

February 29, 2016

Community Discussion Draft Comments

**(Comments unintentionally left out of previous compilation
of the Community Discussion Draft)**

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August 5, 2016

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CAPITAL PROJECTS

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RE: Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan

To whom it may concern:

As you are likely aware, the Alaska Railroad (ARRC) continues the development of regularly scheduled, year-round passenger service from Anchorage throughout the state of Alaska. State, municipal and railroad planning documents all reference ARRC's steps toward providing commuter rail service in the Anchorage bowl, connecting to the Mat-Su valley and Girdwood. While the mapping provided in the draft Anchorage Land Use Plan correctly identifies the ARRC's corridor as a transportation corridor, we feel that it needs further designation as a "Transit Supportive Development Corridor" to accurately reflect the efforts of the ARRC and others to initiate commuter rail service in the future.

If you have any further questions in this matter, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Brian A. Lindamood, PE, SE
Director, Capital Projects

cc: David Greenhalgh
Wendy Lindskoog

South Addition Community Council Resolution Requesting Changes to the Proposed Land Use Plan Map, April 21, 2016

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, the residents of the **South Addition Community Council (SACC)** request the following changes to the proposed Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map 2016 (LUPM):

Whereas, South Addition is presently zoned consistent with the community values held by the residents of SACC, which include low to medium density development, historic homes, sidewalks, alleys, mature trees and walkability;

Whereas, the scale and height of structures are critical factors that define South Addition as a highly valued, historic neighborhood, all future development should be compatible with the current character and scale of the South Addition neighborhood;

Whereas, South Addition residents find the narrative with the current land use map confusing, particularly when compared with current zoning, and find it difficult to understand the implications of proposed designations on the Land Use Plan Map.

Now, therefore, SACC opposes the proposed increase to a high intensity urban neighborhood as outlined on the current land use plan map in the areas between:

1. L to I Street, 10th Avenue – SACC supports height limitations not to exceed 35 feet to protect the sunlight onto the Delaney Park Strip year-round;
2. L to I Street, 11th to 13th Avenue, and on the southeast and northeast corners of I Street and 11th Avenue – SACC supports height limitations not to exceed 45 feet;
3. C to A Street, 10th to 12th Avenue – SACC opposes High Intensity development in this area and instead resolves that this area be designated Compact Mixed Use Housing consistent the area between A and Cordova Streets, and also consistent with the use and values in this historic neighborhood;
4. C to A Street, 13th to 14th Avenue – SACC supports this area to stay multi-family zoning, with a height limitation of 30 feet;
5. C to A Street, 14th to 15th Avenue – SACC support residential mixed-use development in this area with building heights limited to 30 feet;
6. A to Cordova Street, 10th to 11th Avenue – SACC supports the proposed change to compact mixed use, consistent with the historic district designation of this pocket neighborhood;

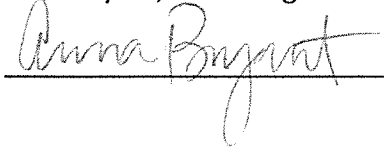
7. A to Cordova Street, 13th to 15th Avenue – SACC proposes this area be designated Medium Intensity Residential development with neighborhood conveniences and a height limit of 35 feet. SACC opposes High Intensity or Residential Mixed Use in this area; it is only a short distance from the Gambell Street business area that is currently underdeveloped.

Passed this day, April 21, 2016 by a vote of 14 for, 1 against, and 1 abstention.

Jeffrey Manfull, President

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Anna Bryant, Recording Secretary

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South Addition Community Council Resolution Requesting Changes to Proposed Land Use Plan Map regarding: Transportation

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, South Addition Community Council (SACC) requests the Municipality address important transportation issues associated with development in the proposed Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map 2016 (LUPM):

Whereas, the SACC neighborhood very much values its safe and walkable character, at the same time the neighborhood is divided by four high speed arterials (A, C, I, and L Streets) that are dangerous and deter people who want to walk, bike or catch a bus;

Whereas, A and C Streets are located near or adjacent to a playground and elementary schools;

Whereas, there is history of Anchorage school children being hit by cars and killed on high-speed arterials adjacent to playgrounds on both Lake Otis and Tudor roads;


Now, therefore, SACC resolves that the Municipality should:

1. Implement strategies that encourage shifting resident's trips via automobile to transit, biking and walking, and discourage drive-alone trips into the City Center.
2. Before adding higher density residential development ensure bus service operates every 15 or 20 minutes along A, C, I, and L Streets.
3. Implement a safe pedestrian crossing for children and adults at the intersection of 12th Avenue and C Street.
4. Reduce vehicle speeds on the four arterials north of Fireweed to 25 mph through effective street design and aggressive speed enforcement.
5. Ensure neighborhood streetscape standards before approving new construction, including curb and gutter, paved alleys, separated sidewalks with landscaped buffers from the street.
6. Make the following changes to LUPM narrative, in "Actions" at page 53:
 - a. VI-2a - Ensure neighborhood streetscape standards before approving high intensity residential construction, including curb and gutter construction, paved alleys, separated sidewalks, landscaped buffers.
 - b. VI-6a - Develop an implementation plan to promote transit, walking and biking, and discourage drive alone travel into the City Center.

c. VI-8a - Protect neighborhoods planned for significant redevelopment into multifamily and high intensity residential by ensuring transit service every 20 minutes supported by safe and convenient walking and bicycle infrastructure with the redevelopment.

