

Appendix



THIS 1929 FORD TRUCK MADE MANY TRIPS THROUGH GIRDWOOD VALLEY HAULING MINERS AND SUPPLIES BETWEEN CROW CREEK AND THE TINY SETTLEMENT ALONG TURNAGAIN ARM. TODAY, IT IS PART OF THE PRESERVED CROW CREEK MINE, AN HISTORIC AND ATTRACTIVE RECREATION AREA.

Girdwood Area Survey

The Girdwood area survey was conducted in January 1993 by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the Municipality of Anchorage. The survey contained twelve questions relating to residence, place of employment, most liked features and most important problems of the Girdwood area, opinions about future resort expansion proposals and the main reasons for those opinions, and attendance at an October 1992 resort information seminar held in Girdwood. The remaining questions related to the sex, age, and main occupation of respondents.

Approximately 1,700 survey forms were mailed to all Girdwood property owners, plus additional persons on the Department of Natural Resource mailing list who had expressed an interest in the area. A total of 247 completed surveys was received, representing a respectable 14.5 percent return rate.

RESIDENCE

A high proportion of Girdwood property owners do not live in the community. Permanent residents, seasonal residents and visitors tend to hold different opinions about community development. As a result, a key question in the January 1993 survey asked respondents if their main affiliation in the Girdwood area was as primary residents, secondary residents or "other". Those claiming primary residence live in Girdwood either year-round or for most of the year. Persons claiming secondary residence typically live in Anchorage and spend weekends in Girdwood, especially in the winter months. The "other" category includes persons who own vacant lots in Girdwood, those who visit the community but who do not own property there, and other interested persons who were on the Department of Natural Resources mailing list.

Of the 247 respondents, 92 persons (37.2 percent) claimed primary residence in Girdwood, 111 (44.9 percent) had second homes in the community and 44 (17.8 percent) fell into the "other" category. (See Table 13.) Excluding the "other" group, the proportion claiming primary (45.3 percent) and secondary (54.7 percent) residence is approximately the same as the proportion of occupied (42.6 percent) and vacant (57.4 percent) units counted in Girdwood by the 1990

Census. In other words, the ratio between permanent and seasonal residents is reflected in the survey. To a limited extent, the "other" category reflects day users of the Girdwood area.

EMPLOYMENT

The Girdwood Area Survey contained two questions relating to employment. Respondents were asked where they worked and what was their main occupation. The results of both questions were analyzed separately and in terms of the residence of respondents.

Place of Work.

Of the 92 Girdwood residents surveyed, 39 (42.4 percent) said they worked in Girdwood and another 9 (9.8 percent) said they worked in both Girdwood and Anchorage. (See Table 14.) Twenty-five people (27.2 percent) said they worked in Anchorage and 8 (12 percent) said they worked in other locations such as the North Slope and Prince William Sound. Another 8 persons (8.7 percent) were either retired or not presently employed, or did not answer the question.

Excluding persons outside the labor force or for whom information was not available, 46.4 percent of the Girdwood residents who were employed commuted to Anchorage, while another 10.7 percent (i.e., those who worked in both Anchorage and Girdwood) commuted to work at least part of the time. By contrast, only one respondent listing Girdwood as a secondary residence claimed to work in the community.

The survey results were compared with those from the 1990 Census. The 1990 Census reported that the mean travel time to work for Girdwood residents was 27.8 minutes. Given an average travel time to Anchorage of 50 minutes to 1 hour, together with some travel time allowance for persons working locally, the Census indicated that slightly less than 50 percent of Girdwood residents who are employed commute daily to Anchorage. Thus, the Census results and the 1993 Girdwood Area Survey results are consistent.

Occupation.

People were asked to list their main occupation as part of the Girdwood Area Survey. All told, a high proportion (61.5 percent) of respondents listed professional, technical and managerial occupations. (See Table 15.) An even higher proportion of residents with second homes in Girdwood (77.5 percent) cited professional, technical and managerial occupations. This is not surprising since persons with the financial capacity to afford second homes are typically associated with such occupations.

Table 13

Main Affiliation in the Girdwood Area

Girdwood Affiliation	Number	Percent of Total
Primary Residence	92	37.2
Secondary Residence	111	44.9
Other	44	17.9
TOTAL	247	100.0

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

Table 14

Place of Employment

(by percentage)

Place of Employment	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Girdwood	40	16.2	42.4	0.9	0.0
Anchorage	155	62.7	27.3	88.3	72.7
Girdwood & Anchorage	11	4.5	9.8	0.9	2.3
Other	23	9.3	12.0	6.3	11.4
Retired or Not Employed	16	6.5	7.6	3.6	11.4
No Answer	2	0.8	1.1	0.0	2.3
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Place of Employment	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Girdwood	40	16.2	39	1	0
Anchorage	155	62.7	25	98	32
Girdwood & Anchorage	11	4.5	9	1	1
Other	23	9.3	11	7	5
Retired or Not Employed	16	6.5	7	4	5
No Answer	2	0.8	1	0	1
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	44

Note: "Other" places worked by Girdwood residents included North Slope Borough (4); remote Alaska locations (1); Girdwood/Bush (1); Prince William Sound (2); Seward (1); Portage (1); and out-of-town (1).

