

**Evaluation, Opportunities,
Recommendations and
Implementation**

Evaluation of Alternative Concept Plans

How does each concept influence...

- Land Use?
- Open Space?
- Access and Circulation?

The principal focus of this Framework Master Plan is on how the resources of the District can best serve the continued growth of the institutions and other uses without damaging the natural environment in which they are set.

An inescapable conclusion is that a regional traffic solution that eliminates the need to extend Bragaw Street through the District creates many more creative possibilities.

If built as a regional traffic arterial, the extension of Bragaw Street would permanently divide the Goose Lake and APU lands and the trails that traverse them. It would change forever the character of that natural expanse. Without separation by an extended Bragaw Street, not only would the woods and wetlands remain intact, but a greater integration among existing and future facilities could be achieved.

For these reasons, this Plan recommends that the Integrated Campuses concept be selected as the preferred alternative.

Opportunities

Ownership

Within the framework of lands designated for preservation open space, development reserve, development and redevelopment priority, the future uses of land in the District are strongly influenced by land ownership. A few changes of ownership could significantly change future growth patterns. Several such changes are in the process at the time of writing, but the outcomes cannot be anticipated with certainty, and so speculation of consequences has not been addressed.

Natural Areas

Natural areas within the city are fast disappearing. A firm policy of conservation of the highest value natural areas is necessary if the character of the District is to be preserved.

- Selective rerouting of existing trails and drive-ways would conserve blocks of undisturbed habitat for moose and other wildlife.
- Habitat areas should be connected with continuous green corridors for wildlife movement, such as the alignment of the proposed municipal trail.
- Trail and development opportunities north of Goose Lake could improve public recreational use and introduce year-round uses, such as conferences in improved and new structures.
- The southern and eastern sides of Goose Lake should be kept free of all trails and structures to protect water bird nesting habitat.
- Routing of the municipal trail near Northern Lights Boulevard would be improved if the electrical substation were decommissioned and removed or relocated at some time in the future.

Recommendations

Land Use:

A fundamental recommendation of the Plan is that educational and medical institutions within the District be enabled to grow and compete effectively. Their natural setting is an important complement and provides the District with its special character. Other development in the District should support those primary uses and should do so in a way that reduces reliance on automobile trips.

It is recommended that a clear distinction be made between land that should be conserved in its natural state and that which may be developed. The probable intensity of development at each location will define access needs, to be met by appropriate expansion of the streets and trails systems. Note that the time at which development occurs (intermediate or long-range) is independent of the classifications that follow. Recommended land use categories are as follows:

- ***Preservation Open Space.*** Land adjacent to lakes and streams, together with primary wetlands should be permanently protected from development through a conservation easement or similar instrument. Primary wetlands are the Class A wetlands defined on page 15. An objective is to sustain large blocks of contiguous natural land for both habitat and recreation purposes, so contiguous lands that do not occupy primary wetlands or the margins of lakes and waterways should also be included to achieve this objective. Natural open space buffers and some recreational trail corridors may also share this classification. Where appropriate, new vehicular access to serve the District is not precluded by the *Preservation Open Space* classification.
- ***Development Reserve.*** Land that has some valuable natural features but is not integral to *Preservation Open Space* may be developed, provided that natural features, such as stands of mature trees, are not damaged or displaced. Conditions imposed by the Municipality may identify specific features or areas within a *Development Reserve* property that are to be preserved. Conditions may also impose such limits as the percentage of existing vegetated area that is to remain undisturbed. The *Development Reserve* classification indicates a conditional right to develop. Uses may be public, institutional or residential.
- ***Redevelopment & Development Priority.*** This is land that has already been developed, or is ready to receive development without compromising the surrounding natural environment. Such lands are typically already served by streets, utilities and other infrastructure. Included in this classification are all previously developed institutional lands. Infill is recommended before using *Development Reserve* lands.
- ***Institutional.*** This classification includes all lands controlled by institutions in the area. Where institutional lands are mapped with another classification, such as *Preservation Open Space*, limitations of that classification on development shall apply.
- ***Residential.*** This classification is for land that is predominantly occupied by housing in good repair, but does not exclude other compatible uses from being developed within it. This includes most of the land east of APU and the area bounded by Tudor Road, E. 40th Avenue, Folker Street and Dale Street. There are also small enclaves on Mallard Lane and UAA Drive.
- ***Mixed-Use Commercial.*** This classification includes all lands that are not classified as *Preservation Open Space*, *Institutional* or *Residential*. The intent is that these lands should be developed with a compact mix of uses that collectively support the needs of the institutions and those who inhabit them. Offices, institutions, homes, hotels and motels, entertainment, and retail are all encouraged in *Mixed-Use Commercial* lands.

