



# Municipality of Anchorage

Planning Department

Long-Range Planning Division

## MEMORANDUM



G.3.

**Date:** May 18, 2020  
**To:** Planning and Zoning Commission  
**Thru:** Michelle J. McNulty, AICP, Planning Director  
**Thru:** Carol C. Wong, Long-Range Planning Manager  
**From:** Thede Tobish, Senior Planner, Long-Range Planning Division  
**Subject:** Case No. 2020-0043, *Spenard Corridor Plan*

### Planning and Zoning Commission Review and Approval

The Planning and Zoning Commission is scheduled to take public comment on the January 2020 draft *Spenard Corridor Plan* (SCP) on May 18, 2020. For review are the document, included as Attachment 1, and the staff recommendations and amendments for consideration by the Commission. After the public hearing closes, the Commission will deliberate this case and forward its recommendations to the Assembly for consideration. The SCP is to be adopted as an element of the comprehensive plan for the Anchorage Bowl area (AMC 21.01.080) in Table 21.01-1: Comprehensive Plan Elements. Following Assembly approval, the SCP will be formally adopted by the AMATS Policy Committee as an element of Anchorage's *Metropolitan Transportation Plan*.

### Background and SCP Summary

In the context of *Anchorage 2020—Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan* (*Anchorage 2020*), neighborhood or district plans are intended to address long-range land use and development issues at a more focused, subarea level. *Anchorage 2020* directs district plans to include land use and/or residential intensity maps and area-specific policies necessary for implementation and to guide growth and development. The directive for this Plan came from the *West Anchorage District Plan's* Land Use Objective #4 Implementation Action LU-2, which called for preparation of a "Spenard strategic plan".

AMATS partnered with the municipal Long-Range Planning Division and a team of expert consultants to prepare the SCP. This effort constitutes Anchorage's first transit-supportive development plan. The SCP presents a community vision for the corridor centered on Spenard Road that focuses public and private investment objectives to support a direct relationship between land use, transportation and transit-supportive design. The Municipality was fortunate to contract with the Winter and Company team who combined a wide-ranging public outreach effort with their national expertise in corridor planning to craft this Plan. The strength of this plan lies in the consultant's attention to details, which include a structured policy framework, redevelopment guidance, land use, street typologies, and implementation actions.

This public hearing draft culminates over two years of Plan development and review with stakeholder input and direction from the AMATS Technical Advisory Committee. The Plan replaces and builds on the 1986 *Spenard Commercial District Development Strategy* and reflects land use designations, implementation actions, and strategies from *Anchorage 2020* and the *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan*. The Plan's format systematically guides growth and redevelopment for the Spenard corridor. Through its policies, land use designations, investment strategies, design objectives, and implementation actions, this Plan is crafted to support and sustain a lasting relationship between land use, urban design, and all modes of transportation.

The planning team made a concerted effort to organize and assign policies to the essential components of Chapters 2 through 6. Chapter 7 presents a new approach towards Plan implementation. It includes discrete sections with strategies, an action plan summary and timeframe, and an implementation table that matches action items with all the Plan's listed policies.

Funding for this project came from the Municipality's AMATS federal grant program as an AMATS Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) action item.

### **Relationships with Other Municipal Plans**

The SCP is meant to function as an implementation action directed by and consistent with several elements of the Comprehensive Plan. It represents an innovative format for a planning document that interrelates land use with transportation and design elements, with an equal focus on all modes of transportation. This document offers more tailored, in-depth guidance than its predecessor plans presented for Spenard. The SCP builds on the following foundational policies and strategies from the Comprehensive Plan. It also follows the concepts and recommendations for the planning area from the Anchorage Pedestrian and Anchorage Bike Plans.

### **Anchorage 2020**

**Policy 2:** Land Use and Generalized Intensity Maps shall be developed with each Neighborhood or District Plan incorporating elements of the Land Use Policy Map and shall guide land use decisions.

**Policy 9:** New residential development located within ¼ mile of the major street at the center of a Transit-Supportive Development Corridor shall achieve an overall average of equal to or greater than 8 DUA. Individual lot densities shall be further defined through development of implementation strategies. Policy #12: New higher density residential development, including that within Transit-Supportive Development Corridors, shall be accompanied by the following:

- a) Building and site-design standards;
- b) Access to multi-modal transportation, to include transit, and safe pedestrian facilities; and
- c) Adequate public or private open space, parks or other public recreational facilities located on site or in close proximity to the residential developments.

**Policy 30:** Transportation and land use policies and programs shall include:

- a) Multi-modal and intermodal access, including commuter rail and transit service;

- b) Pedestrian-to-transit linkages;
- c) Efficient and safe freight movement;
- d) Congestion management and roadway improvements;
- e) Optimal use of parking;
- f) Minimization of individual and cumulative air quality impacts;
- g) Minimizing impacts on neighborhoods; and
- h) Adequate snow storage.