An analysis of Girdwood respondents indicated that 43.5 percent of respondents were engaged in the professional, technical and managerial occupation category. The next largest group (15.2 percent) was involved in service occupations, followed by 7.6 percent each in clerical/sales and in miscellaneous occupations. Another 13.3 percent either was not in the labor force or did not answer the question.

Although Girdwood undoubtedly has a high proportion of persons in professional, technical and managerial occupations, it is believed that the survey probably overstates their relative significance. Almost two-thirds (65.2 percent) of the Girdwood surveys were answered by males. If the ratio of male to female respondents had been closer to the 55.9 to 44.1 percent ratio identified by the 1990 Census, it is probable that a higher proportion of respondents would have been engaged in service and in clerical/sales occupations.

MOST LIKED FEATURE OF GIRDWOOD AREA

Respondents were asked to list what they liked most about the Girdwood area. Overall, the community's small-town atmosphere was listed the most frequently (34.4 percent), followed by skiing and other outdoor recreation opportunities (27.5 percent) and the natural environment (17.4 percent). (See Table 16.)

An analysis of responses by residence showed significant differences. The small-town atmosphere was listed first by almost two-thirds (64.1 percent) of Girdwood residents, followed by the natural environment (13 percent). Skiing and outdoor recreation opportunities (44.1 percent) were listed first by those with second residences in Girdwood, followed by the community's small-town atmosphere (19.8 percent), the natural environment (16.2 percent) and distance from Anchorage (10.8 percent). The "other" category listed skiing and other outdoor recreation opportunities first (31.8 percent), followed closely by the natural environment (29.5 percent). The small-town atmosphere was not particularly important to most people in this group.

The divergence of opinion among the three groups is not surprising, given the different reasons for their interest in the Girdwood area. Girdwood residents obviously see their existing small-town lifestyle as a major reason for remaining in the community.

Those who have invested in recreation homes in Girdwood place their highest value on skiing and other outdoor recreation opportunities. This group also values Girdwood's small-town

Table 15
Main Occupation of Respondents
(by percentage)

Main Occupation	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Professional, Technical & Managerial	152	61.5	43.5	77.5	59.1
Clerical & Sales	17	6.9	7.6	4.5	11.4
Service	18	7.3	15.2	1.8	4.5
Agriculture, Fishery, Forestry & Related	7	2.8	5.4	0.9	2.3
Processing	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Machine Trades	1	0.4	1.1	0.0	0.0
Benchwork	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Structural Work	11	4.5	5.4	3.6	4.5
Miscellaneous	8	3.2	7.6	0.9	0.0
Not in Labor Force	24	9.7	9.8	9.9	9.1
No Answer	9	3.6	4.3	0.9	9.1
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Main Occupation	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Professional, Technical & Managerial	152	61.5	40	86	26
Clerical & Sales	17	6.9	7	5	5
Service	18	7.3	14	2	2
Agriculture, Fishery, Forestry & Related	7	2.8	5	1	1
Processing	0	0.0	0	0	0
Machine Trades	1	0.4	1	0	0
Benchwork	0	0.0	0	0	0
Structural Work	11	4.5	5	4	2
Miscellaneous	8	3.2	7	1	0
Not in Labor Force	24	9.7	9	11	4
No Answer	9	3.6	4	1	4
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	44

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

lifestyle, in part because it offers an escape from Anchorage. The "other" group, which presumably spends less time in Girdwood, values skiing and outdoor recreation opportunities and the natural environment almost equally, but gives a much lower value to the community's small-town lifestyle.

MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM IN THE GIRDWOOD AREA

When asked to list the most important problem in the Girdwood area today, respondents gave a wide variety of responses. Overall, the most frequently cited response was community growth and change (19.4 percent), followed by inadequate roads (13.8 percent), a lack of affordable housing (8.1 percent) and inadequate utilities (8.1 percent). Other problems cited included a need for improved skiing and recreation amenities, planning and zoning issues, and public safety problems. (See Table 17.)

A review of problems listed by place of residence indicated some differences. Community growth and change was listed first by all groups, although most strongly by Girdwood residents (25 percent). Other problems listed by local residents were affordable housing (13 percent), roads (12 percent), public safety (9.8 percent), and a lack of local control (7.6 percent).

