

# Historic Preservation in Seward, Alaska

*Between the mountains and the Sea*



**John French and Linda Lasota**  
**Seward Historic Preservation Commission**

*Alaska Historic Preservation Conference, October 20-22, 2015*

# City of Seward

Established 1903

City consists of three overlapping parts

1. The historic business district and residential areas on the west side of Bay.
2. Port and harbor facilities at north end of Bay.
3. SMIC and prison on east side of Bay

Demographics (2010 census)

❑ Total Population : 2,693

62% male, 38% female

❑ Racial Status (including multiracial)

76% White

23% American Indian and Alaska Native





Photograph courtesy of the Seward Museum

An early photograph of Seward, Alaska

*Then*



1906, horses and wagons filled Seward's 4th Avenue dock when ships were in port, 06. Photo by Case and Evans: Resurrection Bay Historical Society, Hale Collection.



*Now*

# Seward's history has been shaped by many natural and man-caused disasters; including:



... before and after the earthquake. Top, before the earthquake of March 27, 1964. Bottom, 1 day after the earthquake of March 27, 1964. Photographs by the U.S. Army.



- ❑ Floods along Lowell Creek (early days - completion of diversion tunnel)
- ❑ Fires; especially along Fourth Ave. during World War II
- ❑ Earthquake & Tsunami (1964)

*Seward Waterfront before and after 1964 earthquake & tsunami (USGS)*



## Becoming a Certified Local Government & Historic Preservation Commission

*Early activities:*

- 1992 CLG application*
- 1994 Historic Preservation Commission established*
- 1995*
  - Seward Register of Historic Places*
  - Seward Historic Preservation Award*
  - Local Historic District Designation*
- 1996 Seward Historic Preservation Plan*

# Seward Properties on National Register of Historic Places

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**St. Peter's Church**



**Ballaine House**



**Brown & Hawkins**



**Swetmann House**

# Seward Properties on National Register of Historic Places

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Van Gilder Hotel



Government  
Cable Office



Jesse Lee Home



Railroad Depot

*Not pictured:* Hoben Park, Lowell Creek Diversion Tunnel

# Continuing Historic Preservation Activities

- Assist & Review Nominations for National Register of Historic Places
- Assist & Review Nominations for Seward Register of Historic Places
- Maintain Seward Inventory of Historic Sites
- Maintain Seward Inventory of Local Plants and Trees.
- Manage the Seward Historic Preservation Award
- Assist and Advise the City of Seward regarding Historic and Archeological Activities.



## Recent Seward Historic Preservation Projects

- Hoben Park Restoration
- Cemetery Information Project
- Review and Revise 1996 Seward Historic Preservation Plan

Thank You for Your Attention



*Downtown Seward prior to the 1964 earthquake & tsunami*