Zoning:

It is recommended that the classification *Public Lands and Institutions* (PLI) zoning be retained, and modified to address current and anticipated institutional needs more directly than the existing code allows. Revisit the Site Coverage Maximum for essential facilities, especially in the context of conservation easements or similar instruments being introduced to preserve valued natural lands.

It is also recommended that areas of mixed-use zoning be introduced. The zone should favor compact development and direct connections to transit and trails to encourage access by means other than drive-alone automobile.

It is recommended that existing zoning on the Tudor Centre tract remain unchanged.

Circulation:

A clear objective of the Plan is to ease circulation within the District while reducing dependence on driving. In the process, emergency access to the hospitals must not be hampered and improved transit service must be accommodated.

It is recommended that traffic with neither origin nor destination within the District be actively discouraged. It is also recommended that local streets and trails within the District be connected as a fully integrated circulation system, providing fairly direct connections between all major destinations within the District. This will involve completing links in the network of local streets. Every street should connect to another at both ends, except where natural features make this infeasible. District Circulation Reserve has been used in order to preserve possible connections within the U-Med District. The alignments have not been determined, but the reservation of the connections are necessary in anticipation of future growth.

The design and management of streets within the District should be appropriate to the safety of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians, without favoring any one mode above the others. Transit needs should be fully integrated with the circulation system, with sheltered stops near the intersections of streets and heavily used trails. A transit center has been proposed for a site on Providence Drive. In addition to providing shelter and other amenities for riders, the transit center should be located and configured to enhance safety at street level for those crossing on

foot and by bicycle, and for motorists making turns. Some restrictions on bus staging at or near the transit center may be necessary for reasons of safety and air quality. As changes to the street system are made, consideration should be given to efficient routing of buses. Restriction of pedestrian crossings to a bridge over or a tunnel under Providence Drive is strongly discouraged. Besides disrupting normal circulation and orientation, such arrangements have been found to increase rather than decrease accidents. Grade-separated pedestrian crossings may, however, supplement at-grade crossings.

Parking:

It is recommended that all future parking facilities be located away from the main approaches to institutional buildings, so that they are secondary to those buildings and to the surrounding landscape. Similarly, parking lots or structures should not occupy conspicuous sites such as the corner sites at street intersections. Surface parking and loading areas should be effectively screened from public open spaces.

Utilities:

Overhead cables and their supports are an inappropriate intrusion into *Preservation Open Space* and should, as the 1983 Goose Lake Plan recommended, be removed to the perimeter of the District and buried underground. Land in public open space and all land in *Preservation Open Space* that is disturbed in the course of utilities-related operations should be restored and replanted with native species as a condition of access.

Plan Implementation

Implementation of the recommendations of this Plan, as summarized on the preceding pages, will be achieved through a combination of municipal and private actions. Specific programs must be coordinated with others administered by the Municipality to ensure consistency between this and other locations in the city.

Highlighted here are three sets of programs for subsequent, detailed consideration and implementation by the Municipality. Also presented here is a set of design guidelines for use by those proposing development, as well as by the development review and permitting authorities. Their purpose is to convey the purpose and intent of this Plan. Quantitative standards complement these design guidelines and are, or will be, stated in the applicable zoning code sections.

Five years after Plan adoption, the U-Med Steering Committee should be recalled to review this plan in light of changes that may have occurred within and outside the District. The U-Med Steering Committee should deliver to the Municipality a recommendation to update the 2003 Plan or to continue enforcement of it without amendment. The Municipality should recall the U-Med Steering Committee at intervals not exceeding five years thereafter and should consider their recommendations to update or perpetuate the Plan in its most recently adopted form.

