

ALASKA



REVIEW OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND GOVERNMENT RESEARCH

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The Anchorage Economic Community

Anchorage is, by far, the largest and most populous municipality in Alaska. Paradoxically, it is also the youngest of all of the State's major cities or towns. The city of Anchorage is so young, in fact, that no mention of it can be found in the decennial census report for 1910, although that census contains population counts for Nome, Fairbanks, Seward, Kodiak, Cordova, Valdez, Juneau, Ketchikan, Sitka, Wrangell and Petersburg as well as statements concerning the number of persons living in scores of other Alaskan communities at that time.

Anchorage did not come into existence until 1915. It was originally established as a railroad construction camp by the Alaska Railroad. During its early years, Anchorage functioned primarily as a rail center for interior Alaska and provided the base for modest governmental, wholesaling and trading activity with the interior.

Location and Climate

Anchorage is located on an alluvial plain about 8 miles wide and 20 miles long. It is bordered on the north, west and south by waters of the Cook Inlet (a bay of the Pacific Ocean) and on the east by the Chugach Mountains. Anchorage is shielded by the Kenai Mountains in the south against any excess of moisture from the Pacific, and has an annual average of only about 15 inches of precipitation. Average winter snowfall in the Anchorage area is about 60 inches per year. The massive Alaska Range in the north protects Anchorage from the greatest rigors of the continental interior winters, and the minimum January temperatures reached in Anchorage generally are much above those experienced in Fairbanks. Average temperatures are 5 to 20 degrees above zero during the coldest month of the year, and 49 to 65 degrees during the warmest. In the past, temperatures have been as low as 35 degrees below zero in Anchorage and as high as 86 degrees above. The growing season in the Anchorage area ranges from 100 to 120 days and typically extends from late May to early September.

Population Growth

The population of Anchorage in 1920 was given by the census as 1,856. This figure referred only to those living in Anchorage itself and constituted slightly above 3 percent of the Territory's modest population at the time. Beginning in 1929, the census data included a figure indicating the number of people living in the Anchorage area as well as just those residing within the Anchorage city limits.

The census figures shown in Table 1, depict an astonishing story of growth. From 1929 to 1939, the population in the Anchorage area increased 55 percent. During the next two decades, the population growth was even more dramatic, increasing 658 percent from 1939 to 1950, and 158 percent from 1950 to 1960. From available current estimates it is clear that growth has continued to be rapid.

The economy of the Anchorage area was strengthened greatly in the 1940's and 1950's through the construction and expansion of two major military bases. These installations, Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson, are both located just north and east of the city, and in 1966 collectively had a complement of approximately 14,500 officers and enlisted men. The two bases employ about 3,300 civilians and house about 27,000 military personnel and dependents. The population figures presented in Table 1 include all persons living on these bases.

The Anchorage city limits have been enlarged more than once. Whether there will be further such extensions or whether some more drastic change will be more suitable is a matter of discussion at the present time. The city of Anchorage, the nearest Anchorage suburbs, and some of the more distant communities as well, are now included in the Greater Anchorage Area Borough, and a proposal that the borough and city should consolidate into one local government for the entire area is under consideration.

The experience of Anchorage has been similar to that of other cities which have grown rapidly; the increase in population within the bounds of the original city being accompanied by a great growth in the number of people living in places just outside these boundaries. Under such conditions, the difference between the city

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and the immediate non-city area becomes indistinguishable and the whole appears to be one large city. Spenard, for example, although not within the city's jurisdiction, is so much a part of Anchorage that its main streets are in alignment on the same grid pattern and its avenues continue the numbering sequence of the city itself. The name Anchorage, in general usage, has now come to denote the whole populated area in the Anchorage vicinity.

The Greater Anchorage Area Borough planning estimates for 1967 indicate that the Borough population is approximately 121,700. If this estimate is reasonably correct, it means that approximately 44 percent of the State's estimated 1967 population of 276,000 live within the Anchorage area.

Economic Growth

Economic activity in the Anchorage area has expanded rapidly during the past several years. An examination of the economic data presented in Table 2 shows

that significant growth has taken place in all recorded segments of the Anchorage economy. As noted in the table, there were 64,079 motor vehicles registered in the Anchorage area in 1966. This was an increase of 83 percent over the number registered in 1957. In 1966, Anchorage motor registrations included 40,476 passenger vehicles, 9,519 light trucks, 3,877 heavy trucks, and 1,274 commercial trailers.

