56,953	138,509
Median Value Owned Homes	160,700	144,200
Renter-Occupied Housing	37,869	83,091
Median Rent Paid	\$736	\$720
Family Households	64,131	152,337
<b>Percent of Households that</b>		
Lack Complete Plumbing	0.5	6.3
Lack a Complete Kitchen	0.6	5.6
Lack Phone Service	0.8	3.0
<b>Income and Poverty Levels</b>		
Per Capita Income	\$25,287	\$22,660
Median Household Income	\$55,546	\$51,571
Percent Below Poverty	7.3	9.4
<b>Employment</b>		
Total Employment	65.2	61.5
Percent Unemployed	4.7	6.1
Military	4.4	3.7
Private Wage & Salary Workers	70.8	64.9
Self-Employed Workers	7.0	8.0
Government Workers	22.0	26.8
Unpaid Family Workers	0.2	0.3
<b>Employment by Industry</b>		
AFF, Hunting & Mining	3,886	13,774
Construction	7,995	20,534
Manufacturing	2,542	9,220
Wholesale & Retail Trade	19,755	39,853
Transportation, Communications, & Utilities	11,809	25,043
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	7,654	12,934
Services	55,875	122,452
Public Administration	12,142	30,070

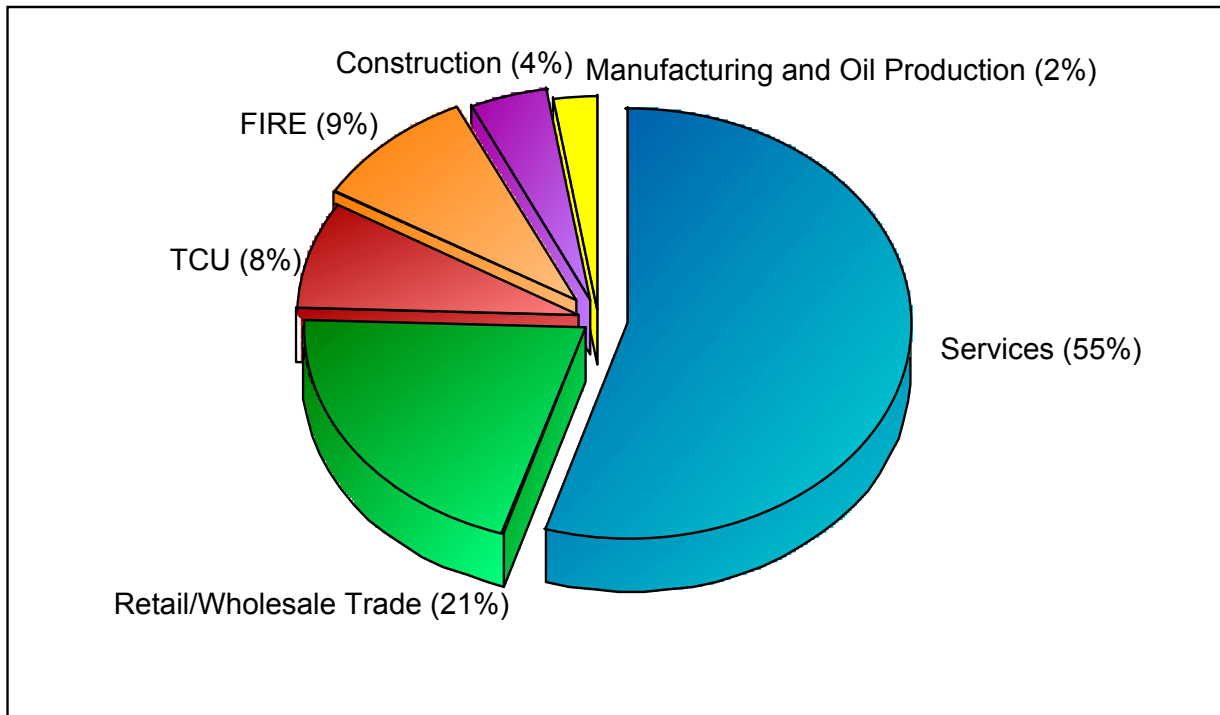
Source: U.S. Census 2000

## APPENDIX E: BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS

**Table 14. Type of Businesses that Responded to Survey**

	% of Total
<b>Number of Full-time Employees</b>	
5 and under	36
6-10	15
11-25	22
26-50	13
51-100	6
101 and over	10
<b>Average Full-Time Employees</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Number of Part-time Employees</b>	
0	35%
1	20
2	14
3	7
4 and over	23
<b>Average Part-Time Employees</b>	<b>6</b>

**Figure 2. Type of Industry Sector Business that Responded to Survey**



**Table 15. Current Community Participation**

Your company is currently participating in...	% of Total
Encouraging employees to vote and participate in the political process	67%
Promoting economic development in Anchorage	57
Promoting volunteering	55
Promoting good health	54
