

***KETCHIKAN COMPASS II®
COMMUNITY-BUILDING ASSESSMENT
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY***

PREPARED BY:



ANCHORAGE • JUNEAU • KODIAK

January 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction.....	5
What is Community Impact Planning?	7
Socioeconomic Indicators.....	8
Population	8
Gender and Age Characteristics	9
Race and Ethnicity Characteristics	10
Household Composition and Home Ownership	10
Employment	12
Unemployment	14
Per Capita Income	14
Poverty Status	16
Education	17
Health and Vital Statistics	19
Business and Cost of Living	20
Household Survey Results.....	23
Household Survey Methodology	23
Perceptions of Community Strengths	27
Community Challenges and Needs	30
Household Challenges and Issues	31
Greatest Unmet Needs In the Community	34
Community Benefits	35
Changes in the Future	36

Emerging Themes from Compass.....	37
Community Strengths	39
Coming Together Around Kids	42
A Diverse Year-Round Economy	49
People in Crisis	54
Overcoming Racial Divides	57
The Costs of Substance Abuse	60
Improving Collaboration and Searching for a Shared Vision	63
Recap of Suggested Priority Initiatives.....	70
Appendix 1: United Way of Southeast Alaska Agencies in Ketchikan.....	73
Appendix 2: Eight Suggested Phases of Compass.....	74

Introduction

The Ketchikan-Saxman Compass II® Community Building Assessment was sponsored by United Way of Southeast Alaska with funding from the Rasmuson Foundation.

Compass® is a broad, open-ended process that consists of eight phases, but is easily adaptable within each community. It has three main goals:

1. Identify issues that are important to the community
2. Publicize them to encourage discussion
3. Provide a common foundation of information to help link discussions and form actions across community groups and interests.

A comprehensive manual available from United Way of America describes the eight phases in detail. The focus of this report is on the first five phases – partnerships, community assets, community data, community vision, and community priorities. Information was gathered from surveys, executive interviews, focus group discussions, and secondary socioeconomic research. The information was analyzed at three levels: by the McDowell Group research team, which focused primarily on the household survey, by a local Ketchikan-based Steering Committee of local leaders, and by United Way staff and volunteers.

Findings

Strengths and Setbacks in Ketchikan

Ketchikan has an exceptionally strong social fabric, with a level of commitment and concern for one another that borders on the unique. Nine out of ten survey respondents said that people in Ketchikan come together when in need. Ketchikan is seen by its residents as a strong, vibrant, and caring community that can't be found elsewhere and that serves as the bedrock for life here (along with the beautiful environment, the quality of the people in Ketchikan were identified as a top reason for living here). People feel that Ketchikan is a good place for families, full of activities usually derived from the ingenuity and energy of its own residents, and a safe place to live.

However, despite this cohesion, Ketchikan paradoxically remains a divided community. Fifty-two percent of survey respondents felt that Ketchikan is headed in the right direction – and 48% did not. These numbers almost perfectly mirror one interviewee's comments that Ketchikan is always split 51-49 about everything. And although 72% of respondents said they feel they are willing to work together on community issues, many conversations

revolved around the inability to collaborate or come together around long-term priorities. Only half of residents felt like they had a voice in the community, and only half felt like they had the information needed to address community problems. As one interviewee put it, the secret to overcoming Ketchikan's challenges seems to be for people to learn how to respond to long-standing community issues the way they respond to emergencies. Improving collaboration was consistently identified as a major need.

Divisions are more complex than might first appear, and there is surprising opportunity for common ground. Ketchikan's proclivity for division and disagreement seems to be rooted more in its personality as a frontier town and its history with boom and bust industries than with fundamental disagreement about what matters here. A spirit of independence, which guides most community involvement, is seen as both a strength and weakness in Ketchikan when it comes to coming together to create change: the remarkable depth to which people care about their community can become more of a stumbling block than a stepping stone for progress. But interviews and focus groups revealed a surprising continuity and sense that residents live and breathe in the same town, sharing the same concerns and discussing the same priorities, rather than living isolated and unrelated experiences. There was overwhelming consensus about Ketchikan's concern for its youth and its desire to see them succeed, as well as concern about alcohol and other drug abuse, and the nature of the local economy.

Emerging Community Themes in Ketchikan

Based on analysis of the data and recurring themes from interviews and discussions, the Ketchikan Compass Steering Committee has taken the information gathered by the United Way/McDowell Group project team and has independently identified a set of emerging themes for future community planning. The six identified themes are above all areas of opportunity: the issues that emerged and are included below are not only what people in Ketchikan care about, but also what Ketchikan is prepared to act upon. These areas of opportunity are key focus points where positive change is most likely to catalyze reactions throughout the community.

Overall, the Compass research process identified the following six themes as potential focus points of community planning and positive change:

1. Coming Together Around Kids

Everyone believes in improving the community for kids. All dialogue about social problems led back to a concern for the inevitable impact on youth, where these problems are often passed on to another generation. However, among youth is also where many of these problems can be addressed: by improving the resiliency of children and youth and engaging the larger community to strengthen the connections between school, family, and community, Ketchikan has the opportunity to reconnect with its younger generation. The school dropout rate, performance gaps between subpopulations, a lack of opportunity for youth activities, and the need for youth to have a genuine role in the community were concerns from residents of all ages. Barriers to success such as financial, transportation, and

cultural barriers should be removed so that Ketchikan can be a place where current children can raise healthy children of their own.

2. A Diverse Year-Round Economy

Ketchikan needs a diverse year-round economy in order to thrive and resolve many of its social ills. The seasonality of employment in Ketchikan is seen as a major stress factor in many families' lives and a cause of other social ills. Unemployment in Ketchikan is very high in winter months and has come to redefine the feel of the town. Since the closing of the pulp mill and the growth of tourism, Ketchikan has experienced much change in the makeup of its economic base, and the ramifications of this transition are still reverberating throughout the community. For many, whether they welcome tourism or not, there is still a long ways to go to developing a stable and prosperous economic base in Ketchikan, and the lack of clarity about what is next promotes a general sense of anxiety. In addition, where jobs are present, the qualified labor is often absent. Workforce development and job training was the top identified need for addressing Ketchikan's economic uncertainty.

3. People in Crisis

Poverty remains a root cause of many community problems, exacerbating other issues and leading to intractable situations. Although poverty rates are below state and national averages, many households in the Ketchikan area are economically fragile, and consequently, the quality of life for many residents is diminished. Seven of the top ten household concerns in Ketchikan revolved around finances and money, with a concern for medical care topping the list. For low-income and other families, there is a lack of affordable housing options, and for unskilled laborers, there is a lack of well-paying job opportunities to help rise out of poverty. There remains a drastic and intolerable income disparity between Native and non-Native families, which continues to shape the experiences of the community.

4. Overcoming Racial Divides

Racial barriers remain in schools and other community spaces. Along with the impacts of race-related trauma from the past, racial divides still define and limit the community. Though much has changed and improved since the city's frontier past, the experience of racism is still a daily part of life for many residents. In the schools in particular, divisions and rifts between Alaska Natives and non-Natives set the beginning of a mold that continues into an individual's adult life and the community's social, economic and cultural spheres. Ketchikan is seen as more successfully integrated than other communities elsewhere, but there is still a long road to travel to healing past racial wounds and addressing both the present ramifications of that history as well as newly arising divides. Cultural knowledge and traditions are not as fully a part of the educational system or the greater community's values as many would like.

5. The Costs of Substance Abuse

The prevalence and severity of substance abuse is a top concern for people who live here. Ninety percent of survey respondents recognized this issue as one facing their community. Yet although Compass participants expressed a conviction that the community has a shared responsibility to acknowledge the gravity of the problem of alcohol and drug abuse, many also felt that complacency has grown too strong in Ketchikan. The impacts of this problem reverberate into families, the economy, and into the lives of youth, and solutions will need to be equally far-reaching and comprehensive in order to limit the destructive impact currently faced. Widespread community consensus about facing this issue will be crucial in planning efforts for change.

6. Improving Collaboration and Searching for a Shared Vision

The lack of a common vision and shared direction for Ketchikan contributes to an unease about the community's future. Residents strongly feel that Ketchikan would benefit by uniting around a common vision, but express much doubt about whether such a goal would be feasible or possible. At the very least, residents would like to see more consensus about where the community is heading, and work to improve relationships and collaborative efforts to successfully achieve common goals. Common ground is everywhere in Ketchikan, but building on it seems to be a more difficult task, and setbacks over working together is barrier that people would like to see the community overcome.

Next Steps for the Ketchikan Compass Process

The results for Ketchikan Compass will be presented to the community at large for further community dialogue and engagement. This report serves as a point of departure for the community to interpret the findings and set new direction for the community. The range of potential community building efforts is limited only by the imagination and commitment of local citizens and action groups.

In addition, United Way staff and volunteers will use the Compass results to help determine how United Way funding can have the greatest impact. The research is furthermore available to United Way partner agencies and any other nonprofit, government, and business organizations as they formulate social service or community development strategies, apply for grant funding, and coordinate efforts to address pressing issues. Members of the community who wish to learn more about the Compass process or to participate in ongoing action planning are encouraged to get involved.

INTRODUCTION

United Way of Southeast Alaska partnered with McDowell Group, Inc., an Alaska research firm, to conduct a community needs assessment of the Ketchikan-Saxman area using a methodology called *COMPASS II®*, *Increasing the Capacity of People to Build Better Communities*. This community-building program was developed by United Way of America. The concept behind *COMPASS II®* is that building communities requires individuals, associations, businesses, and organizations “who are motivated to work with others to improve the social and economic conditions in which people live.” The community assessment portion of *Compass* is intended to provide the community with an evaluation of the community’s current status and priorities in broad terms, as well as functioning as an information resource for future, more detailed, planning.

The McDowell Group conducted a household survey to gather insights about local issues and concerns, Ketchikan’s community challenges, and the assets available to meet those challenges. The household surveys gathered views directly from Ketchikan residents and business managers/owners. This information was supplemented with qualitative research by United Way staff and volunteers, including discussion groups with representatives of different segments of the community, and interviews with a cross-section of community leaders. Socioeconomic data from secondary sources also provides context for understanding the community.

A Steering Committee of community leaders met five times to discuss the information developed during the research. Their main job was to oversee the scope and direction of the project, identify themes, and ultimately, to provide guidance on overarching community priorities.

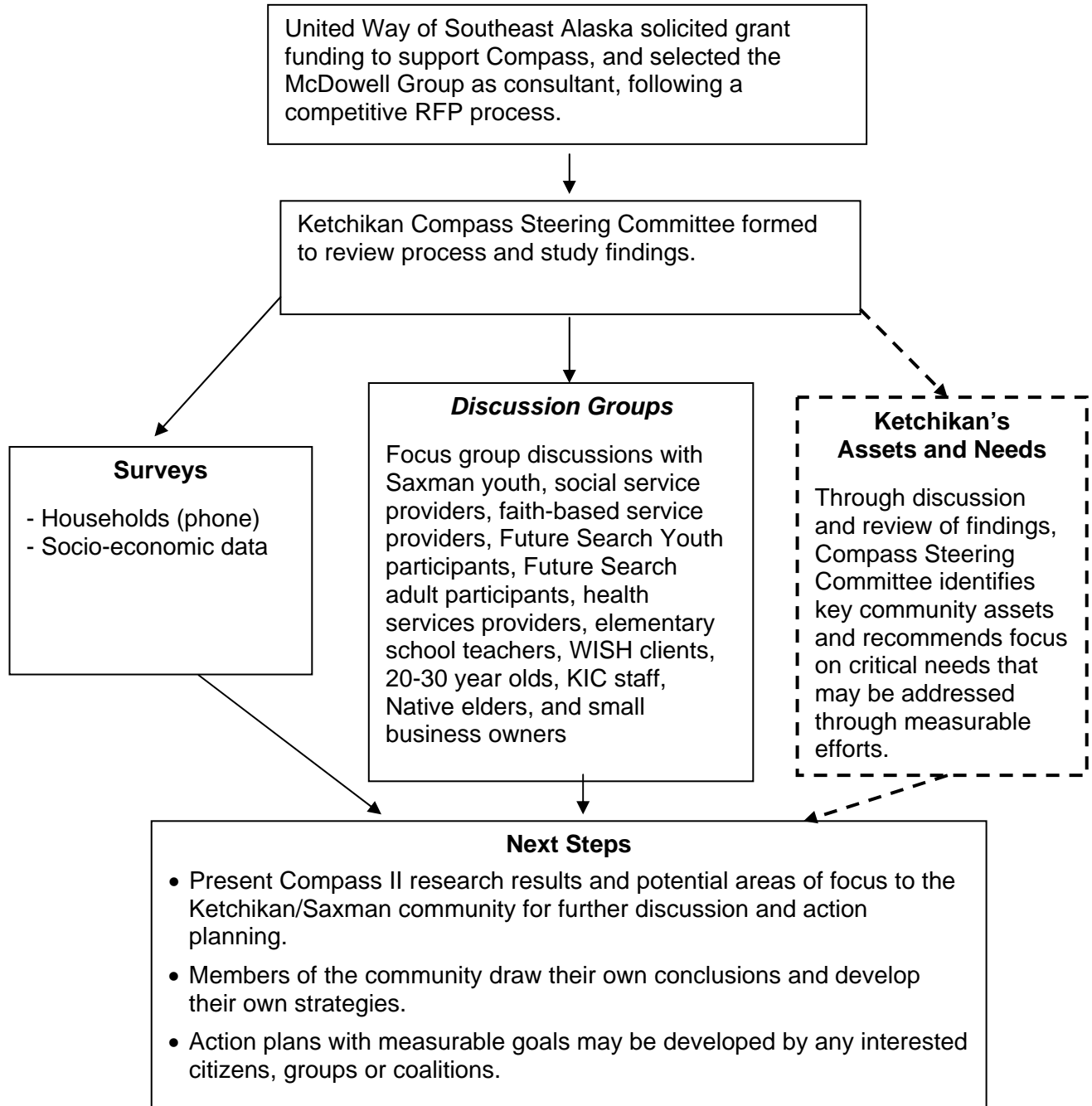
This report includes an overview of the research and discussions. The information provided is designed to be a foundation and point of departure for community-building efforts. Some efforts may evolve directly from the *Compass* process, others may be generated elsewhere in the community. The research results and initial analysis will be presented to the public.

The report presents census and other socioeconomic data pertinent to Ketchikan as well as the results of an extensive community-wide household survey. Methodologies for the survey research are described at the beginning of the sections of this document that discuss the results of that research. Following this data section, the report begins by summarizing the six central themes that emerged from focus group discussions and executive interviews. Each theme has a collection of quotations from community members, which are the heart of the diverse views and insights that capture the many assets, strengths, and challenges facing Ketchikan. The chart on the following page identifies the structure for the process in Ketchikan.

