



February 12, 2018

Senator John Coghill  
State Capitol Room 119  
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Senator Coghill:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Downtown Association, I write in reference to SB 86, as it relates to the Alaska Railroad's Chena Landings project. The Downtown Association supports the Landings project for two main reasons. First, the Landings will add family housing and perhaps some mixed use housing within convenient distance of downtown and, second, the Landings exemplifies *infill development*.

Downtown has much to offer Interior residents. Downtown's locally owned and operated restaurants, retail stores and services appeal to a wide variety of needs, desires and tastes. Downtown is home to many fun and meaningful community events. Future resident of the Landings can access all of this easily on the expanding network of bikeways anchored by the Chena River Walk.

Infill development is an important factor as we consider downtown's future – and our community's future. Sprawl is expensive in our cold climate. Fortunately, downtown already exhibits dense residential and commercial development, all of it served by utilities and city services. Redeveloping vacant or underutilized properties furthers downtown's density, which optimizes a given utility or service network by maximizing the user base per unit of installed utility or infrastructure. Density in our climate can result in real advantages to our community, like faster delivery of services, smaller maintenance budgets and smaller requirements for capital budgets, and flattened if not lowered user costs.

We are heartened to see this infill development. We look forward to Additions at the Chena River Landings and efforts to convert railroad lands in downtown's core into active uses.

Sincerely,

David van den Berg  
Executive Director

cc: Senator Pete Kelly  
Jim Williams, Chief of Staff Mayor Kassel  
Mike Meeks, Chief of Staff Mayor Matherly  
Jon Cook