The data show that the Anchorage School District enrolled more than twice as many children in 1966 as in 1957; that the number of telephones in service in the area has more than doubled; and that the consumption of electricity has nearly tripled in the past ten years. The increase in electricity sales has occurred during the same period that natural gas has become available in the Anchorage area. A private utility company has a franchise to put gas mains under the Anchorage streets and currently is supplying an increasing number of domestic customers with natural gas from the Kenai Peninsula. Natural gas is now also being used for electric power generation in the Anchorage area.

The value of the building permits issued in Anchorage in 1966 was 254 percent above the total value of those issued in 1957. A very large increase in the value of total issued building permits occurred from 1963 to 1964, due to earthquake reconstruction activities. The assessed value of real property in 1966 was four times the 1957 level.

The growing commercial and financial importance of the Anchorage area is further demonstrated by the fact that total bank assets, bank deposits, bank loans and discounts approximately tripled from 1958 to 1966.

The figures showing the gross business receipts for the Anchorage area, presented in Table 3, provide further evidence of the dynamic nature of the Anchorage economy. In most categories the receipts at least doubled, and in several cases the trade quadrupled during the

Table 1
POPULATION OF ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
1920-1967

Census Year	Anchorage City Limits	Percent Change Since Previous Census	Anchorage Area	Percent Change Since Previous Census	Anchorage Area as Percent of Alaska Total	Alaska Total	Percent Change Since Previous Census
1920	1,856	—	NA	—	—	55,036	—
1929	2,277	+23	2,736	—	4.6	59,278	+8
1939	3,495	+53	4,229	+55	5.8	72,524	+22
1950	11,254	+222	32,060	+658	24.9	128,643	+77
1960	44,237*	+293	82,833	+158	36.6	226,167	+76
1967	53,000	+20	121,700	+47	44.1	276,000	+22

*Includes persons living in areas annexed by the city since the previous census.

SOURCES: The figures for 1920-60 are from the decennial reports of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The figures for 1967 are computed from estimates made by the Anchorage City Council, the Greater Anchorage Area Borough, and the State of Alaska.

Table 2
SELECTED ECONOMIC DATA
(Anchorage, Alaska)
1957-1966

	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	Percent Change From 1957
Vehicle Registration	34,938	33,880	36,577	41,383	44,208	46,468	47,810	55,102	62,210	64,079	+83
School Enrollment	8,252	8,994	10,189	11,208	12,624	14,004	15,913	16,225	20,436	21,374	+159
Telephones in Service	15,441	16,900	18,200	21,523	23,214	23,253	25,348	27,098	29,687	33,477	+117
Lighting and Power Customers	18,488	18,310	20,026	21,989	22,733	22,518	23,880	25,356	26,370	26,843	+45
Thousand Kilowatt Hours Consumed	124,958	134,842	147,723	167,918	188,107	218,365	245,242	276,886	310,405	363,313	+191
Municipal Water Customers	6,469	6,325	6,660	7,511	8,827	9,609	9,926	9,836	10,788	10,770	+66
Building Permits (Number)	962	759	956	1,013	895	1,095	1,282	1,806	1,545	986	+2
The figures below are in thousands of dollars											
Building Permits (Value).....	5,677	8,227	15,746	23,375	13,088	18,087	18,080	28,791	19,591	20,079	+254
Postal Receipts	1,074	1,088	1,252	1,433	1,519	1,577	1,847	2,117	2,274	2,500	+133
Assessed Value Real Property	140,158	150,212	139,936	183,981	218,591	243,027	263,273	303,913	474,700	560,156	+300
Assessed Value Personal Property	41,572	45,620	51,418	56,013	55,187	56,528	64,051	82,604	107,537	133,775	+222
Total Assessed Value	181,730	195,832	191,354	239,994	273,778	299,555	327,324	386,517	582,237	693,931	+282
Property Taxes Collected	2,780	3,077	2,139	2,590	3,302	3,657	3,461	5,250	8,076	11,715	+321
Total Bank Assets	n.a.	99,439	102,953	139,696	146,315	184,001	190,312	248,103	275,908	291,714	+193*
Bank Deposits	n.a.	93,334	97,067	130,235	133,625	164,204	174,557	231,282	252,215	263,479	+182*
Bank Loans and Discounts	n.a.	41,150	51,142	64,306	73,320	94,070	100,531	113,020	155,843	157,251	+282*

*Indicates Percentage Change from 1958

period 1957 to 1965. Wholesale trade, which is stronger in Anchorage than anywhere else in Alaska, was nearly five times as great in 1965 as in 1957. The latest count of the number of businesses (by the U.S. Census of Business) showed that there were 121 wholesalers in the Anchorage area in 1963.