Finally, a note on the choice of geographical identifier for this report. It is important to note that throughout this report, Ketchikan refers to the entire Ketchikan Gateway Borough. Most notably, this includes Saxman, which may otherwise appear to be absent from a Ketchikan-themed report.



Compass Community Building Research



WHAT IS COMMUNITY IMPACT PLANNING?

Compass II survey research is designed to identify the issues that community members believe are most important, both to their own households and to the broader community. The socioeconomic research, executive interviews, discussion groups and steering committee process are designed to expand and enrich the community's knowledge about and understanding of those issues. Though some of these issues are easily apparent, the process aims to unearth new insights and sources of common ground for working toward solutions.

With the information in this report and the work and oversight of the local Steering Committee, United Way and the Ketchikan/Saxman community are prepared to pursue Phase 6 of the Compass II methodology, developing a community impact plan. As described in the Compass II manual, community impact planning "...outlines how (community partnerships) will mobilize community assets to achieve targeted community outcomes for defined sets of people." Community impact planning as described in the manual employs typical strategic planning steps, including identifying strategies, goals and measures of success. Compass Phases 1 – 5 revealed areas of potential focus and identified many individuals and groups who may wish to be involved in impact planning. The final nature and scope of the impact planning will be defined by those who choose to be involved, a mixture of individuals from the Steering Committee and other committed leaders from the community.

Based on analysis of the data and community perceptions, the Ketchikan Compass Steering Committee has taken the information gathered by the United Way/McDowell Group project team and has independently identified a set of emerging themes for future community planning. As such, this report serves as a blueprint and a starting point, the beginning of a conversation about Ketchikan working together to improve Ketchikan. The six identified themes are above all areas of opportunity – in a world of problems and concerns, the issues that emerged in this report are not only what people in Ketchikan care about, but also what Ketchikan is prepared to act upon and prepared to change. These areas of opportunity are seen as key areas where positive change is most likely to catalyze reactions throughout the community.

This report is a means to assemble diverse voices and opinions and facts; from this starting point, the community of Ketchikan has the potential and the ownership to take the insights gathered into future collaborative action. It is important to distinguish this report as a tool for long-term action, not merely an end of itself. The range of potential community building efforts is limited only by the imagination and commitment of local citizens and action groups.

SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

Population

Ketchikan's population has moderated between about 13,000 and 14,000 people for the last decade and a half. Most recently, Ketchikan saw a downward trend from 2000 to 2004 (an average of 1.4 percent annual decline). This was slightly more pronounced than the 0.6 percent annual decline seen in the Southeast Region. However, population rebounded slightly in 2005. Forecasters from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development predict more substantial gains out through the next 12 years. Ketchikan's average rate of growth is expected to outpace that of the Southeast Region and Alaska during this time period.

**Population and Average Annual Percent Change, 1960 to 2004,
and Projected Population Estimates, 2008, 2013, and 2018**

Year	Ketchikan	Avg. Annual Rate of Change	Southeast Region	Avg. Annual Rate of Change	Alaska	Avg. Annual Rate of Change
1960	8,774		35,403		226,167	
1970	10,041	1.4	42,565	2.0	302,603	3.4
1980	11,316	1.3	53,794	2.6	401,851	3.3
1990	13,828	2.2	68,989	2.8	550,043	3.7
2000	14,059	0.2	73,082	0.6	626,931	1.4
Estimated:						
2001	13,748	-2.2	72,128	-1.3	632,249	0.8
2002	13,683	-0.5	71,935	-0.3	640,699	1.3
2003	13,685	0.0	72,673	1.0	648,510	1.2
2004	13,093	-4.3	70,964	-2.4	657,755	1.4
2005	13,125	0.2	70,822	-0.2	663,661	0.9
2008	14,870	4.4	74,950	1.9	692,001	1.4
2013	16,361	2.0	77,593	0.7	727,003	1.0
2018	17,896	1.9	79,987	0.6	758,170	0.9

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and the U.S. Census Bureau

Gender and Age Characteristics

Men slightly outnumber women in the Ketchikan area, according to U.S. Census data from 2000. At that time, 51 percent of the population was male and 49 percent was female.

Gender, 2000

	Number	Percent
Female	6,881	48.9%
Male	7,189	51.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Nationally, a dominant trend is the aging of the “baby boomers.” In Ketchikan and Alaska as a whole the trend is even more dramatic, with individuals 65 and over projected to make up twice as large a percentage of the population in 2018 (16 percent) as they did in 2000 (8 percent).

Age Distribution, 1990, 2000, and Projected Estimates, 2018/2019

		1990		2000		2018/2019	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ketchikan							
	Under 5	1,211	9%	964	7%	1,734	10%
	5 to 17	2,911	21%	1,891	13%	3,675	21%
	18 to 64	8,799	64%	10,106	72%	9,549	53%
	65 and over	907	7%	1,109	8%	2,938	16%
Alaska							
	Under 5	149,812	27%	47,591	8%	59,296	8%
	5 to 17	22,532	4%	107,427	17%	154,449	20%
	18 to 64	355,330	65%	436,215	70%	449,661	59%
	65 and over	22,369	4%	35,699	6%	94,758	12%
United States							
	Under 5	53,567,871	22%	60,253,375	21%	63,391,000	20%
	5 to 17	10,036,561	4%	12,040,437	4%	12,506,000	4%
	18 to 64	153,863,610	62%	209,128,094	74%	193,558,000	61%
	65 and over	31,241,831	13%	34,991,753	12%	50,405,000	16%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and the U.S. Census Bureau

The median age of residents of Ketchikan is just one year older than the United States median of 35 years, while Saxman residents are slightly younger (median of 32 years). Alaska residents as a whole have a median age of 32 years.

Median Age, 2000

Ketchikan	Saxman	Alaska	United States
36	32	32	35

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and the U.S. Census Bureau

Race and Ethnicity Characteristics

A comparison of the 2000 and 1990 census results shows a decline in the proportion of Ketchikan residents who describe themselves as “white” and a corresponding increase in those who identify with ethnic and multi-ethnic groups. However, this change is due, at least in part, to changes in how the US Census identifies ethnicity. The 2000 Census was the first time respondents had the opportunity to identify themselves as two or more races. Data now shows 5 percent of Ketchikan residents who identify themselves as two or more races, and slight increases (1 percent or less) in American Indian/Alaska Native, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and African American/black populations.

Race and Ethnicity Characteristics, 1990 and 2000

	1990		2000		2004 estimate	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White	11,316	82%	10,460	74%	9,745	73%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,898	14%	2,109	15%	1,985	15%
Asian	493	4%	603	4%	560	4%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	285	2%	372	3%	332	2%
Black or African American	55	<1%	70	1%	85	1%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	*	*	22	<1%	24	<1%
Other	66	<1%	62	<1%		
Two or more Races	*	*	744	5%	631	5%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and the U.S. Census Bureau

* In 1990, "Asians" included Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. As of 2000, respondents were allowed to indicate more than one race.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and the U.S. Census Bureau

Household Composition and Home Ownership

According to 2000 census counts, there were 5,399 households in Ketchikan and 127 in Saxman. The average household size in Ketchikan was 2.6 people; in Saxman it was higher, at 3.1 people. This compared to an average household size of 2.6 people in Juneau, 2.7 people in all of Alaska, and 2.6 people nationwide.

The number of these households that were occupied by family members was 3,363 for Ketchikan, or 67 percent; in Saxman the percentage was slightly higher, at 71 percent. These numbers were close to state and national averages.

Children were more common in Saxman households (47 percent) than in Ketchikan households (39 percent). The statewide average was 43 percent. In Ketchikan, 15 percent of households had a resident aged 65 or older. In Saxman this rose to 19 percent. Both were higher than the statewide average of 12 percent. Eight percent of Ketchikan households and 11 percent of Saxman households had a single female householder with no husband and children less than 18 years of age.

Sixty-one percent of Ketchikan’s 6,218 housing units were owner-occupied. In Saxman, 72 percent of the 146 units were owner-occupied. The Alaska average was 63 percent. Just over 10 percent of rental units in Ketchikan were unoccupied. In Saxman, nearly a third were unoccupied. Both of these rates were higher than the Alaska average of 5.7 percent.

Median monthly mortgage costs in Ketchikan were \$1,379. This was on par with statewide averages (\$1,315). Saxman costs were substantially lower, at \$527 per month. These figures

compared to a U.S. median of \$1,088. Rental costs in Ketchikan were higher than state and national averages, at \$775 per month, though lower than Juneau averages of \$863 per month. In Saxman, median monthly rent was \$377.

Household and Housing Demographics for Selected Communities, 2000

	Ketchikan	Saxman	Juneau	Alaska	United States
Number of households	5,399	127	11,543	221,600	105,480,101
Average household size	2.6	3.1	2.6	2.7	2.6
Number of family households	3,634	90	7,638	152,337	71,787,347
...as percent of total households	67%	71%	66%	69%	68%
Average family size	3.1	3.6	3.1	3.3	3.1
Number of households with individuals under 18 years	2,129	60	4,570	95,129	38,022,115
...as percent of total households	39%	47%	40%	43%	36%
Number of households with individuals 65 years and over	808	24	1,391	26349	24,672,708
...as percent of total households	15%	19%	12%	12%	23%
Number of households with female householder, no husband, and children under 18 years	436	14	840	17,243	7,561,874
...as percent of total households	8%	11%	7%	8%	7%
Total housing units	6,218	146	12,282	260,978	115,904,641
Owner-occupied units	3,278	91	7,356	138,509	69,815,753
...as percent of total units	61%	72%	68%	63%	65%
Renter-occupied units	2,121	36	4,187	83,091	35,664,348
...as percent of total units	39%	28%	0	38%	35%
Homeowner vacancy rate	2.2%	1.1%	0.9%	1.9%	1.7%
Rental vacancy rate	11.7%	30.8%	5.7%	7.8%	6.8%
Median owner costs with mortgage	\$1,379	\$527	\$1,538	\$1,315	\$1,088
Median owner costs without mortgage	\$387	\$361	\$464	\$393	\$295
Median rental cost	\$775	\$377	\$863	\$720	\$602

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Employment

A steady decline in employment following the closure of the Ketchikan Pulp Mill in 1997 turned around in 2004. By 2005 employment numbers had increased a modest 2 percent from the low in 2003. Total employment change from 1997 to 2005 was -4.8 percent. This was in contrast to Juneau and Anchorage, both of which experienced growth during the same period.

Annual Average Employment, 1997-2005

Year	Average annual monthly employment		
1997	7,293		
1998	7,025		
1999	7,177		
2000	7,119		
2001	7,011		
2002	6,732		
2003	6,816		
2004	6,902		
2005	6,957		
	Ketchikan	Juneau	Anchorage
% change '04-'05	0.8%	2.2%	2.1%
% change '97-'05	-4.8%	6.4%	13.5%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Like many small communities in Alaska, Ketchikan's workforce is subject to strong seasonal fluctuations. In 2005 the monthly average employment fluctuated by more than 2,500 jobs depending on the season. This meant that an estimated 30 percent of the jobs are peak employment time (late summer) are seasonal. This is much higher than figures for Juneau and Anchorage, where only 12 percent of the jobs are seasonal.

Seasonality of Employment, 1997 and 2005

Year		Ketchikan	Juneau	Alaska
1997	Maximum monthly employment	8,785	17,250	281,594
	Minimum monthly employment	6,497	15,647	246,055
	Seasonal jobs ...as percent of maximum	2,288 26%	1,603 9%	35,539 13%
2005	Maximum monthly employment	8,420	18,650	325,645
	Minimum monthly employment	5,850	16,366	288,078
	Seasonal jobs ...as percent of maximum	2,570 31%	2,284 12%	37,567 12%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Note: All minimums occurred in January. Maximums occurred in August or September. Commercial fishing employment is not counted in the wage and salary numbers reported here.

Nearly a third of all wage and salary jobs in Ketchikan are in the government sector, with local government accounting for 15 percent of all employment in the area. In the private sector, the trade, transportation, and utilities sector employs the greatest number of people (1,892 people or 27 percent) followed by the leisure and hospitality sector (741 people, 11 percent).

Employment by Industry, 2005

Sector		Ketchikan		Alaska
		Number	Percent	Percent
Private	Total	4,973	71%	74%
	Natural Resource & Mining	154	2%	4%
	Construction	275	4%	6%
	Manufacturing	454	7%	4%
	Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,892	27%	21%
	Information	95	1%	2%
	Financial Activities	292	4%	4%
	Professional Business Services	211	3%	8%
	Educational and Health Services	655	9%	12%
	Leisure & Hospitality	741	11%	10%
	Other	203	3%	4%
Government	Total	1,984	29%	26%
	Federal Government	307	4%	6%
	State Government	629	9%	8%
	Local Government	1,048	15%	12%
Total		6,957	100%	100%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section.

Note: Commercial fishing employment is not counted in the wage and salary numbers reported here.

Unemployment

Unemployment in Ketchikan has fluctuated since a peak in 1997 of 9.5 percent (following the closure of the Ketchikan Pulp Corporation mill), and has tended to reflect statewide trends in recent years. In 2005, unemployment was at 6.8 percent, the same as the statewide average.

Annual Average Unemployment, 1997 to 2005

Year	Ketchikan	Alaska		United States
	Number	Rate	Rate	Rate
1997	726	9.5%	7.9%	4.9%
1998	534	7.0	5.8	4.5
1999	539	7.1	6.4	4.2
2000	505	6.1	6.2	4.0
2001	528	6.5	6.2	4.7
2002	642	8.2	7.1	5.8
2003	631	8.1	7.7	6.0
2004	597	7.6	7.4	5.5
2005	535	6.8	6.8	5.1

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Per Capita Income

Annual per capita income in Ketchikan is higher than statewide averages and national averages. Ketchikan income in the last five years is as much as 17 percent higher than statewide averages and 20 percent higher than national averages.

Per Capita Personal Income, 1997 to 2004

Year	Ketchikan	Alaska	United States
1997	31,258	26,759	25,334
1998	31,506	27,560	26,883
1999	31,799	28,100	27,939
2000	34,391	29,867	29,845
2001	36,576	31,711	30,574
2002	36,020	32,343	30,810
2003	37,393	32,023	31,484
2004	39,068	34,000	33,050

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Data from the 2000 Census include household incomes from the preceding year. Median household income in 1999 in Ketchikan was on par with statewide averages, while the median in Saxman was approximately \$5,700 lower.

Median Household Income, 1999

Community	Household Income
Ketchikan	\$51,344
Saxman	45,802
Juneau	62,034
Alaska	51,571
United States	41,994

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Analysis by race shows larger income differences. Median household income for white households was \$56,079. For Alaska Native/American Indian households the median income was \$32,888.