**Policy 34:** Transit-Supportive Development corridors, as identified on the Land Use Policy Map, shall be characterized as follows:

- a) Average residential densities equal to or greater than 8 DUA occur within up to a quarter mile of the major street at the center of the corridor;
- b) New commercial development within these corridors is oriented to the street with parking on the side or rear of the building when possible;
- c) A goal for bus service within these corridors is 15-minute headways during peak hours and 30-minute headways during non-peak periods;
- d) A pedestrian-oriented environment is created, including: expanded sidewalks, crosswalks, street furniture, bus shelters and landscaping; and
- e) Additional traffic lanes are not considered along these corridors unless there is no feasible alternative to solve a significant congestion problem.

**Policy 38:** Design, construct, and maintain roadways or rights-of-way to promote and enhance physical connectivity within and between neighborhoods.

**Policy 46:** The unique appeal of individual residential neighborhoods shall be protected and enhanced in accordance with applicable goals, policies, and strategies.

### **Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

**Goal 1:** Ensure development of a balanced transportation network for people, goods, and services that provides an acceptable level of service.

**Goal 2:** Provide a transportation system that moves people and goods safely and securely throughout the community.

**Goal 4:** Develop a transportation system that supports a thriving, sustainable, broad-based economy by locating and using transportation infrastructure and facilities to enhance community development.

**Goal 5:** Establish community connectivity with safe, convenient, year-round automobile and non-automobile travel routes within and between neighborhoods, commercial centers, and public facilities.

**Goal 7:** Provide a transportation system that provides viable transportation choices among various modes.

### **Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan**

**LUP 3.2:** Promote the development of main street, transit-oriented, and mixed-use corridors that help meet the city's needs for retail, services, jobs, and housing; and that support these uses and adjoining neighborhoods with access to multiple modes of travel and attractive pedestrian environments.

**LUP 5.3:** Accompany infill development with placemaking investments in infrastructure, such as walkable streets, enhanced streetscapes, parks and public spaces, and other services that improve the quality of life in targeted areas...

**LUP 8.3:** Provide greenways and trail extensions into designated centers and reinvestment focus areas, to improve their connectivity with the trails system and overcome barriers to neighborhoods.

### **West Anchorage District Plan**

**LU-2:** Prepare a "Spenard strategic plan" focusing on development of the Spenard Road corridor extending from International Airport Road to Hillcrest Drive. The plan should:

- Revisit and update the analysis and recommendations of the *1986 Spenard Commercial District Development Strategy* with continued focus on revitalizing commercial uses along the road and retention and enhancement of residential land uses elsewhere;
- Establish a final boundary sufficient to plan both sides of Spenard Road as a coordinated whole using Exhibit 4-2 as a starting point, including the adjoining McCrae Road corridor;
- Consider and expand on the discussion in *WADP* Section 4.1.5; and
- Include community councils, the public, and businesses in the process.

### **Public Participation Summary**

The Public Hearing Draft SCP culminates a comprehensive multi-year public involvement program, which included two interactive community workshops, regular community council presentations, attendance at the Spenard food truck and Saturday Market venues, and both a dedicated website and Facebook page. A technical advisory group of community and business representatives was convened to provide input, document reviews, and to establish a set of guiding principles for the Plan over a year timeframe. The Planning Team conducted stakeholder interviews including meetings with agencies with road and trail jurisdictions. As an AMATS-funded project, the Plan underwent additional review and coordination from the AMATS Technical Advisory and Policy Committees. The Technical Advisory Committee sponsored two early draft plan reviews. The second of these was a Community Review Draft, which focused beneficial technical input from the Alaska Railroad, ADOT&PF, and the municipal Traffic Department, and shaped the Plan's evolution. Results of these outreach elements are reflected in Chapters 2 and 3.

The Public Hearing Draft was released for review on February 18, 2020, for the May 18, 2020, public hearing. The document was posted on the Planning Department website, distributed for review and comment to the affected Community Councils, review agencies, and other interested parties. Staff met with the Spenard Community Council to provide a plan overview and to answer questions. The public hearing schedules were announced on the MOA Public Notices web pages. Comments received to date are included in this packet as Attachment 2.

### **Comments and Issue/Response**

The Department received comments (Attachment 2) on the Public Hearing Draft document from four municipal agencies, the Spenard Community Council, and one member of the public. The Department has summarized the comments received and provided a staff response in an Issue-Response Table, included as Attachment 3. Following the public hearing closure, staff will update this table as needed and add comments made at the public hearing.

### **Department Recommendation**

The Department recommends approval of the January 2020 Public Hearing Draft *Spenard Corridor Plan* with the following recommendations and amendments, which are listed in the Issue-Response Table (Attachment 3):

1. In response to input from the Spenard Community Council, staff concurs that Minnesota Drive can function at least in certain areas in the future as part of what the Plan describes as the planning area's primary active network.