After community growth and change (16.2 percent), persons with second residences in Girdwood listed roads (14.4 percent), a need for improved skiing and recreation amenities (10.8 percent), and inadequate utilities (9.9 percent) as the most important problem in the community.

In terms of utilities, this group most often cited the lack of natural gas services as the main problem.

Respondents in the "other" category ranked community growth and change, roads, and planning and zoning issues equally (15.9 percent) as the most serious problems in the Girdwood area, followed by inadequate utilities (13.6 percent). This group ranked Girdwood's water and sewer systems as the most deficient utilities.

Table 16
Most Liked Feature of Girdwood Area
(by percentage)

Feature	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Skiing and Other Outdoor Recreation	68	27.5	5.4	44.1	31.8
Natural Environment	43	17.4	13.0	16.2	29.5
Small-town Atmosphere	85	34.4	64.1	19.8	9.1
Distance from Anchorage	19	7.7	5.4	10.8	4.5
Other	25	10.1	10.9	6.3	18.2
No Answer	7	2.8	1.1	2.7	6.8
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Feature	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Skiing and Other Outdoor Recreation	68	27.5	5	49	14
Natural Environment	43	17.4	12	18	13
Small-town Atmosphere	85	34.4	59	22	4
Distance from Anchorage	19	7.7	5	12	2
Other	25	10.1	10	7	8
No Answer	7	2.8	1	3	3
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	44

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

Table 17

Most Important Problem of the Girdwood Area
(by percentage)

Problem	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Community Growth/Change	48	19.4	25.0	16.2	15.9
Lack of Development	8	3.2	1.1	4.5	4.5
Skiing/Recreational Needs	16	6.5	2.2	10.8	4.5
Roads:	34	13.8	13.8	13.8	15.9
Seward Highway	(21)	(8.5)	(8.5)	(8.5)	(9.1)
Local	(13)	(5.3)	(5.3)	(5.3)	(6.8)
Affordable Housing/Land	20	8.1	13.0	6.3	2.3
Public Safety	13	5.3	9.8	2.7	2.3
Utilities:	20	13.8	13.8	13.8	13.8
Natural Gas	(9)	(8.5)	(8.5)	(8.5)	(8.5)
Water/Sewer	(11)	(5.3)	(5.3)	(5.3)	(5.3)
Air Pollution	5	2.0	1.1	2.7	2.3
Planning/Zoning	14	5.7	2.2	4.5	15.9
Lack of Local Control	7	2.8	7.6	0.0	2.3
Conflicts with Seibu	6	2.4	5.4	0.0	2.3
Other	32	13.0	14.1	11.7	13.6
No Problems	6	2.4	1.1	4.5	0.0
Don't Know	3	1.2	1.1	0.9	2.3
No Answer	15	6.1	1.1	10.8	4.5
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Most Important Problem of the Girdwood Area
(by number)

Problem	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Community Growth/Change	48	19.4	23	18	7
Lack of Development	8	3.2	1	5	2
Skiing/Recreational Needs	16	6.5	2	12	2
Roads:	34	13.8	11	16	7
Seward Highway	(21)	(8.5)	(7)	(10)	(4)
Local	(13)	(5.3)	(4)	(6)	(3)
Affordable Housing/Land	20	8.1	12	7	1
Public Safety	13	5.3	9	3	1
Utilities:	20	8.1	3	11	6
Natural Gas	(9)	(3.6)	(1)	(7)	(1)
Water/Sewer	(11)	(4.5)	(2)	(4)	(5)
Air Pollution	5	2.0	1	2	1
Planning/Zoning	14	5.7	2	5	7
Lack of Local Control	7	2.8	7	0	0
Conflicts with Seibu	6	2.4	5	0	1
Other	32	13.0	13	13	6
No Problems	6	2.4	1	5	0
Don't Know	3	1.2	1	1	1
No Answer	15	6.1	1	12	2
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

RESORT DEVELOPMENT OPINIONS

Respondents were asked to indicate if they had favorable, unfavorable or mixed feelings about proposals to expand resort development in the Girdwood area beyond the expansion then being undertaken by the Alyeska Resort.

Overall, almost 56 percent (55.9 percent) said they favored such development. Another 30.8 percent held mixed opinions, and 12.1 percent said they were opposed. Only three people claimed to hold no opinion on the subject. (See Table 18.)

A review of responses by residence showed significant differences. Whereas 71.2 percent of persons with second homes in Girdwood and almost two-thirds (63.6 percent) of the "other" group favored additional resort development, only one-third (33.7 percent) of Girdwood residents gave this response. The difference is not surprising, given the primary interest in skiing of persons with second homes in Girdwood versus the greater focus on community issues by local residents.