Median Household Income by Race, 1999

Race	Household Income
Alaska Native/ American Indian	\$32,888
White	56,079
All	51,344

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Poverty Status

Census data also provide information on poverty. Poverty rates in Ketchikan (4.5 percent) and Saxman (7.4 percent) were lower than national averages (9.2 percent). The poverty rate in Ketchikan was lower than the statewide average of 6.7 percent, while in Saxman it was slightly higher.

People in households with young children (under age 5) were more likely to be living in poverty than their counterparts with older children. Families with a female householder with no husband had substantially higher rates of poverty. In Ketchikan, 17.7 percent of these families were living in poverty; in Saxman, 27.8 percent were living in poverty.

The poverty “rate” in the following table refers to the percent of families in each category that are in poverty. That is, in Ketchikan, 4.5 percent of all families in Ketchikan were in poverty. 9.7 percent of families with related children under 5 were in poverty. 6.1 percent of families with related children under 18 were in poverty, etc.

Families in Poverty, 2000

	Ketchikan		Saxman		Juneau	Alaska	United States
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate
All families in poverty	164	4.5%	8	7.4%	3.7%	6.7%	9.2%
Families in poverty with related children under 5	75	9.7%	2	15.4%	10.3%	13.4%	17.0%
Families in poverty with related children under 18	127	6.1%	8	10.5%	5.5%	9.3%	13.6%
Families in poverty with female householder, no husband, and related children under 18	82	17.7%	5	27.8%	14.3%	23.7%	34.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

According to 2000 census data, a total of 900 individuals in Ketchikan were living in poverty, as were an additional 55 individuals in Saxman.

Individuals in Poverty, 2000

	Ketchikan		Saxman		Juneau	Alaska	United States
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate
All individuals in poverty	900	6.5%	55	12.1%	6.0%	9.4%	12.4%
18 years and over	561	5.6%	24	8.0%	5.2%	8.3%	10.9%
65 years and over	40	4.1%	2	6.3%	3.9%	6.8%	9.9%
Related children under 18	290	7.5%	31	20.4%	6.7%	11.2%	16.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Education

School Enrollment

Public school enrollment has declined since 1997, following the closure of the pulp mill, though the declines have slowed in recent years. Public school enrollment was essentially stable from 2003 to 2004. Enrollment at the University of Alaska Southeast has increased since 2000 (the first year for which data is available). University enrollment has increased by more than 500 students since that time.

Ketchikan Gateway School District and UAS Enrollment, 1997-2004

	Public School Enrollment	UAS Enrollment
1997	2,782	-
1998	2,757	-
1999	2,643	-
2000	2,517	1,523
2001	2,398	1,787
2002	2,391	1,740
2003	2,327	1,853
2004	2,325	2,035

Source: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning and Community Development Department, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Census

Note: Data for UAS enrollment unavailable prior to Fall 1999.

Educational Attainment

Ninety percent of Ketchikan area residents age 25 and over have completed education at or above the high school level. Twenty percent of the population has at least a bachelor's degree (including 6 percent with graduate or professional degrees), and another 7 percent have associates degrees. An additional third of the population has completed some college education without completing a degree. The percentage of Ketchikan residents with some college education but no degree (33 percent) is higher than statewide and national averages (29 and 21 percent respectively). The percentage of residents with bachelor's and graduate/professional degrees is lower than the statewide and national averages.

Educational Attainment, age 25 and up, 2000

Highest Level Attained	Ketchikan		Alaska	United States
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than 9th grade	205	2%	4%	8%
Some high school, no diploma	727	8%	8%	12%
High school graduate	2,673	30%	28%	29%
Some college, no degree	2,961	33%	29%	21%
Associate degree	619	7%	7%	6%
Bachelor's degree	1,289	14%	16%	16%
Graduate or professional degree	525	6%	9%	9%

Source: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning and Community Development Department, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Census

School dropout rates in Ketchikan spiked in 1998 at 9.2 percent but declined steadily through 2003 (the last year for which data is available). In 2003, the rate was only 3.3 percent, compared to a statewide average of 4.8 percent. However, there is a range of methodologies for collecting drop out rates, and these data are often contested.

School District Dropout Rates, Grades 7-12, 1997-2003

	Ketchikan	Alaska	United States (grades 10-12)
1997	6.7%	3.4%	
1998	9.2	3.8	
1999	6.8	5.1	
2000	6.1	6.2	4.8
2001	5.5	5.8	
2002	4.6	5.4	
2003	3.3	4.9	

Source: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning and Community Development Department, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Census

Health and Vital Statistics

Cancer was the leading cause of death in Ketchikan in 2002 to 2004. This was followed by diseases of the heart. Cancer rates were higher than statewide and national averages. Heart disease rates were higher than statewide averages, but substantially lower than national averages.

In the following table, the “rate” is the number of instances per 100,000 people. Ketchikan rates that are higher than either than state or national rates are shown in italics.

Mortality Statistics, 2002-2004

	Ketchikan		Alaska	United States
	Number	Rate	Rate	Rate
All Causes	251	777.0	792.9	801.6
<i>Cancer</i>	63	191.4	186.8	184.6
Lung Cancer	18	52.7*	55.1	52.9
<i>Diseases of the Heart</i>	56	181.5	174.0	217.5
<i>Coronary Heart Disease (Ischemic)</i>	36	119.0	112.7	150.5
Cerebrovascular Disease (Stroke)	11	38.3*	55.8	50.0
<i>Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease</i>	13	42.9*	44.2	41.8
Diabetes	9	**	23.9	24.4
Homicide	2	**	6.5	5.6
Suicide	4	**	6.5	5.6
Teen Suicide	0	0	34.2	
Unintentional injuries	18	46.1*	56.5	36.6
Motor Vehicle Accidents	4	**	18.9	14.8

* Rates based on fewer than 20 occurrences are statistically unreliable and should be used with caution.

** Rates based on fewer than 10 occurrences are not reported.

Source: Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics

Birth rates in Ketchikan were lower than state and national averages. The same held true for teen birth rates. Ketchikan residents were also more likely to receive first trimester care and adequate prenatal care than their counterparts at state or national aggregates. They were also less likely to have pre-term deliveries. Ketchikan’s low birth weight rates were slightly higher than statewide averages, but lower than national averages.

In the following table, "rate" is the number of instances per 100,000 people.

Birth and Prenatal Care Statistics, 2002-2004

	Ketchikan		Alaska	United States
	Number	Rate	Rate	Rate
Infant Mortality	7	**	6.8	
Births to Residents	541	13.4	15.6	14.0
Teen Births (15-19)	51	32.7	41.1	41.2
First Trimester Care	452	85.8	80.6	83.9
Adequate Prenatal Care	459	89.3	64.9	74.6
Pre-term Delivery	52	9.6	10.5	12.5
Low Birth Weight	33	6.1	5.9	8.1

** Rates based on fewer than 10 occurrences are not reported.

Source: Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics

Business and Cost of Living

Business Sales

Gross business sales averaged \$472 million in the five years from 2000 to 2004. However, 2002 was an abnormally poor year, and pulled down the average for that time period by nearly \$20 million.

Gross Business Sales, 1995-2004

Year	Millions of \$
1995	557.1
1996	461.1
1997	457.5
1998	456.4
1999	460.6
2000	525.1
2001	443.6
2002	403.8
2003	462.0
2004	530.1

Source: Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning and Community Development Department

Cost of Living

Food and utilities cost more in Ketchikan than in Juneau or Anchorage, with the notable exception of electricity. Costs of food, gasoline, and electricity are higher in Ketchikan than national averages, but heating oil is less expensive (as is true in Anchorage and Juneau, as well).

Food and Utilities Costs, 2006

	Ketchikan	Juneau	Anchorage	US Average (2005)
Weekly food costs, family of four, with 2 school-age children	\$128.57	\$118.57	\$121.46	\$90.34
Electricity, 1000 kW	100.50	107.36	121.00	93.65
Heating Oil, 55 gallons	163.35	151.62	121.00	165.00
Gasoline, 55 gallons	146.24	143.91	121.55	106.65

Source: University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service Food Cost Survey, U.S. Census

The real cost of food and utilities has increased substantially since 1997. When controlled for inflation (22 percent from 1997 to 2005) the impacts are somewhat less dramatic. Under this analysis, electrical costs have actually decreased, while food costs have been stable. Heating oil and gasoline costs have both increased substantially.

Food and Utilities Costs, 1997 and 2006

	2006	1997	Percent Change
Weekly food costs, family of four, with 2 school-age children	\$128.57	\$96.84	25%
Electricity, 1000 kW	100.50	93.50	7%
Heating Oil, 55 gallons	163.35	77.75	52%
Gasoline, 55 gallons	146.24	86.08	41%

Source: University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service Food Cost Survey

According to 2000 census data, a higher proportion of Ketchikan's homeowner households (29 percent) were spending 30 percent or more of their monthly incomes on homeowner costs, compared to statewide averages (23 percent). However, only 18 percent of Saxman homeowner households are spending 30 percent or more on homeowner costs.

Selected Monthly Homeowner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, 1999

	Ketchikan		Saxman		Alaska	United States
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than 20%	1,063	47%	59	60%	51%	
20% to 30%	552	24%	21	21%	26%	
30% to 35%	239	11%	2	2%	7%	
35% or more	400	18%	16	16%	16%	

Source: U.S. Census

Thirty-six percent of renter households in Ketchikan spent 30 percent or more of their household income on monthly rental costs, the federally determined maximum for considering housing costs affordable. This was true for only 2 percent of Saxman renters (a single household). Ketchikan's figures were slightly higher than the Alaska average and slightly lower than the national average.

Monthly Rent Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, 1999

	Ketchikan		Saxman		Alaska	United States
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than 20%	609	29%	35	73%	31%	32%
20% to 30%	606	29%	2	4%	22%	23%
30% to 35%	219	10%	1	2%	7%	7%
35% or more	556	26%	0	0%	25%	30%
No cash rent	149	7%	10	21%	13%	8%

Source: U.S. Census

Note: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development considers housing affordable if it is at or below 30% of income.

HOUSEHOLD SURVEY RESULTS

The *COMPASS II*® methodology provides a basic household survey that was customized for use in the Ketchikan/Saxman community. McDowell Group adapted the Compass II sample survey with assistance from a project advisory committee consisting of United Way staff in Juneau and Ketchikan and the Ketchikan Compass Steering Committee Chair. The Steering Committee also assisted in editing the final survey questions. The survey was conducted by telephone from facilities in the McDowell Group's Juneau office between May 2 and May 15, 2006. The purpose of the household survey was to learn about Ketchikan residents' perceptions of community strengths, their opinions about challenges and issues in the community, and specific challenges and issues faced by individual households. Key findings are presented below.

Household Survey Methodology

Sample households were selected at random from the Ketchikan telephone directory. There were 306 completed surveys, resulting in a maximum margin of error from sampling of +/- 5.8 percentage points. Some additional (unknown) error may have resulted because respondents were limited to households with listed telephone numbers and to those with "land lines" as opposed to cell phones. Calls were made on weekday evenings (after 5:00) and on weekends during the day. The following section provides an analysis of the survey sample.

Respondent Profile and Weighting

Demographic characteristics of the survey sample were compared to those reported in the 2000 U.S. Census for the Ketchikan population at large. Females were somewhat over-represented in the sample, and Natives were under-represented. To adjust for these differences, survey results for females and Natives were statistically weighted. The weighting adjusted the importance of the responses to compensate for the differences between the sample and the population. Percentages shown throughout this report therefore represent the Ketchikan/Saxman population, within the margin of error and other considerations discussed above.

The following table compares the survey sample to the Census demographic data.

Comparison of Sample to Census 2000 Demographics

	Census 2000 Population	Survey Respondents
Gender		
Female	49.6%	65%
Male	50.4	35
Total	100%	100%
Race		
White/Caucasian	67%	78%
Alaska Native/American Indian	18	9
Asian or Pacific Islander	7	2
Latino/Hispanic	3	2
Black/African American	1	0
Other	1	3
Two or more races	7	-
Refused	-	7
Total	100%	100%
Household Income		
Less than \$10,000	5%	2%
\$10,001 to \$15,000	5	6
\$15,001 to \$25,000	13	6
\$25,001 to \$35,000	15	8
\$35,001 to \$50,000	18	18
\$50,001 to \$75,000	21	17
\$75,001 to \$100,000	12	19
\$100,001 to \$150,000	8	6
\$150,001 to \$200,000	2	2
\$200,001 or over	1	1
Don't Know	0	5
Refused	0	12
Total	100%	100%

Subgroup Analysis

The report examines areas in which responses between subgroups differ, for example by income level or when comparing Alaska Natives with non-Natives. Because the sample sizes for most subgroups are relatively small, the corresponding margins of error are larger than for survey respondents as a whole. For example, there were 29 Alaska Native respondents and 31 respondents from single-parent households. This means that the sampling error for those subgroups may be up to 15 percentage points greater than for the respondents as a whole.

Ethnic Distribution of Respondents

Respondents identified their ethnicity as follows: 237 white, 29 Alaska Native or American Indian, 7 Asian or Pacific Islander, 6 Latino/Hispanic and 9 “other.”

- Ethnic differences may be correlated with other factors. For example, forty-six percent of Alaska Native households responding earn less than \$35,000 per year, compared with 19 percent of white households.

Other Respondent Demographics

- Both the average and the median age of survey respondents was 50 years. No residents under the age of 18 were surveyed.

Respondent Age
(Respondents before weighting)

Respondent Age	Percent
18 to 24	5%
25 to 34	13
35 to 44	17
45 to 54	25
55 to 64	20
65 to 74	12
75 and older	7
Refused	1
Median Respondent Age	50 years

- The sample included a representation of residents from all regions of the Ketchikan area.

Respondent Area of Residence
(Respondents before weighting)

Area of Residence	Percent
Inside City Limits	55%
North Tongass	28
Saxman	2
South Tongass	13
Pennock/Gravina/Off Road	1
Refused	<1

- More than 98 percent of respondents consider themselves permanent residents of Ketchikan. More than three quarters (76 percent) have lived in Ketchikan for more than ten years.

Respondent Length of Residence
(Respondents before weighting)

Length of Residence	Percent
Less than 1 year	1%
1 to 3 years	6
3 to 10 years	17
More than 10 years	76

- More than half the respondents come from households with no children.

Respondent Family Composition
(Respondents before weighting)

Type of Family	Percent
No children	54%
1 parent with children	10
2 parents with children	30
Household has at least one senior	24

Note: Total is more than 100 percent because households with a senior may fall into one of the other categories, as well.

Perceptions of Community Strengths

This set of questions measures perceptions by Ketchikan/Saxman residents about the issues facing their community. Note that these questions ask respondents how they think residents in general feel about the community. The questions do not explore whether those feelings/perceptions are accurate.