The Department recommends modifying Chapter 3, Figures 3.3, 3.5, & 3.8, to show Minnesota as a future primary active network.

2. Any design changes towards this network designation for Minnesota Drive will require close collaboration with and approvals by ADOT&PF. To ensure this occurs, add the following as a new bullet in the Primary Network middle section of Chapter 3 Policy 3.1 on page 31:

- Potentially, sections of Minnesota Drive in close coordination with ADOT&PF planning efforts and consistent with state and federal guidelines and regulations.

3. For consistency with *Anchorage 2020*, and to support the intent of the Chapter 4 maps and policies, the Department recommends adding the following to Chapter 3 Policy 3.6 on page 40:

*Anchorage 2020* Policy #14 should be applied and rezonings of residential parcels to commercial uses is generally inappropriate unless recommended in the Plan.

4. For additional clarification on the use of a new Spenard Overlay Zone in land use transition areas, the Department recommends adding the following to Chapter 3 Policy 3.8 on page 41:

The Spenard Overlay Zone will act as a tool to provide guidelines and policies on what land uses occur in transitional areas.

5. As an additional planning tool, add the following to the bulleted paragraph in the Aerial Crossings section on page 117:

ADOT&PF and AMATS should create a survey tool to forecast demand and to gauge how likely new crossing improvements would be used here.

6. Add the following new last sentence as another possible tool to support future Building Renovations and Improvements on page 142:

Consideration should be given to establishing a revolving loan fund from Community Development Block Grant sources.

7. Include additional explanatory language about the overlay zone in the third paragraph under the header “Provide Regulatory Relief for Projects that Meet the Corridor Vision” on page 148:

With assistance from the Traffic Engineer, zoning overlays can allow lower parking requirements in Spenard to reflect the fact that future commercial uses will be patronized and sustained by increasing numbers of pedestrians.

8. The Department recommends two site-specific land use designation adjustments to Chapter 3, Figure 3.7, and Chapter 4, Future Land Use Figure 4.5, and one other land use designation change to Chapter 4, Figure 4.5 only. These are depicted and described in Attachment 4. These three map designation changes bring these figures into consistency with the 2040 LUP, and in one case indicates a Plan designation change from the 2040 LUP.
9. In order to avoid confusion about locating future neighborhood serving commercial uses as depicted on the Chapter 4, Future Land Use Figures, staff recommends modifying the title and text for the second paragraph on page 79.

Change title to: Neighborhood-Serving-Commercial Areas

Add the following to replace the last sentence:

- In the first sentence, change Spenard Corridor to Spenard Road Corridor, in order to clarify that these nodes are located just off Spenard Road, not on the Plan’s ¼ mile Corridor.
- Change the last sentence as follows, to more clearly tie to the Chapter 4 Land Use Maps and Policy 3.7:

Additional small-scale appropriate, neighborhood-serving commercial non-residential and mixed-use development should be encouraged is identified on the Future Land Use Figures 4.5 and 4.9 and referenced in Policy 3.7 (page 41). These future neighborhood commercial nodes should be oriented to the on side streets to provide neighborhood access and a transition to the busy Spenard corridor while also establishing small neighborhood commercial nodes.

- Attachments:
1. *Spenard Corridor Plan*, January 2020 Public Hearing Draft Document
  2. Comments Received
  3. Issue-Response Table for *Spenard Corridor Plan* Public Hearing Draft
  4. Department Land Use Map Adjustments

**Spenard Corridor Plan**

**Public Hearing Draft, January 2020**

**(Document can be viewed at end,  
beginning after page 27.)**

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# **Comments Received**

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27 April 2020

Michelle McNulty  
Planning Director  
Municipality of Anchorage Planning Department  
4700 Elmore Road, Anchorage AK 99507  
By Electronic Mail: [michelle.mcnulty@anchorageak.gov](mailto:michelle.mcnulty@anchorageak.gov)



Re: Spenard Corridor Plan comments – Spenard Community Council

Dear Michelle McNulty,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Public Hearing Draft Spenard Corridor Plan (SCP), dated January 2020. These comments are submitted on behalf of the Spenard Community Council (SCC).

Since 2014, the SCC has supported efforts to fund and develop the Spenard Corridor Plan. When this planning effort began in 2016, our council became involved and has continued to help shape this plan as a comprehensive vision for our community. The SCP is unique for Anchorage in having transit-oriented development, active transportation, and neighborhood identities as central and necessary components of the document. We feel these components are essential in guiding our community for years to come.

We have adopted this plan as our own and intend to campaign to have the Anchorage Assembly adopt it as the official neighborhood plan for the SCC. We offer the following comments in an effort to continue to align the document with our resident's vision for our own neighborhoods.

