

## Appendix E—Attitudinal Survey

### Denali Borough Resident Attitudinal Survey

Prepared by the Northern Economic Research Associates (7300 Chena Hot Springs Rd Fairbanks Alaska 99712) for the Denali Borough under the auspices and direction of the Denali Borough Planning Commission.

#### Survey Design, Focus Groups, and Execution

On July 12 of 2007 the Denali Borough Government, through the Planning Commission and Mayor, contracted with NERA to conduct a voter attitudinal survey under RFP 07-01. The work was to include focus group sessions with borough residents, meetings with the planning commission, and a telephone survey of residents. It was to be completed in a time frame of two months. This section will describe the process by which the survey instrument came to be designed and how the survey itself was executed.

The Planning Commission had undertaken a revision of the Borough Comprehensive Plan, and was concerned about fielding input from the residents in the revision of that plan. As is always the case in government, the citizens and the government communicate imperfectly. Ordinary citizens are not generally involved very much in government, and it is often the case that those who are do not represent the voters at large, but rather have keen interests themselves in some public issue.

So the Planning Commission was interested in taking a pro-active approach and determining the opinions of residents at large on some key issues the Borough is facing. The comprehensive plan speaks to a number of topics, such as land use regulation and control, economic development, services - and establishes vision statements pertaining to each.

Ultimately the Planning Commission, Assembly, and Mayor have authorities in law that are very specific: the powers to tax and zone, for example - and it was emphasized in NERA's proposal that the survey must ultimately address *actionable* matters as opposed to fluff. The survey needed to go beyond a vague opinion about economic development and speak to what role and how the government should be involved in it.

To a significant degree the formation of the Denali Borough was a pre-emptive move to preclude the Mat-Su Borough extending northward (or for that matter the North Star Borough extending south) and to keep government at a minimum.

Since that time there has been tremendous growth, with the epicenter of that growth at the entrance to Denali National Park and Preserve. The tourist economy, through the overnight accommodations tax, has financed virtually the entire borough government. But its growth has also now brought about questions pertaining to land use and services that require long range planning.

The Borough is relatively young, even by Alaska standards. Although previous surveys have been done both in conjunction with the first Comprehensive Plan, along with alternative occasional community efforts (e.g. the Denali Summit and Yanert Community Plan, and an Anderson High School student survey) a contemporaneous Borough-wide survey based on questions fielded from every region was necessary.

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NERA reviewed all previous surveys and planning documents and met with the Borough Planning Commission several times, in addition to continuous communication and drafting of survey questions before the survey was conducted.

Prior to the focus group meetings one extensive worksession with the Planning Commission was conducted that narrowed down a topical field of questions that were to be discussed at four focus group sessions of local residents in Anderson, Healy, McKinley Village, and Cantwell.

The focus group participants were recruited in a number of ways. Flyers were distributed to all locations Borough notices are posted. A newspaper article in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner carried a story about the effort and provided contact information. The Borough website posted notice and contact information. NERA paid for production of an issue of the Denali Summit containing a story on the project and contact information.

The Planning Commission was also concerned that Alaska regional Native corporations with landholdings or operations in the Borough participate. NERA contacted officials at Ahtna, CIRI, and Doyon. One representative from Ahtna attended. Two of the largest tour companies were contacted, with one undertaking extensive conversation about the survey but neither raised issues to address or incorporate.

All of these produced some number of participants who called in requesting a seat at one of the focus groups. But far and away random phone calls were used as a means of acquiring participants, and a gratuity was offered for their time so that people who are ordinarily not disposed to participate in government affairs were induced to come and spend a significant amount of their time producing a survey ordinary citizens would understand and answer objectively.

Twenty-nine total participants were recruited with Healy naturally producing the largest group with nine members and Cantwell the least at five. Eight participated in Anderson and seven in McKinley Village. All of the focus groups went well over three hours, and one of them over four.

In addition to these twenty-nine residents there were well over a dozen individuals who gave a great deal of input over the phone during the focus group recruiting but who could not attend because they were extremely busy at this time of year during business hours, lived in Kantishna, or were otherwise precluded from attending.

Participants were provided three years' worth of budget data from the Denali Borough government as well as an overview of the concerns established by the Planning Commission. A presentation was also given pertaining to the functions of the School Board vs. the Assembly and Mayor, the authorities of the Borough under Title 29, and ancillary data on the status of the municipal land entitlement, landfill costs, and any questions the participants had on the process.

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It was emphasized that the focus groups had at least several key functions in this project. First, bringing concerns to the Planning Commission that were citizen-motivated and that may not have been addressed. Second, providing input to those areas that the Planning Commission had identified, and working out well-defined questions citizens could answer that would give meaningful, actionable instructions to the Planning Commission, Assembly, and Mayor.

But third, it was imperative to ask questions that were not leading in any way. That is, not eliciting a biased response by slanting the question in some way. To provide information content either before or during the question that assisted citizens in both understanding and making a fully-informed decision - but not coaching an answer one way or another.