Retail and Service Trades

According to figures presented in the 1963 Census of Business (See Table 4) there were 501 retail establishments operating in the Anchorage area in 1963. These stores, which constituted 31 percent of all of Alaska's retail establishments, compiled total sales of \$133,062,000 during 1963. These sales comprised 47 percent of Alaska's total retail sales during the period. There were 3,542 paid retail employees working in the Anchorage area in November, 1963 and 420 active proprietors of unincorporated businesses. The total annual retail payroll for 1963 was \$17,467,000.

During 1963, auto dealers in Anchorage accounted for 65 percent of the State's auto sales. Furniture and home furnishing outlets in the Anchorage area realized 53 percent of total State sales in that category. Anchorage retail food store sales reached 42 percent of the State's total, and eating and drinking establishments in Anchorage obtained 40 percent of all monies spent in the State for that purpose during 1963.

There were 420 service establishments in the Anchorage area in 1963 according to the 1963 Census of Business. These establishments had 1,685 paid employees in November, 1963, and had a total annual payroll of \$10,576,000. A wide variety of service establishments operated in the Anchorage area during the year, including: 52 hotels, motels, tourist courts and camps; 122 personal service shops; 52 auto repair, auto service shops and garages; 99 miscellaneous business service shops; 4 motion picture theaters; 44 miscellaneous repair service shops; and 47 amusement and recreation service establishments.

Anchorage Employment

Anchorage is the most important single labor market area in Alaska. During recent years, an average of over 40 percent of all the non-military people employed in the State have worked in the Anchorage area.

Average monthly employment in the Anchorage labor market area reached 34,275 in 1966. (Table 5.) This employment level was about 8 percent above the average monthly employment level in 1965, and was higher than that of any previous year.

During the six-year period from 1961 to 1966, the monthly average of total employment increased by about 28 percent. All classifications of employment activities in

Table 3
SUMMARY OF GROSS RECEIPTS AS REPORTED ON
BUSINESS LICENSE RETURNS*
City of Anchorage and Greater Anchorage Area Borough
1957-1965

	In Thousands of Dollars							Percent Change From 1957		
	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963		1964	1965
Construction	\$ 47,242	\$ 62,975	\$ 45,619	\$ 51,278	\$ 53,143	\$ 55,719	\$ 54,363	\$ 95,251	\$113,237	+140
Manufacturing	2,671	4,303	3,846	1,357	3,364	4,821	7,429	7,803	10,695	+301
Professional	4,548	4,610	6,708	7,915	9,934	10,765	12,622	14,791	18,402	+305
Transportation, Communications, Utilities	14,578	19,605	17,601	18,746	24,292	19,543	28,720	26,424	35,343	+142
Wholesale	13,261	24,165	34,130	31,521	35,684	36,778	42,580	57,099	63,932	+382
Retail	86,473	101,405	96,524	107,612	110,091	130,159	126,289	137,160	176,406	+104
Finance and Real Estate	15,008	13,868	18,628	30,717	24,766	31,395	32,699	36,179	44,426	+196
Services	10,728	10,011	14,545	10,933	12,592	12,972	12,794	13,825	18,708	+74
Agriculture and Forestry	—	297	157	321	—	7	55	1	42	n.a.
Miscellaneous	489	1,045	1,130	1,176	321	15,034	1,639	18,717	19,753	+304
TOTAL	\$194,997	\$242,285	\$238,888	\$261,576	\$274,188	\$317,192	\$319,188	\$407,248	\$500,944	+157
Percent Change From Previous Year	—	+24	-1	+9	+5	+16	+1	+28	+23	

* Does not include fisheries transactions, mining activity, the sale of alcoholic beverages, or insurance sales and commissions.
SOURCE: State of Alaska, Department of Revenue

the Anchorage area showed growth during this period. Employment in finance, real estate, and insurance showed the greatest growth during the period, increasing by 58 percent. Rapid growth also took place in the manufacturing, construction, trade, and service and miscellaneous employment areas.

