CHAPTER 4

Land Use Concept Plan

Land Use Concept Plan

Guiding Anchorage's Growth

Where will new residents settle over the next 20 years? Where will people work, shop, and play? How will Anchorage look? Will there be room to grow? This chapter outlines the framework for answering these questions.

The most important land use planning issue for the Anchorage Bowl is room to grow—not only for homes, but for business, industry, and public uses. While the basic land use patterns in the Anchorage Bowl have been established, efficient use of the remaining vacant and underdeveloped lands is critical for Anchorage to remain the Southcentral Region's workplace, and economic and cultural center.

There has been a longstanding recognition that growth within the Anchorage Bowl is physically limited by the natural features of mountains and water. As the city builds out to its natural limits, more development is taking place outside the Bowl in nearby Chugiak-Eagle River and in the Palmer-Wasilla area. A connection across Knik Arm between Point MacKenzie and Anchorage, which would open thousands of acres to development, remains under discussion.

The Municipality of Anchorage is reaching a

Community Expansion - Other Options

Military land, Fire Island, and Point MacKenzie—how could these and other options affect Anchorage's ability to expand?

The amount of land in the Anchorage Bowl that is available for development is limited. But, surplusing of military land, construction of a causeway or bridge to Fire Island, or establishing ferry service to Point MacKenzie could increase the available supply of land. However, all of these possibilities are speculative and largely outside municipal control.

It would be unwise to base this Comprehensive Plan on the chance that one or more of these options might become reality during the next twenty years. If such an opportunity for expansion does arise, Anchorage's growth options will be reassessed, and the Comprehensive Plan will be revised to reflect those changes.

major crossroad as the amount of remaining undeveloped land continues to decrease, and older developed areas continue to age. As a result, the coming years will mark a major turning point for the Municipality. Will the emphasis be placed on opening new areas to growth outside the Bowl; or will the emphasis be placed on upgrading / replacing older development with new here in the Bowl? Will new private investment outside the Bowl create disinvestment in the older portions of Anchorage? The answers—in the form of decisions on land use and transportation policy, standards for new development, and investment in capital improvements—will have major economic, social, and fiscal ramifications for the Municipality in the years ahead. In short, they will affect the future quality of life in Anchorage.

This chapter presents land use and design principles for planning and managing growth. Together, the Land Use Concept Plan and the Planning Principles set a new direction for Anchorage.

The **Anchorage 2020** Land Use Concept Plan is the result of a comprehensive planning process, which integrated public involvement with analyses of population, economic, and land use trends. Initially, a vision for Anchorage's future led to the creation of a broad set of goals. To help develop strategies for achieving those goals, several alternatives for Anchorage's long-range growth and development were assessed. After consideration of public comment, planning issues, and policy choices, a preferred scenario was prepared.

The Land Use Concept Plan portrays the preferred land use scenario. It consists of three maps that address major new land use policies, growth allocation, and open space conservation possibilities. The Land Use Concept Plan provides the basis for developing subsequent land use and residential intensity maps, but in itself is not a zoning map. The **Anchorage 2020** plan seeks to reflect the community's consensus on changes to land use policy. Consensus on policy then lends itself to the next step—implementation measures.

What Are Some of the Possible Choices for Future Anchorage?

Four alternative growth scenarios for the Anchorage Bowl in 2020 were developed and presented for public review. The scenarios represented broad land use choices. They were designed to:

- Stimulate public discussion about critical land planning issues;
- Provide choices among land planning alternatives; and
- Help set priorities for competing land use goals.

The four alternative growth scenarios were:

1. **Current Trends** – Existing land use policies and development trends continue.
2. **Neighborhoods** – Neighborhoods are the most important aspect of community life. Schools, parks, and neighborhood business districts become strong focal points. Each neighborhood supports a mix of housing and community activities.
3. **Urban Transition** – Downtown, Midtown, and older in-town neighborhoods develop a more intensive urban character. Initiatives to foster more intense mixed-use development and neighborhood renewal in the northern half of the Bowl are introduced. Suburban / rural neighborhood character in South Anchorage is retained.
4. **Slow Growth / Satellites** – Slower population and residential growth in the Anchorage Bowl are promoted to conserve open space and retain established neighborhood character. Anchorage functions more as a regional workplace and marketplace for fast-growing residential communities in Chugiak-Eagle River and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

The four alternative scenarios are shown in greater detail in the Appendix.