Every focus group was conducted in a manner that kept the group on point: to author questions for the survey. No focus group's work was influenced by any other focus group with very limited exceptions. If a group appeared to be stuck on some issue after a great deal of time had passed, a general idea of what occurred at another group was offered as a discussion point.

At the conclusion of the focus groups, draft questions were presented to the Planning Commission, and all questions were reviewed and prioritized, as there was limited time and too many questions, many of which were similar in nature. A draft survey instrument was prepared, and that draft survey underwent a second round of review by the Planning Commission.

This survey was yet still a draft document. A final pre-testing stage was undertaken where six respondents were given the survey, except they were afforded the opportunity to give input on their impressions. As a consequence additional changes were made for the final survey instrument. Those modifications were again sent to the Planning Commission, which concluded the construction of the final survey instrument.

The survey itself was undertaken by first acquiring the MTA phone book directory, excluding business or government lines, and then randomizing the numbers. A stratified random sample was conceived, based on the proportions of the three telephone prefixes for the Denali Borough. (Healy: 683, Cantwell: 768, and Anderson: 582). Based on proportions of these prefixes, an equiproportional survey would result in 58% of the responses from the Healy exchange, 27% from the Anderson exchange, and 14% from the Cantwell exchange.

The survey continued for two full weeks\*, and although the phone numbers had been randomized, every single line in the Borough had been called at least once, and a good proportion of them twice - some three times if the respondent had indicated a willingness to undertake the survey at a later time. Two hundred responses were ultimately attained.

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\*On the last day of the survey the fiber optic cable was severed, reducing the number slightly below what it would have been otherwise.

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An additional one hundred sixty two people had been contacted but did not wish to do the survey (87 in Healy, 42 in Anderson, and 33 in Cantwell).

According to the Department of Community Advocacy, the over-18 population of the Borough had been estimated at 1,443 in year 2000. Of course the Borough has grown since then, but a present population estimate is unavailable. But at any rate the sample represents about 14% of that number, although 25% of that number had been positively contacted including individuals not wishing to participate in the survey. In terms of total non-business land lines, about half the numbers in the entire Borough were contacted.

Not much more effort would have been productive in terms of a cost/benefit calculus as the point of diminishing returns had been passed after the first round of having called every line in the Borough. In consideration of the time of year this response rate of well over 50% in terms of lines contacted was quite good. It was certainly enough to provide statistical validity to the responses.

The distribution of responses across telephone prefixes was in accordance with the proportions above. What may be more of interest are the proportions across the regions that were defined in the initial question of the survey, listed below:

Location	Number	Proportion
Anderson	48	23.9%
North of Stampede Road South of Anderson Turn-off	18	9.0%
Healy Area including Stampede	83	41.3%
Parks Corridor South of Windy Bridge to Carlo Creek	24	11.9%
Cantwell	28	13.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Cautions in Interpreting the Results

There are a couple of reasons to take caution with any survey of this kind in terms of interpreting the results. The first is self-selection bias. The second is the distinction between nominal preferences and the strength or passion of those preferences. It is one thing to say that 51% of those who responded to a survey answered "yes" to some question. But it is another thing entirely to have the Borough Assembly pass a law that those 51% of respondents felt marginally so about, whilst the other 49% of respondents along with those who did not answer felt very strongly the opposite.

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Self-selection bias in this context is the problem that arises when people who choose to answer a survey are different from the people who choose not to answer. In this case we had 162 people who did not want to answer the survey vs. 201 people who did. What we can say for sure is that those 162 did not want to have their time taken up. But the question is how can we realistically assess what this means in terms of any bias we may have gotten out of the survey results.

The most fundamental question to ask is whether those who did not answer are generally the kinds of people who favor more government, more regulation, and more interference in their lives? Or are they the kinds of people who want less government, less regulation, and less interference in their lives? It is the more reasonable inference that if anything, these are people who want to be left alone, and indeed when identifying ourselves as conducting a survey on behalf of the Denali Borough Government the responses prior to hanging up certainly give support to that inference. The experience in the focus groups also reinforced that observation.

At the very least what is important to keep in mind is that these are the answers from people who were contacted randomly, but who chose whether or not to answer the survey.

The second matter is the concern over nominal preferences vs. the amount of passion any person feels about them. Two people can have the same answer on a survey, but one feels so strongly that they are willing to present themselves before an Assembly or take citizen action over it whereas the other may not care much at all.

So despite cases where a majority favor or oppose some issue, it is a well-known political phenomenon that a highly motivated minority can either push through initiatives the majority actually opposes, or stop others the majority actually favors.

In the most practical terms here, a strong majority of those surveyed favored increasing the tipping fee in order to forward-fund the landfill closure expenses. There is little doubt though that a proposal to increase the tipping fee above the recent increases will draw strong opposition from commercial interests that generate a substantial amount of refuse. So as a political question an elected official contends with not just the nominal numbers for or against - but also with the degree of opposition in terms of its intensity.