Although the Anchorage employment pattern has been one of overall growth, the area shares in the two major employment problems which plague Alaska as a whole. These problems are: the sharply seasonal nature of the demand for labor in most sections of the State; and the great extent to which the economy relies upon federal, state, and local governmental units. Fortunately, the second problem to some extent offsets the first since governmental employment tends to be more continuous than some other kinds of employment in the State.

The extent of the seasonality of employment in the Anchorage area is clearly illustrated by the fact that about 6,000 more workers were employed in the Anchorage area during the peak employment month of August in 1966 than were working during March, the month of lowest employment activity in 1966. Employment fluctuations of such great magnitude taking place in an area within a single year, ordinarily would be expected to generate periods of vast seasonal unemployment. In Anchorage, however, the seasonality of employment is not fully reflected in the figures of unemployment. The number of people unemployed in Anchorage during any given month in 1966 ranged from a low of 1,850 during October to a high of 3,560 during April: a difference of 1,710 persons.

Evidently, many of the additional employment opportunities available each summer in the Anchorage area are filled by transient labor from Seattle, various West-coast and other U.S. areas. These people return to the "lower 48" in the fall, thereby transferring a substantial part of Anchorage's seasonal unemployment out of the State. As a result, Anchorage generally has one of the lowest average unemployment rates of any of Alaska's major population centers.

The Anchorage annual average unemployment rate dropped from 6.7 percent of the total civilian workforce in 1961 to 4.7 percent in 1964. The 1965 unemployment rate increased slightly to an average level of approximately 5 percent, and again increased in 1966 to 7.3 percent. This is apparently due to the completion of large reconstruction projects generated by the great earthquake of 1964, and the consequent withdrawal of some jobs from the labor market.

Government employment in the Anchorage area accounted for 39 percent of total employment in 1966. This is down from the 1961 level of 42 percent. People working in the trade employment category in Anchorage accounted for over 16 percent of total employment in 1966. Employment in contract construction; service and miscellaneous; and transportation, communication and public utilities accounted for 8, 16, and 8 percent of total employment respectively.

Table 4
ANCHORAGE RETAIL TRADE
1963

Kind of Business Group	Establishments Number	Sales (\$1,000)
Lumber, Building Materials		
Hardware, Farm Equipment	25	\$ 8,032
General Merchandise	9	9,674
Food Stores	32	26,886
Automotive Dealers	44	30,197
Gasoline Service Stations	46	7,681
Apparel and Accessories	37	4,640
Furniture, Home Furnishings, and Equipment	28	5,228
Eating, Drinking Places	133	13,196
Drug Stores, Proprietary Stores	14	6,057
Other Retail Stores	113	16,053
Non-Store Retailers	20	5,418
TOTAL	501	\$133,062

Source: 1963 Census of Business, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Oil in the Anchorage Area

From its beginning on the Kenai Peninsula in 1957 the oil and gas industry rapidly became the leader in the mineral field in Alaska. In 1966 the value of oil produced and gas sold totaled \$44 million, which was 56 percent of Alaska's total value of mineral production. In that year there was an increase of 30 percent in the quantity of gas sold and 24 percent in the oil output as compared with the year before. Further increases are confidently expected. There are already 60 oil wells in production in Southcentral Alaska.

Most of the oil output so far has been from the Swanson River oilfield, which was the first to be discovered. It was soon producing at a rate of 10,000,000 barrels annually—an output reached by only a few elite oilfields in the United States. Up to April 1967, it had produced a total of more than 65 million barrels. While this field continues its steady output, it has now been joined by the Middle Ground Shoal field in Cook Inlet. By late 1966 the latter oilfield was producing at a rate of almost 12,000 barrels per day from 13 wells.

Exploratory activities have revealed that the Inlet waters contain at least six oilfields. Drilling capacity in the Inlet has been greatly expanded, and further developments are planned. There were eight permanent drilling platforms in place at the beginning of 1967, and the number is to be increased. Some of these platforms can accommodate 32 wells each. In addition to the fitting out of these platforms, many miles of pipeline have been laid on the bed of Cook Inlet to connect the platforms to the shore facilities.

The search for oil led to the discovery of natural gas, which is at present being produced by 20 wells. A direct result of this has been the decision to build two chemical

plants beside Cook Inlet to produce urea and ammonia, using 60 million cubic feet of natural gas per day.

Anchorage is the nearest large city to the oil and gas fields, and is becoming a supply center for a major oil and gas producing region with promising industrial development possibilities.