- A majority of residents (90 percent) view their community as one in which people are prepared to help each other and are willing to work together on community issues (72 percent).
- Just over half of residents (57 percent) feel that people in Ketchikan have similar priorities about the community and that they have the information they need to address community issues (53 percent).
- Half of residents (51 percent) think the community is headed in the right direction, and that people in Ketchikan feel like they have a voice in the direction of their community.
- Alaska Natives are somewhat less likely to feel that people in the community “are willing to work together on community issues” (57 percent agree versus 74 percent of whites).

Community Strengths

“Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements concerning people in Ketchikan:”

People in Ketchikan...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Total Agree/Strongly Agree
Come together to help each other out when they have a problem	35%	54%	89%
Have the information they need to address community issues	3	50	53
Have similar priorities about the community	6	52	58
Are willing to work together on community issues	8	64	72
Feel like they have a voice in the direction of their community	4	47	51
Generally feel like the community is headed in the right direction	6	46	52

Volunteerism

- Volunteerism is common among Ketchikan residents; more than half of respondents (53 percent) said they volunteer in the community.
- Ketchikan residents are involved in a wide array of volunteer activities. The three most popular venues for volunteerism in Ketchikan are religious groups, schools, and children or youth activities (as indicated by about one in four respondents, respectively).

“In the past six months, have you volunteered in your community, including serving on a nonprofit board of directors?”

	Percent
Yes	53%
No	47

- Volunteers contributed an average of approximately 22 hours to community service in the month prior to the survey. One in four respondents (25 percent) volunteered more than 20 hours in the previous month.

“In the past month, how many hours, if any, have you done volunteer work?”

	Percent
None	16%
1 to 5 hours	23
6 to 10 hours	18
11 to 15 hours	8
16 to 20 hours	11
21 hours or more	25
Average number of hours	22 hours

“If yes, what activities do you volunteer for?”

(Base: Respondents who said they volunteered in the past six months)

	Percent
Religious group	27%
School	22
Children and youth activities	24
Seniors or disabled people	16
Sports group	14
Civic group, such as Kiwanis	12
Groups that work with lower-income or homeless people	9
Arts group	8
Hospital or health group	8
Environmental group	4
Cultural group, music, museum	6
Family conflict or counseling organization	3
Fire or emergency medical services	5
Political group or candidate	3
Library	2
Business association	2
Neighborhood group, such as neighborhood association	1
Other	9
Refused	2

Voting

Citizen involvement in the political process is another indicator of community support and strength. Eight out of ten Ketchikan residents (80 percent) said they regularly vote in local elections. However, it should be noted that this does not necessarily mean that they voted in the last election or all elections.

Voting

“Do you vote in elections?”

Response	Percent
Yes	80%
No	17
Don't Know/ Refused	3

Community Challenges and Needs

Residents were asked to rate the importance of issues in the community such as jobs and the economy, health, housing and education. More than half (55 percent) agreed that drug and alcohol abuse is a major issue. Roughly three out of ten respondents said lack of affordable housing (35 percent) and lack of affordable medical care is a major issue (30 percent). All other issues were identified as a major concern by fewer than one in four respondents.

Community Challenges

“Using a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 a major issue, please describe whether you believe each of the following is an issue for people in your community:”

Issue	Rated 5 (Major Issue)	Rated 4	Rated 3	Total 3+4+5
Drug and Alcohol abuse	55%	22%	13%	90%
Lack of affordable housing	35	23	19	77
Lack of affordable medical care	30	16	23	69
School dropout rate	23	26	23	72
Lack of good jobs	23	21	33	77
Lack of affordable child care	19	19	26	64
Overcrowded classrooms	19	13	25	57
Lack of recreational facilities and activities (playgrounds and ice rinks)	20	16	21	57
Crowded streets	18	19	32	69
Mental illness, depression, or emotional issues	16	21	29	66
Teen pregnancy	13	22	24	59
Access to after-school programs and activities	14	11	19	44
Family violence, including abuse of children or adults	12	27	35	74
Lack of services for the elderly	12	19	22	53
Water pollution	11	14	15	40
Need for better community appearance or cleanliness	9	18	27	54
Lack of continuing education classes	9	13	21	44
Lack of art and cultural facilities	10	14	22	46
Crime	8	17	42	67
Poverty	8	15	36	59
Unsafe schools	7	7	18	32
Inadequate public transportation	6	9	16	31
Racial or ethnic tension	4	3	21	28
Noise pollution such as airplane or vehicle noise	3	6	23	32
Air pollution	1	2	9	12

Differences among Lower Income and Higher Income Respondents

Lower income residents tended to rate some issues of higher priority than do higher income residents. Following are those issues with differences between the two groups.

Lower and Higher Income Community Priorities

Issue for the Community	Identified as “Major Issue” (4-5)	
	Low Income (<25K)	High Income (>100K)
Lack of affordable housing	63%	32%
Lack of recreational facilities	28	12
Lack of services for the elderly	29	9
Crime	22	7
Poverty	20	3
Inadequate public transportation	12	0

Household Challenges and Issues

The following table shows issues that Ketchikan residents said affect their own households. Note that these figures must be interpreted with care, as some categories are likely to be reported more accurately than others. In particular, it requires specialized survey techniques to obtain reliable self-assessments with respect to issues such as personal or family drug and alcohol abuse, experience of family violence, emotional or behavioral problems, etc. Compass survey results for these and similar issues may not reflect actual community incidence rates.

A very small percentage of households reported that the following issues affect them directly. The top issue affecting households is not having enough money to get medical insurance. Twenty-three percent of respondents rated this as a 4 or a 5, where 5 indicated a “major issue” for their households. Other issues that garnered high levels of concern were water pollution, the affordability of medical care, the affordability of heat and utilities, finding good jobs, and use of tobacco products in the households of respondents.

Household Challenges

“Using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “not an issue” and 5 “a major issue,” please tell me how much of an issue each of the following was for you or anyone in your household over the past 12 months....”

Issue	Rated 5 (Major Issue)	Rated 4	Rated 3	Total 3+4+5
Not having enough money to get medical insurance	15%	8%	6%	29%
Experiencing water pollution	9	9	11	29
Use of tobacco products	9	5	11	25
Not having enough money for medical care	7	8	12	27
Not having enough money for heat and utilities	7	9	12	28
Having a lot of anxiety, stress, or depression	6	7	15	28
Finding it difficult to manage money or budget	5	7	17	29
Not being able to find a good job	7	8	14	29
Not having enough money to pay for housing	6	6	10	22
Not enough cultural or entertainment activities	5	8	14	27
Not being able to find afford care childcare	3	1	5	9
Not having enough room in your house for all the people who live there	4	3	3	10
Living in housing that needs major repairs	4	4	9	17
Not having enough money for food and clothing	4	5	8	17
Children not motivated in school	3	5	6	14
Not being able to afford recreational activities	3	6	9	18
Not having reliable transportation to your job	3	5	6	14
Experiencing an alcohol issue	3	2	6	11
Children or teenagers experiencing behavioral or emotional issues	2	3	8	13
Experiencing noise pollution	2	3	11	16
Not being able to find or afford care for a senior or a person with a disability	2	4	14	13
Children being unsafe at school	1	2	4	7
Not being able to get transportation for a senior or a person with a disability	1	4	5	10
Not being able to communicate in a common language	1	2	2	5
Experiencing a drug issue	1	1	5	7
Experiencing physical conflict in the household	1	1	2	4
Experiencing racial or ethnic tension	<1	2	10	12
Experiencing air pollution	1	1	3	5
Experiencing crime	<1	<1	3	4

Differences among Lower Income and Higher Income Respondents

Lower income households tended to be more likely than higher income households to be affected by certain issues:

Household Issues – Lower Income and Higher Income

Issue for Your Household	Identified as “Major Issue”	
	Low Income (<25K)	High Income (>100K)
Use of tobacco products	21%	0%
Not being able to find a good job	19	0
Not having enough money for food and clothing	17	0
Not enough cultural or entertainment opportunities	14	0
Not having enough money for heat and utilities	14	0
Not able to find affordable services for a senior or person with a disability	10	0
Not having enough money for medical care	16	7
Having a lot of anxiety, stress, or depression	13	3

Greatest Unmet Needs in the Community

Respondents were asked to identify the greatest single unmet need in the community. They were not prompted; however, the question followed the question above, which asked about a list of specific issues. This was intentional to help respondents consider a range of issues. However, the presence or absence of an issue in the earlier questions could have had an effect on how this question was answered.

- Lack of jobs/the economy was identified as the most significant unmet need by two out of ten households (20 percent).
- There was less agreement on other unmet needs, with less than one in ten respondents agreeing.

Greatest Unmet Needs *“What do you think is the greatest unmet need or problem facing families living in Ketchikan?”*

	Percent
Lack of jobs/the economy	20%
Don't know/refused	14
Drug abuse	8
Youth activities/recreation	8
Affordable housing	7
Cost of medical care	7
Alcohol abuse	5
Quality of education	5
Poor parenting	4
*Other	4
Better politicians	3
Access in and out of Ketchikan	2
Values	2
Lack of recreation/activities	2
Domestic violence	2
Help for single parents	1
Cost of living	1
Poverty	1
Childcare issues	1
Community can't agree	1
Mental Health Services	1
Unsafe schools	<1
Public Transportation	<1
Crime	0
Racial diversity issues	0

Community Benefits

Ketchikan residents were asked “what two best things about living in Ketchikan” they would point out to someone who had never been there. Half of Ketchikan residents listed the environment and beautiful location as being the best thing about living in Ketchikan (50 percent). Four out of ten Ketchikan residents (39 percent) said the friendly, honest and helpful people in Ketchikan are the best thing about living there. Roughly one-quarter of Ketchikan residents said the solitude of the small town (24 percent) and the recreation opportunities such as hunting and fishing (24 percent) are the best things about living in Ketchikan.

Community Benefits

“If you were talking to someone who has never been to Ketchikan, what would you say are the two best things about living there?”

Environment/location beautiful	50%
Friendly, honest, helpful people	39
Small town, solitude, quiet	24
Recreation/hunting/fishing/wildlife	24
Safe/wholesome/low crime	10
Weather/climate	10
Other	10
Clean/no pollution	9
Good to raise kids	3
Arts/culture	2
Community involvement	2
Jobs	2
Schools	1
Don't Know/Refused	1

Changes in the Future

Ketchikan residents were asked to describe one new thing or change they would like to see in the Ketchikan community in the next ten years. Respondents did not widely agree on any particular changes. However, eighteen percent of residents said they would like to see more jobs and stability in the next ten years. No other responses garnered more than 8 percent of responses.

Changes in the Future

“If you were to hope for one thing new or different about the community of Ketchikan in the next ten years what would it be?”

More jobs/stability	18
Bridge	9
Access	7
Less tourism impact	7
Reorganize government	6
Support activities for kids	5
Better roads/sidewalks	5
Less bickering	3
Schools	3
More shopping	3
Fewer drug/alcohol issues	2
No bridge	2
More affordable housing	2
Better medical care	1
Aquarium	1
More recreation	1
Slow unneeded development	1
More community dialogue/info	<1
Other	15
Refused	1

EMERGING THEMES FROM COMPASS

“When we’re grown up, we’ll be able to tackle problems just as well as we tackle emergencies.”

The following section summarizes the wealth of insights gathered from fifteen focus groups and twenty-one one-on-one interviews. In addition to discussing Ketchikan’s strengths and assets, conversations revolved around central issues facing the community – social issues with a particular urgency for change, potential directions for improvement, resources to draw upon, and new avenues and ideas for the community. Six main themes emerged consistently in discussions: *Coming Together Around Kids*, *A Diverse Year-Round Economy*, *People in Crisis*, *Overcoming Racial Divides*, *The Cost of Substance Abuse*, and *Improving Collaboration and Searching for a Shared Vision*. Prior to delving into these issues, there is a summary of Ketchikan’s assets, strengths, and success stories.

A disclaimer is in order: Though a similar pattern was used in each conversation, these discussions were not conducted using a systematic methodology, and therefore the results should not be construed as conclusive in the sense that survey methodologies are meant to produce conclusive results (instead, the household survey serves as the statistically valid portion of the Compass project). The object of the discussions was to shuffle through the various opinions, concerns, passions, and impressions of a diverse cross-section of our community to uncover a coherent common story about where we live, and to identify common ground for coming together to build a better future for our community.

Questions were interactive, exploratory and intuitive, but they all revolved around what Ketchikan might be when it grows up; what might be the key issues and most pressing needs in our community; where might the community come together for change; what might be the barriers to and assets for change; what we might be proud of; what might need fixing. The goal was to mine the insights privy to the professional and personal perspectives of every person we spoke with.

There was a surprising and pleasant coherence to the conversations. It turns out that most of us, in fact, do live in the same town: we are thinking about many of the same issues, often times in similar ways, no matter what side of the political fence we are sitting on. And, of course, there are splits as well. Conversations uncovered the genuine magnitude of certain issues in Ketchikan, particularly in the realms of poverty, race, alcoholism, and broken families. No report could do justice to the many ideas raised throughout conversations, but the following themes and issue complexes are those that repeated themselves throughout discussions. These themes, of course, overlap and transect in multiple ways; none is unrelated to another. Combined, they give a picture of where we are and where we hope to go. They are offered as possible starting points for further community dialogue and consensus building.

Groups:

Elementary Teachers, Small Business Owners, Largest Employers/ Health Care, Native Elders, KIC Staff, Saxman Youth, Future Search Youth, Non-Profit Leaders, Faith Based Social Services, Future Search Adults, Drug & Alcohol Recovery Community, Seniors, Steering Committee, WISH Residents, 20-30 Age Group

Individuals:

Evy Barnes, Joe Johnston, Bess Clark, Bruce Borup, Rob Skinner, Angela Salazar, Bob St. Claire, Sara Lawson, Roberta McCreary, Carolyn Stamm, Stephanie Rainwater, Dick Coose, Susan Walsh, Gretchen Klein, Carlen Williams, Patty Mackey, Choc Shaffer, Dragon London, Devra Milam, Doug Ward, Salvation Army Client

Community Strengths

Put simply, there are likely few communities of any size where residents say they come together as much as Ketchikan does. Without a doubt, Ketchikan residents are proud of the way their community comes together for one another, and recognize it as one of the greatest benefits of living here. An overwhelming 89% of residents in the phone survey stated that people in Ketchikan help each other out when they have a problem, and conversations with individuals revealed the same underlying strength to the social fabric. Whether it is a sense of knowing your neighbors, feeling safe raising your family, or knowing the community will respond to a local emergency, there is a solid foundation to Ketchikan's world. For many, this care for the local community extends to an appreciation for the environment around Ketchikan as well.

It's a good place to raise a family. There's a lot of support in this community for everyone. Because you do get support – there is someone to call on – it's not some anonymous agency down the street. People know they're looked after.

We have a lot of familiarity with each other. When somebody is in need of something, the call goes out for fundraising, and we know how to come together.