Promoting youth development	51
Promoting arts and culture	46
Expanding business and industrial development in Anchorage	46
Promoting community networks	43
Building community trust	42
Beautifying community spaces	40
Promoting commercial revitalization in Anchorage	40
Fostering racial harmony	37
Promoting entrepreneurship	36
Preparing people for jobs	32
Promoting commercial real estate improvement in Anchorage	29
Increasing availability and/or access to jobs	27
Increasing neighborhood safety	26
Promoting educational reform	24
Increasing availability of recreation opportunities	22
Connecting neighbors who need help with those who can help	21
Designing a plan for community development	19
Increasing affordable housing and home ownership	17
Improving access to transportation	14

**Table 16. Interest in Participating in Community Initiatives**

Your company would like to participate in...	% of Total
Designing a plan for community development	16%
Promoting economic development in Anchorage	15
Promoting educational reform	14
Expanding business and industrial development in Anchorage	14
Increasing neighborhood safety	14
Promoting good health	13
Beautifying community spaces	12
Promoting youth development	12
Increasing availability of recreation opportunities	12
Fostering racial harmony	12
Building community trust	12
Promoting volunteering	11
Promoting commercial revitalization in Anchorage	11
Connecting neighbors who need help with those who can help	11
Promoting entrepreneurship	10
Improving access to transportation	10
Promoting community networks	10
Encouraging employees to vote and participate in the political process	10
Promoting commercial real estate improvement in Anchorage	8
Promoting arts and culture	8
Preparing people for jobs	7
Increasing affordable housing and home ownership	7
Increasing availability and/or access to jobs	6