Transportation

The Anchorage area has an expanding, well organized transportation network. In recent years the land surface, water, and air transport capacities of the area have grown rapidly enough to permit the movement of increasing quantities of cargo, and growing numbers of passengers, into and out of the Anchorage area without apparent strain.

Anchorage International Airport is one of the first ten airports in the United States to be selected by the Federal Aviation Agency to be a Category II airport. The city is still, as it has been from its foundation, the location for the headquarters of the Alaska Railroad. The municipal Port of Anchorage has recently been enlarged, and equipped to handle containerized shipments.

Anchorage is the hub of a road network which links Fairbanks, Valdez, Palmer, Seward, Kenai, Homer, Haines

and the Alaska Highway through Canada. Construction of a bridge across Turnagain Arm is contemplated. This would reduce, by many miles, the road journey to the Kenai Peninsula with its important oil installations. It would also open up possibilities of an extension of the populated area to the southwest.

The Marine Highway System, inaugurated in Southeast Alaska in 1963, has its terminus at Haines. This marine highway connects Prince Rupert (British Columbia, Canada) with Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Sitka, Juneau, Haines, and Skagway. This Southeastern ferry system permits the movement of passenger and freight traffic up and down the Alaska "panhandle" and provides Anchorage with a direct "highway" link to the Pacific Northwest. Each year increasing numbers of persons utilize the facilities of the Alaska ferry system and current plans call for the system's expansion.

Anchorage International Airport

An examination of the data in Table 6 shows the growing importance of Anchorage International Airport. As noted, during the past eight years the number of passengers moving in and out of the terminal annually has doubled, and the annual number of "through passengers" has multiplied by eight. During the same period the amount of freight handled at the airport has risen by some 70 percent.

Table 5
YEARLY AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT IN ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
1961-1966

	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	Percent Change From 1961
Mining	328	423	470	425	381	418	+30
Contract Construction	1,908	2,103	1,962	2,906	3,024	2,882	+51
Manufacturing.....	562	619	615	688	778	816	+45
Transportation, Communication and Public Utilities	2,299	2,328	2,244	2,264	2,565	2,686	+17
Trade	3,903	4,116	4,316	4,495	5,182	5,629	+44
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	860	968	1,028	1,110	1,206	1,388	+61
Service and Miscellaneous	2,763	2,718	3,098	3,440	3,781	3,963	+43
Government	11,249	11,466	12,086	12,745	13,387	13,468	+20
Unclassified	2,817	2,773	2,757	3,059	3,159	3,025	+7
Total Employment	26,689	27,514	28,576	31,132	33,463	34,275	+28
Total Unemployment	1,928	1,740	1,818	1,532	1,820	2,696	+40
Total Civilian Work Force	28,617	29,254	30,394	32,664	35,283	36,971	+29
Percent Unemployed	6.7	5.9	6.0	4.7	5.2	7.3	—

SOURCE: Computed from data obtained from the Alaska State Department of Labor.

Table 6
ANCHORAGE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
Passenger and Freight Traffic
1959-1966

Year	Passengers in	Passengers out	Through Passengers	Total Passengers	Freight In (Pounds)	Freight Out (Pounds)	Total Freight (Pounds)
1959	108,605	115,164	41,080	264,849	12,544,361	26,377,746	38,922,107
1960	113,786	118,480	54,210	286,476	12,627,502	24,919,794	37,547,296
1961	124,825	130,387	122,483	377,695	14,507,499	26,277,533	40,785,032
1962	135,316	140,881	121,209	397,406	14,926,390	27,530,757	42,457,147
1963	150,667	156,026	171,763	478,456	15,159,422	27,898,062	43,057,484
1964	180,404	185,348	180,900	546,652	22,350,000	33,530,508	55,880,508
1965	202,209	211,001	167,853	581,063	20,373,527	31,935,908	52,309,435
1966	222,209	224,344	359,943	807,056	20,611,961	45,011,663	65,623,624
Percent Increase 1966 over 1959	105	95	776	205	64	71	69

SOURCE: Anchorage International Airport

Anchorage has a great growth potential in international air tourist traffic. By virtue of its geographical location, Anchorage is in an important position on the air route map of the world. An air route to the Orient from the east coast of the United States is through Anchorage. In addition, Anchorage is the intermediate point between Europe and Japan. As a result, five international air carriers (Air France, Japan Air Lines, Royal Dutch, Scandinavian, Lufthansa) stop at the Anchorage International Airport on their polar route flights. Other scheduled airlines using the Anchorage terminal for cargo, stopover and passenger service include: Northwest Airlines, Alaska Airlines, Pacific Northern Airlines, Northern Consolidated Airlines, Wien Air Alaska, Reeve Aleutian Airlines, Cordova Airlines, Pan American, Flying Tiger Line, Canadian Pacific, Continental.