In some of the survey questions the analysis is done in two ways. The first is to present all data including the "no opinion" responses. The second is to re-calculate proportions where the "no opinion" responses are excluded. There is a very good reason for doing both. Suppose for example that 50% of the respondents have "no opinion" on an issue whereas only 40% are "for" and 10% "against". Then although there is no "majority" that is in favor of this item, the fact is four out of five people who have any opinion at all favor it. That is, 80% favor and 20% oppose amongst those who have opinions.

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Making this distinction does not matter when over 90% of the residents have given an opinion one way or another. The results are basically the same. It only begins to matter as the proportion of "no opinion" responses grows significantly higher. An elected official needs to concern himself with both ways of looking at the problem because people can arrive to public meetings armed with torches and pitchforks despite half of the population not even caring enough about the issue to give an opinion.

In summary, the survey is information. It is information that resulted from a process of initial issue framing by the Planning Commission. It was then filtered through and added to by focus groups comprised of individual citizens. From there it was winnowed down to seventeen priority questions by the Planning Commission. Those were fine-tuned by a pre-test. Finally, while over 50% of those contacted chose to participate, let us not forget the others who did not participate - because they also represent their counterparts in the population. Were we to make any assumption about them, these are people who would likely tend to favor less government as opposed to more government.

Finally, raw proportions can obscure the intensity of preferences people have over an issue. All interest groups are motivated in accordance with how any particular issue affects their lives most directly. Even when a majority of the population is ambivalent on some matter, there can be extreme divisiveness amongst the remainder who do care.

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### Survey Responses by Region

The first survey question was a general impression about the size of the Borough, meaning the budget, personnel, and reach in terms of its impact on the lives of the residents:

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
1) The Government is						
a) Too big	24.6%	12.5%	52.9%	28.9%	8.3%	28.6%
b) It is the right size now	50.3%	52.1%	29.4%	51.8%	58.3%	50.0%
c) It is too small	3.5%	2.1%	5.9%	3.6%	4.2%	3.6%
d) No Opinion	21.6%	33.3%	11.8%	15.7%	29.2%	17.9%

About half the residents feel the size of the borough is just right. Another quarter feel it is too large, and a very small fraction feel it is too small. Amongst the regions, the Highway residents feel the most strongly about the size of the government being too large, with just over half having that impression. The others do not stand out so much as so different it is worthy of special note. Cantwell and Healy are marginally on the side of too much government whereas Anderson and the Parks Corridor weigh slightly more on the side of "just right" in comparison to the average.

If we omit the "no opinion" responses we have the following distribution, which should be interpreted as the responses amongst those who registered an opinion one way or the other:

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
1) The Government is						
a) Too big	31.4%	18.8%	60.0%	34.3%	11.8%	34.8%
b) It is the right size now	64.1%	78.1%	33.3%	61.4%	82.4%	60.9%
c) It is too small	4.5%	3.1%	6.7%	4.3%	5.9%	4.3%

What this does is allow one to see a little more sharply the distinctions amongst those who did register opinions. The Highway region is clearly leaning in the strongest direction of "too much government" whereas the Parks Corridor has the fewest who lean that way. Cantwell and Healy lean a little more in the direction of "too much government" than does Anderson. In all, the vast majority of residents feel the government is either the right size or too big. Only a tiny minority feel it is too small.

The second question asked for a general impression about the level of zoning and land use regulation. The question was further clarified if necessary to ensure that the respondent understood it was the existing code as opposed to their impression about what direction the borough was headed or attempting with recent efforts.

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2) Is the level of zoning and land use regulation the borough is exercising

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Too much	14.1%	8.3%	27.8%	14.5%	8.7%	17.9%
b) Not enough	26.1%	4.2%	22.2%	31.3%	60.9%	21.4%
c) Just right	28.1%	29.2%	27.8%	32.5%	17.4%	25.0%
d) No opin- ion	31.7%	58.3%	22.2%	21.7%	13.0%	35.7%

The responses are mixed, and in fact the largest single category is no opinion on the issue, with almost a third of respondents in that category. The Highway residents again enter as the most opposed to the current level of zoning or land use regulation and the Parks Corridor with the least feeling that way. The Parks corridor has the strongest sentiment - a majority - that feel there is not enough zoning or land use regulation.

When we omit the "no opinion" responses in order to gauge the relative comparisons amongst those who cared to register an opinion, the results are pretty clear:

2) Is the level of zoning and land use regulation the borough is exercising

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Too much	20.6%	20.0%	35.7%	18.5%	10.0%	27.8%
b) Not enough	38.2%	10.0%	28.6%	40.0%	70.0%	33.3%
c) Just right	41.2%	70.0%	35.7%	41.5%	20.0%	38.9%

The overwhelming majority of Parks Corridor residents who responded with an opinion one way or the other felt that the level of land use regulation was insufficient (70%). The strongest opinion registered elsewhere was in favor of "just right", with Anderson having 70% who felt that way. Healy and Cantwell are a little more evenly divided although the stronger sentiment is on the side of "just right". When there is this kind of division amongst the residents then a more specific questions about land use regulation and zoning are required, and are taken up later in the survey.