Transportation Management Programs

- Consider traffic management programs and transportation improvement programs for each campus and subdistrict to improve the efficiency with which streets and parking facilities are used. In the process, measures should stem the growth of automobile trips, increase transit and carpool ridership, and encourage bicycle use, walking year-round, and skiing in winter. This Plan should provide the basis for coordination among campus master plans.

Land Conservation Programs

- Conservation easements may be established for areas with identified natural values. In exchange for a surrender of development rights on such properties, other development or tax benefits would accrue to property owners, in proportion to the value of their donation.

Zoning Modifications

- Consider amendment of the Institutional Zone to address institutional needs more directly than current zoning allows.
- Consider mixed-use zoning for the proposed University Village area.
- Rezone lands between E. 40th Avenue and Tudor Road to enable residential redevelopment in a mixed-use district.
- Modify the percentage of Site Coverage Maximum under certain specified circumstances.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines convey the qualitative intent of a plan in a form that can be used directly by property owner, developer, designer, and permitting authority. Where design standards prescribe precise and usually quantified parameters, Design Guidelines invite innovation in achieving the desired result and, at the same time, safeguard the integrity of the overall vision for the District.

The list that follows addresses large scale, urban design issues, as well as topics at an architectural scale. Through a process of refinement, the District Design Guidelines will become relatively few in number, concise and clearly understandable. In addition, each institution is expected to develop guidelines and standards specific to its property as a component of its campus master plan. These should be consistent with the District guidelines and standards, but would address circumstances specific to each campus.

Development Phasing

Public Infrastructure

Ensure thoughtful direction and timing of public investments in infrastructure to leverage private investments in ways that will benefit the District as a whole.

- Sequence implementation of District public improvements to:
 - stimulate reciprocal private development,
 - enhance the existing open space and trail system, and
 - address immediate and long-range circulation needs.
- Maximize opportunities for shared use and funding of infrastructure projects throughout the District.

Institutional and Private Development

Provide owners and developers with a policy framework that will ensure proper coordination of all improvements with one another and with the plans for adjacent properties. Place a high value on irreplaceable natural features.

- Design and sequence development so that the natural qualities of the District are protected. All development should be consistent with the Plan's identified land classifications:
 - Redevelopment Priority
 - Development Priority
 - Development Reserve
 - Preservation Open Space
 - Institutional
 - Residential
 - Mixed-Use Commercial

District Identity

Gateways

Acknowledge, through design and signage, the points of entry to the District and to institutions within it.

- Treat Bragaw Street, UAA Drive and Providence Drive as principal gateways into the District.
- Treat Tudor Centre, Providence East, Seawolf Drive, Dale Street, Piper Street, Florina Street, Wright Street, Cornell Court, E. 40th Avenue, E. 42nd Avenue, and MLK Learning Center Drive as entrances to campuses and other properties.

Entrance and Orientation

Simplify wayfinding by clearly identifying major destinations throughout the District.

- Provide each campus entry with a permanent monument and landscape treatment appropriate to its context.
- Coordinate standards for lighting, street furnishings and signage throughout the District to create a consistent and understandable circulation system.
- Extend direction-finding signage to trails where appropriate.

District Development: Campus and Mixed-Use Neighborhood

Mix and Arrangement of Uses

Reduce the need for vehicular trips by encouraging service, retail and other support functions close to places of work, residence and study in the District.

- Encourage a mix of uses within blocks and, where feasible, within buildings.
- Public attractions should be located so that public access and activity do not disrupt every day users of the District.
- Attractions should be designed to complement the natural setting of the District and should be compatible with adjacent uses.
- Expand the local street and pedestrian circulation systems throughout the District to accommodate direct access between facilities.

Building Mass

Configure each building to be compatible in scale with adjacent natural and built features.

- Design buildings so that their apparent bulk does not overwhelm the size and character of nearby buildings, woodlands and other open spaces, and trails.
- Protect solar access to significant public open spaces by limiting the height of buildings to the south.
- Avoid features such as large blank walls that increase the apparent bulk of a building.