**Table 17. Types of Organizations Charitably Supported  
by Anchorage Businesses, 2002**

Type of Organizations	% of Total
<i>United Way of Anchorage</i>	49%
National Health and Social Service Organizations ( <i>Heart Association, MADD, NAACP, March of Dimes, American Diabetes Association, Volunteers of America, HABITAT for Humanity, Feed the Children, Easter Seals, Hospice, American Lung Association, Muscular Dystrophy Association, American Cancer Society, including Breast Cancer and other Cancer Associations, etc.</i> )	34
Local and Regional Civic Organizations ( <i>ACVB, Fur Rendezvous, Alaska Community Forum, Alaska Humanities Forum, Visitor Industry Charity Walk, Commonwealth North, AEDC, Rotary Clubs, Bear Paw Community Foundation, Anchorage Athena Society, etc.</i> )	28
Youth and Family Support ( <i>Boys and Girls Scouts, Toys for Tots, Alaska's Children's Trust, Rally Program, Friends of Alaska Children, YMCA, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Club of Anchorage, etc.</i> )	22
Crisis Centers/Programs ( <i>Red Cross, AWAIC, HOPE, STAR, Pregnancy Center, etc.</i> )	16
Catholic Social Services ( <i>Clare House, Brother Francis, etc.</i> )	15
Private Education ( <i>Pacific Northern Academy, Bristol Bay Education Fund, Suzuki Learning, Math Counts, private schools, etc.</i> )	9
Disability Services and Programs ( <i>Challenge Alaska, Access Alaska, Special Olympics, etc.</i> )	9
Food Assistance ( <i>Kids Kitchen, Bean's Café, Downtown Soup Kitchen, etc.</i> )	8
Salvation Army	8
Arts and Cultural Organizations ( <i>Anchorage Folk Festival, Anchorage Symphony, performing arts, Anchorage Museum, Alaska Aviation Museum, Alaska Veterans Memorial, etc.</i> )	7
Public Broadcasting ( <i>radio and TV</i> )	6
Local Medical Organizations/Foundations ( <i>Providence Hospital Fund, etc.</i> )	6
Churches	5
Fraternal Organizations ( <i>Elks, Lions, Moose, Shriners, American Legion, etc.</i> )	5
Environmental and Animal Organizations ( <i>Alaska Zoo, Botanical Garden, PETA, Friends of Pets, Nature Conservancy, Kenai River Clean-Up, etc.</i> )	5
Universities ( <i>UAA, Alaska Pacific University</i> )	4
Legal Organizations ( <i>South Poverty Law Center, Anchorage Youth Court, Alaska Legal Services, Alaska Pro Bono, etc.</i> )	4
Alaska Native Organizations ( <i>Alaska Native Heritage Center, Alaska Native Foundation, Southcentral Foundation, etc.</i> )	4
Police Organizations	2
Public Education ( <i>PTA, etc.</i> )	1
Other ( <i>Key Coalition, FCER, Chinese American Association, Ski Patrol</i> )	7

**Table 18. Company Level of Annual Cash Charitable Contributions, 2002**

<b>Value</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
None	8%
\$1-\$500	20
\$501-\$1,000	11
\$1,001-\$2,500	12
\$2,501-\$5,000	19
\$5,001-\$10,000	8
\$10,000-\$50,000	14
Over \$50,000	7
<b>Average contribution</b>	<b>\$114,161</b>
<b>Median contribution</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>

**Table 19. Company Level of Annual In-Kind Charitable Contributions, 2002**

<b>Value</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
None	18%
\$1-\$500	15
\$501-\$1,000	10
\$1,001-\$2,500	15
\$2,501-\$5,000	14
\$5,001-\$10,000	11
\$10,000-\$50,000	11
Over \$50,000	6
<b>Average contribution</b>	<b>\$42,254</b>
<b>Median contribution</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>

**Table 20. Company Level of Annual Volunteer Hour Contributions, 2002**

<b>Hours</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
None	22%
1-49	19
50-99	13
100-199	13
200-499	19
500 and over	14
<b>Average hours</b>	<b>2,348</b>
<b>Median hours</b>	<b>60</b>

**Table 21. Support of Employee Volunteerism**  
*Does your company allow employees time off (either paid or unpaid) for volunteer work?*

Hours	% of Total
Yes	72%
No	28

**Table 22. Local Hiring Practices**

<i>Does your company reach out to hire local people who are trying to transition from welfare to work?</i>	% of Total
Yes	38%
No	62
<i>Does your company reach out to hire local people who have disabilities?</i>	% of Total
Yes	44%
No	56

**Table 23. Employee Benefits**  
*Does your company offer...?*

	% of Total
<b>Health care benefits</b>	
Yes	77%
No	23
<b>Child care services or assistance</b>	
Yes	8%
No	92
<b>Employee Assistance Program</b>	
Yes	43%
No	57

## Verbatim Survey Responses

*Q. In what other ways, if any, has your company helped to improve the local quality of life in the last year?*

### Business Practices

- *Better price for building things.*
- *Providing jobs / services in the community.*
- *We broadcast Native/non-Native cultural stories and other programming / public broadcasting on KNBA 90.3FM and Native America Calling, National Native News and earth songs.*