We know how to come together for things in the short term. The long term is a little bit different, but our natural tendency is to do the right thing.

People working in the community generally care about what they do, genuinely have passion for what they do here. It's just too hard to live here if you don't care.

People don't come together here on civic issues, but they come together in all sorts of little ways.

Ketchikan is a small village and everybody does know everybody. If you're going to do something, everybody will know about it, but I think you can use that in a positive way.

There's an island mentality here. People really look after one another.

There's a lot of rallying together – you see that coffee can at the grocery store and you know that it's legit and people will get the money they need.

Ketchikan has so much going for it in terms of people, in terms of support of kids, in terms of support of people in need. We're more aware of it because we're small. We're aware of it because we know the people who are struggling – whether it's domestic violence or mental illness. And I think that's a good thing.

The arts community is incredible. This is becoming a little Southeast arts center. When I moved here I had choices every weekend of things to do. I felt very welcome.

People want to help people. And people are pretty generous.

The one thing everybody comes together on is the fourth of July parade. Everybody is in that.

Ketchikan comes together all the time when people are in need and I'm always proud to see people do that .

Businesses give so much – it's a very giving community.

We're an incredibly generous community.

This community is phenomenal when responding to disasters. When things happen to members of the community, there is a tremendous outpouring of support.

Funds pop up in response to personal tragedy.

The community in many ways is very healthy, because when we need to come together we do.

People who live here appreciate the natural abundance. You value the beauty of the scenery.

People are very defensive of our community when it comes to outside scrutiny. We're loyal. We live here, and we care. We're loyal to the choice we've made to live here. When others come and tell us we're doing things wrong, it upsets us, because we do care about the resources around us

Success stories and assets in the community focused on the strong presence of community organizations in Ketchikan, community-driven and locally generated initiatives, and many specific causes and events. The role of the arts in Ketchikan was highly valued by many respondents. Several respondents talked about the transiency inherent to Ketchikan as a unique asset that kept the community fresh and dynamic.

There's so many things that people give and volunteer to – so much time. But I think volunteering is untapped, I don't think it's exhausted, it could be better coordinated.

Ketchikan is very welcoming and open – People enjoy having people come through here. We tolerate a lot of diversity – we deal with a lot of inflow and outflow of people here.

It's amazing what crafts people make at home in the winter. People here are very industrious. If we don't make something happen here, it's not going to happen. In the arts, the level of participation is really high. It's acceptable just to try things out -- new things that you would be shy about doing.

There's a strong sense of we should do as much as we can to help each other – relying on local business, for example. For us being so remote, there's not really a lack of things to do. We have things that you wouldn't have in other places, since we need to be reliant in coming up with our own activities for entertainment.

There's so many phenomenally strong community organizations.

This is a wonderful community for the arts.

New members to the community are a strength; they bring skills, insights, and break up the tension and closed mentality of a small town

We need new people to get into this community – newcomers are great assets.

The Monthly Grind was put on by people who got together and said, we can do it – this is Alaska, we've got a pioneering spirit.

The biggest accomplishment I've seen is the KIC Clinic. It included KGH, Saxman, and brought so many people together.

An example of successful collaboration is the FAS initiative. It's State funded, included KIC, the school, and parents were involved. Everybody was involved because everybody believed in the mission. Everybody was involved in shaping the process.

Cultural camp has been a real success – it's been in existence for almost 20 years, so its OK if some of the partners change.

Revilla Island Prevention Coalition is an example of collaboration.

The shipyard and the hospital are both doing well for employment opportunities.

Let's Talk was a good event -- adults and young people sat down together and had small group discussions. Ketchikan Future Search was also a success.

A big success was the KGH Foundation fundraiser. It had all the makings of a successful project. Also, the American Cancer Society and Holy Trinity big annual fundraiser are examples of successful fundraising efforts.

Our research probed beyond these assets and strengths into the issues upsetting the balance, the unsolved concerns: those areas keeping Ketchikan's unique gifts from shining as much as they could. But before diving into commentary about the community's setbacks, it is important to remember that residents had much good to say about Ketchikan. The resiliency and richness of the social fabric in Ketchikan would easily be the envy of other communities large and small, given the overwhelming consensus about residents coming together in times of need. That indispensable and admirable asset will be crucial in moving Ketchikan further in the direction of its visions and hopes to solve its remaining challenges.

Coming Together Around Kids

There are lots of issues many people in Ketchikan would like to come together around, but above all, kids are the one thing most people believe Ketchikan can come together around -- because in a sense, people already do. Time and time again, respondents spoke up about the way Ketchikan rallies around its youth.

We know when someone needs food because they spent all their money on drugs, but we have to give it to them anyway because there are kids involved.

I knew he was an environmentalist, but when his son was on my grandson's baseball team, we put all that behind us, while we were at the ballpark anyway.... The kids have to come first.

I have heard a counselor say that the goal was to have everyone college bound get some money. A lot of that came out of the community's pocket.

Beyond this base of solidarity, however, lay a deeper question for many respondents -- whether we can come together around kids in a way that works for the kids and solves the long-term problems at heart. Scripts for success and failure are written early in our children's lives. It's hard to catch up. According to people close to the issue, many of Ketchikan's children are not thriving, and many of them are living in chaotic families. These children are poised to perpetuate the vicious cycle of poverty with great cost to society and our community. They are falling through the cracks. However, most people believe that we can -- and should -- catch them.

We can have more centers for teenagers, but if the teenagers go home and mom's got alcohol in the fridge or she's stoned out of her mind, what is there for the teen to do?

You're going to have to phase those families out by getting their kids successful. Nobody in the world thinks they need parenting classes. And parents end up parenting the way they were parented. How are you going to fix some of these families? You're not. Your only hope is to help the kid.

We need successful community partnerships between education, business, and umbrella groups providing an opportunity to learn. If what we're doing isn't working, you can't keep doing the same thing. If the kids are failing, it's something we're not doing as a system.

We need another caring unit in the community who knows those kids -- who knows their schedule, and has an interest in them, and asks them how they're doing. A teacher should be able to contact other mentors in that child's life.

There's a lack of coordination for programs -- there's tons of grants but they're all band-aids, nothing is galvanized around a community initiative and commitment to do things differently.

Economic conditions are what's creating the problem. There's a huge poverty level in this community and for the kids stuck in that, the future's not looking bright.

What I'd like to teach, is to teach my kids to survive. I'm a survivor. Say, if I survived, then you can survive too.

Despite these hardships, there is a sense that at heart, Ketchikan cares a great deal about its youth and wants to see them succeed. This seeming contradiction with comments about the lack of programs for youth is indicative of the level of commitment and care that most residents of Ketchikan feel about their youth – for although there are already programs in place, there is a desire to do more and do better. Many feel Ketchikan is doing an admirable job facing an uphill battle, with more community support than would be found elsewhere. Nevertheless, this fundamental source of concern and caring does not seem to be enough.

People here love the kids. Everybody here is very committed to their kids.

Our teachers are fabulous. They really care about the kids.

A parent will tell you, we always focus on the negative, but there are so many positive things going on in this town. We could do a lot better, but in comparison to down South, we do a good job. We do better for our kids than most communities down South.

Ketchikan Future Search is a success story for us – an organizational process that involved young people talking about their problems and what it would take to stay here

What's been exciting in this community is there's been more and more youth opportunity. the past five years have really seen a growth in opportunity – Big Brothers Big Sisters, Ketchikan Youth Court, Boys & Girls Club, the schools – we have staff going into the classrooms to help people stay in school.

It takes a whole community to work together to raise children. We're not doing that.

You get a minority of people who are taking care of the kids who are getting into sports and everything.

Everybody here celebrates the community – you see that a lot in times of stress. There's a great outpouring of support. But for people on the fringes, that's not so readily available. And you see that with kids, too.

We're not giving students a fair share in this community so they can become healthy adults. What activities do we have in this community for young people? We don't provide anything for them.

Some teachers are just giving up on students. If a student goes from an A to a C, the teacher calls to talk. But if they're flunking, they don't even call. For students that don't get attention from home, what's there? A few special teachers, and that's it.

Ketchikan has such a strong footing in its of commitment and concern for youth that, in many ways, there is a clear vision of what is needed. This involves, first, the whole community coming together around the issue in a proactive way. For many, it also means providing mentors and other

caring adults for youth, for those who are on the fringe and do not experience the same sense of community that others find so strong. Others are more attuned to subtle barriers that could easily be overcome with enough effort: transportation, the need for more GED or vocational education programs, or the need to start very young.

A community has more influence on a child than a parent. For a parent, it's a battle. That's the nature of the world we live in, and it's a question of what we can do about it.

It has to be in the heart of everybody in this town – I want that kid to succeed. Keeping an eye out on the kid next door, introducing yourself to them, asking how they are doing, saying good morning, making sure things are OK.

There's so much potential for youth to build upon to get them connected, with volunteering, internships, and so on.

It's important for students to know that somebody at school cares, and to know that somebody outside the school cares. People need to know who the teenagers are. Youth need that kind of interconnectedness. And it's also helpful for the adults.

We should ask adults for a list of kids – 'who do you really know?' – and find out who nobody knows. We also need training on asset-building with kids and other people. We need to learn how to make kids feel like they're valuable. Perhaps we could involve the Chamber in caring for youth.

A GED program is a big need in this community and what we have is insufficient because we have so many kids not making it through school.

Vocational education would help keep people in school.

The problem I saw with the highest risk kids is that they didn't have the transportation. They couldn't be involved in extra-curricular activities even when they wanted to. A scholarship can give a kid a glove. But he can't get to practice or to the games. He doesn't have the support at home, and he doesn't have it from the community, either.

We need activities to keeping kids busy – between three and six in the afternoon is where we get most of our trouble. Some people—for example, the football team—are committed to making sure that everyone can play – but I'm not sure that everyone knows, and others don't want to take it because it feels like charity.

Saxman could use their own Boys & Girls Club. Saxman youth need a place that's theirs.

We need a better system to oversee community service work for youth – an eye on them and an interest in them. Somebody that just coordinates that service.

We need borough support for buses. Perhaps free buses for under 18 between 3:30 and 7.

You want to reach youth at a very young age. You can tell, at a young age, whether or not kids will succeed in school and how they'll feel about themselves. It starts with good pre-school and good well-trained day care.

Adults and teenagers alike spoke about the reality of the generation gap and finding new ways to reach youth. Too often, young people feel misunderstood and ostracized, or unfairly criticized because of their young age. Their social isolation within the community leads to a disconnect with the world around them, which, is invariably the start of their own disengagement or dangerous lifestyle decisions. Respondents of all ages agreed that youth need to feel more involved, brought on board in community life, and respected. For many youth, the onus for change was not on them, but on the community.

Before I did the Future Search program, I didn't even care about Ketchikan. Now that I'm getting involved I'm getting a much bigger sense of community pride. It gives you something bigger to care about when you feel like you're a part of the community. I think that if we gave that opportunity to more kids, they'd see that there's an alternative.

We need more formal education and involvement around what is happening with teenagers. We also need to work with young people to make it happen. People need to talk to each other across the generations.

Youth being at the table bring a lot of perspective and a lot of wisdom.

Young people feel like they don't have a voice in the community.

Kids need to feel that there is something beyond the box that they're experiencing – to feel connected to the community.

Just talking to the young people in the neighborhood and sharing an interest in them makes a difference. Having expectations for them – talking to them as if you expect good things from them. Sometimes I think people think they don't have anything in common with youth or any similar interests, but that's usually not true.

We should add youth representatives to boards and government bodies if people truly want us to get involved.

Kids feel that whatever's happening in school is not particularly relevant to them.

People are still stuck in a reading-writing-arithmetic mentality. If you think that sitting in a chair equals education, you've missed the boat. Because kids are not learning that way anymore. Educators, parents, and community members are going to have to realize that it's a whole new world for our youth, and we are not going to be able to raise them the same way anymore.

There's not a lot of opportunity for youth voice yet in the community. It's just starting.

Initiatives have to get started by youth. If they get started by adults it's not cool. You need other kids to get into it. Adults should be supportive, but not take it over.

The kids we consider problem kids have more perseverance in school than many adults have. If I had the same amount of setbacks in a job, I'd have given up and been out a long time ago. But we're asking more from these kids and we're giving them less time to get there.

However, community analysis of issues surround youth was not limited to the educational system and related spheres. Many also felt that although the blame for failing youth often falls on the school, more attention needs to be paid to the family role and parent role in their children's lives.

Teachers can help out but the number one resource person is the parent. Parents should be more aware of the programs that are available.

We need free parenting classes without stigma – I went to classes and people said, but you're a nurse. And I said, you're never too old to learn new tricks. But there's stigma.

Parents are being bad influences. There's a lack of interest in their kids, a lack of interest in their voice. Either parents don't even know where their kids are, or they're just an authority figure and kids feel like they can't have any voice.

That's where we need to be putting our energies – giving families adequate resources to survive. Parenting classes. Supporting youth. That's foundational. We can talk about the bridge, about fractional politics, but meanwhile, this problem is going on and on. The competency of the parents is so foundational to the child that I don't know if social intervention can be successful.

We all become parents and don't all take classes – but it's the most important job you'll ever do. How do you get people to take parenting classes?

A lot of the kids that are failing, when I talk to the parents, they have failed too. They have no positive association with school. They know intrinsically that school will help with success, but they haven't a clue how to help their kids get there.

Not surprisingly, the subject of the future of Ketchikan's youth overlapped frequently with other issues on respondents' minds, from drugs and alcohol, to racism, to the seasonal economy and household poverty. For many respondents, the issues facing youth in Ketchikan were closely interrelated with a broad array of community concerns.

We should teach job seeking at school. This is all connected to jobs.

We've got parents who struggle that we would like to reach out to, so that their kids don't struggle, and we can break the cycle of a lack of education.

Some people say, "We have a high drop out rate because there's no pulp mill." That's not true. Drop outs used to have a place to go and work at the pulp mill. But we got a lot of those people in ER because they couldn't read a manual.

For Native students in particular, many respondents felt that the problem of failing students could not be solved without thinking about the presence of racism directly. Solutions, in turn, often lay with reinforcing cultural traditions that are at risk of fading away.

A lot of Native people don't advocate for their children, and they don't really know how, because of the negative experience they've been through themselves.

When kids reach a certain age, parents start justifying why they're not succeeding, that they're discriminated against, and school becomes less and less important.

A lot of Native people know how to do subsistence activities, but not everybody. And not the young ones. A drop-in center would help. We need something like that plus a few people to teach them how to get along in this world and be ready to be adults.

Younger kids mimic the behaviors of older kids, and older kids mimic the behaviors of adults. We need to bring the old ways back so our kids want to follow them. What can a young man do today to be a hero? He can be a teacher – learn how to do traditional activities and then teach them. Get the forty-year-old to teach the 18-year-old. Teach old traditions.