Building Orientation

Orient buildings to face streets and other public spaces and to conserve energy.

- Encourage active ground floor uses along pedestrian routes.
- Orient buildings and related structures to maximize shared views.
- Provide balconies, terraces, lobbies and entrances facing parks, plazas and special streets.
- Provide links from plazas and courtyards to major open spaces.
- Face doors and windows towards public open spaces. Avoid turning the back of any development on public open space.
- Configure windows to capitalize on natural light and avoid solar gain in summer.

- Coordinate building design with existing trees and other natural features to provide shelter from prevailing winds.
- Orient buildings to create favorable micro-climates for new and existing landscape, and to protect building entrances and usable outdoor spaces.

Building Articulation

Reconcile the need for improved local access between campuses and support facilities with the established character of District development.

- Site and articulate new campus buildings to reinforce the center of each campus as a walkable environment.
- In residential portions of the District, maintain a sense of traditional blocks, street walls and intersections within the established street system.
- Avoid development of remote facilities that would subdivide natural areas.

Public Art

Enrich the maturing urban environment by integration of art in its public spaces.

- Integrate public art into the development projects.
- Use regional and local themes in selecting public art.
- Scrutinize the suitability of art objects, especially memorials, introduced to public spaces for their possible influence on future improvements.

Materials and Signage

Set a precedent for future development with the quality of signage and of conspicuous building materials. It is important that consistent, high quality be maintained.

- Use building materials that suggest permanence and dignity and that are appropriate for Alaska.
- Develop specific guidelines for each institution and the neighborhood development (commercial and residential). For non-institutional development, these may take the form of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions [CC&Rs].

District Open Space

Hierarchy of Open Spaces

Provide for a full range of open space needs in the District. The primary value of some natural space is as undisturbed habitat. At the other extreme are open spaces designed for active recreation. The District is capable of meeting both of these needs and many less clearly defined and shared uses.

- Provide passive and active public open space in the District.
- Consider the relationships between primary and secondary open spaces in the senses of public access, size, habitat uses, and other specialized uses such as nordic skiing and snowshoeing.
- Connect all public open spaces with a network of pedestrian pathways as components of an open space system that extends beyond the individual institutions to the adjacent neighborhood.
- Integrate private open spaces with the public access system to the extent that compatibility with other private uses permits.

Landscape Buffers

Protect natural areas from inappropriate access, from 'visual pollution' such as an open view of a parking lot, and from untreated runoff from developed areas. Natural areas, especially those designated as *Preservation Open Space*, merit special protection, which can be provided in part by planted buffers.

- Favor use of native plant materials, but ensure that view corridors will not be obstructed when trees and shrubs approach maturity.
- Conserve and integrate established native plants in the disturbed areas near development.

Native Landscapes

Reinforce the natural landscape and ecology of the District by use of appropriate materials and techniques.

- Emphasize native plantings in naturalistic patterns.
- Coordinate native plantings adjacent to habitat corridors with mixed plantings in associated streets and open spaces.
- Protect steep slopes from erosion.
- Protect and restore existing wetlands.

- Maintain campus safety and security through selective trimming or removal of trees and shrubs. Avoid use of tall, dense plantings that obstruct sight lines.
- Use native plantings to protect nesting areas and other sensitive habitat from human access.

Habitat Protection

Protect surviving native flora and fauna in the District and encourage their continued presence.

- Maintain existing wildlife corridors linkage among habitat areas.
- Restrict pedestrian access to sensitive areas.
- Minimize the widths of disturbance zones when constructing trails.
- Identify and protect especially vulnerable plant and animal habitats.

Recreational Facilities (Trails, Beaches and Sports Fields)

Integrate recreational facilities with the circulation system to provide ready access for all who live or work in the District.

- Complete the system of local streets and trails to interconnect the other primary public open spaces.
- Vary the spatial experience along trails in response to orientation and to natural and built features.
- Configure and landscape the trails and contiguous private open spaces to create a series of connected yet discrete open spaces, each related to buildings and capitalizing on views.
- Provide public access to the trails
- Celebrate significant points of connection of the trails.
- Maintain the integrity of ski trails over or under vehicular streets.
- Connect campus local trails to the regional trail system.