The third question pertained to whether and how the government should be involved in economic development as a general matter. The answers are presented here in shorthand and the full description can be had by viewing the survey in the appendix. But the principle distinction amongst the answers was whether the government should be involved "at all", whether it should be a part of the ordinary duty of assembly and mayoral positions, or whether there should be tax money spent and specific programs undertaken with administrative positions or commissions dedicated to the task:

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3) To what level should the borough promote economic development:

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) None	22.0%	18.8%	33.3%	20.5%	20.8%	25.0%
b) Regular duty	59.5%	58.3%	55.6%	60.2%	58.3%	64.3%
c) Spend tax money on it	7.0%	14.6%	0.0%	4.8%	8.3%	3.6%
d) No opinion	11.5%	8.3%	11.1%	14.5%	12.5%	7.1%

Clearly, the majority opinion is that the borough assembly and mayor, as a regular part of their duties, should be promoting economic development. Only a very small portion of the borough feels that there should be commissions, administrative positions, or special programs associated with marketing the borough and economic development. In fact, when we add in the responses of "none", more than 80% of the borough residents appear to be opposed to creating an economic development bureaucracy.

There do not appear to be opinions that vary so significantly across regions that they require special emphasis. Nor are there enough "no opinion" responses to make a difference by excluding them. Virtually all residents - almost 90% - have an opinion on this matter.

During the focus group discussions the phrasing of this question was discussed in detail. Such a question has very good potential for being phrased in such a way that the responses are not very instructive. People favor wealth and opportunity. So asking them whether economic development is something they are opposed to or in favor of is not going to produce much of value in terms of actionable borough government content - or worse yet to interpret positive responses as meaning the residents are in favor of an economic development commission or office housed within the administration.

The fourth question was preceded by a statement on the present status of municipal land entitlements. The total acreages in patented, management authority, and selections was provided along with the question about whether release of that land should be a priority item for the borough government:

4) Should the Borough make surveying and release of municipal entitlement land a priority?

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corri- dor	Cantwell
a) Yes	52.3%	60.4%	55.6%	50.0%	45.8%	46.4%
b) No	24.6%	18.8%	27.8%	24.4%	37.5%	21.4%
c) No opinion	23.1%	20.8%	16.7%	25.6%	16.7%	32.1%

There was a fairly strong trend in moving from north to south along the borough transportation corridor. A clear majority in Anderson (60%) felt this was a priority issue for the borough. But as we move south, the proportion falls to a minority.

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There are a significant number with no opinion on the issue, particularly in Cantwell. When we exclude the "no opinion" answers and address those that expressed one, the results were sharper:

4) Should the Borough make surveying and release of municipal entitlement land a priority?

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corri- dor	Cantwell
a) Yes	68.0%	76.3%	66.7%	67.2%	55.0%	68.4%
b) No	32.0%	23.7%	33.3%	32.8%	45.0%	31.6%

The trend along the transportation corridor is not so clear in this framing. There are very strong majorities, amongst those who have opinions, for making this a priority with the exception of the Parks Corridor residents. It is still a majority there, but not nearly so strong as in the others - particularly with respect to Anderson.

The survey began probing more specific questions about land use regulation or zoning after these introductory questions. The first question pertaining to zoning asked about a very general type of zoning in which areas of residential, commercial, agricultural, or subsistence use were set forth. It was further clarified if necessary that this meant specifically drawing boundaries - zoning - around areas for specified uses, although very general in nature:

5) Generalized Zoning

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Favor	50.3%	50.0%	50.0%	49.4%	82.6%	25.0%
b) Oppose	39.7%	31.3%	38.9%	44.6%	8.7%	64.3%
c) No opinion	10.1%	18.8%	11.1%	6.0%	8.7%	10.7%

With the exception of Anderson, over 90% of the borough residents had an opinion on this issue. About half of the residents favor such a thing with 40% opposed. But there are some very distinct differences by region - and the most polar opposites are next to one another. The vast majority of Parks Corridor residents are in favor whereas a very strong majority of Cantwell residents oppose. Healy is about the most evenly divided on the question. In this case again, since almost all residents had an opinion, eliminating the "no opinion" category does not make that much difference, with the exception of Anderson.

When the level of zoning or land use regulation becomes more comprehensive the opinions of the residents begin to become more divided, but generally in opposition. Question #6 asked about zoning lot sizes, setbacks, occupancy, viewshed, etc:

6) Building size or occupancy, lot size, setbacks, viewshed, etc.

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Favor	36.2%	40.4%	22.2%	30.1%	79.2%	17.9%
b) Oppose	56.8%	51.1%	66.7%	61.4%	20.8%	78.6%
c) No opinion	7.0%	8.5%	11.1%	8.4%	0.0%	3.6%

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Note again the polar opposition of Cantwell residents to the Parks corridor, with nearly 80% of each on opposite sides of the fence for this issue. The Highway corridor residents are also in strong opposition as would be consistent with their other responses. Healy is a solid majority against whereas Anderson is a small minority in favor. In this case again, we have almost all residents expressing an opinion about this issue and omitting the "no response" category is unnecessary.