We are thankful for the opportunity to help make this great document even better. Please contact us for clarifications or questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Lindsey Hajduk".

Lindsey Hajduk  
President  
Spenard Community Council  
907-360-3320

## Recommendation Summary

- **Chapter 7:** The SCC supports the inclusion of these new components into the final SCP.
- **Land Use Encroachment:** The SCC recommends incorporating a new policy on land use encroachment to ensure residential properties are protected.
- **Minnesota Drive:**
  - The SCC would like to see Minnesota Dr. better incorporated into the SCP to have vision/goals, framework policies and directives, and design guidelines, applied to the roadway. The SCC would also like to see Minnesota better reflected in the maps.
  - The SCC does not support the so-called “one-way couplet” on Minnesota-36<sup>th</sup> Ave-Spenard and recommends it be removed from the SCP.
- **Parks and trails:** Our council strongly supports connectivity of our parks and trails, as well as the long-term vision of daylighting Fish Creek. We also emphasize the need to use native plants throughout the community near these open spaces and during redevelopment.

## Chapter 7: Implementation

The Spenard Corridor Plan represents a community plan to be implemented for the next 30 years. It is the closest thing to a community vision for Spenard that will exist for the neighborhood. The Planning and Zoning Commission and Anchorage Assembly should officially adopt this plan and ensure its incorporation and implementation into all municipality actions within the planning area going forward

The SCC is pleased to see the addition of sections within Chapter 7, including the action plan and implementation strategies by chapter. The policies and concepts included within the SCP help paint the future vision for Spenard, but the implementation of these components are essential to making this vision a reality. The SCC strongly supports the incorporation of the new Chapter 7 items in the document, with the following recommendations included.

**Chapter 7 Implementation, page 140:** The text reads, *"The project must be fully designed and shared with neighborhood groups, such as Spenard Community Council, although at no more than a concept level. This approach holds the developer to a shared objective, but allows an interim project that is viable. In most cases, the unbuilt portion of the property would serve as surface parking in the near term with an understanding that it would be developed later. This will allow high intensity projects to take place over time, and can enable them to start in the near term with currently feasible partial projects."*

However, allowing surface parking in the near-term is not any different than what is the current unenforced, but existing, code enforcement policy in the Corridor. We would prefer more

specific guidance for developers regarding "interim projects." What would "interim" time frames look like within the 30-year window referenced in this section preamble?

**Chapter 7 Implementation, page 142:** These sections on Adaptive Reuse and Building Renovations and Improvements are vitally important to the development of the neighborhood's commercial uses. References to Municipal support such as financial assistance, low interest loans, and other similar mechanisms could also include reference to the creation of a revolving loan fund from Community Development Block Grant sources to support small business improvements. This would be added to the section that includes, *"Adaptive Reuse Not all private investment in Spenard should be focused on new construction. There are significant opportunities to reuse existing commercial buildings for new land uses that better support the Plan's goals for the Corridor. For example, a vacant building that housed an auto-mechanic shop could be reconfigured to house a coffee shop or an art gallery. This type of investment should be encouraged and supported by the Municipality, particularly since these smaller, older buildings can help maintain the eclectic and authentic feel of the area as newer development occurs on other sites. Supporting this type of investment may require enhancing flexibility in the zoning code to remove barriers to adaptive reuse, such as required parking. Building Renovations and Improvements The Municipality should support property owners that want to invest in renovations or site improvements to existing properties. Enhancing landscaping, consolidating vehicular access, reconfiguring parking, redesigning façades, fixing deteriorated building elements and adding new outdoor seating areas are all examples of renovations that would further the Plan's objectives. Consider the potential to set up programs at the Municipality or in partnerships with Spenard non-profits that encourage and reward property owners that want to invest in their property. Financial assistance, low interest loans and other similar mechanisms are all possibilities."*

**Chapter 7 Implementation, page 148:** The text reads, *"Examples of redevelopment barriers include requirements for lot size, setbacks, landscaping, easement and parking. Minimum parking ratios are a leftover from suburban traffic engineering of the 1960s. They have codified automobile-only planning and over-parking to the extent that many places appear to be wide open parking lots instead of urban places for people to enjoy. To address this, this Plan recommends legislating parking maximums instead of minimums, and letting developers and the market determine whether or not parking is needed for a site. This is a high priority zoning action which could occur in coordination with a more comprehensive zoning overlay as discussed above or it could be done sooner with a more targeted zoning amendment."*

The SCC agrees and is pleased to see this recommendation referenced and connected in language elsewhere in the plan that supports shared parking zones, such as in Implementation section (p.176) *"Policy 5.29: Promote Compact Parking Design 1. Provide an adequate number of spaces while also minimizing curb cuts and avoiding potential interruptions to vehicular traffic and pedestrian/ bicycle traffic. 2. Locate and design parking to reinforce the transit-pedestrian-, and bicycle-friendly vision for Spenard. 3. Refer to bullet list under Policy 5.29 for specific design alternatives."* Zoning overlays which would allow lower parking requirements

are the right idea for Spenard, where the commercial sectors should be available for patronage of multiple businesses by non-motorized and transit users.