Public Review of Alternative Growth Scenarios

Brochures featuring four alternative growth scenarios were widely circulated for public review. Thousands of copies were distributed largely as inserts in the local newspaper. The scenarios were also posted on the municipal website.

The Planning Department sponsored seven workshops and hosted five open houses for public review of the scenarios. Written comments were also requested. Over 500 people participated in the review process.

Each scenario elicited a variety of comments, for and against. All comments were compiled and analyzed to determine preferences in scenarios and scenario features. A compilation of these comments is available from the Planning Department.

Preferred Scenario

When presented with the four alternative scenarios, the community voiced a broad consensus in favor of the urban features and neighborhood diversity of the Urban Transition Scenario. Strong support was also given to the neighborhood enhancement elements of the Neighborhoods Scenario. There was near unanimous backing for parks, recreation, and open space, and strong support for retaining Anchorage's unique natural setting. Finally, there was widespread agreement that significant land use planning policy changes were desirable and advisable to sustain Anchorage in the future. "Business as usual" planning and development practices under the Current Trends Scenario were unpopular, as was the reverse concept of intentionally slowing further growth in the Anchorage Bowl.

The Preferred Scenario serves as a framework for the **Anchorage 2020** Land Use Concept Plan. It includes the public's preferred policy choices on the following seven key planning issues, and blends the most popular features of several of the original alternative scenarios.

Bright baskets of flowers line the streets of Downtown in summer.

Seven Key Planning Issues that Influence Future Growth

Seven key planning issues were chosen to focus the alternative scenarios on significant policy choices for land use planning in the Anchorage Bowl. Public policy choices on these issues will help shape future growth patterns. They will set priorities for the future use of undeveloped land and for the reuse of developed parcels. Although other issues are important, these seven issues are pivotal since decisions on these planning areas will affect any future development in the Bowl.

To better understand the components of the Preferred Scenario, the seven key planning issues and snapshots of those issues in the context of **Anchorage 2020** are described next.

Issue #1. Downtown/Midtown

These are areas where most of Anchorage's workplaces, civic and cultural buildings, and the busiest transportation corridors are located. There are significant opportunities for further development in these areas, including commercial and residential redevelopment. The continued success of Downtown/Midtown will affect Anchorage's long-term economic vitality and the quality of life for all its residents. A dynamic and active set of policies will be required to realize these changes.

Downtown connects to a redeveloped and revitalized Ship Creek area.

How Anchorage 2020 Addresses Downtown/Midtown:

- Downtown/Midtown areas evolve to more intensive urban centers, with core office, business, arts and cultural facilities and activities.
- Downtown connects to a redeveloped and revitalized Ship Creek area.
- Higher residential densities and compatible, pedestrian-oriented mixed land uses are promoted.
- Infill and redevelopment gradually revitalize older areas and bring more residents to Downtown/Midtown neighborhoods.
- Unique architectural and site design standards and incentives improve the appearance and function of Downtown/Midtown.
- Midtown Park is developed with Loussac Library as a focal point of Midtown.
- A multi-choice transportation system is provided.

Issue #2. Hillside

The Hillside contains almost two-thirds of the Anchorage Bowl's vacant residential land. It has the most vacant land suitable for single-family homes and is the target of intensifying development pressure. However, much vacant land on the upper Hillside is poorly suited for building due to adverse environmental conditions and lack of infrastructure. Much of the lower Hillside is largely developed, although some scattered tracts with good site conditions remain

vacant. Land ownership and settlement patterns, irregular topography, poor soils, variable groundwater quality and quantity, uneven residential densities, and transportation and utility access problems pose challenges for Hillside development.

How Anchorage 2020 Addresses the Hillside:

- Traditional low-density development continues on the upper Hillside.
- Strategic and limited revisions to zoning and public water/sewer extensions permit additional small-lot subdivisions on the lower Hillside.
- Significant environmental features are protected and integrated into new subdivisions and public facilities.
- Transportation and other land use decisions reduce traffic congestion and trip generation.
- Hillside wildfire dangers are addressed through an active management program.