We have Big Brothers Big Sisters – we need Big Uncles and Big Aunties.

Finally, respondents widely agreed that this issue matters not only in a moral sense, or simply out of concern for one's neighbors, but that the challenges facing youth are fundamental to Ketchikan's future. Many felt that if Ketchikan had one priority, it should be ensuring the success of their youth.

Everybody cares about education. We want educated people to be coming back to our community and working here. Education fits the whole community. We have to have those people here if we're going to move on and grow up.

People do care about our youth. Youth are the future for our community.

If I could change one thing, it would be to truly educate the children as young as possible.

Youth could become something for Ketchikan to come together around. But we're going to need to be reminded of that.

If we could turn one thing around in this town, it'd be eliminating having fringe kids. Starting in kindergarten.

The kids are our future, and if we don't somehow raise our kids better than we're doing, we're in trouble.

If you don't start with educating children, your hopes of having an educated community are pretty slim.

Among the potential community initiatives discussed and identified by interview participants and the Compass Steering Committee, in addition to suggestions found above:

- Provide transportation access to after-school enrichment programs, activities and recreation for all youth, including at-risk kids, and make recreation and activities affordable. Overcome cultural barriers in these programs.
- Create informed support teams for every child, and ensure mentoring relationships for those in need.
- Empower, coordinate, and bring existing resources and agencies to bear on the issue. Maximize coordination among youth services providers.
- Focus on early childhood education, in particular pre-school, day care, and proper assistance for young families.
- Focus appropriate family-based and parent-based support when in need.
- Work to bridge the gap between Native and non-Native students by pursuing culturally relevant education and institutions.
- Ensure transition and continuity from elementary through junior high school. Make sure that students about to enter junior high are prepared and will not be at risk for failing.
- Strengthen alternative education programs, such as vocational education and GED programs.
- Strengthen the role of youth voice in decision-making institutions.

A Diverse Year-Round Economy

This theme, of course, wasn't a surprise to discover. With an economy historically dependent on natural resources, many saw Ketchikan in some form of economic identity crisis, struggling with a seasonal economy and wondering what might come next. While Ketchikan had an average unemployment rate of 6.8% in 2005 and a poverty rate lower than both the state and national average, 29% of the household survey respondents were concerned with finding a good job, affording health insurance and housing, and paying for heating and utilities. 20% of the respondents said that jobs and employment was Ketchikan's greatest unmet need. It isn't any secret: on one hand Ketchikan is booming with the tourism industry. On the other hand, the seasonal nature of the industry is taking its toll.

"My family has struggled with how seasonal this town is. There's a need for economic security. I got my education down South and I have a year round job. But my husband grew up here, went to UAS, and it's exceedingly difficult to find year round employment."

Everyone agrees, from social service providers to business leaders to clients of social service agencies: Ketchikan needs a diverse year-round economy. The seasonal economy is seen as a root cause of many of our social ills.

What's most needed is year round employment...if people have steady year round employment, a lot of other risk factors are minimized. If you can meet your basic needs, a lot of other problems fall by the wayside. It's about trying to keep families together: Employment is huge in order to keep families together.

Seasonal employment is a contributing factor to drugs and alcohol use.

Respondents connected the nature of the economy to nearly every other issue on their mind. For some, it threatens the sustainability of strong health care.

Having fewer people with health care benefits means fewer people are paying their medical bills. That makes it difficult to provide the broad range of services a community needs.

For others, there's a shortage of opportunities for children to make a life here.

For the youth that are going off to college there's nothing for them to come back to.

We need some young people to stay here in town and start families who are trained to a good job.

It is even seen as threatening our visitor industry itself as we become less and less of an authentic destination.

We're on the verge of losing our authenticity and the minute we lose that, we lose the basis for tourism. We need to continue the emphasis of diversifying our industry, otherwise we're just in a boom and bust cycle like the past 100 years.

There isn't necessarily agreement on what the diverse economy would look like. Physical infrastructure like Gravina Access or the Intertie is receiving a good deal of attention. The shipyard

has been supported strongly by government spending. But certain contradictions in the preparedness of our human infrastructure, in our workforce, came up repeatedly in discussions.

In all cases, conversation moved well beyond infrastructure development when considering Ketchikan's economic situation. From the social service angle, the lack of jobs for unskilled laborers is seen as a huge issue. From the perspective of employers, failure to recruit and/ or retain skilled, trained, and professional workers threatens the stability and sustainability of our economy, from the hospital to the shipyard. Even in the service industries, lack of capable workers is seen as an issue. Through the course of this study, a clear contradiction emerged. On one hand, some felt there weren't enough jobs:

We need better paying year round jobs. It'd be more stable for the community.

The main issue is jobs that people can support themselves with. Jobs that can pay the rent. If you're making \$2,000 a month, \$800-900 goes to rent, \$300 goes to food, plus several hundred for utilities – if the mother is staying at home, that's barely enough to survive.

Jobs that people can live on and rent that's affordable. That's the two biggest issues in this community.

The biggest challenge is that there's no jobs. There's no good benefits.

On the other hand, Ketchikan employers spoke of tremendous difficulties in recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce for year round jobs with benefits.

As much as people say that there aren't jobs, it's hard to find employees. Finding qualified employees that want to work is hard.

My biggest concern is qualified applicants.

The problem is being able to find a qualified work force....and if they do, being able to pass a drug test...and if they pass that, are they gone in three months?

We're so busy filling gaps in employment that we don't find the time to plant seeds for long term solutions in our organization.

For many residents, Ketchikan is not growing the kind of workers it need for a thriving economy.

The majority of people looking for jobs and having trouble finding them – that's the men. Low-skilled blue collar jobs – that's the issue.

It used to be when you graduated from high school you could go straight to the pulp mill. There's nothing like that now. You need to get training.

The days of high paying low-skilled jobs are over.

There are jobs out there. If we had a training, even a six month training, in computer and clerical work, it would go a long ways.

There are a lot of jobs here that people aren't qualified to do, and it's unfortunate because we have to go out of city or out of state.

Some of the best successes we've had have been training people in our own community to be qualified.

One of the things that I've been struck by recently is a whole group of college grads has moved back to Ketchikan trying to figure out what to do with their lives. They're incredibly bright kids who aren't sure what to do yet. We have the opportunity to train them into the jobs we have here.

A common underlying question seemed to be: even if we had plenty of power from the intertie, and plenty of accessible industrial space on Gravina, would we actually have the work force we'd need for a sustainable year round economy? More often than not, the composition of the local work force was identified as the root issue behind Ketchikan's complex economic situation.

The School District, UAS-KTN, State Job Service, KIC, Cape Fox Corporation and the great business community, leading employers and non-profits might all have a hand in the solution. At present, with a few exceptions, collaboration is not maximized, and none have been brought into a unified action plan.

Many other issues overlapped with the seasonal economy. The high drop out rate and a strong concern of youth slipping through the cracks was often correlated either with the financial stress of seasonal work on the household, or the lack of employment opportunities for youth. Many felt that we need to nurture the dreams and expectations of our youth.

You need an education. We [Natives] used to be living in two worlds. Now we're living in the next step world.

Young people don't have the opportunity to be guided and mentored.

Young people need not just job skills training but training in how to act professionally.

Ketchikan Future Search is a success story. Young people interviewed businesses about what would have made it easier to get started here in town.

The drop out rate is a key issue for our economic base. You can't build an economy on drop-outs. The hardest jobs to find are for low-skilled blue-collar workers.

High school students need to know more about both academic and vocational options that are available to them.

We have to get young people to realize that they need the education now. Years ago, all you needed was a way to fish, but now, that's not enough.

Ketchikan residents were not short of ideas about ways to improve the local economy. While tourism played a major role in all discussions, respondents also had a rich diversity of creative ideas for diversifying the economy, thinking innovatively about Ketchikan's long-term potential. It is clear that an intricate and multi-faceted approach is the goal of most residents.

I rely on tourism just as much as anybody else. But we're at the whim of some very large trends.

What people don't recognize is that tourism has created more opportunity for small business to thrive.

We have to be open to global opportunities. With technology being the way it is, you can pretty much do anything anywhere. In Coffman Cove, you have people answering phones for customer service for faraway companies.

It would help if the community and the tourism industry could plan together better.

We should diversify the economy a little at a time – not looking to add 400 jobs all at once, but expanding events like the hummingbird festival and quilting events, maybe just attracting people from around Southeast at first.

Ketchikan has an opportunity to use its resource base and build an economy on its resources, but it needs to be based on sustainable resource use.

There are lots of barriers to entrepreneurial innovation on a small scale. We're not really friendly to small businesses in this town. Ketchikan could adopt the Business Incubator model.

We need to set up cottage industries, not extractive industries, because extractive industries have a tendency to boom and bust. Our strength is that we have natural resources and we need to preserve them. Ecotourism is a way to use our resources sustainably in a cottage industry. Other possibilities are shipbuilding, wooden furniture, or a think tank.

Quality of life has always been secondary to building an economic base, and those things need to be side by side.

Attracting professionals, e.g. medical professionals to town is a real challenge. Sometimes it can limit the services that can be provided.

We are hindered by a lack of outside experience and awareness among people on boards and councils.

For economic diversification, you need leaders who aren't afraid to step on people's toes.

Finally, although much has been invested in promoting large year-round employers, some believe that there remains untapped potential in small businesses for Ketchikan.

Alaska in general is more entrepreneurial in spirit. We need to encourage small business and diversify our economy.

If you want to retain young people in this town, encouraging people to start small businesses would be the best path.

I think the mega-employers days for Ketchikan are over.

Small businesses have trouble getting going – we have so many laws, and something always gets in the way. You have to have some desire to be working here for it to be possible.

I work with people with disabilities for whom micro-businesses are the best route, and the deposit can be what breaks them.

There is no small business administration here anymore, so there's no assistance.

Among the potential community initiatives discussed and identified by interview participants and the Compass Steering Committee, in addition to suggestions found above:

- Place emphasis on workforce development for community development. Realign the education of children, and develop the skills of our available workforce, to match the needs of our emerging economy. Train, recruit, and retain Ketchikan's youth.
- Create a unified action plan and work to maximize strategic initiatives and collaboration between businesses, educational institutions, and major employers – for example, partnerships between the university and the shipyard.
- Build a road map to getting on the same page for strategic and focused requests to government and granting agencies for infrastructure/capital improvements.
- Make Ketchikan friendly for entrepreneurial investment and start-up businesses.

People in Crisis

In the household survey, 77% of the respondents believed a lack of affordable housing was an issue in Ketchikan. 22% saw it as an issue that affected them directly. Concerns about being able to pay for insurance, medical expenses, or other basic needs were also prominent in the survey. Although Ketchikan has a relatively low poverty rate compared to the national average, many families and individuals are still struggling to make ends meet. Beneath the surface, and invisible to many, there is a hidden subpopulation working to find a way to get by.

The cost of living is a top problem—whether it's housing, food, and so on. People are still very poor and they're not as able to receive benefits as they used to.

Poverty is a problem—the true of depth of poverty is not revealed – maybe because the averages are better, maybe because of summer employment.

We are under serving a population that needs access to health care and better health services. These people are falling through the cracks.

People are ignorant, naïve, or just ostriches about not wanting to look at the problems here. We don't acknowledge the great economic disparity between people here. There's a whole environment we don't acknowledge. The wealthy live well or go away in the wintertime.

People lose everything when they go to a domestic violence shelter. If they want to go to Ward Cove to spend a day with their kids, it's very difficult.

Finances are the biggest issue we see people facing -- the classic falling through the cracks scenario. And it doesn't take much to fall between the cracks.

Financial obligations such as keeping up a food pantry or even furniture hold people back. Furniture's a high commodity in this community. And fuel costs are outrageous right now.

A lot of the clients that we see struggling are single parents – predominantly female, unskilled, have several kids, possibly didn't finish high school or get a GED, and they're trying to find a job to support their family. But minimum wage is often not enough, and people go back to public assistance. That's a trap that a lot of people never get out of – living on public assistance and never being self-sufficient.

One of the most commonly identified areas of concern was the cost of housing. From those in the trenches in the social services, housing came up hands down as a leading issue. From an inside view, the lack of low income housing is a community crisis. Over a hundred families are on a waiting list. The housing shortage leads to a host of problems: it keeps victims of domestic violence from moving out and starting another life; it results in chaotic households where nearly anyone is allowed to live in a home because they contribute to the rent. Above all, it perpetuates a position of crippling poverty that prevents families from being able to take the next step up in their lives.

But even beyond the realm of poverty, housing came up as a concern: from a parent's perspective, it makes it difficult for kids to return here from college and start lives here. And from a business

perspective, it drives up salaries, making it hard to compete in the industrial sector – or, it makes it difficult to recruit and retain valuable employees.

There's no place for people to go. There's no housing for these people. Not that's decent. There's no shelters for families in Ketchikan – families are turned away from other shelters.

Housing is huge. It is very bad. That's my number one thing.

I've been on the list with the Alaska Housing for over a year. I started at 133.

There's a lack of low income housing. I know a lot of people who are homeless. Only one bedrooms and three bedrooms are available right now, but with two girls I only qualify for a two-bedroom.

Housing is always expensive in the winter when you are not making anything.

If you are trying to live on Social Security, low income housing has a wait list a mile long.

Respondents spoke of the complexity and multiple dimensions of living in poverty. It is clear that solutions will mean a broad range of strategies to improve services, maximize coordination among agencies, and minimize risks at the outset.

The welfare system is not easy to use. I've gone through five caseworkers since I became homeless after leaving a violent and unsafe home.

Transportation is huge. Transportation to child care is a huge issue.

Transportation is a really big issue here. Some people don't have cars or can't afford to have a car. Whether it's seniors or teens who need a way to get to home, we need solutions.

One of the biggest barriers for seniors is not having enough money. The funding to different agencies has been cut. The process to qualify for the care is the biggest problem.

The perception of Alaska from Outside is very different from arriving here. It's hard to get fish, and you've got no way to cook it if you're homeless. The cost of living is so high – what seems like a good paycheck before you get here turns out not to be anything.

Among the potential community initiatives discussed and identified by interview participants and the Compass Steering Committee, in addition to suggestions found above:

- Develop a collaborative, inter-agency way to case manage the people who are in need. Create a networking or clearinghouse so that people don't need to knock on all the different doors to get their handouts. Develop information and referral services to maximize services being provided.
- Work to develop and maximize communication and trust between and among agencies. Build collaborations between agencies on shared needs and long-term projects.
- Provide budgeting classes, parenting classes, job training, and other basic adult education services for people in need.

- Develop a community foundation or other sources for community-wide funding for social services.
- Strengthen connections between the non-profit sector and the rest of the community, including the business community, and involve more people in the work of non-profits so that there is greater understanding of their role in the community.
- Create a specific study for the crisis of low-income affordable housing, including an overview of Ketchikan's housing situation, the housing market, and quantified housing need. Include current housing initiatives and government and market based strategies for alleviating the housing crisis.