## Land Use Encroachment

Land use change often occurs within the SCP area. The municipality's enforcement team is an important key to ensuring that the appropriate land use designations are followed.

**Chapter 3 Plan Concept/Framework pages 40 or 41:** As the conservation of residential lands for housing is a high community priority, rezonings of residential properties to commercial is inappropriate. Stable residential neighborhoods should be maintained. This should be included on page 40 Changes in Land Use, or page 41 Protecting Established Neighborhoods. To discourage speculative rezones, staff should consider including sunset clauses in conditions for rezones.

**Chapter 4 District-Specific Concepts, Page 69 "Potential Encroachment of Commercial on Single-Family Properties:"** Land use encroachment occurs throughout Spenard, often for speculative purposes from residential to commercial, taking time and energy of residents to fight for residential properties. The SCP is encouraging higher-density residential use, so this concept should be strengthened and turned into a policy to apply to the full SCP area, not just the Central District.

**Chapter 3 Plan Concept/Framework, Page 41, Policy 3.8:** The Spenard Overlay Zone acts as a tool to provide guidelines and policies on what transitional land use can occur. The council supports the distinctions within the overlay zone.

## South District

**Chapter 4 District-Specific Concepts, Page 84:** Major at-grade pedestrian crossing should be placed at Breezewood with a zebra marked, bulb/choker crossing to minimize the distance the pedestrian or bicyclist must cross and a pedestrian activated stoplight. Serious consideration should be given to a pedestrian refuge island at Spenard and Aviation Avenue.

Other considerations should be slowing traffic from Northwood Drive to International, taking into account the deep curves of the road that make it unsafe for ingress/egress from side streets for pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles.

**Chapter 4 District-Specific Concepts, Page 88, Southern Gateway:** This language should be removed from this section, "Improvements to this intersection may also include a future interchange." This is neither wanted nor needed and has been strenuously opposed by the Spenard Community Council for years.

## Minnesota Drive

Minnesota Dr. should be fully incorporated into the SCP to ensure planning solutions are able to address the needs within the plan area. Currently Minnesota Dr. acts as a highway dividing our community, obstructing access across superblocks, and creating high air pollution along its route. This length is just 1 mile long, but improvements along Minnesota Dr. that align with the SCP principles, design concepts, street-edge character, etc., should be applied to Minnesota in this plan.

Opportunities, including in the Metropolitan Transportation 2040 plan offers multi-way studies on Minnesota from Tudor to Hillcrest to test for solutions our community members have long sought out, including reduced speeds (to 35 mph), safer and more frequent crossings, a lane diet, and supporting the daylighting of Fish Creek Road.

**Chapter 3 Plan Concept/Framework, Page 26 and subsequent maps (Figures 3.3-8) Plan Concept area map:** A conspicuous deletion from the plan area map is Minnesota Drive, essentially a 6-lane high speed corridor through the heart of the Spenard neighborhood and Corridor Plan. Concepts around connecting features on either side of Spenard Road itself cannot be taken into consideration without Minnesota Dr., which is an important regional feature that needs to be incorporated into planning and solutions offered in the SCP.

**Chapter 3 Plan Concept/Framework, Page 32 (Figure 3.5) Active Transportation Network map:** The entirety of Minnesota Drive from Tudor Rd. to Hillcrest Dr. should be identified as a Secondary Active Network. There should be safe sidewalks or multi-use path facilities along the corridor to accommodate for people on foot and by bike. Currently sidewalks are narrow and directly next to three lanes of 45+ mph traffic. Neighborhoods throughout the plan area are often segmented and obstructed, leaving the pathway along Minnesota Dr. as the best option for active transportation. Potential intersection changes along Minnesota Dr. should also allow for the active network to continue along the roadway.

**Chapter 5 Circulation and Connectivity, page 101:** The community has clearly spoken against routing northbound traffic from Minnesota Blvd. onto Eastbound Spenard Road, a proposal AK Department of Transportation refers to as "the one-way couplet." The Minnesota-36<sup>th</sup> Ave-Spenard couplet is not supported by the SCC and should be removed from the SCP.