The people of Alaska are extremely air oriented. Evidence of this is the fact that there are 67.2 airplanes in the State for every 10,000 persons. New York State by way of comparison, has 2.3 registered planes for every 10,000 persons. About one out of every 100 Alaskans now has a pilot's license. In Anchorage the ratio is much higher, due to excellent general aviation facilities. Thus, in addition to the heavy schedule of regulated air carrier activity, Anchorage is a center for bush and private flying.

There are about 800 private planes in the Anchorage vicinity. About 300 float planes are under registry at Lake Hood, just outside the city limits. Lake Hood is the world's most active seaplane base and its tower handles more than 40,000 operations annually. Merrill Field in Anchorage is the base for about 500 private planes and controls more than 165,000 landings and take-offs annually.

Other air activity, in the Anchorage area, results from the large movements of military personnel who fly in and

out of Elmendorf Air Force Base in service planes, and from the flights of the forty certified air taxi operators based in Anchorage.

Alaska Railroad

The Alaska Railroad extends from the port of Seward on the Gulf of Alaska to the city of Anchorage and continues on to Fairbanks, located deep in Alaska's interior. It is a single track railroad 471 miles long. It is owned by the United States Government and is operated by the U.S. Department of the Interior. The control center for the Alaska Railroad is in Anchorage. The center consists of passenger and freight terminals, marshaling yards, warehousing facilities and a repair shop. The Alaska Railroad invested large sums in recent years to convert its locomotives from steam to diesel. It also has spent substantial amounts to acquire modern cars, to develop its van-pac system, and to convert to heavier rails. The Alaska Railroad is a critical factor in the development of the vast natural resources of the Interior. It has the unused capacity and modernized freight handling methods necessary to support considerable economic growth.

The Port of Anchorage

The Port of Anchorage is a modern municipally owned dock facility on Cook Inlet. The first vessel to utilize this facility docked on April 14, 1961, and the first commercial cargoes were accepted April 21, 1961.

During its first year of operation, the Port of Anchorage handled 38,259 short tons of cargo. In 1962, total cargo

handled through the Port increased by 155 percent and reached a total of 97,486 short tons. Port activity during 1963 continued to expand at a very rapid rate and by the end of the year had totaled 193,200 short tons which was 98 percent above the total for the previous year.

During the first three months of 1964 no freight came through the Port of Anchorage. This was due to the fact that alternate ports, without ice, were available to service the Anchorage area. However, the March 27 earthquake and its subsequent tidal waves seriously damaged or destroyed these alternate port facilities and the Port of Anchorage became the only major Southcentral port facility substantially operational. It has become Alaska's most important harbor facility, and is now operating on a year-around basis.

During 1964, a total of 748,802 short tons of cargo was handled through the Port. In 1965, the Port handled 922,208 short tons of cargo, an increase of 23 percent over the level of activity in 1964. The tonnage handled in 1966 increased to 1,006,486 or 34 percent over 1964.

The Press, Radio and T.V.

One of the criteria of the status of a city, apart from its actual population, is often taken to be the publication of a local newspaper, especially a daily newspaper. Anchorage does not fail by this standard, for it has two daily papers with a combined circulation at present of more than 49,000. Although each gives appropriate front-page treatment to news of national or world importance, these newspapers are built upon a strong core of local news, and by this they help to foster a sense of community in a place which contains many newcomers. Both papers circulate extensively outside

Anchorage itself, and thereby are a part of the magnetic effect of a big city on a rural population.

Anchorage has two television stations at present, and color T.V. is available. There are also five AM radio stations and three FM stations.

Future Prospects

The recent growth of Anchorage has been based upon business and transportation. This sustained a severe setback in 1964 when the earthquake did extensive damage to public and commercial facilities and much private property was destroyed. But the dynamism of the city was shown by the confidence with which reconstruction was undertaken. Anchorage has accomplished an extraordinary feat in the completeness of its recovery. Few traces now remain of the havoc of March 27, 1964.