- *Built 12 new units of multi-family housing.*
- *We are a small architectural design partnership and we attempt to improve the quality of our built environment with every project that we are involved.*
- *Addressing race relations, cultural awareness in or out of the work.*
- *Allowed local performers to do public performances.*
- *Provided care to less fortunate patients.*
- *Reduction in pollution, improved water quality.*
- *We do not hire people who smoke. We do not hire people who are eligible to vote and don't.*
- *Training immigrants to work in society.*
- *Through outreach programs, welfare to work, mature Alaskan planning.*
- *Improve roads.*
- *Employees of fourteen and keep our place of business professional.*
- *Created job opportunities for rural residents.*
- *Providing outstanding customer service and satisfaction in the health care arena.*
- *Provide a good job. Clean work environment.*
- *We encourage our employees to volunteer. We support all team sports that employees or their children participate in. We allow our managers to do community work on company time.*
- *We do not contribute much to the general public. Our priority is our employees. We give generously to our employees in the event that they need help.*
- *New meals on wheels van, new affordable senior housing, improved adult day care for seniors in need.*
- *(Company) takes pride in all communities we are located in. Service is highly encouraged.*
- *Provide good stable jobs.*
- *Hired youth and disabled (part time) to assist with there living situation.*
- *Encourage participation by all employees in non-profits groups.*
- *Providing help for people.*
- *Our business is a Native owned co-operation. Aiming to help members in Alaskan villages earn a supplementary income to their subsidence life style.*
- *Clients' safety and home health and community networking.*
- *By affording employees to work casual hours.*
- *Educate visitors and residents about Alaska.*
- *Our focus is on improving a better community in the village.*
- *(Company) has built two new container vessels to service only the Alaska market enabling faster and reliable service, operator ship capacity and higher environmental standards.*
- *Educational programs.*
- *Bus stop bench maintenance, garbage can outside planters.*
- *Serving on organizations to raise monies to better Anchorage.*
- *The deaf community relies on our services. Keep them mobile and communicating.*
- *Through actions and employees' actions to promote judgment of well being.*
- *Quality of life program for employees.*

## Community Involvement

- *Giving to our church for many charitable contributions.*
- *Food Bank, High Schools.*
- *America's promise (Anchorage's promise)*
- *Support of non-profits (\$ and in-kind). Manager participation on community boards. Hosting receptions. Education for employees on issues. Employee involvement volunteers.*
- *The gift of sight program. We work with financially handicapped individuals to get an eye exam and glasses free. Lions Club, school nursery program administrations. State of Alaska Vocational Rehabilitation, Brother Francis etc. Covenant House, Mary Conrad Center, Pioneer Home, and Abused Women's Shelter.*
- *We built a facility for use by non-profit organizations and education groups for training, collaboration strategic planning and other activities, free of charge.*
- *Community based practice. Employees are active members of community.*
- *Individual volunteers in Shrine, Rotary, U.S. Navel Sea, Bean's Café, and MS walk.*
- *Mostly through donation efforts.*
- *Mentoring non profits, board members.*
- *Wide participation in chamber, as well as on executive board of Historical 501c 3 organization association.*
- *Community leadership. Involvement in boards, Task Force, Committees for various community agencies, projects, charitable giving and fundraising.*
- *Fur Rendezvous.*
- *Participates heavily with the chamber.*
- *I personally volunteer for a number of things. I am a chamber ambassador. I am the team coordinator relay for life in Eagle River. I volunteer at Providence extended care Dementia unit.*
- *I donate many hours as well as in-kind contributions to Anchorage Promise.*
- *Involvement at community councils and assembly.*
- *When time allows it, we have donated services to various organizations.*
- *Clean-up annual. Rotary mediation services.*
- *Café, started musical programs.*
- *Day of Caring, trail adopted.*
- *Citywide cleanup and donations.*
- *Donate office space, furniture to ALPAR.*
- *My company believes in giving back to the community. We participate as a team in United Way Day of Caring, Anchorage having clean-up, and have recently purchased an older downtown building and remodeled it for our offices.*
- *Participated in reading rendezvous, a reading promotion, sponsored author-in-the school events, donated items for auctions to numerous charitable organizations.*
- *Provide assistance and instruction to not for profits concerning fund raising. Donate time and materials, sit on various boards, assist with scholarships underwriting.*
- *General help as person to person but company not directly involved.*
- *Participation in Special Olympics fund raising.*
- *Participation with the downtown partnership.*