Issue #3. Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport

Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (TSAIA) has long been recognized as the air transportation gateway to the Municipality and Alaska, and one of the most important economic generators for Southcentral Alaska. This state-owned and -operated airport is a major employer and land use with potential for expansion. In the late 1990s, it supported about 8,200 on-site jobs on 4,700 acres. State strategies plan for increased aviation activity, with more on-site jobs and associated building space needed by 2020.

Once located in an undeveloped section of West Anchorage, a modernized airport now sits among established neighborhoods, main transportation corridors and several of Anchorage's premier recreational facilities. The popular Tony Knowles Coastal Trail rims the perimeter of the airport. Several park facilities exist within the airport boundaries. These municipal facilities are not permanently established, but exist through lease or permit agreements with the State. Because of these complex land use interrelationships and the continued growth of the airport, there are mutual concerns about impacts from land uses on municipal, private, and airport lands. These concerns can only be addressed and resolved through a collaborative planning process.

Existing airport plans show minimal land is needed for expansion beyond current airport boundaries for protection of safety zones near runways, noise abatement, and a future taxiway and snow storage area. Under **Anchorage 2020** alternative land use scenarios, significant additional airport expansion was considered as an option to support long-term airport development. However, airport expansion beyond existing borders has met with public concern. Some community concerns about impacts from activities on the existing airport property remain unresolved. As the Anchorage Bowl continues to develop, decisions about airport and neighborhood growth and development must also address impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, traffic, land use, public infrastructure, open spaces, recreational lands, and the natural environment.

How Anchorage 2020 Addresses Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport:

- Future growth of airport and runway-dependent land uses is managed primarily within the present airport boundaries.
- The Municipality will develop a West Anchorage District Plan through a collaborative planning process involving the State, the Municipality, and the community. This plan will address airport activities and their impacts on the community, as well as impacts from adjacent land uses on the airport. The Municipality is also committed to collaboration with the State on development of the State's Airport Master Plan and Noise Compatibility Program.
- Except for protection of safety zones near runways, noise abatement, and a future taxiway and snow storage area identified in current airport plans, future expansion of airport-related land uses outside current boundaries is restricted to existing commercial and industrial zoning districts. Existing residentially zoned areas are preserved for residential use to accommodate projected population growth in a way that is compatible with the airport noise environment and safety standards.
- Some parts of the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail and Kincaid Park are within airport boundaries. These areas have a high value to the public and should be protected. If any airport lands currently used for recreational purposes under an agreement with the Municipality are considered for use by the airport for non-recreational purposes, the airport and Municipality will conduct a collaborative public process. All other options will be eliminated before making any final decisions that result in the loss of recreational/open space areas.