Further analysis of reasons for favorable responses indicated that improved skiing and recreation amenities was the primary reason cited by persons with second homes in Girdwood, followed by economic development and increased tourism and recreation. (See Table 19.) On the other hand, Girdwood residents who favored additional resort development most often cited economic development as the primary reason for their support.

The greatest proportion of permanent Girdwood residents (41.3 percent) said they had mixed feelings about additional resort development in the Girdwood valley area. When asked the reason for their "mixed" opinion, local residents most often said that they favored upgraded recreation opportunities but they feared accompanying growth and change. (See Table 20.) The same reason was also most often cited by persons with mixed feelings who either had second homes in Girdwood or fell into the "other" category.

Table 18

Opinions about Future Resort Expansion Proposals

(by percentage)

Opinion	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Favorable	138	55.9	33.7	71.2	63.6
Unfavorable	30	12.1	23.9	4.5	6.8
Mixed	76	30.8	41.3	23.4	27.3
Don't Know	3	1.2	1.1	0.9	2.3
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Opinion	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Favorable	138	55.9	31	79	28
Unfavorable	30	12.1	22	5	3
Mixed	76	30.8	38	26	12
Don't Know	3	1.2	1	1	1
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	44

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

Table 19

Reasons for Favorable Resort Development Opinions

(by percentage)

Reasons	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Improved Skiing and Amenities	44	17.8	5.4	28.8	15.9
Increased Tourism and Recreation	22	8.9	0.0	14.4	13.6
Economic Development	39	15.8	14.1	16.2	18.2
Increased Property Values	13	5.3	3.3	7.2	4.5
Environmentally Sound Development	4	1.6	0.0	1.8	4.5
Other	16	6.5	10.9	2.7	6.8
Not Applicable	109	44.1	66.3	28.8	36.3
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Reasons	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Improved Skiing and Amenities	44	17.8	5	32	7
Increased Tourism and Recreation	22	8.9	0	16	6
Economic Development	39	15.8	13	18	8
Increased Property Values	13	5.3	3	8	2
Environmentally Sound Development	4	1.6	0	2	2
Other	16	6.5	10	3	3
Not Applicable	109	44.1	61	32	16
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	44

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

Relatively few people interviewed (12.1 percent) held unfavorable opinions about additional resort development beyond the recently completed Seibu expansion. Although the proportion of Girdwood residents holding such opinions (23.9 percent) was higher than those with second homes in the community and the "other" category (4.5 percent and 6.8 percent respectively), more local people held mixed or favorable opinions. Concerns about growth and overcrowded conditions were most often cited as the main reason for opposing further resort expansion. (See Table 21.)

RESORT INFORMATION SEMINAR ATTENDANCE

During October 1992, the Department of Natural Resources and the Municipality of Anchorage co-sponsored a Resort Information Seminar in Girdwood which featured presentations on destination resort development by knowledgeable representatives of Whistler, British Columbia.

A significant proportion of Girdwood residents surveyed (40.2 percent) said they had attended at least part of the Resort Information Seminar.

(See Table 22.) In addition, one individual stated that he had viewed tapes of the seminar. This indicates that a large share of local people are relatively well informed about the implications of resort development.

AGE AND SEX CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

As part of the survey, questions were asked about the age and sex of respondents, primarily to see if different groups of people answered particular questions in different ways.

Overall, a very high proportion of surveys was answered by males (70 percent). (See Table 23.) Although this proportion was lower for Girdwood residents (65.2 percent), it was still not consistent with the male-to-female ratio for the community.

In terms of age, most respondents were in their 40's. (See Table 24.) The median age of Girdwood respondents was 41.46 versus 47.59 for secondary residents and 45.36 for persons in the "other" category. The older age of secondary residents probably reflects the longer time needed to accumulate the income necessary to acquire a second home.

Table 20

Reasons for Unfavorable Resort Development Opinions

(by percentage)

Reasons	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Growth/Overcrowded Conditions	16	6.5	12.0	3.6	4.5
Area Physically Unsuitable	5	2.0	4.3	0.9	0.0
Other	8	3.2	7.6	0.0	2.3
Not Applicable	218	88.3	76.1	95.5	93.2
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Reasons	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Growth/Overcrowded Conditions	16	6.5	11	4	2
Area Physically Unsuitable	5	2.0	4	1	0
Other	8	3.2	7	0	1
Not Applicable	218	88.3	70	106	41
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	44

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

Table 21

Reasons for Mixed Resort Development Opinions

(by percentage)

