



Sponsor: Anthony Lovell
Introduction: April 7, 2026
Adopted On: April 7, 2026
Vote: 5 Yeas, 0 Nays, 2 Absent

CITY OF THORNE BAY
RESOLUTION 26-04-07-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF THORNE BAY, ALASKA, CONFIRMING ITS STONG SUPPORT FOR TAQUAN AIR AND ITS DIRECT POINT-TO-POINT MAIL, FREIGHT, AND PASSENGER AIR SERVICE BETWEEN KETCHIKAN AND THORNE BAY, AND URGING THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, THE ALASKAN FEDERAL CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, AND FEDERAL AND STATE DECISION MAKERS TO PRESERVE THIS ESSENTIAL LONGSTANDING COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION LINK

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Thorne Bay, Alaska, serves as the governing body of the community and is responsible for promoting transportation systems that support the health, safety, welfare, economic vitality, and quality of life of its residents and businesses; and

WHEREAS, reliable direct transportation connections between Prince of Wales Island communities and the regional center of Ketchikan are essential to maintaining access to medical services, pharmacies, government services, education, commerce, family and tourism travel, and community life; and

WHEREAS, for more than twenty (20) years Taquan Air has provided direct point to point, non-stop, air service between Ketchikan and Thorne Bay and has served as a vital part of the broader Prince of Wales Island transportation network; and

WHEREAS, Taquan's direct air service has supported the movement of passengers, mail, critical freight, medicine, animals and pets, breakdown parts, essential goods, and time sensitive business shipments while providing Thorne Bay residents, businesses, and visitors with reliable and efficient transportation between Thorne Bay and the regional transportation hub Ketchikan. Thorne Bay businesses and community members rely on the convenience of service providers in Ketchikan including NAPA Auto Parts, O'Reilly Auto Parts, Island Pharmacy, Walmart, Island To Island and Stone Tree Veterinary Clinics, Safeway, Peace Health, A&P Market, Madison Lumber & Hardware, Tongass Business Center, mechanical and electrical contractors, and other service providers for important shipments ; and

WHEREAS, the availability of dependable direct air transportation plays an important role in supporting medical travel for residents seeking healthcare services in Ketchikan and beyond, facilitating school travel and educational activities, supporting family travel and community events, enabling tourism and visitor access, and encouraging inward investment and economic activity in the Thorne Bay and Prince of Wales Island region; and

WHEREAS, Taquan's transportation network also contributes to the reliability of mail delivery, critical freight movement, and small business logistics that are essential to the daily functioning of island communities; and

WHEREAS, Taquan has made a commitment to the City of Thorne Bay that if inclement weather delays mail delivery by air transportation it will implement a ground transportation delivery the following day to improve the delivery service of USPS Mail and freight to Thorne Bay; and

WHEREAS, the continued financial and operational viability of Taquan Air's current 11-destination scheduled air service network throughout Prince of Wales Island depends upon maintaining a broad-based and efficient transportation system supported by sufficient mail, passenger, and freight volume across the network, and the loss of mail service to communities such as Thorne Bay, Coffman Cove, Whale Pass, and Naukati would jeopardize the infrastructure, jobs, flight frequency, direct scheduled service to Ketchikan, and critical freight capability necessary to sustain air service not only for Thorne Bay, but for other Prince of Wales communities as well;

WHEREAS, with the loss of USPS Mail Taquan Air will be forced to discontinue scheduled service to Thorne Bay, Coffman Cove, Naukati, and Whale Pass, the resulting loss of network efficiency and supporting revenue would likely make it impossible to economically sustain scheduled service to other remote Prince of Wales Island communities, including Point Baker, Port Protection, Edna Bay, Kasaan, and Meyers Chuck, thereby reducing essential transportation access across the island and other points as a whole; and

WHEREAS, a proposal has been advanced by Alaska Seaplanes/Island Air, a Juneau based company, to restructure this transportation system by placing Thorne Bay at the end of a hub-and-spoke transportation model centered on Ketchikan and the Klawock Airport by replacing direct air service with a series of transfers involving the Post Office in Ketchikan, the Ketchikan Airport Ferry, sorting and transfers at the Ketchikan Airport, a flight to Klawock Airport, sorting and transfers to vehicles, and subsequent roadway transportation issues during inclement winter months between Klawock and Thorne Bay; and

WHEREAS, each additional transfer and infrastructure dependency increases the likelihood of service failures, delays, weather disruptions, roadway interruptions, ferry disruptions, missed connections, damaged freight, delayed mail and reduced reliability for businesses and residents who depend upon timely transportation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Thorne Bay believes that the local communities should have a meaningful voice in the transportation and mail service decisions that directly affect their economic survival, public access, local jobs in Thorne Bay and quality of life, and that the community preference should be given substantial weight by the United States Postal Service, the Alaska Department of Transportation, the US Department of Transportation, and other relevant agencies; and

WHEREAS, preserving direct service by a longstanding local and regional operator is in the public's best interest because it promotes transportation resilience, supports local jobs in Thorne Bay and on Prince of Wales Island, preserves competition, protects the broader Prince of Wales Network and smaller communities, and avoids over-reliance on a single outside carrier or centralized ground transfer model; and

WHEREAS, the loss of US mail will cause the elimination of Taquan Air as a scheduled carrier serving Thorne Bay and the greater Prince of Wales Island, would reduce competition and could create a monopoly position for Alaska Seaplanes/Island Air, a Juneau based company, to the detriment of local

choice, competitive pricing, service reliability, and transportation independence of Prince of Wales communities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Thorne Bay, Alaska hereby affirms its strong support for Taquan Air and its longstanding commitment to provide direct point-to-point mail, freight, and passenger air service between Ketchikan and Thorne Bay; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council recognizes the importance of maintaining reliable and efficient direct transportation connections that support the health, safety, economic activity, and daily life of the residents of Thorne Bay and the surrounding Prince of Wales Island communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council encourages transportation planning and service decisions affecting the community to give full consideration to the operational realities of island transportation systems and the importance of minimizing unnecessary transfers and infrastructure dependencies that may reduce reliability for passengers, mail delivery, and freight movement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council respectfully urges federal, state, and postal authorities, as well as other relevant agencies and transportation planners, to carefully consider the value and proven reliability of the existing direct air service network serving Thorne Bay; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution shall be transmitted to the United States Postal Service, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, the Alaska Congressional Delegation, the U.S. Department of Transportation and other appropriate agencies and stakeholders involved in transportation and mail service planning affecting Prince of Wales Island communities.

PASSED AND APPROVED by a duly constituted quorum of the City Council of the City of Thorne Bay, Alaska, this 7th day of April, 2026.



Anthony Lovell, Vice Mayor

ATTEST:



Caitlyn Sawyer, City Clerk / Treasurer