Issue #4. Transportation Improvements

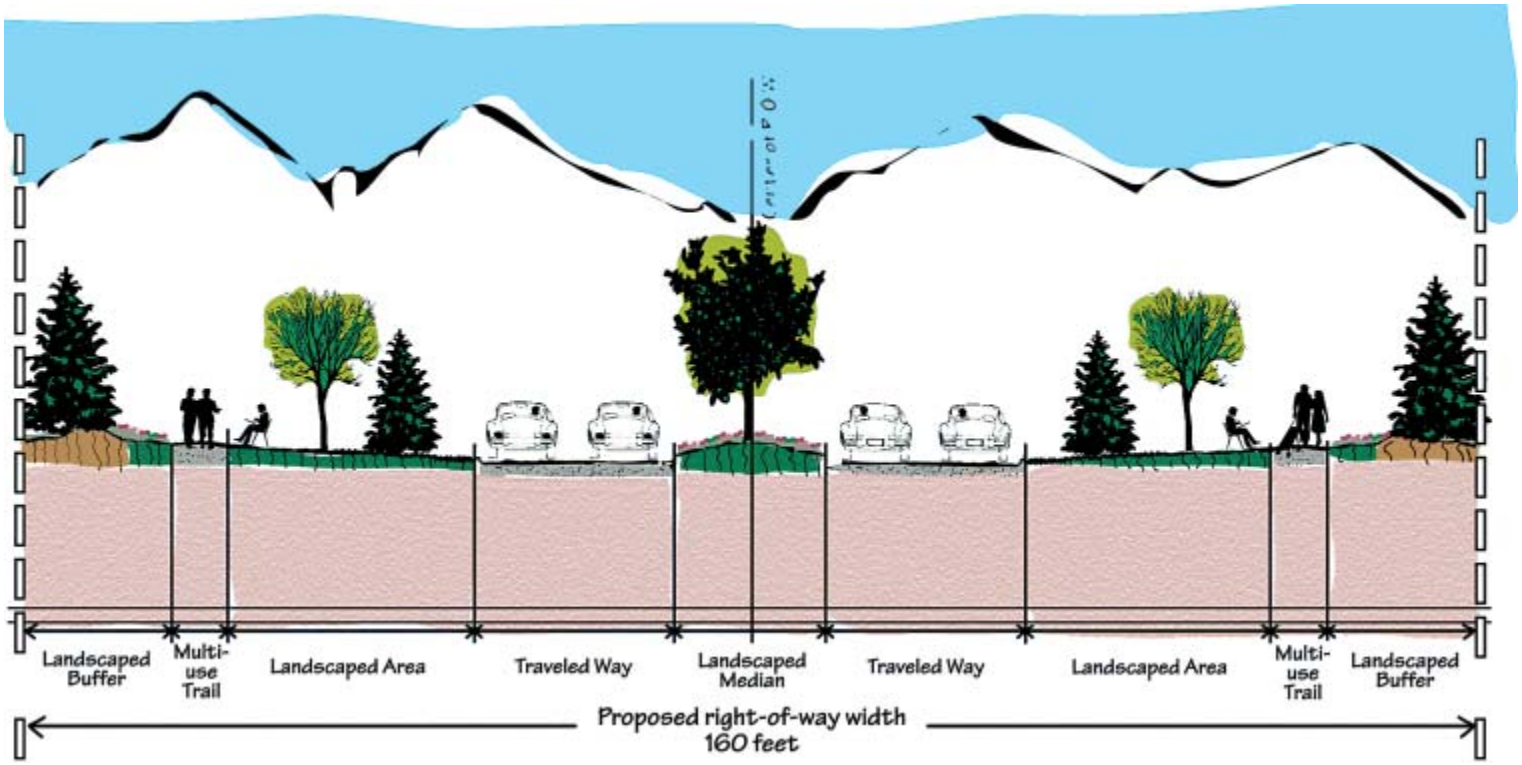
Because major roads, highways, and trails serve and help shape our community, they must be coordinated with land development. Road rights-of-way are a major land use—about 9,300 acres or almost 20 percent of developed land in the Anchorage Bowl. Safe, efficient movement of people and goods throughout town is vital to the quality of life and the local economy.

How Anchorage 2020 Addresses Transportation Improvements:

- Transportation improvements will be balanced among transit, pedestrian, and road improvements.
- Depending on the outcomes of major investment studies and other transportation studies, improvements may be made to selected east-west and north-south arterials.
- Transit service frequency is increased and routes are expanded.
- Transit-supportive development corridors, pedestrian-accessible developments, and multi-modal roadways and trail networks are promoted.
- Freight movement is facilitated throughout the community, especially among the port, international airport, railroad, and industrial reserves.
- Streetscape standards revitalize road corridors for all users.
- Commuter rail and inter-modal transit services tie Anchorage to outlying communities.
- Neighborhood through-traffic movements are minimized.