Reasons	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Favor Recreation Upgrade but Fear Growth/Change	28	11.3	17.4	7.2	9.1
Fear Higher Costs/Taxes	5	2.0	3.3	1.8	0.0
Fear Loss of Town Character	11	4.5	4.3	3.6	6.8
Need More Information	12	4.9	4.3	6.3	2.3
Other	19	7.7	12.0	3.6	9.1
No Answer	1	0.4	0.0	0.9	0.0
Not Applicable	171	69.2	58.7	76.6	72.7
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Reasons	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Favor Recreation Upgrade but Fear Growth/Change	28	11.3	16	8	4
Fear Higher Costs/Taxes	5	2.0	3	2	0
Fear Loss of Town Character	11	4.5	4	4	3
Need More Information	12	4.9	4	7	1
Other	19	7.7	11	4	4
No Answer	1	0.4	0	1	0
Not Applicable	171	69.2	54	85	32
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	44

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

Table 22

Resort Information Seminar Attendance

(by percentage)

Attendance	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Yes	53	21.5	40.2	7.2	18.2
No	191	77.3	58.7	91.0	81.8
No Answer	3	1.2	1.1	1.8	0.0
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Attendance	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Yes	53	21.5	37	8	8
No	191	77.3	54	101	36
No Answer	3	1.2	1	2	0
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	44

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

Table 23

Gender of Respondents

(by percentage)

Gender	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Male	173	70.0	65.2	72.1	75.0
Female	74	30.0	34.8	27.9	25.0
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Gender	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Male	173	70.0	60	80	33
Female	74	30.0	32	31	11
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	33

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

Table 24

Age of Respondents

(by percentage)

Age Range	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (%)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (%)	Other (%)
Under 30	10	4.0	7.6	0.9	4.5
30 - 34	22	8.9	15.2	3.6	9.1
35 - 39	33	13.4	19.6	9.0	11.4
40 - 44	61	24.7	26.1	24.3	22.7
45 - 49	46	18.6	13.0	24.3	15.9
50 - 54	26	10.5	7.6	11.7	13.6
55 - 59	13	5.3	2.2	8.1	4.5
60 - 64	16	6.5	3.3	8.1	9.1
65 or older	19	7.7	4.3	9.9	9.1
No Answer	1	0.4	1.1	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	247	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(by number)

Age Range	Number	Percent	Girdwood Primary Residence (#)	Girdwood Secondary Residence (#)	Other (#)
Under 30	10	4.0	7	1	2
30 - 34	22	8.9	14	4	4
35 - 39	4	13.4	18	10	5
40 - 44	61	24.7	24	27	10
45 - 49	46	18.6	12	27	10
50 - 54	26	10.5	7	13	6
55 - 59	13	5.3	2	9	2
60 - 64	16	6.5	3	9	4
65 or older	19	7.7	4	11	4
No Answer	1	0.4	1	0	0
TOTAL	247	100.0	92	111	44

Source: Girdwood Area Survey, January 1993

Summary of Girdwood Vision Consensus Building Forum

The Girdwood Board of Supervisors and the Four Valleys Community School Board co-sponsored two consensus building workshops on Saturday January 16 and 23, 1993. The workshops took place in the Girdwood School gymnasium, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.. Each workshop was attended by approximately 30 people.

The purpose of the workshops was to provide a forum for residents and property owners to begin developing a consensus and a vision of those qualities of life considered essential to the community.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 1993. Workshop participants brainstormed answers to four questions. Each participant was asked to rank his/her most important priorities. The four questions and the answers received are listed on pages 111-117.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1993. Workshop participants ranked the answers to three questions from the January workshop. These rankings are shown on pages 115-117.

Participants then developed a summary statement for each of these three questions. These summary statements are as follows:

Question A. People live in Girdwood because of its unique Alaska small town atmosphere and attributes which make it an excellent place to raise a family. These attributes include: a diverse, tolerant and caring community with a strong sense of volunteerism, involvement, and easy access to local government officials. Other important small town attributes include intimacy, a slower pace of life, safety, and excellent primary education.

Girdwood has a pristine and beautiful wilderness setting which is close to, yet removed from, the Anchorage metropolitan area and encompasses a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities surrounding a ski resort.

Question B. People's priorities for improving Girdwood include increased local political autonomy, particularly local control of the planning and zoning process. There is a desire to see development of a multi-purpose community center, which may include both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, a planned town center and improved, expanded and managed trails, an industrial park and a recycling center. People want access to a natural gas utility and rail service to Anchorage. There is a desire for better communication with the Alyeska Resort management.

Question C. Girdwood residents are concerned about the problems brought about by rapid growth, which includes loss of the unique small town atmosphere, increased noise and air pollution and other environmental impacts. They are also concerned about not having enough local autonomy, control, and zoning enforcement, as well as a lack of affordable housing and the cost of public facilities and services.

A local newspaper article which summarizes the results of both workshops is reprinted on pages 118-119.

QUESTION A: Four-part question:

- What are the qualities of Girdwood that determine its character as a community?
- Why do you live in Girdwood?
- What do you like most about Girdwood?
- Identify the values of the Girdwood lifestyle that are essential to why you live here.