**Chapter 5 Circulation and Connectivity, page 117:** We recommend adding a new survey tool to the red text in this section, which reads, *"Minnesota Drive at 33rd Avenue. A crossing at this location would provide more direct pedestrian and bicycle crossings from the neighborhoods west of Minnesota Drive to the Spenard Road corridor. However, due to the impacts on Minnesota Drive (signal time given to each direction dramatically decreases a road's capacity, increasing the possibility of congestion and queues), this crossing should be implemented only in response to a substantial increase in pedestrian demand. Further study is needed to project the potential use levels of this crossing."* When there is no current safe crossing, such as at

Minnesota Drive and 33rd Avenue, we cannot measure true pedestrian demand. We recommend DOT/AMATS create a new survey tool to forecast demand based on proposed improvements, i.e. if there was a signaled crossing or pedestrian bridge at 33rd and Minnesota and how likely it would be used.

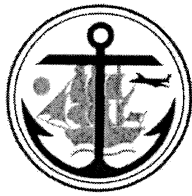
## Parks and Trails

**Page 44 (Figure 2.8) Open Space Network:** There are exciting new components included, like the note about the potential for the Alaska Railroad trail. The Fish Creek Greenbelt and primary active network along it is an important priority for the community. These regional open space features described on page 39 are exciting opportunities to build on the Anchorage 2040 Land-Use Plan for greenway-supported development.

Utilities, including electrical, should have another policy number that includes maintaining native vegetation when servicing their water/wastewater and electrical lines. As of now, there is nothing that mentions the destruction that is happening currently to the mature trees of Spenard by Chugach Electric Association in taking down entirely or cutting trees at electrical line height. They are also taking trees down next to parks that feed into Fish Creek. This would not be a problem if they put their electrical lines underground as they are required to do with the monies collected each month from the ratepayers.

AWWU should be required to revegetate with native species, after laying or replacing pipes, especially when it is in an area that feeds directly into the Fish Creek watershed. (See Northwood Park as it ends at Tundra Court.)





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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** March 23, 2020

**TO:** Current Planning Division Supervisor.  
Planning Department

**THRU:** Kristen A. Langley, Traffic Safety Section Supervisor,  
Traffic Engineering Department

**FROM:** Randy Ribble, Assistant Traffic Engineer

**SUBJECT:** 2020-0043 Review and Recommendation of Spenard Corridor Plan

**RECEIVED**

**MAR 23 2020**

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Traffic Engineering Department has completed review of this plan and recommends that land for adoption with the following comment. Design elements illustrated with in the plan in regards to parking, pedestrian crossings, bike lanes and traffic marking and signage will require review and approval by the traffic engineering department when be implemented for any future improvement projects along this corridor.



Anchorage  
Health  
Department


RECEIVED


MAR 18 2020

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

**Date:** March 12, 2020

**To:** Planning Department, Current Planning Division

**Thru:**  DeeAnn Fetko, Deputy Director

**From:**  Janine Nesheim, Environmental Sanitarian II

**Subject:** Comments Regarding CUP 2020-0043, MOA Planning Department, Review and Recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission for adoption by the Assembly of the Spenard Corridor Plan, January 2020 Public Hearing Draft as an element of the Comprehensive Plan

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No Comment.

# MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** March 17, 2020

**TO:** Dave Whitfield, Planning Manager, Planning Section, Planning Division

**FROM:** Paul Hatcher, Engineering Technician III, Planning Section, AWWU

**RE:** Zoning Case Comments

Hearing date: April 13, 2020

Agency Comments due: March 16, 2020

RECEIVED

MAR 17 2020

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

AWWU has reviewed the materials and has the following comments.

**2020-0043 SPENARD CORRIDOR PLAN, Review and Recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission for adoption by the Assembly of the Spenard Corridor Plan, January 2020 Public Hearing Draft as an element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan boundary centers on Spenard Road and adjacent areas from Hillcrest Drive to International Airport Road, Grid SW1529, 1629, 1727, 1728, 1729, 1826, 1827**

1. AWWU water and sanitary sewer infrastructure is within this Spenard Corridor Plan boundary.
2. AWWU requests that the AWWU Planning Department be involved in any discussion regarding additional need for infrastructure, either water or sanitary sewer in the Spenard Corridor Plan.

If you have any questions pertaining to public water or sewer, please call 564-2721 or send an e-mail to [paul.hatcher@awwu.biz](mailto:paul.hatcher@awwu.biz)



**Kimmel, Corliss A.**

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**From:** Tobish, Thede G.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 3:26 PM  
**To:** Kimmel, Corliss A.  
**Cc:** Wilm, Joni C.  
**Subject:** FW: Spenard Corridor Plan Comments

RECEIVED

MAR 10 2020

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

CK, please add these comments to the folder for case 2020-0043. Thanks.

**From:** Oleksandr Lushchik <oleks.lushchik@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 3:14 PM  
**To:** Tobish, Thede G. <thede.tobish@anchorageak.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Spenard Corridor Plan Comments

Awesome! Thanks for making this more accessible.