The major reconstruction task still outstanding is the re-establishment of business in the area on the north side of 4th Avenue, where an earth slide reduced many properties to ruins. This challenge was met by a decision to carry out a bold demonstration of urban renewal in a business environment. The area has now been stabilized by a project of earth replacement and drainage. The next stage is to sell parcels of land suitable for large and small businesses, in order to create a City Center Plaza with covered walks linking the shops and stores, and parking for 800 cars. A six-block area of public parks will provide visual appeal. It is anticipated that completion of this Plaza as a thriving business center will lead to improvement of surrounding parts of the downtown area. This project indicates the assurance with which Anchorage faces further growth.

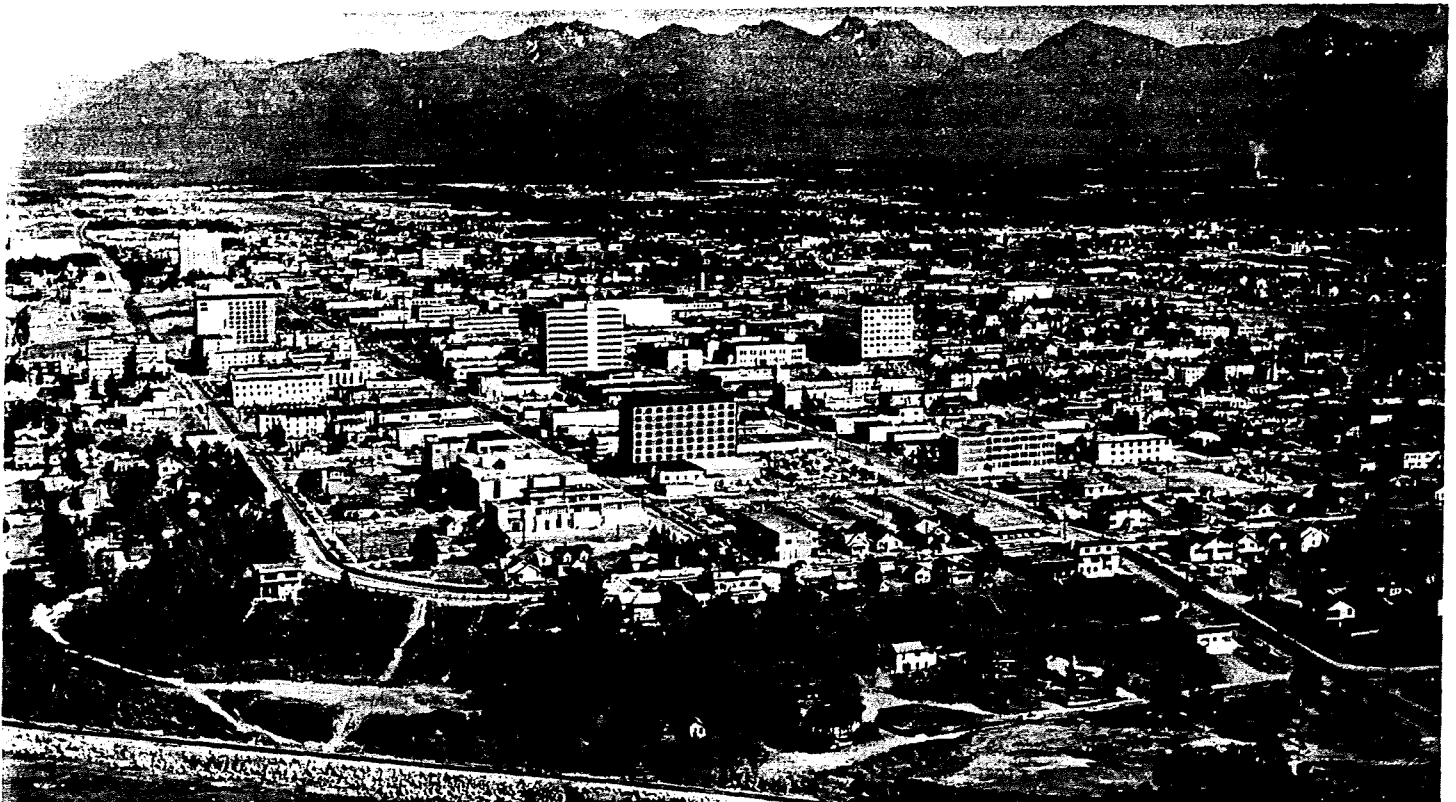


Photo by Ward Wells