Rural setting	[]
Access to political leadership	[]
Small town atmosphere where everyone knows everyone	[]
Scenic beauty and wildlife	[]
Safety for children and adults	[]
Recreational environment and opportunities	[]
Access to metro area	[]
Weather attracts a particular type of person	[]
Separate and independent of Anchorage	[]
Diversity of residents	[]
Quality of Life:	
<u>Facilities:</u>	
• School and community school	[]
• Library	[]
• Local road service	[]
• Fire/EMS	[]
<u>Attributes:</u>	
• Quiet	[]
• Low pollution levels	[]
• Easy pedestrian access to services	[]
• Sense of community/caring	[]
• People are open, involved, tolerant, supportive, generous - lack of caste system	[]
Slower pace of life	[]
Great place to raise a family	[]
Relatively low taxes	[]
Short lines at Post Office	[]
Large tracts of unpopulated land	[]
Living in a ski resort town/amenities	[]
Individual freedom	[]
Employment/economic opportunities	[]
Wilderness access	[]

COMMENTS ON QUESTION A: _____

QUESTION B: What do you think needs to be done to improve Girdwood?

Affordable multi-family housing	[]
More decent paying jobs	[]
Building/architectural controls	[]
Possibility of more Planned Unit Developments	[]
Planned subdivisions with utilities and ingress/egress	[]
Planned town center	[]
Increased minimum lot sizes for residences	[]
Campground and RV park	[]
Improved roads and drainage	[]
Mass transit / public parking / train -- In-valley	[]
Rail service to Anchorage	[]
Alternative access to hotel	[]
Improve roads / additional trails / loop to 20 Mile River	[]
Designated trails (allocation among user groups)	[]
Improved pedestrian access	[]
Move vs. leave airport	[]
Community center (multi-purpose)	[]
Cemetery	[]
Recreational facilities (sledding hill, swimming pool, undeveloped recreation lands)	[]
Upgrade/expand utilities (water, sewer, gas, solid waste, small hydro, and recycling/junk clean-up)	[]
Increased public safety (fire, police, animal control)	[]
Local high school	[]
Greater local control of planning and zoning process	[]
Greater political autonomy, e.g. "development city"	[]
Improve air quality	[]
Closer relationship with Seibu	[]
Improved atmosphere for additional businesses, e.g. banks	[]
Industrial park	[]
Local gravel supply vs. non-local gravel supply	[]
Ban hunting and trapping in the valley	[]

COMMENTS ON QUESTION B: _____

QUESTION C: As Girdwood grows and develops as a community, what are the major concerns that need to be addressed?

Local control / autonomy	[]
Courting development vs. demand-driven development	[]
Involvement of local businesses in economic growth	[]
Developing too rapidly / haphazardly	[]
Need for code enforcement and zoning	[]
<u>Pollution:</u>	
• Visual (lights, signs, unfinished buildings)	[]
• Noise (snowmachines, sno cats, buses)	[]
• Air (wood stoves, auto exhaust)	[]
• Litter (recycling)	[]
Crime / law enforcement / safety	[]
<u>Increased use of facilities:</u>	
• Schools	[]
• Water & sewer	[]
• Roads / transportation (including traffic, need for mass transit, parking)	[]
• Emergency medical & fire	[]
<u>Housing:</u>	
• Affordable housing for all residents	[]
• Resort employee housing	[]
Loss of small town atmosphere	[]
Don't want a "company town"	[]
<u>Effect on property values:</u>	
• Decrease or increase	[]
• Who pays for the increased burden on the infrastructure	[]
Transient community / party town problems	[]
Commercial development of prime land	[]
Avoid the "us" (locals) vs. "them" (tourists) mentality	[]

COMMENTS ON QUESTION C: _____

QUESTION D: Share your expanded vision of what the community should be in ten, twenty and fifty years when today's children are seated as the adults in charge of decision-making and dealing with the problems we have created.

Retirement community	[]
Local decision making	[]
Retain "small town community"	[]
Schools	[]
Enhance / preserve local environment with sound planning and controlled growth with little impact on community and at no cost to the public	[]
More privately owned land	[]
Not more privately owned land	[]
Affordable living standards	[]
Reasonable taxation	[]
Four season resort	[]
Artist retreat community	[]
Interaction between resort and the local community	[]
Convention facility	[]
Abundance of recreational facilities	[]
Safe, clean neighborhoods	[]
Better and more jobs and benefits	[]
Decrease auto traffic / increase public transportation	[]
Diverse income levels	[]
Lots of wildlife	[]
Many opportunities for children	[]
All Heritage Land Bank land is parkland	[]

COMMENTS ON QUESTION D: _____

GIRDWOOD VISION CONSENSUS BUILDING FORUM RESULTS

Question A: What do you like most about Girdwood? (Choose the five most important things and rank them on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important and 1 the least important).

