

**Candidate name**

Jeffrey Brown

**1. Describe your previous experience with Alaska tourism. Do you have any prior employment in the industry?**

My experiences with Alaska tourism include Kayaking, boating and fishing, zip lines, and hotel stays. I have not worked in the tourism industry.

**2. Visit Anchorage ensures our community remains top-of-mind with visitors, meeting planners, and travel trade professionals. The work distinguishes our destination in a crowded, competitive landscape. Do you support Visit Anchorage's mission? Please explain your position.**

I support Visit Anchorage's mission. Tourism is a vital part of our economy. It takes promotion and community support to market our tourism industry. There is no more important a time than during this Covid pandemic to educate potential travellers and planners that Anchorage, and Alaska have "The best place" to vacation, stay safe, and have fun. With Alaska's great outdoors and raw space, and the pandemic, now is the time that Visit Anchorage is more important than ever.

**3. Anchorage's 12% room tax supports municipal services in three ways: one-third goes to the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) general fund; one-third goes to support operations and pay the bond debt for the Anchorage Convention Centers; and one-third goes to the MOA's destination marketing contract (currently held by Visit Anchorage). Do you support the current three-way allocation of Anchorage room tax revenues? Please explain your position.**

Assuming the money is spent well, absolutely. It makes sense to use tourism dollars to further promote tourism.

**4. In Anchorage, the visitor economy is already a significant contributor. Prior to COVID, the industry generated \$297 million in visitor-related spending and \$38 million in municipal hotel and rental car taxes. In addition to the taxes paid by visitors, tourism created one in nine jobs locally. Do you support additional taxes levied on the tourism industry and/or customers? If yes, please explain the type of taxes you believe would be most appropriate, and also how you believe those funds would be spent. If no, please explain your position.**

It is very difficult to tax "tourism". Unfortunately, it keeps coming down to taxes that broadly target businesses that do a lot of business with tourists, and also hit Alaskans that utilizes the goods and services these businesses provide. We are already taxing tourism, and I think it might be a good idea to find other sources of revenue. At this time I don't foresee supporting more tourism taxes.

**5. COVID has fundamentally affected leisure and convention travel, and a complete recovery may be several years away. How would you work to aid local businesses and individuals – particularly those reliant on tourism and travel – so that they can survive and flourish?**

Supporting Visit Anchorage is a great first step, and maybe finding more funds to market and promote the industry, especially this year. I support federal aid programs for business relief. I think it might be interesting to give businesses a break on their taxes based on how much of the income they take in is then spent here in Anchorage as well, incentivizing local spend.

**6. Do you have priorities that would make the municipality a more travel-friendly destination? If yes, please provide details.**

My priorities regarding the tourism industry are public private communication and partnership, resistance to new taxes on Anchorage tourism, and advertising and marketing to include the efforts of Visit Anchorage.

**7. What do you see as the mayor's role in Anchorage's visitor industry, destination marketing, and community development?**

The mayor's role as Chief executive is to promote Anchorage with every opportunity, and build relationships, and network to help spread the word and help people come together. Asking state and federal governments for assistance, and support, with industry can bring attention to the tourism industry and the need to support the industry which is vital to our economy.

**8. What are your overall priorities for the municipality?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**9. What do you see as the greatest threat to Anchorage's future success? What about the greatest opportunity for the community?**

The biggest threat the Anchorage's future success is the divisive nature of politics these days. Violent swings to the right and left continue to fracture the electorate, create havoc each time anew administration rolls through, and leaves our governments and our citizens with compromised direction and comprehensive planning. We are a fantastic community, but only if we work together cohesively. At present, the extreme right, and the extreme left are tearing us apart at the middle and taking advantage of us all and serves only to leave a vacuum for less than community mindedness to take a foothold.

**10. Would you be interested in a follow-up meeting with Visit Anchorage?**

Sure.