Passed this day, April 21, 2016 by a vote of 14 for, 1 against, and 1 abstention.

Jeffrey Manfull, President

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Anna Bryant, Recording Secretary

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South Addition Community Council Principles Supporting Resolution

I. Important Elements of the Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan's Intent

A primary intent of Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan is to recognize the importance of growth intensity, continuity and compatibility of community development. The Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map Narrative (LUPM) explains that the new land use plan offers “guidance when developing other plans and making land use and development decisions, public infrastructure investments, and evaluating proposed zoning changes, in coordination with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan”.

The Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map narrative makes it clear that in order to build a community that meets our development needs, a seamless sense of continuity between unique and valuable districts and neighborhoods must exist. To achieve that end, we must respect the character, value and potential that each sub-district contributes to the whole. The following excerpts from the LUPM Narrative outline the guidance for how a seamless sense of continuity between unique and valuable districts and neighborhoods will be created.

Community Goals Driving the MOA Land Use Map:

Section 1.3 Community Goals Driving this Plan: Compatible Development Goal

“Development that respects the scale and character of existing neighborhoods, contributes to neighborhoods of lasting value and vitality, and is supported by investment in local amenities and services.” (p. 10)

Section 1.4 Coordination with other Plans

“Anchorage 2020 called for Neighborhood or District Plans to help achieve Comprehensive Plan policies, and respond to specific issues that arise in particular parts of the community... Together, the Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map and area-specific plans guide future growth and development to achieve citywide and neighborhood goals, and maintain or improve the essential character of Anchorage’s communities.” (p. 3)

Section 1.9 Anchorage’s Growth Strategy

“A strategy is a long-term engagement, implemented through actions, which involve partnerships among multiple organizations and people in the community—relationships that continue and evolve over time to meet the community’s goals and needs.” (p. 7)

Section 1.9 Anchorage's Growth Strategy, Strategy 8. Compatible Use

The Land Use Plan Map takes into consideration compatibility of uses. This refers to types of uses as well as the physical characteristics of buildings and density of dwelling units, noise, appearance, and traffic. The size, or bulk of buildings, building design, the shadowing and wind effects of tall buildings can impact neighboring structures and lots. Compatibility issues are generally addressed through more specific area, neighborhood or district plans, transportation plans, and through zoning. (p. 10)

II. Key Considerations to Compatible Development in South Addition

South Addition is an irreplaceable, established, valued, historic neighborhood that has been and is still being created with unique nature and scale and close proximity to downtown.

1. The physical characteristics and scale makes it a sought-after place to live for people of all ages. The neighborhood is defined by sidewalks yards, gardens, alleys and tree lined streets, as well as a mix of single-family and medium density historical and contemporary residential architecture.
2. It is an interesting blend of variety of housing -- a mixed stock of mostly one or two stories single family homes, duplexes and fourplexes. It also includes a number of three story larger apartments and condominiums that maintain the nature and scale of the neighborhood. There are few four-story buildings.
3. South Addition offers an intimate and welcoming scale for walking and biking with streetscapes that encourage residents to watch the street they live on, and enjoy safe and healthy community engagement with their neighbors.
4. The scale, sidewalks and green landscape nature of South Addition are extremely important to the city as a whole and should be maintained and supported. As more higher-density housing is developed in the downtown core (as recommended in the Downtown Plan) South Addition will serve as the nearby, lower density, safe, walkable neighborhood that offers needed intimate character and scale supporting good quality urban living.
5. The larger Anchorage community appreciates and enjoys South Addition. It is the home of citywide public areas including Delaney Park Strip and Westchester Lagoon, and many public walking and racing areas. Downtown workers and visitors walk in South Addition for exercise and pleasure. However the high speed on A, C, L, & I Street thoroughfares create an uninviting safety hazard for pedestrians and bikers who use or live in the neighborhood.

6. The Downtown Plan calls for more high-rise and High Intensity housing in the urban core. South Addition should not compete with Downtown for high-rise/High Intensity development. South Addition serves as the nearby, low to moderate density, safe, walkable neighborhood that offers needed intimate character and scale supporting good quality urban living.

7. The South Addition neighborhood plays a valuable role in protecting downtown's important viewshed. From the new Dena'ina Convention Center and most of the major downtown high-rise buildings, South Addition's low heights and plentiful landscaping allow clear views to the south and east of our growing and beautiful city framed by the Chugach Mountains and Cook Inlet.