Most Liked Features of Girdwood	Number of Points Awarded	Ranking
Small town lifestyle	74	#1
Wilderness setting	64	#4
Scenic beauty	72	#2
Sk resort town	49	
Recreational environment/opportunities	61	#5
Employment/economic opportunities	47	
Convenient to but separate from metro area	53	
Like the people	56	
Availability of good public services	52	
Relatively low taxes	39	
Low pollution levels	67	#3
Access to political leadership	55	7
Other	Number of Points Awarded	
Personal security / safety	14	
Large tracts of unpopulated land	5	
"Strong" community	5	
Girdwood based for-profit community development corporation	5	

Question B: What do you think needs to be done to improve Girdwood? (Choose the five most important things and rank them on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important and 1 the least important).

Needed Improvements for Girdwood	Number of Points Awarded	Ranking
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT		
• Ban hunting/trapping in valley	56	
• Develop local gravel supply	29	
• Do not develop local gravel supply	31	
• Improve air quality	51	
ECONOMY AND POPULATION		
• More jobs	40	
• Closer relationship with Seibu	57	
• Improved atmosphere for additional businesses, e.g. banks	40	
LAND USE		
• Affordable multi-family housing	44	
• Possibility of more Planned Unit Developments	40	
• Planned subdivisions with utilities and ingress/egress	50	
• Increased minimum lot sizes for residences	49	
• Planned town center	65	#4
• Industrial park	59	
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & UTILITIES		
• Multi-purpose community center	68	#2
• Increased police services	40	
• Improved fire protection services	44	
• Improved animal control services	49	
• Local high school	42	
• Cemetery	37	
• Campground/RV park	45	
• Improved/expanded trails	65	#4
• Improved recreation facilities	66	#3
• Upgraded/expanded water utilities	48	
• Upgraded/expanded sewer facilities	50	
• Natural gas availability	63	#6
• Small hydro-electric power development	26	
• Upgraded solid waste services	40	
• Recycling	62	
• Junk clean-up	56	
TRANSPORTATION		
• Improved roads/drainage	46	
• Alternate access to Resort	47	
• Mass transit in valley	45	
• Improved pedestrian access	49	
• Rail service to Anchorage	56	
LOCAL GOVERNMENT		
• Greater political autonomy	63	#6
• Local control of planning & zoning process	72	#1
• Building/architectural controls	61	

Question C: As Girdwood grows and develops as a community, what are the major concerns that need to be addressed? (Please rank every item on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important and 1 the least important).

Major Concerns to be Addressed	Number of Points Awarded	Ranking
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT		
• Air pollution	70	#2
• Noise pollution	66	#3
ECONOMY AND POPULATION		
• Rapid growth	66	#3
• Company town	53	
• Involvement of local businesses in economic growth	50	
• Loss of small town atmosphere	72	#1
• Impacts on property values	50	
• Transient community problems	53	
• Encouraging development	36	
LAND USE		
• Affordable housing	58	#7
• Resort employee housing	51	
• Commercial development on prime land		
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & UTILITIES		
• Crime	52	
• Fire protection	51	
• Emergency medical services	51	
• Schools	52	
• Water	52	
• Sewer	57	
• Solid waste disposal/litter	51	
TRANSPORTATION		
• Local roads	46	
• Parking	54	
• Mass transit	54	
LOCAL GOVERNMENT		
• Local control/autonomy	64	#5
• Zoning enforcement	62	#6
• Infrastructure costs	58	#7

LOOK TO THE

Future

Consensus Building Workshop Review

By: Diane Powers

Saturday, January 16, 1993 was the first Girdwood Vision Consensus Building Forum. All in all it went very well—the Board of Supervisors & the Four Valleys Community School did a great job of organizing. The attendance was not impressive, but the information received was and will be very useful and worthwhile. The purpose of the workshop was to get a vision of what the community would like to see happen in the future of the valley. There is approximately 24,000 acres that is being appropriated by the state from the National Forest, 1,000 of that will be acquired by the Municipality of Anchorage. With all this new land (Winner/Glacier Creek) becoming available, there is a need to update the Turnagain Arm comprehensive plan. The information that is being gathered at these forums will be very useful in determining the direction the valley should take.

The meeting was opened by Tim Bennett and Sam Daniel facilitated the meeting. Ed Fogels, Project Manager of the Turnagain Arm Management Plan, and Tom Nelson, Project Manager of the Turnagain Arm Comprehensive Plan Update gave some background information and how it relates to these meetings.