Can I give your email out to others who may be interested in commenting electronically?

And if you could, please use this as my official comment:

I moved to Anchorage about two and a half years ago. It did not take me long to find that Spenard was my home in this city. Between the music, the restaurants, and the community, I knew it was the right place.

I am happy that the Spenard Corridor Plan shares a focus on values that I hold; that it shares a vision of a neighborhood with walk-able, bike-able streets: a thriving community with pride in its art and culture.

Thank you for taking the time to put this document together. I am in support of the majority, if not the entirety of the current incarnation of the Spenard Corridor Plan.

In particular, I wholeheartedly support a three-lane road diet for Spenard Road. The section north of Northern Lights Blvd is a great start, but I would love to see that expanded to central and south Spenard.

Currently, north Spenard is a pleasure to walk and bike. That is not the case when you head south across Benson. On a bicycle, I have the choice of riding on cracked, fractured, or absent sidewalks, or I can compete for the rightmost lane with automobile drivers. Neither is a good choice, yet I often choose the former for my personal safety. Drivers often barrel down that windy road at 40+ mph and when a car decides to make a left turn, those following tend to suddenly swerve to the right to avoid losing speed. The current four-lane system creates unnecessary hazards for drivers and bikers alike. A three-lane design with bike lanes on either side reduces all these hazards. Drivers get a protected turning lane where they don't impede traffic behind them. Bikers no longer have to compete with cars for their own lane.

Pedestrians don't have to worry about bikers swerving around them on narrow sidewalks. The only folks that might see this as a "loss" are those that see Spenard as an expressway through this side of town. However, I see this as redundant when considering the grid layout of Northern Lights/Minnesota/Int'l Airport Rd. Those three are far better suited for automobile traffic, while Spenard is the logical choice for a focus on pedestrian/bicycle traffic.

Of course, I may be preaching to the choir here, as much of this is already presented in the report, but I hope that my personal input shows that The Spenard Corridor Plan is backed by constituents who share the vision in this document.

Sincerely,

Oleksandr (Oleks) Lushchik

UBC Local 1281

On Tue, Mar 10, 2020 at 10:26 AM Tobish, Thede G. <[thede.tobish@anchorageak.gov](mailto:thede.tobish@anchorageak.gov)> wrote:

This email comment works or please send another if you wish to say more.

Thank you.

Thede Tobish

**From:** Oleksandr Lushchik <[oleks.lushchik@gmail.com](mailto:oleks.lushchik@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, March 9, 2020 5:52 PM

**To:** Tobish, Thede G. <[thede.tobish@anchorageak.gov](mailto:thede.tobish@anchorageak.gov)>

**Subject:** Spenard Corridor Plan Comments

Hello!

I wanted to get my comment through to The Planning and Zoning Commission (and thus to the Anchorage Assembly) before the scheduled public hearing on April 13th. From the muni memo that I read, it seems my only two options are to either send physical mail or a fax before March 23rd. However, I do not own a printer nor a fax machine and am curious why there is no option to simply send an email. Mostly, I just wanted to show my support for the plan and in particular, for a three lane/bike lane "road diet" for the rest of Spenard Road as well as personal testimony of why that is important to me. Would this be possible via email? Or do I need to go buy some nice stationary for a good old-fashioned letter?

Thanks,

-Oleks Lushchik

# MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE



Development Services Department  
Addressing email: [addressing@muni.org](mailto:addressing@muni.org)

Phone: 907 343-8466  
Fax: 907 249-7868

*Mayor Ethan Berkowitz*

**Case 2020-0043, Spenard Corridor Plan**

**RECEIVED**

FEB 25 2020

No comments.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Thanks,

Karleen Wilson  
Addressing Official  
907-343-8168

**SPENARD CORRIDOR PLAN****January 2020 Public Hearing Draft****ISSUE-RESPONSE SUMMARY**

<b>Issue No.</b>	<b>Page No.</b>	<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Issue Summary</b>	<b>Staff Response</b>
1	General	Oleks Lushchuk	Supports three-lane concept for entirety of future Spenard Road	Concur, <u>no change</u> . See Chapter 5 Spenard Road options pages 104 & 105
2	General	MOA Traffic Dept.	The Plan's design recommendations will require Traffic Dept approval for future projects.	Concur, <u>no change</u> .
3	General	MOA Health Dept.	No comment.	
4	Utilities	AWWU	The project area includes existing AWWU sewer/water infrastructure. AWWU requests direct involvement in future discussion for additional new sewer/water infrastructure.	Concur, <u>no change</u> . This collaboration would be automatic.
5	General	MOA Development Services Dept.	No comment.	
6	26, 32, 44	Spenard Community Council	Minnesota Dr is not adequately depicted on the Chapter 3 maps—it is a prominent transportation feature and that should be highlighted.	Concur, <u>modify figures 3.3, 3.5, &amp; 3.8 to show Minnesota as a future primary active network</u> .
7	40 or 41	Spenard Community Council	Conservation of residential lands is a community priority and rezoning from residential to commercial is no appropriate. Stable residential neighborhoods should be maintained.	Concur, add the following to Policy 3.6: <u>Anchorage 2020 Policy #14 should be applied and rezoning of residential parcels to commercial uses is generally inappropriate</u> .