- *Participation donations. Anchorage Youth Center and Pro Bono programs. Various blood bank drives.*
- *United Way day of caring, habitat for humanity, city wide cleanup, Junior Achievement.*
- *Volunteer participation with a targeted non-profit. To assist in developing their public awake ness.*
- *Participated in Vision Anchorage and as a board member on the Chugiak/Eagle River chamber of commerce.*
- *Encouraging employees to participate in practical volunteer activities. Clean up, day of caring, other charitable volunteer opportunities.*
- *Picking up trash along local streets.*
- *Helped build a church. Contributions to M.D.A.*
- *We're a home based business and our community service and volunteer hours are through professional organization projects and volunteer organizations.*
- *Alaska's events of local and national interest.*
- *Adopt a family annually through the Salvation Army, Food Drive, and United Way Day of Caring.*
- *We participate in Youth Court, Booth Home, Covenant House, Anchorage Historic Properties, Fish Creek Preservation and Youth Scholarship Programs (through various Native Corps).*
- *Executive and leadership community involvement including board (non profit) participation, community events and related.*
- *Our company is a major sponsor for the American Lung Assoc. ASTHMA Walk. Rotary International.*
- *Annual chamber clean-up. Volunteers to neo-natal ICU. Volunteer coaching little league.*
- *Road clean up, working with and participating on board of AEDC.*
- *Visitor industry charity walk.*
- *Legislative boards, bridge builders, hospital volunteering.*
- *Volunteer for health fair screenings.*
- *The deaf community relies on our services. Keep them mobile and communicating.*
- *We are always working for volunteer opportunities in the community.*
- *President/ CEO services on Salvation Army Boards, Public Facilities. Advisory Commission, Governors Transition Team. Rural strategies board team, others not at liberty to disclose at present time. Also sponsors youth sports, charities, tithes coaches teams.*
- *By participating in charitable events to raise money.*
- *Donated engineering design services to the Knik little league for waterline design for the sprinkler system at their Eagle River ball fields.*
- *Employees volunteer time in community. Organized and achieve support by the company.*
- *Owners participate on non profit boards. Sponsor 401(K) profits having plan for employees and rotary. Sponsor cafeteria plan for employees. Sponsor long term disability benefits for employees. Flex time for employees. Some work at home to take care of developmentally disabled siblings and/or children.*
- *Encourage employees to get involved in their church or other organizations.*

- *Donated free flight seeing trips that benefited many organizations around MOA. Gave more bag donations to organizations.*
- *I volunteer at the schools.*
- *By volunteering services to rotary clubs of Anchorage and chamber of commerce of Anchorage.*
- *We bring to Anchorage a variety of entertainment and recreational opportunities (Egan Center and Sullivan Arena) Donations to Covenant House, Catholic Social Services.*
- *Participating in school and extra curricular activities with our children, donating in-kind and product to churches and hospitals.*
- *Employees can volunteer anywhere and try to help. Donated to high schools yearbooks.*
- *Volunteering on boards.*
- *Mayor's Charity Ball.*
- *Habitat for Humanity.*
- *Various organizations. Boys and Girls Club, Lion's Club.*
- *Donate to Iditarod. Fur Rendezvous, art shows, and crafts.*
- *Giving money when we can.*
- *Participation in leadership in multiple civic organizations, including YMCA, CSS, Providence Health System, ACVB, KSKA, Museum of Arts.*
- *Continue assisting our native citizens.*
- *Sponsor trail and clean all summer and Day of Caring.*