District Access, Circulation and Parking

Roadways

Design the circulation system to serve all users. In the past, some streets have been built to meet only vehicular needs, conflicting directly with the principles of the current plan.

- Design every street to accommodate automobiles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians equitably.
- Design streets to encourage driving at appropriate speeds, making appropriate use of traffic calming measures.
- Design roads and driveways to conform with the existing topography, minimizing cutting and filling, yet adhering as closely as possible to transit gradient and turning parameters.
- Provide direct connections to the trail system.
- Accommodate the needs of transit to serve major destinations in the District effectively.

Transportation Management

Manage vehicular movements in the District to meet access needs without compromising uses or environmental quality.

- Promote the use of transit, walking, bicycling and skiing for circulation to and within the District.
- Maintain equity between modes within streets and intersections throughout the District.
- Manage parking on campuses to encourage car pooling.
- Control street intersections to regulate vehicular flows to acceptable levels.
- Minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians by introducing controls at busy crossing points.

Public Transit

Promote public transit as a viable mode of travel within and beyond the District.

- Provide transit routes and stops that give public transit priority over other vehicles.
- Provide convenient transit stops that are close to destinations and include adequate seating, shelter and other furnishings as appropriate.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Expand the circulation system to provide safe and convenient access on foot and bicycle between all major destinations within and adjacent to the District.

- Seek opportunities to establish pedestrian connections between the campus and the adjacent neighborhoods
- Design streets in the adjacent neighborhood that encourage pedestrian use.
- Direct pedestrian and bicycle traffic to street crossings with adequate sight distances and appropriate traffic controls.
- Provide sidewalks on both sides of every street.
- Identify and respond to the needs on each sidewalk for pedestrian through-zone width, building frontage zone, furnishing zone, curb and loading zone dimensions.
- Connect all streets to others at both ends to create a flexible grid. Similarly, connect all sidewalks, trails and walkways to one another or to building entrances.
- Provide safe off-street, short-cut pedestrian connections where possible.

Service Access

Provide access for service vehicles that is discrete yet efficient.

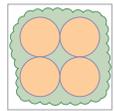
- Locate service, drop-off and pick-up areas away from corners and major building entries, so that they minimize disruption to vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns.
- Discourage loading, service and parking access from primary pedestrian streets and trails.
- Ensure adequate sight lines for maneuvering service vehicles.