Issue No.	Page No.	Respondent	Issue Summary	Staff Response
8	41	Spenard Community Council	Policy 3.8 should address the Overlay Zone's role in determining what land use occurs in transition areas.	<b>Concur</b> , add the following to Policy 3.8: <u>The Overlay Zone acts as a tool to provide guidelines and policies on what transitional land uses occur.</u>
9	44	Spenard Community Council	When servicing utility easements, the utility companies should maintain existing or use native vegetation.	Staff concurs and since the utilities generally strive to minimize clearing and use native species as applied in Title 21, there is not a need to create a new policy. <u>No change.</u>
10	69	Spenard Community Council	The second paragraph of Policy 4.8 should be strengthened into a new policy and applied throughout the three districts.	Concur, but the staff response to comment #8 above accomplishes this recommendation. <u>No change.</u>
11	84	Spenard Community Council	Add an at-grade crossing of Spenard Road at Breezewood and consider adding pedestrian refuge at Spenard and Aviation Avenue.	These concepts along with the call for traffic-calming techniques are already included in Policy 4.16. <u>No change.</u>
12	88	Spenard Community Council	Remove the last sentence in the paragraph labeled Southern Gateway, which references future interchange improvements.	Staff understands the Spenard Community Council does not support this concept. Staff concurs with ADOT&PF's recommendation to show potential future interchange changes. This language does not pre-suppose when or what the changes might be, which will follow a rigorous public process. <u>No change.</u>



Issue No.	Page No.	Respondent	Issue Summary	Staff Response
13	102/104	Spenard Community Council	Remove references and graphic that discuss the ADOT&PF 36 <sup>th</sup> Avenue one-way couplet. Not supported by the Council.	<u>No change.</u> AODT&PF sees this feature as a potential viable solution to safety and congestion issues here. The Plan is neutral on the design, which will follow a public process.
14	117	Spenard Community Council	The Council recommends adding a new survey tool to forecast demand for improvements for the Minnesota Dr at 33 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue crossing paragraph	Concur, add the following as a new last sentence in the Minnesota Drive at 33 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue paragraph: <u>ADOT and AMATS should create a survey tool to forecast demand and to gauge how likely new crossing improvements would be used.</u>
15	140	Spenard Community Council	In the top paragraph, more definition is needed for the concept of interim projects in phased developments.	Phasing new developments over time, which usually is applied through entitlements, allows for lesser intensities on an interim timeframe. Phasing and interim uses are recommended in the Plan as a redevelopment strategies Landowners and the market control how and when redevelopment to higher intensities happens. By-right developments at lesser intensities can use service parking on lots if consistent with Title 21. It would be difficult for the Plan to mandate a definition to interim uses. <u>No change.</u>

Issue No.	Page No.	Respondent	Issue Summary	Staff Response
16	142	Spenard Community Council	The reference to financial assistance items to support adaptive reuse and building renovations and improvements should include block grant sources.	Concur, add a new last sentence in the Building Renovations and Improvements: <u>Consideration should be given to establishing a revolving loan fund from Community Development Block Grant sources.</u>
17	148	Spenard Community Council	Include additional language about the zoning overlay in the third paragraph under the header “Provide Regulatory Relief for Projects that Meet the Corridor Vision	Concur, add the following at the end of the third paragraph: <u>Zoning overlays can allow lower parking requirements in Spenard where future commercial uses will be patronized and sustained by increasing numbers of pedestrian.</u>

- Planning Staff Recommended Changes to Public Hearing Draft Figures 3.7 and 4.5:  
(numbers correspond to the numbered areas outlined in black and re-colored on the map.)
- 1. Correct land use designation on Kiwanis Fish Creek Park from “Compact Mixed Residential-Medium” to “Park, Natural Area or Open Space,” to reflect the 2040 LUP land use designation of this dedicated parkland.
  - 2. Correct the land use designation for the residential properties abutting Kiwanis Fish Creek Park to its east and north from Compact Mixed Residential-Medium to “Compact Mixed Residential-Low,” to better reflect the existing housing, R-1 and R-2M zoning, and the 2040 LUP. This corrects an inadvertent deviation from these to a higher-density residential designation than intended.
  - 3. (Figure 4.5 only) Add diagonal line pattern to the southernmost four residentially-designated lots on Arkansas Drive to indicate their SCP designation is a change from the 2040 LUP.