**Q. What services, in any, do you feel are most needed in your community?**

### **Children and Youth Services**

- *Youth programs, educational opportunities.*
- *More youth activities. (3)*
- *Youth programs.*
- *Better children's youth activities.*
- *Youth programs are almost non-existent in Eagle River.*
- *Protection for children against violence, hunger, and exploitation.*
- *We need to stay on top of providing opportunities for our kids to be healthy, safe, cared for lovingly, educated, and participating in their community.*
- *Help our teens in our communities.*
- *Better after school child care.*
- *Opportunities for teens.*
- *Free and affordable after school and summer programs for kids.*
- *Kid's education and programs*
- *More recreational activities for youth. (Ski programs at Hilltop, soccer complex, ball fields, gym time in winter)*
- *Public awareness of keeping children safe from abuse and sex at a young age. Also the importance of proper education of all youth.*
- *Youth social activities, teen social centers where kids can hang out and be social. Recreational areas for youth with skateboarding, bicycle, roller blazes.*

- *Volunteer's to help kids and teens in community.*
- *Good children services. We have a large percentage of entry-level position in our workforce and these employees tend to have young families. Childcare is critical to their ability to work.*
- *More awareness of children's needs and care.*
- *More things for youth ages twelve to eighteen to do, including recreational and economical.*

## **Education Services**

- *Good schools.*
- *Assistance for education.*
- *Better education (3).*
- *Quality education.*
- *Get our high school twelve grade graduates better opportunities to college here in our city Anchorage to better their education here and not always out of state.*
- *Education for kindergarten to university.*
- *Continuing education.*
- *Education within community.*

## **Health and Social Services**

- *Better care for the homeless. Better relation between natives and non-native community.*
- *Job availability to help homeless.*
- *Bridge programs.*
- *Shelters for the homeless that want to help themselves. I realize some of our community people are mentally ill, and while they would take advantage of the free offerings and services, they so not want to change, or turn their lives around. They should be offered a safe place, but not at the expense of folks who need help, and want to get a new start.*
- *Affordable healthcare for all.*
- *Affordable group healthcare for small businesses.*
- *Healthy lifestyles.*
- *Health services and health care.*
- *Handicapped access.*
- *Alcohol and drug treatment programs.*
- *Shelter for women and children. Emergency food and shelter.*
- *Short term (less than seven days) Shelter laundry, hygienic type care for temporary homeless family care.*
- *Clean up of homeless, "homeless camps in residential areas."*
- *Health insurance.*
- *Alcohol treatment affordable.*
- *Centralized organization to assist individuals in locating pro-bono health care services, dental, and optometric services, etc.*
- *Homeless and runaways.*
- *Help homeless.*

- *More affordable health clinics in the communities that stays open twenty-four hours, and not always hospital emergency as an alternative.*
- *Better service for elder people. Better medical service for elders.*
- *Access to affordable health care and child care.*
- *Comprehensive senior services in one location.*
- *Social services for the elderly, homeless and disabled (mentally and physically).*

## **Government Services**

- *Get an honest days' work out of more federal, state, and municipal employees.*
- *Economical development improvement.*
- *New mayor.*
- *Tried, without success or response, to contact local, state and executive officials on local and state subjects. Recommended "Friday nights sweeps" with maximum effort of police department devoted to one specific unannounced area of concern. Then, the "bad guys" would be on alert not knowing and, hopefully would "shape up" or leave.*
- *Community planning.*
- *City needs more policemen in departments.*
- *The development of an efficient, balanced, affordable government.*
- *Business development, jobs, placing people in jobs.*
- *Litter control. Community policing.*
- *Improved library services.*
- *Need more monies for complete funding of existing projects to improve the community service, such as state income tax.*

## **Housing Services**

- *Affordable housing (4).*
- *Apartments that are readily available not a two to four year wait. Many apartment owners discriminate if applicant has Section 8 voucher.*
- *Housing for lower and lower middle class people.*
- *Transitional housing.*

## **Transportation Services and Issues**

- *Better transportation (3)*
- *Port of Anchorage Development with Knik crossing. Ship Creek development.*
- *Sidewalks.*
- *Increase transportation.*
- *Better public transportation.(2)*
- *More pedestrian bicycle friendly streets.*
- *Better bus services so people with limited income can get to work with out owning a car.*
- *Reduce noise, loud music from cars, quieter mufflers, especially motorcycles.*
- *Downtown parking.*
- *More side walks and cleaner walk ways for the handicap*