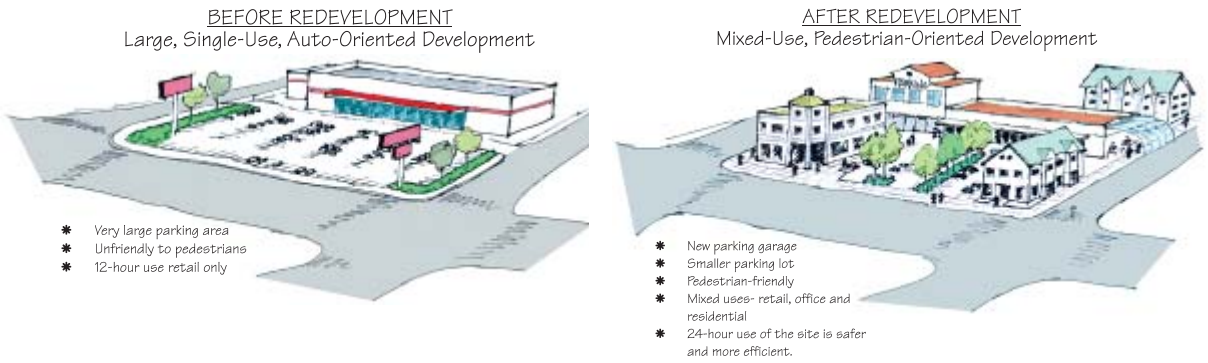
Issue #5. Infill or Redevelopment

Redevelopment of unused and partially developed parcels and obsolete buildings becomes more economically feasible as Anchorage's vacant land base shrinks. Infill, rehabilitation, and redevelopment will reshape and modernize older areas so they can better meet future needs for housing and other uses and activities. These tools also assist with economic revitalization of older areas.



Separated sidewalks and landscaping are major features of the 15th Avenue expansion project.

"Big Box" before and after



How Anchorage 2020 Addresses Infill or Redevelopment:

- In addition to large tracts of remaining vacant land, this issue becomes a priority focus to meet projected growth by encouraging more intensive development where appropriate.
- Neighborhoods and subareas in and around Downtown / Midtown and the University-Medical District are targeted for public / private reinvestment.
- Design standards mitigate impacts of higher densities and address architectural compatibility.

Issue #6. Natural Open Space

Planning for and retention of natural open space were listed as top priorities by community residents. In the late 1990s, there were about 10,000 acres of municipal parks and open space in the Anchorage Bowl. Development pressures and funding constraints pose increasing challenges for conservation and enhancement of open space and its natural qualities.

How Anchorage 2020 Addresses Natural Open Space:

- **Anchorage 2020** formalizes natural open space as a new land use category.
- New greenbelts and parks are added where there are deficiencies to offset higher density developments, or to serve as buffers between incompatible developments.
- Additional parks, trails, and natural areas are included within and between neighborhoods, and between neighborhoods and incompatible development.
- Critical fish and wildlife habitats and other natural areas important to water quality, public access, and recreation are protected.

Issue #7. Chugiak-Eagle River

Chugiak-Eagle River is home for growing numbers of Anchorage workers. The short supply and rising cost of single-family housing lots in Anchorage is accelerating single-family home construction in Chugiak-Eagle River. Anchorage's capacity to absorb residential growth will affect the growth rate of Chugiak-Eagle River and its relationship to Anchorage, as well as regional traffic patterns.

How Anchorage 2020 Addresses Chugiak-Eagle River:

- Population and housing stock in Chugiak-Eagle River grow by two-thirds by 2020.
- Chugiak-Eagle River becomes a more self-contained community with local-serving retail and support services.

The community surrounding DeLong Lake graciously balances homes and natural open spaces.

Anchorage boasts a wonderful trail system that allows for easy access from many city neighborhoods.

Land Use Concept Plan

The Land Use Concept Plan is presented in three planning maps with related text that address major new land use policies, the allocation of additional population and housing, and future open space conservation. Together, they portray significant Preferred Scenario features and address the seven key planning issues.

Land Use Policy Map – Shows new land use policies that designate:

- Major Employment Centers
- Redevelopment / Mixed-Use Areas
- Town Centers
- Neighborhood Commercial Centers
- Industrial Reserves
- Transit-Supportive Development Corridors
- Urban / Rural Services Boundary
- West Anchorage Planning Area