Overcoming Racial Divides

Racial divides are seen as one of Ketchikan's most onerous inheritances from the past. Though much less overt than in the city's frontier past, racial tension and cultural misunderstanding remain a fact of life for many of Ketchikan's residents. The depth of racial divides in Ketchikan and lack of community integration was a frequent topic of discussion, especially among Alaska Natives. Overcoming racial barriers remains a challenge and an ongoing struggle that is at the forefront of daily experience for many residents. On the most immediate level, there is work to be done for Native and non-Native communities to work more closely together, such as in the social services sector. On a deeper level, residual trauma from historic racist practices continues to affect families and individuals several generations later, perpetuating a cycle that can only be broken with renewed community commitment and resolve.

When growing up, we weren't allowed to go to public schools. We couldn't go to certain parts of town. That's why we went to boarding school.

I grew up in a boarding school from 7 to 18. I was separated from my mother. I had 8 kids. One day one of them said to me, how come you don't hug us? And I stopped and said, oops. I was so busy trying to raise them, I didn't know how. I was such an insecure person that I couldn't get close to anybody. Because my mother never paid any attention to me. There's people like me who have a lot of problems they're passing on. How are we supposed to deal with our insecurities?

Racism is something I grew up with. I went through it all through school – kids following me, throwing things at me – and me wishing I had a bow and arrow.

Racism is still here. When I go into a store I can see the clerk watching me around the store. After a long time they come over and see if I need anything.

Distrust and hard feelings work both ways in the Native and non-Native community. There are many more people on both sides of the fence that need to do a better job. People are so used to being judged that it's very difficult – people that have had a bad experience before are mistrustful.

From looking at the household survey, it is evident that concerns over race issues were not a subject a person felt willing to discuss over the phone. Even in person, it was often spoken of reluctantly, but with passion and electricity.

There's still racism here, especially at the elementary and high school level. There's a higher Native drop out rate.

I go to Native meetings and non-Native meetings and they're not the same. I would like to see more understanding of that. We have different communication styles, and we all need to be educated about how to work with that.

When a co-worker and I are waiting to cross the street and they don't stop, and then one of my blonde co-workers needs to cross, they do stop—and to me, that's discrimination. It's something you don't think about unless you happen to be Native.

A large percent of the kids that are struggling are Native. If the parents aren't onboard, it's tough.

There is racial division in the community. I don't see it because I'm not Native so maybe I'm oblivious, but I hear about it.

Most of us have a clear definition of racism from southern civil rights issues. Among many, there is a general confidence that racism doesn't apply in Ketchikan. There are so many instances of successful Native individuals embraced and supported across cultural lines, and the abolition of institutionalized practices can make it easy to assume that racial issues have gone the way of history. Those success stories of integration should not be bypassed, but they fail to present the full story.

As many pointed out, Ketchikan has dramatic under-performing of Natives in educational institutions, under-participation in extracurricular activities, and under-performance in the economy. There is the sense of missed opportunities as well – that the community's rich traditional resources have yet to be fully realized or integrated into the rest of the community sphere.

When we grow up, the city and borough and tribal government need to sit down together.

The problem I see is the lack of working together. There's something that holds us all back, that doesn't allow us to sit at the table. We don't take advantage of each other's assets.

It is possible to help the community overcome our inheritance from Ketchikan's history of destructive and tragic race relations. Race is Ketchikan's closet issue, which, if nothing else, impacts the success of Native children in our schools.

Racism has a lot to do with young people struggling. KIC is trying to bring back our traditions and showing song and dance. When my daughter went to Metlakatla she learned Tsimshian words and a Tsimshian dance. We need more of that in the schools.

In Saxman, people feel separate from Ketchikan. Activities for kids in Ketchikan don't really feel like they're for us. A lot of the kids here might have friends at the high school, but we would never really hang out with them.

All the kids in Saxman are stereotyped as bad kids. My vision for the future is to get rid of all the stereotypes and have everyone be friends.

In the schools, I saw some difference in how Native students are talked to by teachers. Certain kids are treated better than others.

Schools aren't a very positive place for Native students in general. And that has nothing to do with the people, it's just the environment.

Many respondents felt that "moving on" and progressing beyond racial divides would mean taking extra effort to embrace Ketchikan's diversity and integrating members of the community.

We teach Spanish and French and whatever in the schools – why do we still have to fight to teach our own language, that we speak? A language that people who live here speak?

We don't want to lose that culture, we still have to fight to keep it going.

I've always wanted to have an event to bring people and teachers to Saxman and say, this is what we have, and show off a little bit. Most of the youth have been exposed to some tradition – almost all of them know song and dance. And that's not valued enough – particularly in the schools.

Over the years, race has become less of a problem for employment. This community has opened up more. I think most employers have very diverse workforces. We went through a point where we had to hire Natives and most employers have said they are great employees. There's more job preparedness thanks to KIC working on that – and they're getting hired.

There's a big Filipino population that hasn't been explored as far as their contribution to Ketchikan. This town was built on the back of Filipinos, and we should honor that.

Interest in Native culture has been a benefit to the community.

Natives and non-Natives get along pretty well here; they mix and mingle. It's not as segregated as places down South: there's interracial marriages, there aren't dividing lines that no one can cross.

Integration of our community goes both ways – Ketchikan needs to be more open to Saxman and Saxman needs to be more open to Ketchikan. The Monthly Grind is an example of right step, but it's not yet a success: it's great that it is being held in Saxman, but very few Natives attend. And have they felt invited or welcome there?

We need to improve tolerance for the importance of culture. My 15 year old son is working first job for Cape Fox and had to choose between going to collect seaweed with his family and going to work. Cape Fox gave him the choice to take the day off, but most other businesses in town would not have even given him an option.

Among the potential community initiatives discussed and identified by interview participants and the Compass Steering Committee, in addition to suggestions found above:

- Convene a diverse taskforce of community leaders to specifically address this issue.
- Investigate engaging outside assistance through community workshops such as Undoing Racism, which has been used in Anchorage and Juneau, or traditional healing circles.
- Enlist the school district in joining in a strategic response to the issue. Incorporate Native, Filipino, and other traditions into curricula and extracurricular events.
- Develop initiatives to foster cross-cultural awareness, understanding, and education.
- Strengthen a sense of Ketchikan's rich indigenous and imported cultures as assets that add to the vitality of the community.
- Work to create bridges between Native and non-Native service providers and improve collaboration.

The Costs of Substance Abuse

Drugs and alcohol are highly visible to those who are affected by it and invisible to those who aren't.

There are 49 liquor licenses and 16 churches. Forty-nine liquor licenses and how many people live here? You do the math. That's about one liquor store or bar for every 300 people.

You can get a prescription for anything you want in this town.

Alcohol and other drug abuse is one of Ketchikan's most costly public health issues in dollars, in human resources, and in human lives. It led the household survey as a community issue with 90% of respondents identifying it as a major issue. Behind many of the conversations about jobs, racism, youth, the strength and resiliency of families in Ketchikan, the topic of substance abuse continually resurfaced as feeding into and transforming the given problem onto a larger scale. While there is a widespread sense that we have a shared responsibility to acknowledge the problem and act with compassion and dedication to address it, there was an equally wide sense that there is a high level of complacency about drug and alcohol abuse, given its historic presence in Ketchikan.

Drugs are rampant and very organized here. It destroys our community across the board. It is the elephant in the room. And our youth participate in it very willingly.

There's clearly a drinking problem in the middle and upper class, but they're able to keep it maybe a little more hidden. This is a small town, and everybody knows what everybody else is doing, and some people won't come to therapy because they're afraid other people will find out.

For respondents, this issue affected everybody. Youth:

80% of the kids are on something. The kids that you'd expect to be good kids are just as much on drugs as anybody else. And then everyone's surprised.

There are a lot of kids who do it really occasionally as a social thing.

All we have is anti-drug education. It's not working. Everybody knows that it's bad for you. But for a lot of the kids, they're just expected to do drugs every day, and nobody really cares.

Employers:

The problem used to be alcohol. People came back from logging camps and drank. Now it's drugs. All applicants for one job failed their drug test.

Families:

It's difficult to address the youth drinking problem when this whole community has a drinking problem. Kids see model behavior and think it's OK.

There are a lot of families who are struggling and trying to make ends meet, and that ties in to drug use. If Mom and Dad can't get their basic needs met, how can they meet the needs of their kids?

There was a repeated sense in interviews that Ketchikan is producing lost generations of kids who are growing up in chaotic families dominated by substance abuse, and who are following in the footsteps of their parents. In the long term, these generations will not rise as future leaders of Ketchikan any more than they will be able to sustain their own families with a new direction.

It seems like a lot of people that drop out are stoners, but it might also be that the reason they're stoners is the same reason they're dropping out, not because of it.

When a parent can't pay the bills or is drinking all the time, the teenager doesn't have a purpose. It's a heartbreaker. It's so hard on the teens and the children. We don't have a teen center for addiction. We have to send them off elsewhere.

It being a small community, the teens do not have a lot of resources they would elsewhere. You either fish or go to the bowling alley. There are ball teams, but not everybody's into sports. We're losing teens.

The adults are being hypocrites when they're telling their kids not to use drugs or alcohol. You are by your own example modeling the behavior that your kids are going to grow into.

There is some question as to whether we have adequate treatment facilities in Ketchikan, particularly for youth.

DA and courts are overwhelmed. We don't have room in jails. The way to break the cycle is through rehab.

This island needs a long-term treatment facility. KAR house has a 12 bed, 28 day treatment facility. One thing that's a barrier is the need to send people away for long-term treatment. There's a lack of funding to do that.

This is one of the richest states in the country, and we send our children out of state to deal with this.

The most successful treatment is when you get the primary support group – the family – involved. It's not really successful unless you have the support of the family.

There's no Ketchikan treatment specific to meth.

Despite the absence of a long-term treatment facility, Ketchikan has immense personal assets in the struggle against alcohol and drug abuse -- individuals committed to prevention, treatment, and long-term community change. A wealth of respondents spoke passionately about the issue and their hopes for the future. In particular, in addition to the need for more resources, respondents spoke of the need for compassion and losing the stigmatization of addiction in order to create a healthier environment for recovery.

We need to increase compassion for people struggling with these issues. If we have compassion, then we can work as a community to address the problem.

We need to increase awareness. People think teenagers can't be alcoholics and that's not true.

We need to get rid of the stigma of 'you're a drug addict'. It is a medical problem first, not a criminal one.

If you get one or two people clean, it's worth all the time, it's worth every nickel.

Among the potential community initiatives discussed and identified by interview participants and the Compass Steering Committee, in addition to suggestions found above:

- Develop a plan to ensure adequate treatment is available to those who need it.
- Begin long-term planning and capital fund development for a southern Southeast treatment facility.
- Take measures to prevent the excess prescribing of pharmaceutical drugs.
- Help the community overcome the stigmatization of addicts.
- Raise awareness of the issue and increase community-wide commitment to changing social norms and behaviors. In the words of one interviewee:

It's going to take widespread community support, from the legislators on down to the neighborhood resident. It's going to take a comprehensive commitment from all levels. It's going to take the state legislature, churches, community agencies, city officials, passing laws and enforcing laws and saying "we've got a problem here" and the everyday person on the street saying, "this is a problem in our community and we're not going to tolerate or accept it.

Improving Collaboration and Searching for a Shared Vision

A recurrent theme in Ketchikan is that despite the fact that the community does a phenomenal job of coming together in times of crisis, and that, on a day-to-day basis, neighbors help one another in a way not found elsewhere, Ketchikan is deeply fractured on the subject of its own future and what the community might become. There is a strong sense that Ketchikan is lacking a vision for itself or an identity that the community can rally behind. Attempts at long-term planning and collaboration are often well below people's hopes and expectations. There is, nevertheless, a desire for Ketchikan to find a way to unify its diverse viewpoints around common causes and work together for the overall good of the community. Seven of ten phone survey respondents said that Ketchikan residents are willing to work together on community issues. The catch seems to be getting there. Although people agree they would like to get to such a place of cooperation, there is much doubt about achieving consensus about what that place would look like, or what cooperation would focus on. Still, the costs of not coming together are apparent to many.

Everyone has their pet project, but we're not going to be able to accomplish them all.

Some of the division will be overcome by consolidation, but we still need to give the state legislature and federal delegation one message about what we need.

That's what happens in our community: it just doesn't all come together. We're not all working as one team because we just don't know what everybody is doing. One place is providing training, but what's the outcome? Are there jobs for them? The needs are not matched.

Conversations about a common vision for Ketchikan and collaborative long-term thinking often returned to the need for committed, proactive leadership. There seemed to be an especially strong focus on investing in leadership for the future -- developing qualified, involved, and forward-thinking leaders with integrity in order to bring the town together, help it unite around a sense of self, and heal its historic divides.

Community leaders need to work together. As leaders, it's our responsibility to sit down at the table.

Common ground: That's an attitude and a leadership thing. In most communities the government leads the community. But we get pulled in two directions.

We have a politically weak community. It's too easily influenced by people. It's gone so easily from being a company town to those people being the ones in charge. That doesn't allow us to come together.

Why do we have to be so narrowly defined as a community? Do we have to be a timber town, a tourism town, a retirement town? Can't we be a little bit of all those things?

In the absence of leadership, you are what you end up with. So we are a tourism town.

Most often people don't speak up to the power holders because they're afraid of the ramifications.

If the leaders aren't interested in change, you can't make it work.

Change would have to come from citizens, but there's a fear. Leaders need to initiate it.

If you put yourself out there and try to make a difference, you usually get criticized for trying to make a difference.

We're not really good at working together. It becomes territorial.

There is a sense that the unique personalities and histories of Ketchikan, similar in many ways to those of Alaska in general, create the habitually fiery dynamic that keeps people from coming together. Ketchikan residents see themselves as ardently independent – one of the strengths of the community that too often becomes a weakness when dealing with conflict, searching for compromise, or looking for common ground.

Both a strength and weakness is the independence of the people who live here.

Alaskans in general tend to be very self-centered – we want to be independent, want to be isolated, want self-satisfaction.

Our biggest negative trait is our divisive community. If we had a professional sports team to channel our passions, and yell at the TV, that would do us a lot of good.

Unity is a problem in this town. Instead of finding common ground, we're as divided as possible. We see everything in black and white. We disagree on almost everything. In a smaller town, it becomes more personal. Even if on the whole you know a certain change might be good, if it affects you negatively, you're against it.

People who've been doing things here for a long time don't care to change things and do what they can to keep it that way. That's where that fiercely independent thing comes in. That holds us back in a lot of ways. \$25 million was spent trying to keep the pulp mills here instead of looking to the future.

There's a very strong group of people who are opposed to new ideas. It's just fear. A major problem in this town is a lack of trust.