The local option questions, numbers seven and eight, were the one area that produced anomalous results by comparison to what would be expected given the rest of the survey. It is important to understand why. The question, as written, asks them to indicate whether they are in favor or opposed to residents being able to request zoning in their local area - *when the respondent's property itself would be subject to that zoning*. The question was to be predicated with the statement below:

One method for regulating land use is called a "local option" where property owners and residents of a local area testify to the Borough Assembly whether they want to establish regulations on land use in their locality. In this question "local" means an area no larger than any existing subdivision.

This question can be taken in two different ways depending on the nuances of exactly how it is asked, and even the voice inflection on key words. Because the results were anomalous, the telephone interviewer was asked to explain exactly what he thought this question meant. His explanation conveyed that this was a means for the residents to veto efforts by the Denali Borough government to zone them. In short, a way of blocking zoning.

He was therefore queried further to make certain if any information at all besides the exact statement and question had been read. The answer was yes, and doing so was contrary to instructions. The statement that this was a way for the local area to take precedence over Borough zoning was made. Furthermore, heavy emphasis was placed on the words "they want" - causing a reinforcement of the impression that this was a matter of what the residents wanted to do vs. what the Assembly or administration wanted to do.

By far the most important concern NERA has is getting accurate information, free from any taint of bias into the hands of the Planning Commission and Borough. This was the only area in the survey that gave a hint of that result, and it is therefore with great care the statistical results are inspected.

In nearly fifteen hours of focus group work, hours of phone interviews, the pre-testing, and survey results taken by the principle investigator himself, a very clear opinion by Borough residents emerged prior to inspection of the total survey results for question #7. If you ask residents "do you want your neighbors to have the ability to dictate what you can do on your land" - the answer is a large majority "no". If you ask them "do you want to have personal veto authority over Borough land use regulations" the answer is "yes".

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A person could interpret what question #7 is getting at in either way according to how much they know about the subject already vs. how much they are influenced by exactly the way in which the question was asked.

Because some residents of the Borough are already living within a local option area (Village View Subdivision along the Parks Corridor) - they knew what "local option" meant before the question was asked. They would not be as susceptible to subtle differences in the way the question was asked. The same was true of residents further south (Cantwell), who were the source of the demand that "local" be carefully defined in this question. They were suspicious of those to the north subsuming them within a large "local option" zone. On the other hand, people who are completely reliant upon only the information contained in the predicate statement along with the question will be more susceptible to the way in which it is asked.

Let us inspect the results then and see how they comport with a thorough understanding of interaction between regional differences in preferences, understanding of the issue, and the way in which the question was asked:

7) Local option area that included your own property.

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Favor	59.1%	54.2%	70.6%	59.8%	75.0%	42.9%
b) Opposed	29.3%	35.4%	29.4%	30.5%	4.2%	39.3%
c) No opinion	11.6%	10.4%	0.0%	9.8%	20.8%	17.9%

It would be very misleading to say that 59% of the borough residents want their own property changed from "unrestricted" zoning to a more restrictive definition established by residents of each community based on the results above. Observe that 70% of the Highway residents - the ones who felt most strongly that the government was too big, and with the highest proportion thinking the present level of zoning and land use regulation was too much already - chose "favor". When asked about whether they thought residents outside their locality ought to be able to have this option (question #8), there were actually *fewer* of the Highway residents in favor:

8) Local option by others outside your area

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Favor	62.3%	58.3%	61.1%	64.6%	79.2%	50.0%
b) Oppose	23.1%	18.8%	16.7%	25.6%	8.3%	39.3%
c) No opinion	14.6%	22.9%	22.2%	9.8%	12.5%	10.7%

Generally speaking, the Highway residents and those in the Parks Corridor, particularly Village View subdivision, could be counted on as taking opposite sides throughout the survey on questions involving the size and scope of government. But on question #7 that was not the case. Village View subdivision (and nearby) residents already had local option zoning, and understood that it was a way of bringing land use regulation upon themselves as opposed to being a way of keeping it out. So it is easy to understand why

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they would "agree" with north Highway "anti-government" people on question #7. They were in effect responding to opposite questions.

To test this hypothesis further, the Highway residents were segmented into a separate pool, and the correlation computed between "too much zoning already" and "favor local option" answers. The correlation was negative and significant at about the 80% level. In other words, people who were completely negative towards zoning altogether were tending to respond positively to their property being zoned by their neighbors. Because what they thought they were answering was a question giving them the right to veto the other kinds of zoning proposed in questions #5 and #6.

The focus group meetings discussed in detail ordinance 96-04 and the letter from Borough Attorney James Gorsky dated January 5, 2006 - both of which were provided to them. They understood that while the present ordinance may be defective in respect to the disenfranchisement of nonresident landholders, that local option zoning or land use regulation is both legal and common. The present ordinance merely needs to be remedied by removing the inability of nonresident landholders from equal participation.

This information is related here because after spending three and a half hours with individual borough residents where a great deal of very detailed discussion is undertaken including review of the actual ordinances, legal opinions, and answering their questions - one knows what they think and how they will answer a question depending on how it is put to them.