III. South Addition Community Plan Process is Underway

South Addition is currently undertaking the development of a neighborhood plan. The plan will provide a specific guide to define and promote development that is compatible with the neighborhood. The planning process recognizes that the continuity of character and quality of life from the eastern to western edges of South Addition are very important. It will address development considerations such as the physical bulk, size and characteristics of buildings, setbacks, density of dwelling units, noise, appearance and traffic as well as viewsheds, shadowing and wind effects of taller buildings.

IV. South Addition is Unique, Requiring Its Own Development Solutions

South Addition is a unique and historic neighborhood. Consequently its plan will likely propose development solutions that are different from other areas in Anchorage but common for highly valued historic neighborhoods in cities across the country.

For example, the plan may propose an overlay district accompanied by an infill housing ordinance as a tool to ensure the traditional character of the community is preserved while also ensuring an efficient use of existing development sites. Infill housing ordinances provide the structure for development to take place in the context of the valued qualities of the existing, developed neighborhoods. A variety of compatible housing types are allowed while the ordinance helps guide new infill construction and area redevelopment in a manner that mixes land use densities while reinforcing the scale and physical characteristics of the established neighborhood.

V. Anchorage Ordinance 2015-100 Significantly Changed the LUPM's High Intensity

The approval of MOA AO 100.2015 changed the significance of the High Intensity land designation in the Land use Plan Map by allowing the right to build six story buildings in areas designated as High Intensity regardless of the area's existing zoning that requires significantly smaller building heights. In 2010's Provisionally Adopted Title 21, R4 was limited to three to four storied (35 to 45 foot tall) buildings. Now the coupling of AO 2015-100 with the Land Use Map designation of High Intensity can destabilize existing neighborhood by allowing randomly constructed six story, or 70 feet tall buildings, in existing R4 neighborhoods that are soft mixes of single family houses across from low, two or three story apartments. Land Use Plan Map designations of High Intensity R4 zoning now fundamentally threaten the physical characteristics of South Addition.

Great caution must be taken to not allow the combination of the Land Use Plan Map High Intensity designation and AO 2015-100 to erode the effectiveness of other municipal plans. The Downtown Plan calls for High Intensity urban housing. SACC agrees High Intensity housing needs to be built downtown in order to fill in and redevelop our urban core.

High intensity development should be built on lands already zoned for it, where landowners will welcome it:, such as Downtown and certain areas in Fairview. Building to high densities in a medium density neighborhood damages the neighborhood while delaying High Intensity development where it is already zoned and welcomed.

VI. Transportation Issues related to the LUPM.

Before adding higher density residential development to South Addition, measures should be taken to ensure that streetscapes include curb and gutter, separated sidewalks and landscaping, as well as adequate bus service operating every 20 minutes along A, C, I and L Streets. Vehicle speeds on the four arterials north of Fireweed should be lowered to 25 mph through effective street design and aggressive speed enforcement.

Development should improve South Addition, and produce as high quality pedestrian environment east of C Street as is enjoyed west of C Street. A and C Streets function mostly to rush cars going to and from downtown, with narrow sidewalks right next to speeding cars. There are no protected pedestrian crossings on A or C between 9th and 15th Avenues, and the "Transit Supportive Development Corridor" on 15th has no bus service at all in South Addition. School children and bus riders should have basic pedestrian protection when crossing A and C.

Unfortunately, Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) goals and strategies are heavily weighted to move cars, and have little intent to improve the neighborhoods they transect. Many South Addition residents enjoy walking and biking close to home, but use their cars if

going beyond the neighborhood and downtown because north and south bus service is infrequent, and A and C Streets are inhospitable and dangerous for pedestrians and bicycles.

Along with its usual road construction schedule, the MTP needs to incorporate a number of Anchorage 2020 policies and target transportation investments in areas slated for infill and redevelopment, including several from Anchorage 2020:

- "Design, construct, and maintain roadways or rights-of-way to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, the disabled, automobiles, and trucks where appropriate."
- Improve "Anchorage's overall land use efficiency and compatibility, traffic flow, transit use, pedestrian access, and appearance."
- Build "A pedestrian-oriented environment including expanded sidewalks, crosswalks, street furniture, and bus shelters and landscaping."
- Design "with a goal of reducing vehicle trips and distance for neighborhood residents and minimize traffic impacts on nearby residential areas."
- "Improve public transportation service between residential areas and employment, medical, educational and recreational centers."
- "Design, construct, and maintain roadways or rights-of-way to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, the disabled, automobiles, and trucks where appropriate."
- Place greater emphasis on pedestrian to transit linkages, minimizing individual and cumulative air quality impacts and impacts on neighborhoods.

Placing more emphasis on walking, biking and transit improvements in areas targeted for infill and redevelopment will come closer to achieving Anchorage 2020 goals to provide "a safe, energy efficient transportation system that is designed and maintained for year-round use and that respects the integrity of Anchorage's natural and northern environment," and offer "affordable, viable choices among various modes of transportation.

Unless Anchorage expands its transportation goals to promote transit, biking and walking, and discourage drive alone traffic, additional residential density will burden existing neighborhood streets with even more unwanted demand for parking and traffic.