- *More traffic lights.*

## **Recreational Services**

- *Improved recreational / cultural resources.*
- *More recreation availability.*
- *Recreation transportation.*
- *Walking town center, improve recreational activities.*
- *The new sports facilities.*
- *Extend the coastal trail along the pass to Potters Marsh.*

## **Other Comments**

- *No new services needed. Need to continue efforts towards greater collaborative problems solving; more strategic and focused use of available resources.*
- *Currently, leadership in adjusting to tomorrow's smaller economy as government funding falls.*
- *More educated people looking for jobs.*
- *Volunteering is always needed.*
- *Neighborhood clean-up communities.*
- *We think the services currently provided should be maintained as is, as they are currently adequate.*
- *Volunteer hours, ideas for non-profit fundraising, more involvement.*
- *More open communication between people.*
- *Religious based activities.*
- *Keeping the streets safe and clean. Promote the small town fields to neighborhoods.*
- *Building a sense of community that all boats can rise with consistent community involvement*
- *Keeping the city safe and clean for all people regardless of race.*
- *More encouragement to volunteers, make the opportunities known.*
- *Sense of pride and ownership. Level playing fields for access to community activities and opportunities.*
- *Beautification.*
- *Those which make it possible to go downtown after 5:00 pm, and feel safe. Those which enforce vehicle and driver licensing with insurance. Those which require able bodied folk to do community - or for pay - work. Those which require poor mothers and disabled to do at home or sheltered work. Those which eliminate Brother Frances Shelter, Beans Café, and bus passes for street corner beggars. Mentorship programs by volunteers.*
- *A convention center in Midtown with applicable parking.*
- *Racial harmony.*
- *Race relations.*
- *Youth recreation services, education, and public transportation.*
- *Job training.*
- *Central community bulletin board. Separate from newspaper, etc. Large monthly calendar at central location physically and on line to facilitate inter / intra-community communication.*

- *More networking.*
- *A realignment of the public perception that government or somebody else owes any of us something. A hand up theory. The well needs to run dry in many cases. We love to give, but only to those with a real need.*
- *Need to make sure services are going to the right people in community.*
- *Too broad of a question to answer without overlooking a need.*
- *General education, and in control of your own destiny.*
- *Water control and quality noise control, air pollution control.*
- *Welfare to work programs, providing low cost housing/transportation and educational opportunity.*
- *Personal protection.*
- *Neighbor to neighbor*
- *Entertainment, crime prevention, beautification*
- *Make town more colorful.*
- *Vocational education programs.*
- *Right now in good shape.*
- *Safety, transportation, and housing*
- *Give all people a chance to better themselves and life without hold backs of court cases, time spent in jail, labels on names from system, and what ever reasons in life that may have a hold on their progress to do better. Adjust laws to help people and not hold them down or back.*

**Q. How would your company most like to, or how does it plan to, be more involved in improving the community?**

- *Help children with anything we can.*
- *Continue giving to places to help.*
- *Working with community groups, chamber, AEDC, vision Anchorage, University. Active politically to advocate for an attractive growing vibrant community. Creating private sector jobs and employment opportunities.*
- *Maintain current level of involvement in the face of declining budgets.*
- *Keep trying to encourage volunteerism and giving.*
- *Involvement in boards, task force, committees for various community agencies, projects, charitable giving and fundraising.*
- *Greater donations, greater participation in the community.*
- *Staying involved with the community volunteering at various events. Attending meetings learning and giving input.*
- *Continue as before.*
- *I do all I can as a sole-proprietor. Six to eight hours a week donated.*
- *We're involved as much as possible.*
- *We will continue to contribute to our community as we have in the past.*
- *Help business to deal with racial concerns.*
- *Interested in turning the company to a non-profit organization.*
- *Have no plans at this time.*