So how shall we interpret the survey results in combination with all of the other information and experience gained in this study? The answer is that a majority of the borough residents surveyed support the ability of local communities (subdivision size) to bring land use regulations upon themselves. But a majority of the residents do not want their property zoned by this means at this time, despite the potentially deceptive result in question #7.

Another alternative respondents were asked to consider was leaving the borough zoned as largely unrestricted use, but requiring permits for large impact activities that could stress the capability for fire, EMS, traffic, water supply or wastewater treatment. Generally speaking this was viewed favorably:

### 9) Zoned Unrestricted; permits for large impact activities

	Total Bor-	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Favor	65.0%	58.3%	66.7%	68.7%	75.0%	53.6%
b) Oppose	21.0%	14.6%	22.2%	24.1%	12.5%	28.6%
c) No opinion	14.0%	27.1%	11.1%	7.2%	12.5%	17.9%

The familiar pattern of Parks Corridor residents being most strongly in approval for land use regulation is followed here, and the only exception perhaps to the general rule is that Cantwell had a significant number of "no opinion" responses. With the majority of areas

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in fact having more than ten percent "no opinion", it would be useful to consider the results for just those registering opinions:

### 9) Zoned Unrestricted; permits for large impact activities

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Favor	75.6%	80.0%	75.0%	74.0%	85.7%	65.2%
b) Oppose	24.4%	20.0%	25.0%	26.0%	14.3%	34.8%

It is fairly clear that a huge majority of those who have any opinion at all favor the concept of unrestricted zoning combined with limited permitting of large impact activities. Cantwell is the least enamored of the idea, but still a solid majority amongst those who have any opinion at all.

Building codes and enforcement of same does not have very much support in the Denali Borough. A solid majority is opposed to the formulation of borough building codes, and only a quarter favors it. The results are not precisely consistent with previous questions in terms of the geographic distribution:

### 10) Building permits and building codes, and expend funds to enforce.

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corri- dor	Cantwell
a) Yes	25.1%	47.9%	22.2%	15.9%	33.3%	7.1%
b) No	64.3%	43.8%	77.8%	72.0%	41.7%	85.7%
c) No opin- ion	10.6%	8.3%	0.0%	12.2%	25.0%	7.1%

Cantwell again comes out leading the opposition against building codes, but Healy and the Highway residents are also strongly opposed with over 70% each. Anderson is more evenly divided while somewhat surprisingly the Parks Corridor residents have more opposed than anything else. Parks Corridor residents strongly favor land use regulation, but not building codes.

The survey at this point returned to a more detailed question on the manner in which land releases ought to be accomplished. The first option was whether the entire procedure should be at the discretion of the borough administration. The second option was to undertake a process whereby citizens nominated lands they wished to see released, followed by a process in which public input was also taken on the release of nominated lands. The third option was to allow the administration to initially nominate lands in addition to citizen nomination, and again allow public input:

## Appendix E—Attitudinal Survey

### 11) Release of municipal entitlement land

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Administratively	1.5%	2.1%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	3.6%
b) Citizen nomination; public input	35.7%	31.3%	33.3%	37.5%	30.4%	46.4%
c) Admin + citizen nomination	44.4%	45.8%	50.0%	45.0%	52.2%	28.6%
d) No opinion	18.4%	20.8%	16.7%	16.3%	17.4%	21.4%

Clearly, an administrative monopoly on the release of lands is soundly rejected in favor of a nominations-type process that is either restricted to the citizens themselves or allows both citizens and the administration to nominate. Generally people favored both, but not exclusively so by region. Because there were nearly 20% of the residents with no opinion we again consider the responses amongst those who had one:

### 11) Release of municipal entitlement land

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Administratively	1.9%	2.6%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	4.5%
b) Citizen nomination; public input	43.8%	39.5%	40.0%	44.8%	36.8%	59.1%
c) Admin + citizen nomination	54.4%	57.9%	60.0%	53.7%	63.2%	36.4%

A majority of those who had an opinion one way or another favored both the administration and the citizens initially nominating lands to consider for release, followed by a process that included public input. All of the regions except Cantwell favored that choice. Cantwell on the other hand largely preferred that citizens alone have the initial nomination.

The kind of land release that borough residents preferred by rank order was fairly clear. They were asked to consider outright sales vs. sales with conditions, such as land released for residential vs. commercial purposes, and whether commercial land should have "proving up" conditions upon it: Another choice was whether the borough should itself develop the land, and lease facilities it owns to others.

The table demonstrates how many times each answer was listed as the first choice, as the second choice, the third, or the last. "No opinion" answers are excluded from the tally. Outright sales dominated both first and second choices. Selling with conditions came next, and it is very clear that leasing the land generally came in third behind either of those two. Residents are very soundly against having the borough itself develop lands.