Parking Facilities

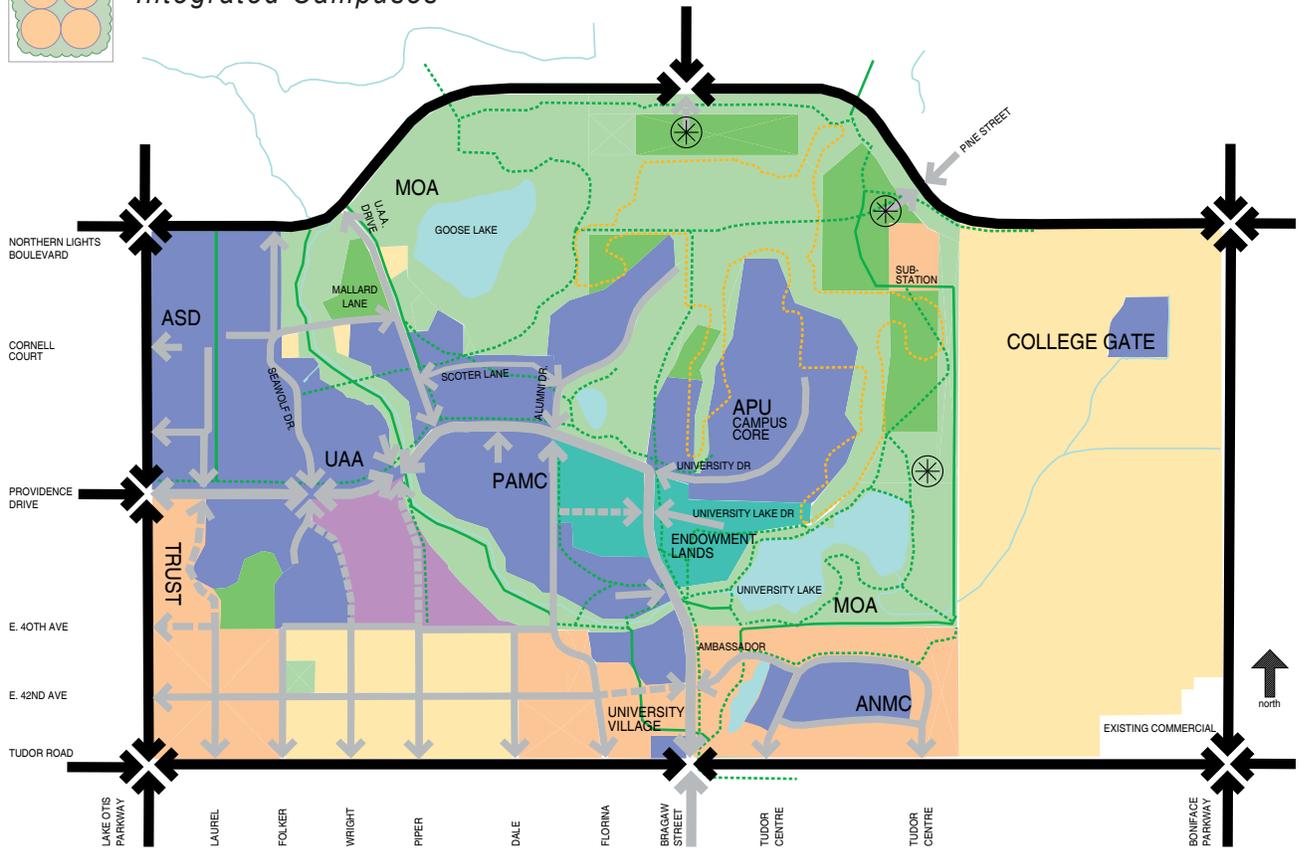
Locate and configure parking facilities for convenience without undue visibility. They should be less dominant in the landscape than occupied buildings or major landscape features.

- Provide convenient but inconspicuous parking.
- Minimize frontage areas used for surface parking.
- Provide landscape buffers between roadways and parking lots.
- Limit parking areas so they are not immediately visible from the municipal trails.
- Provide adequate but not excessive parking at designated access points to trail system.
- Lay out surface parking with clear and direct pedestrian access routes.
- To the extent practicable, use shared parking facilities.
- Discourage parking entrances and exits on pedestrian-oriented streets or close to corners.
- Buffer structured parking at street level with active, pedestrian-oriented uses or landscaping.
- Wherever practicable, locate parking facilities out of public view on the perimeter of campuses to reduce conflicts with pedestrians.

Recommended Plan



Integrated Campuses



Integrated Campuses concept as recommended by the U-Med Steering Committee on February 12th, 2003.

The conclusion of this Plan, and of the Steering Committee for the study that represented all interests in the District, was that Bragaw Street should not be extended across the District. The Committee further concluded that no new vehicular connection (other than driveway access) should be made to Northern Lights Boulevard at Bragaw Street or east of it because of the disruption it would cause to trails and the natural environment. However, vehicle access into the District from Northern Lights Boulevard is not precluded by this Plan. The location of any new access will in part be determined by emerging development patterns. Also, the June 2003 East Anchorage Study of Transportation (EAST) has identified a need for additional access to the District from the north or east within the next twenty years. It is anticipated that the need for new District access will be evaluated at each five-year review of the Plan or sooner if warranted.

KEY

PREDOMINANT LAND USES		EXISTING TRAIL
PRESERVATION OPEN SPACE	APU SKI TRAIL	PROPOSED OR ENHANCED TRAIL
DEVELOPMENT RESERVE	REGIONAL CIRCULATION	DISTRICT CIRCULATION
DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY	DISTRICT CIRCULATION RESERVE	possible access points evaluated by the East Anchorage Study of Transportation
REDEVELOPMENT PRIORITY		
INSTITUTIONAL		
MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL		
RESIDENTIAL		