- *Community service when it comes along.*
- *We believe we will maintain, but not increase the amount of community involvement on company support.*
- *Expanded groups. Beans Café, promoting listening groups.*
- *Upgrade our building and property.*
- *Preparing in Day of Caring.*
- *Doing what we can do above.*
- *Current level is fine.*
- *By paying the highest possible wages and let the employees do their own things.*
- *Continued improvement of own downtown office area with own building.*
- *Staff in Anchorage donates time to two organizations involved in promoting literacy and racial diversity.*
- *Continued community work service with park hiking roads. Anchorage downtown counseling, partnership, chamber of commerce, radio ads against drinking and driving. Support MADD activities.*
- *Continue tradition and encourage staff to be involved.*
- *Add new community public affairs program on KNBA, air more public service announcements.*
- *Company too small.*
- *When and where needed.*
- *Coaching and sponsoring youth sports.*
- *Make an effort to improve our property and enlarge our business, so we can hire employees.*
- *At the individual level, encourage community help by individuals.*
- *Keep our business neat and clean; provide jobs on an entry level in a limited way.*
- *More community services.*
- *Most activities are through fund raising for United Way of Anchorage.*
- *Continue doing what we have been doing.*
- *They don't and wouldn't want to because they are moving out of state.*
- *Continue to support volunteerism by employees.*
- *Continue to operate as we have.*
- *City wide clean-up.*
- *No plans.*
- *Our state needs a source of income tax so we will know who wants and will live free in this state. Also we need a gross business license tax.*
- *Continue what we already do.*
- *Involving our teachers to provide a stronger education for students.*
- *Through chamber of commerce. Through beautification of community.*
- *Adopting a section on the highway.*
- *No plans to be more involved.*
- *Offering services that are not available.*
- *Keep funding youth programs. Keep encouraging people to vote. Keep involved with United Way and booth home.*

- *Encourage employees to be active in community councils. Give time off for school support activities.*
- *Continue and expand the above answer in question 17.*
- *We continue to foster employee involvement in the community where we are most needed.*
- *Anchorage economic development association.*
- *Volunteering by staff.*
- *Continue in supporting charitable organizations through contributions of money and time.*
- *Fostering youth development groups, Big Brothers/ Sisters. Newsletters promoting good health to patient staff.*
- *Continuing to be involved with and provide services at discount to non-profits. In addition, we typically provide in-kind services to several local (Anchorage) non-profits.*
- *Plan to serve Alaska community foundation and Capital campaign for non profit boards.*
- *Finding more volunteers opportunities.*
- *By participating in chamber of commerce functions.*
- *We offer to local business approving wireless e-mail service.*
- *We are always looking for volunteer opportunities in the community. I have noticed that most events that are put on I.E. spring clean up have a fee associated.*
- *My little \$600 K gross revenue a year agency / business currently is at its maximum for participation. We currently contribute at a level of several orders of magnetite beyond our peers. We are not complaining, but we definitely are engaged.*
- *Continuing the path we are on.*
- *We don't intend to involve our company any more than it currently does.*
- *Each year we select a project to donate our engineering design services that makes an improvement in the community.*
- *Encourage people to be more active in community and follow elective officials.*
- *Continued employee involvement in specific organizations.*
- *Serving on non-profit boards.*
- *Not sure.*
- *No plans. We gave to United Way and try always to get 100% participation.*
- *Chairman of the board is on mayoral team.*
- *Currently we involved in separate organization activities. We had sufficient community involvement.*
- *Continuing efforts in professional organizations.*
- *We will continue our current plans. We will also support the efforts of visions Anchorage, Anchorage economical development Corp. to build a larger convention center in Anchorage which will create hundreds of new jobs.*
- *Volunteering.*
- *Already very involved.*
- *Church organizations.*
- *Haven't a plan.*
- *Continue with what we are doing.*
- *Continue with housing projects.*

- *More involved in the Lion's Club.*
- *Through our continued charitable giving to those organizations that reach the greatest number of people and have the greatest impact.*
- *Arts and museums.*
- *Continuing on going charitable support.*
- *Make donations to appropriate groups.*