### 12) The release of lands should be by

	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	Fourth Choice
a) Sell Outright	82	44	17	26
b) Sell + Conditions	64	39	32	18
c) Lease	17	53	71	13
d) Borough Develops	7	22	29	91

## Appendix E—Attitudinal Survey

The residents were further asked if they wished to see a staff position or a paid consultant undertake a comprehensive evaluation of borough lands for the purpose of determining revenue potential for the borough. There was no clear majority opinion here, and indeed nearly 20% of the residents had no opinion on the issue. The most common response was opposition, however:

### 13) Staff position or consultant evaluates lands for revenue potential

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corri- dor	Cantwell
a) Yes	33.0%	42.6%	5.6%	35.4%	17.4%	39.3%
b) No	48.2%	34.0%	83.3%	51.2%	52.2%	35.7%
c) No opin- ion	18.8%	23.4%	11.1%	13.4%	30.4%	25.0%

These results are somewhat out of character given what one might expect given previous answers. But we cannot argue with the data. More of Cantwell's residents selected "yes" in response to this question than any other category whereas the Parks Corridor had a majority saying no - and a proportion about equal to Healy's. The Highway residents, true to form, rejected spending money on it whereas Anderson came out similar in proportion to Cantwell's plurality in favor.

With this many in the "undecided" category, we may wish to again more sharply distinguish between proportions of those who have opinions:

### 13) Staff position or consultant evaluates lands for revenue potential

	Total Bor- ough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corri- dor	Cantwell
a) Yes	40.6%	55.6%	6.3%	40.8%	25.0%	52.4%
b) No	59.4%	44.4%	93.8%	59.2%	75.0%	47.6%

The majority of those with opinions are pretty strongly opposed to hiring a position or consultant to do such evaluations. The exceptions are Healy and Cantwell, and they may not have the same reasons for so choosing.

The landfill closure expense issue has generated a concern over how to go about funding it. Residents were prompted with the necessity of forward funding the closure and the understanding that the present tipping fee does not generate sufficient revenues to do so. Residents were given the option of a higher tipping fee, a sales tax, or some other tax vehicle to fund closure of the landfill:

## Appendix E—Attitudinal Survey

### 14) Funding Landfill Closure

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Higher tipping fee	59.9%	63.8%	64.7%	60.2%	65.2%	42.9%
b) Sales tax	9.1%	4.3%	5.9%	9.6%	8.7%	17.9%
c) Other tax	6.1%	4.3%	5.9%	7.2%	4.3%	7.1%
d) No opinion	24.9%	27.7%	23.5%	22.9%	21.7%	32.1%

A large majority of the residents favor a higher tipping fee to accomplish the task of funding closure - about 60%. But about a quarter of the population surveyed had no opinion on the matter. When we exclude those without an opinion it is 80% of those responding with any opinion on the matter that they would prefer to see the charge embedded within the tipping fee.

The proportions across the regions are not remarkably different with the exception of Cantwell residents. The sales tax has some support in Cantwell as a means of financing the closure, and this does make sense in one particular respect. Cantwell has the only transfer station in the Borough, and due to both the longest distance and the staffing of the site faces the highest cost already. Increasing that cost further would be felt more acutely in that locality.

In the focus group sessions a very strong minority, particularly with business interests in the Healy canyon area, expressed a desire for water and wastewater treatment projects. So the question was fielded to residents. A majority did not materialize, although the most common response was that in opposition:

### 15) Design and Construction of water and sewer projects

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Yes	38.9%	57.4%	27.8%	33.7%	52.2%	21.4%
b) No	48.0%	36.2%	66.7%	55.4%	26.1%	50.0%
c) No opinion	13.1%	6.4%	5.6%	10.8%	21.7%	28.6%

There were some regional differences of interest, with the Parks corridor and Anderson expressing majorities for such projects and the remainder of the regions either strongly opposed (Highway residents) or slightly opposed as in Healy and Cantwell. However, a significant number also registered no opinion on the matter, with the highest proportion in Cantwell.

The numbers without the "no opinion" response magnify the opinion, when expressed at all, to be majority against. The strongest of these was in the Highway and Cantwell regions, followed by Healy. The Parks Corridor and Anderson, when an opinion was expressed, favored study and design/construction of water and sewerage projects.

## Appendix E—Attitudinal Survey

### 15) Design and Construction of water and sewer projects

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Yes	44.8%	61.4%	29.4%	37.8%	66.7%	30.0%
b) No	55.2%	38.6%	70.6%	62.2%	33.3%	70.0%

Another issue that arose in the focus groups was whether to continue with the present volunteer fire departments or whether to instead move to a paid professional department. It was a straightforward question with an equally straightforward set of opinions:

### 16) Paid Professional Fire Department

	Total Borough	Anderson	Highway	Healy	Parks Corridor	Cantwell
a) Yes, Paid Department	25.1%	17.0%	22.2%	30.0%	34.8%	17.9%
b) No	64.6%	74.5%	72.2%	60.0%	47.8%	67.9%
c) No opinion	10.3%	8.5%	5.6%	10.0%	17.4%	14.3%

A large majority of the residents do not favor a paid professional fire department. About a quarter of those surveyed do favor one, and the highest proportions were registered in the Parks Corridor and Healy. Anderson was the strongest in opposition, followed closely by the Highway Corridor residents, and then Cantwell. On this question about 90% of residents did have an opinion one way or the other, with the only standout really being the Parks Corridor with 17% having no opinion.