We're like crabs in a pot that are keeping one another from escaping. We keep one another from getting ahead of each other. There's a leveling concept at play, keeping people from rising up.

We need a government that's proactive, not reactive. Community planning has tended to be reactive.

The lack of a common vision and shared direction is seen as a source of general unease and tension within Ketchikan – as if it is a sore spot that holds the community back and keeps it from realizing its full potential, from letting the town flourish. The desire for such a vision was a common subject of conversation.

There's a general anxiety here about where Ketchikan is going.

I don't think the community has really given itself permission to have local control—that we can say, this is the kind of community we want to be.

Some sort of unity to where this town is headed is needed. It goes back to proactive versus reactive. We react to decisions, but aren't proactively doing anything.

We need leaders who are willing to look down the road. Once that's in place at the local government level, it's easier for the community to grasp the vision question.

We need to stop doing it the old way and ask ourselves what do we want the community to look like.

We do better coming together around a crisis than we do accomplishing change.

We need to train ourselves to look 20 or 30 years down the line. Ketchikan's kind of the last town on the road. We need to be proud of this place, but we need to take care of it, too.

We might be able to agree that there is a given problem in Ketchikan, but we wouldn't agree on the solution. We need to have a focal point – we keep straying with where we put our energy and it would do good to have a focus.

The problem I see is the lack of working together. There's something that holds us all back, that doesn't allow us to sit at the table. We don't take advantage of each other's assets.

In focus groups and one-on-one interviews, we often asked people what *their* vision of Ketchikan would be, or what Ketchikan would look like when it grows up. Many spoke about what they would want to keep the same – Ketchikan's strengths that they hope will remain well into the future – but a recurring theme was moving past the divides in the community.

I would like Ketchikan to be a little more content with itself, and recognize its strengths.

We should try not to be some sort of industrial center, because it won't work. We're just too isolated.

I'd really like to see this community be based on what we really want to be, and not based on fear. Instead, we should be saying, what do we want to become, and what should we do to get there, and have that guide our decisions.

The underlying battle is that this is a resource-based economy. So it's a kind of survival mentality. Stewardship is a little lofty, but it's a goal. A resource-based economy causes anxiety. We have to leave that anxiety behind in order to be able to look long-term at our community.

When it grows up, I'd like Ketchikan to be a little more mature, less emotional – not less passionate, but less emotional – about being able to come together on problems and come to resolution and resolve the issue.

My vision is to have the community acknowledge that we have some problems we need to work on. Because unless we acknowledge it, we can't really change that.

I'm not sure if Ketchikan could identify a common vision—but for issues that people could rally around, our kids would work for most people.

We could rally more around our seniors. To some extent we do, but we're going to have to pay a lot more attention, because of changing demographics. How do we keep our seniors leading productive healthy lives?

I know what it can't be. It can't start out with the solution. It has to represent genuine common ground.

I'd like it to be a community that plays well together and lives well together. That doesn't hold grudges for decisions made 5-10 years ago and moves on.

I'd like this town to have strong bones so that it can thrive on that.

Some respondents were skeptical of the goal of finding a common theme or shared direction for Ketchikan. Since the end of some of Ketchikan's major industries, these respondents felt that the various push and pull factors within the community were the nature of life in Ketchikan, and were likely to remain that way. This group of people still felt that Ketchikan residents could do a better job collaborating and overcoming differences among one another – they just disagreed on the idea that Ketchikan would ever get past the point of having differences to overcome.

Ketchikan is likely to be adolescent for the next 50 years. There's not a sense of long term commitment.

Trying to find a single identity wouldn't work. Ketchikan doesn't have a common theme. I used to think the Tongass could be it, but I don't anymore. Then I considered arts, but although the arts are wonderful here, they won't define our town. Nor is there a shared industry. To some extent, what we see is what we will have.

I think Ketchikan is stuck in the past. Whatever your opinion on past issues, we need to move on. Timber's not what it used to be, fishing is not what it used to be, and tourism is bigger. But people want it to be what it used to be.

Life changes, and as much as you may like it or not like it, if you don't adapt, you're going to be left behind.

My vision is that Ketchikan would keep its uniqueness, but that we'd be working better together. Not to tear our factions away, but to find a way to overcome them. We have incredible potential.

A parallel thread to the conversation on a shared vision that went beyond the traditional divides in the community was the need for more collaboration within Ketchikan. Many residents felt that although people never hesitate to forego all differences in times of emergency, that spirit was often much harder to find in other situations. Respondents had a range of suggestions and insights for improving the nature of collaboration in the community.

Instead of thinking we can solve the whole problem, let's think that we can improve a piece of it. Work in increments—make improvements here, make improvements there. If you work in increments, you're improving the whole situation.

Community building will require a respect for diversity. We need to “man up” and take responsibility for each of our parts. There needs to be a sense of individual responsibility for our community.

We've got to quit separating ourselves out and start coming together more. Quit having separate sameness and quit duplicating and overlapping each other so much.

I think if we could get a shared vision and pick one or two projects to focus on, that could really get the ball rolling.

For community building to work—we would have to come to a really high level of consensus. It would have to involve almost every sector of the community. It would have to have a long timeline – there's a lot of emotional stuff that would have to go through about it – get mad about it, yell about it, discuss it, then do something about it. We call it cuss and discuss.

It would also be nice if in addressing some of the tangible outcomes, the intangibles happened – relationships between people improved.

Because we're small and know each other so well, I would hope that we can be doing a better job than we are.

How do you get at common ground? You use a business strategy. You decide on a community message, you decide how to communicate it, you communicate it, and you spend money on it.

On what projects should Ketchikan collaborate? What would that collaboration look like? What are basic needs and starting points? Above all, respondents spoke about coming together around Ketchikan's youth as an issue that could create genuine consensus and community will. But beyond that goal, there was a myriad of other suggestions for collaboration.

Successful community building will be hard, but not impossible. If we could really unite around one issue that didn't have anything to do with timber or fishing, that made everybody feel good – kids would be a good one. And not to make it about fears but hopes and desires for our future.

The community could come together around cultural awareness and learning about gathering the traditional resources that are out here.

Consolidation is good news – it is key to resolving issues in both governments – and will help get quality people involved.

We should keep working on bringing arts and humanities to a scale of becoming a recognizable asset in this community.

Arts and humanities bring things to the parents and families. That is a sign of health – moms and kids having something that they share in common.

The Ketchikan Behavioral Health Collaboration Project is working on an initiative to make more comprehensive information system for social services – trying to create a system where there's no wrong door, where we can help direct people to the right services.

We should have a community recruiter for Ketchikan. Ideas such as recruiting on hunting and fishing shows – you're getting the name of Ketchikan out there, though not necessarily a specific business itself, or specific employee opportunities.

We should broaden economic development opportunity, expand recreation and arts capacity, and help people get their masters through distance learning capabilities.

Some of the best successes we've had have been training people in our own community to be qualified – we've had partnerships with the University and our whole community should work more with them to make them a stronger asset.

How do we get the businesses that come in during the summer involved? I'd like to see them more involved and that would make people feel better about their presence. That's a great vision for our seasonal businesses to get involved and give. We should find a way to connect with them.

We need one place where people can come to the desk and say here's my need – and people know how to identify it and what to do about it.

Among the barriers to collaboration are Ketchikan's independent nature, the demand on time and resources, and a range of other significant factors.

Some of the agencies are in severe financial situations. Sure we can collaborate, but we need to fix [those problems], they need to have all their ducks in a row.

What we are is very dependent on outside forces. That's a challenge for a community.

Learning to listen and give people time to talk their problems through is something that this community would benefit from.

It's not difficult to collaborate, it's just difficult to find the time and willingness to give things up. You're so wrapped up around your own projects.

Nobody's been able to pull off that kind of coordination. We are such independent folks. We pride ourselves on that. We say to ourselves, 'I'm not going to get behind that and be like those other groups.'

The idea is that collaboration will reduce everyone's load, but the reality is that it's an incredible burden to bring people together who don't necessarily talk.

Among the potential community initiatives discussed and identified by interview participants and the Compass Steering Committee, in addition to suggestions found above:

- Develop a plan to ensure adequate treatment is available to those who need it.
- Work to make Juneau-based state social service agencies more accountable to Ketchikan clients.
- Develop a community prevention and health services access plan for people in need.
- Empower collaborations in community initiatives by identifying and overcoming barriers to sharing information among and between social service agencies and our educational and government institutions.
- Develop a vision statement centered around investing in Ketchikan's best renewable resource, and strongest asset – kids.
- Promote consensus-building in all levels of community affairs.
- Create leadership development initiatives, from youth programs to board and professional development opportunities.
- Tap into the potential for volunteering in the community and strengthen volunteerism.
- Develop a "business strategy" to promote a community-wide vision statement and garner extensive commitment and support.

RECAP OF SUGGESTED PRIORITY INITIATIVES

This section reprints the potential community impact initiatives discussed and identified by interview participants and the Steering Committee. Ultimately, decisions for next steps for the Compass process and this report's results lie with the interests and motivations of leaders within the Ketchikan community.

Coming Together Around Kids

- Provide transportation access to after-school enrichment programs, activities and recreation for all youth, including at-risk kids, and make recreation and activities affordable. Overcome cultural barriers in these programs.
- Create informed support teams for every child, and ensure mentoring relationships for those in need.
- Empower, coordinate, and bring existing resources and agencies to bear on the issue. Maximize coordination among youth services providers.
- Focus on early childhood education, in particular pre-school, day care, and proper assistance for young families.
- Focus appropriate family-based and parent-based support when in need.
- Work to bridge the gap between Native and non-Native students by pursuing culturally relevant education and institutions.
- Ensure transition and continuity from elementary through junior high school. Make sure that students about to enter junior high are prepared and will not be at risk for failing.
- Strengthen alternative education programs, such as vocational education and GED programs.
- Strengthen the role of youth voice in decision-making institutions.

A Diverse Year-Round Economy

- Place emphasis on workforce development for community development. Realign the education of children, and develop the skills of our available workforce, to match the needs of our emerging economy. Train, recruit, and retain Ketchikan's youth.
- Create a unified action plan and work to maximize strategic initiatives and collaboration between businesses, educational institutions, and major employers – for example, partnerships between the university and the shipyard.
- Build a road map to getting on the same page for strategic and focused requests to government and granting agencies for infrastructure/capital improvements.
- Make Ketchikan friendly for entrepreneurial investment and start-up businesses.

People in Crisis

- Develop a collaborative, inter-agency way to case manage the people who are in need. Create a networking or clearinghouse so that people don't need to knock

on all the different doors to get their handouts. Develop information and referral services to maximize services being provided.

- Work to develop and maximize communication and trust between and among agencies. Build collaborations between agencies on shared needs and long-term projects.
- Provide budgeting classes, parenting classes, job training, and other basic adult education services for people in need.
- Develop a community foundation or other sources for community-wide funding for social services.
- Strengthen connections between the non-profit sector and the rest of the community, including the business community, and involve more people in the work of non-profits so that there is greater understanding of their role in the community.
- Create a specific study for the crisis of low-income affordable housing, including an overview of Ketchikan's housing situation, the housing market, and quantified housing need. Include current housing initiatives and government and market based strategies for alleviating the housing crisis.

Overcoming Racial Barriers

- Convene a diverse taskforce of community leaders to specifically address this issue.
- Investigate engaging outside assistance through community workshops such as Undoing Racism, which has been used in Anchorage and Juneau, or traditional healing circles.
- Enlist the school district in joining in a strategic response to the issue. Incorporate Native, Filipino, and other traditions into curricula and extracurricular events.
- Develop initiatives to foster cross-cultural awareness, understanding, and education.
- Strengthen a sense of Ketchikan's rich indigenous and imported cultures as assets that add to the vitality of the community.
- Work to create bridges between Native and non-Native service providers and improve collaboration.

The Costs of Substance Abuse

- Develop a plan to ensure adequate treatment is available to those who need it.
- Begin long-term planning and capital fund development for a southern Southeast treatment facility.
- Take measures to prevent the excess prescribing of pharmaceutical drugs.
- Help the community overcome the stigmatization of addicts.
- Raise awareness of the issue and increase community-wide commitment to changing social norms and behaviors.

Improving Collaboration and Searching for a Shared Vision

- Develop a plan to ensure adequate treatment is available to those who need it.
- Work to make Juneau-based state social service agencies more accountable to Ketchikan clients.
- Develop a community prevention and health services access plan for people in need.
- Empower collaborations in community initiatives by identifying and overcoming barriers to sharing information among and between social service agencies and our educational and government institutions.
- Develop a vision statement centered around investing in Ketchikan's best renewable resource, and strongest asset – kids.
- Promote consensus-building in all levels of community affairs.
- Create leadership development initiatives, from youth programs to board and professional development opportunities.
- Tap into the potential for volunteering in the community and strengthen volunteerism.
- Develop a "business strategy" to promote a community-wide vision statement and garner extensive commitment and support.

APPENDIX 1: UNITED WAY OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA MEMBER AGENCIES IN KETCHIKAN

The following list includes agencies with both offices in Ketchikan and those providing services to Ketchikan.

Alaska Community Services, Inc.
Alaska Health Fair, Inc.
Alaska Legal Services Corporation
Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association
American Red Cross of Alaska, Southeast Alaska Chapter
Association for the Education of Young Children
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southeast Alaska
Boy Scouts of America, Southeast Alaska Council
Boys and Girls Club of Juneau
Catholic Community Service
 Child Care & Family Resources
 Southeast Senior Service
Community Connections
Gastineau Human Services, Corp.
Girl Scouts, Tongass Alaska Council
Ketchikan Committee for the Homeless (PATH)
Patchworks
Rendezvous Senior Day Services
St. Vincent de Paul
Salvation Army, Ketchikan
SERRC Adult Education Services
Southeast Alaska Food Bank
Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL)/ORCA
Women in Safe Homes (WISH)

APPENDIX 2: EIGHT SUGGESTED PHASES OF COMPASS

For a detailed description of the Compass II process, see *Compass II® Guide to Community Building, Increasing the Capacity of People to Build Better Communities* by United Way of America.

1. Form a Community Partnership

Diverse sectors and interests

People who are invested in the outcome (stakeholders)

People who have not previously been involved

2. Inventory Key Community Assets

Capacity for improvement

Associations, organizations, businesses

3. Collect and Analyze Community Data

Household and business surveys

Key informant interviews and discussion groups

Socio-economic research

4. Review Community Priorities

Steering Committee discussions based on findings

Additional community dialogue

Develop and strengthen broad support

5. Select Priority Issues and Establish Community Impact Agenda

Utilize final report as a point of departure

6. Issue-Oriented Planning: Build an Outcome-Focused Community Impact Plan

Continue stakeholder planning

Set detailed targets, strategies, and timelines

7. Take Action

8. Track Process, Progress and Impact