



City of Gustavus, Alaska
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August 10, 2020

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Alaska Marine Highway
Dot.amhs.comments@alaska.gov
Via e-mail

Subject: Winter Operating Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing you in response to your request for comments regarding the operating plan (October 2020 – April 2021) to meet community service needs.

I recognize the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the AMHS, it has had a significant impact to the community of Gustavus also. Availability of safe, reliable transportation for rural communities of the “vehicle” road system is only available by our ferries. As with the City Council, the State must provide for essential services to keep communities viable. This is especially true during this time of limited availability to reliable transportation.

Transportation of goods, services, and people are only available by plane or boat; the City does not have a barge ramp. Most of this is done via commercial service such as seaplanes and the ferry. The weather in this region makes travel via seaplane unreliable. In addition, the amount of cargo that can be shipped via seaplane is very limited. Finally, the cost of travelling via seaplane is unaffordable for many.

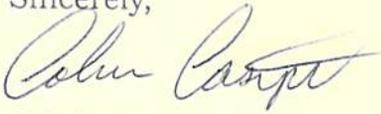
The ferry offers reliable, predictable, and safe transportation to and from Gustavus. Medical appointments, food, materials for home repairs, or equipment to for construction and other purposes can only come by ferry. Please keep these points in mind as you read the responses below.

The community of Gustavus NEEDS service twice a week, every two weeks at a MINIMUM. It is necessary to have the turnaround be 1 or 2 days so that people can meet appointments, shop for food and supplies, and other personal activities. Service this summer has attempted to follow this schedule, but did not consistently, and it was a hardship on some. However, if Gustavus could get twice a week, twice a month with a 1 or 2 day turnaround, it would provide the ability to keep our town viable.

I realize that you may read this response and say, “oh, another community asking for everything,” but that is not the case. Gustavus NEEDS the ferry to survive. The Alaska

Marine Highway is our road. Just like pavement, highways, or railroads, the ferry system is our transportation lifeline. SAVE OUR ROADS, SAVE OUR CITY.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Calvin Casipit". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Calvin Casipit, Mayor