The last survey question asked respondents to rank their choices in the event of a revenue shortfall. There were six options including cutting spending. The tax revenue options were an increased overnight accommodations (bed tax), a "sin" tax on alcohol and tobacco, a sales tax, a utility tax on items such as electricity and phone or heating oil, and finally the all-time loser: a property tax.

### 17) Revenue shortfall: rank options

	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	Fourth Choice	Fifth Choice	Sixth Choice
Cut Spending	69	18	31	18	23	22
Bed Tax	44	62	33	17	17	8
Sin Tax	35	47	44	30	20	5
Sales	25	29	40	29	41	13
Utility	10	21	26	66	40	12
Property	6	7	8	11	33	110

The responses were arranged by the order in which they were ranked first, second, third and so forth. In doing so we see a clear average ranking that places cutting expenditures at the top, followed by the bed tax - and so forth in the manner they were introduced above. One supposes that the fastest way off the assembly or mayoral positions would be to propose a steep property tax in the Denali Borough.

## Appendix E - Attitudinal Survey

### Denali Borough Survey Questions

Preliminary Question: describe your location:

- a) Anderson
- b) North of Stampede road, south of Anderson turn-off
- c) Healy area
- d) Parks Corridor south of Windy Bridge to Carlo Creek
- e) Cantwell

1) Do you feel the borough government has gotten

- a) Too big
- b) It is the right size now
- c) It is too small
- d) No Opinion

2) Is the level of zoning and land use regulation the borough is exercising

- a) Too much
- b) Not enough
- c) Just right
- d) No opinion

3) To what level should the borough promote economic development:

- a) None
- b) Encourage as part of the regular mayoral and assembly duties
- c) In addition to the above, spend tax money on administration of economic development and marketing of the borough.
- d) No opinion

The Borough has patent on four thousand acres of its Municipal Land entitlement, has 16,000 under management authority, and will be receiving almost 30,000 of selected land.

4) Should the Borough make the surveying and release of municipal entitlement land a priority?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) No opinion

## Appendix E - Attitudinal Survey

5) The Borough is considering different options for land use regulation or zoning. If the kind of regulations are very general such as what areas residential, commercial, agricultural, or remote use and subsistence are allowed, are you in favor of or opposed to this kind of control over land use?

- a) Favor
- b) Oppose
- c) No opinion

6) If land use regulation or control would include such thing as building size or occupancy, minimum lot size, setbacks, signage, noise, water consumption, traffic impact or view shed disturbance do you favor or oppose it:

- a) Favor
- b) Oppose
- c) No opinion

One method for regulating land use is called a "local option" where property owners and residents of a local area testify to the Borough Assembly whether they want to establish regulations on land use in their locality. In this question "local" means an area no larger than any existing subdivision.

7) Would you be in favor or opposed to a local option area being formed that included your own property?

- a) Favor
- b) Opposed
- c) No opinion

8) Would you be in favor or opposed to a local option area being formed by others outside your local area if they want to?

- a) Favor
- b) Oppose
- c) No opinion

9) Another method is to leave the borough zoned as unrestricted use, but require permits for a limited number of large impact activities that may stress the capacity for fire or EMS service, traffic, water supply and wastewater processing. Would you be in favor of or opposed to requiring permits in these cases where a public process is followed for granting of such permits?

- a) Favor
- b) Oppose
- c) No opinion

## Appendix E - Attitudinal Survey

10) Should the Borough government require building permits and building codes, and expend funds to enforce these?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) No opinion

11) How shall the releases of municipal entitlement land be accomplished?

- a) Administratively
- b) By a process of nomination from citizens, with public input to our government
- c) Allow the administration to nominate along with the citizens, and public input after nomination.

12) What form of land release do you most prefer for municipal entitlement lands? Rank these:

- a) Selling land outright
- b) Leasing land
- c) Selling, but controlling the use through commercial or residential designations, or requiring development conditions for commercial lands.
- d) Borough develops facilities and leases them (for example grocery store or other)
- e) No opinion

13) Should the borough government fund a staff position or consultant to evaluate borough lands under its municipal entitlement for management of minerals extraction, methane production and other means of raising revenue?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) No opinion

14) The Borough is required to forward-fund closure expenses of the landfill when its useful life is finished. The current tipping fee does not include that expense. Which do you prefer for funding the closure expenses?

- a) Higher tipping fee
- b) Sales tax
- c) Other tax
- d) No opinion

15) Do you want the borough to expend funds for the design and construction of water and sewer projects for service areas that need it?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) No opinion

## **Appendix E - Attitudinal Survey**

16) Should the borough establish a paid professional borough fire department or continue with volunteer organizations?

- a) Yes, paid department
- b) No
- c) No opinion

17) Should the borough find itself in a revenue shortfall, rank your preferences?

- a) Sales
- b) Property
- c) Utility Tax (electricity, phone, heating oil)
- d) Liquor and tobacco
- e) Overnight accommodations
- f) Cut Spending
- g) No opinion