After the opening, everyone broke into groups to brainstorm 4 important questions:

1. Why do you live in Girdwood? What do you like the most about Girdwood? Identify the values of the Girdwood lifestyle that are essential to why you live here?
2. What do you think needs to be done to improve Girdwood?
3. As Girdwood grows and develops as a community, what are the major concerns that need to be addressed?
4. Share your expanded vision of what the community should be in 10, 20, & 50 years when today's children are seated as the adults in charge of decision making, dealing with the problems we have created.

The ideas generated were used to create a questionnaire in which people were asked to prioritize the answers. At the January 23rd forum, participants generated statements that summarized the major issues identified within each of the topics addressed.

Following is a list of the ideas generated by the first three questions, and their respective summary statements. The top 5 issues identified are listed by number-#1 being top priority. They are not intended to be inclusive and are reflective of the thinking of a small sample of the community.

Question A: What do you like most about Girdwood?

- #1 Small town lifestyle
- #2 Scenic beauty
- #3 Low pollution levels
- #4 Wilderness setting
- #5 Recreational environment/opportunities

Ski resort town
Employment/ economic opportunities
Convenient to but separate from metro area
Like the people
Availability of good public services
Relatively low taxes
Access to political leadership
Personal security/safety
Large tracts of unpopulated land
"Strong" community
Girdwood-based for profit community development corporation

Summary Statement #1. People live in Girdwood because of its unique Alaskan small town atmosphere and attributes which makes it an excellent place to raise a family. These attributes include: a diverse, tolerant and caring community with a strong sense of volunteerism, involvement, and easy access to local government officials. Other important small town attributes include intimacy, slower pace of life, safety and excellent primary education.

It has a pristine and beautiful wilderness setting which is close to, yet removed from, the Anchorage metropolitan area and encompasses a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities surrounding a ski resort.

Question B: What do you think needs to be done to improve Girdwood?

- #1 Local control of planning & zoning process
- #2 Multi-purpose community center
- #3 Improved recreation facilities
- #4 Planned town center
- #5a Natural gas availability
- #5b Greater Political autonomy

Natural Environment:

- Ban hunting/trapping in Valley
- Develop local gravel supply
- Do not develop local gravel supply
- Improve air quality

Economy and Population:

- More jobs
- Closer relationship with Seibu
- Improved atmosphere for additional businesses, e.g. banks

Land Use:

- Affordable multi-family housing
- Possibility of more Planned Unit Developments
- Planned subdivisions with utilities and ingress/egress
- Increased minimum lot sizes for residences

- Industrial park

Community Facilities and Utilities:

- Increased police services
- Improved fire protection services
- Improved animal control services
- Local high school
- Cemetery
- Campground/RV park
- Improved/expanded trails
- Upgraded/expanded water utilities
- Upgraded/expanded sewer facilities
- Small hydro-electric power development
- Upgraded solid waste services
- Recycling
- Junk clean-up

Transportation:

- Improved roads/drainage
- Alternate access to Resort
- Mass transit in Valley
- Improved pedestrian access
- Rail service to Anchorage

Local Government

- Building/architectural controls

Summary Statement #2. People's priorities for improving Girdwood include increased local political autonomy, particularly local control of the planning and zoning process. There is a desire to see development of a multi-purpose community center, which may include both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, a planned

town center and improved, expanded and managed trails, an industrial park and a recycling center. People want access to a natural gas utility and rail service to Anchorage. There is a desire for better communication with the Alyeska Resort management.

Question C: As Girdwood grows and develops as a community, what are the major concerns that need to be addressed?

- #1 Loss of small town atmosphere
- #2 Air pollution
- #3a Noise pollution
- #3b Rapid growth
- #4 Local control/autonomy
- #5 Zoning enforcement

Economy and Population:

- Company town
- Involvement of local businesses in economic growth
- Impacts on property values
- Transient community problems
- Encouraging development

Land Use:

- Affordable housing
- Resort employee housing
- Commercial development on prime land

Community Facilities and Utilities:

- Crime, Fire protection,
- Emergency medical services, Schools, Water, Sewer,
- Solid waste disposal/litter

Transportation: Local roads, Parking,

- Mass transit

Local Government:

- Infrastructure costs

Summary Statement #3. Girdwood residents are concerned about the problems brought about by rapid growth which includes loss of unique small town atmosphere, increased noise and air pollution and other environmental impacts. They are also concerned about not having enough local autonomy, control and zoning enforcement as well as a lack of affordable housing and the cost of public facilities and services.

If there are ideas you have that weren't addressed, please let the Turnagain Arm Management Plan Advisory Board Members know your thoughts. Contact Tim Bennett, Tom Yeager, Bill Schwartz, or Diane Powers. You can write to them c/o:

Girdwood Board of Supervisors
P.O. Box 345, Girdwood, AK 99587.

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