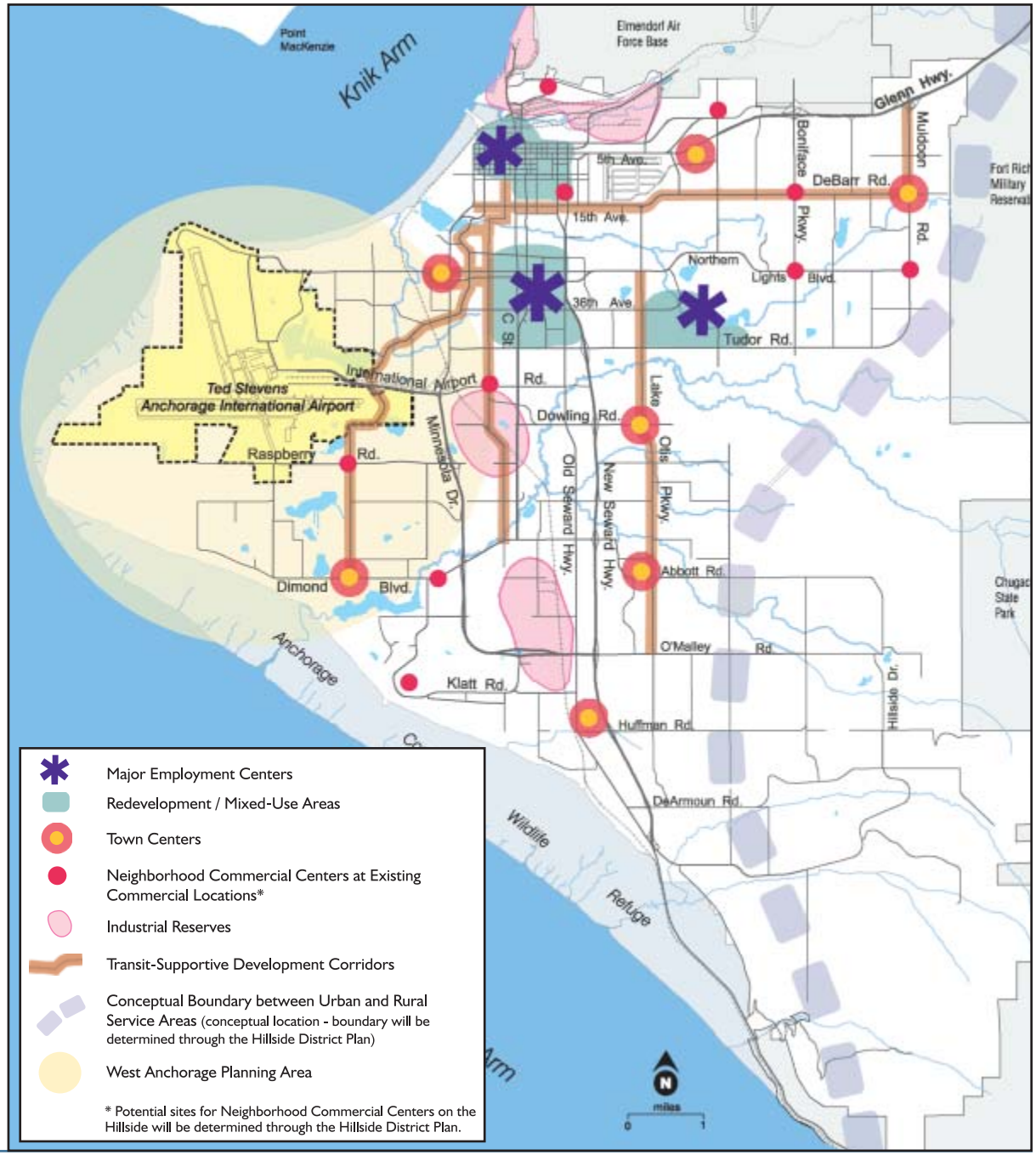
Growth Allocation Map – Illustrates how future population and housing are allocated in the Bowl's five subareas to accommodate projected growth.

Conceptual Natural Open Space Map – Identifies major existing natural open spaces and possible future additions and formalizes natural open space as a land use category.

Land Use Policy Map

The Land Use Policy Map sets the direction for the preferred form of long-term growth and development in the Anchorage Bowl. This direction will be refined in subsequent district and neighborhood plan components of the Comprehensive Plan. The map highlights only those key policies that can be shown graphically—other key **Anchorage 2020** policies are highlighted in the Planning Principles in this chapter and in Chapter 5.

Land Use Policy Map



Specifically, the Land Use Policy Map identifies the approximate location of the following major new urban elements in the Anchorage Bowl: major employment centers, redevelopment / mixed-use areas, town centers, neighborhood commercial centers, industrial reserves, and transit-supportive development corridors.

The Land Use Policy Map establishes a hierarchy of uses. **Major employment centers** will be the most intensely developed areas of the Municipality. They will serve as focal points for the highest concentrations of office employment, together with supporting retail and commercial uses. **Redevelopment/mixed-use areas** have been identified near all major employment centers. Residential redevelopment near these sites will be at medium and high densities to enable more people to live close to work.

Town centers will function as the focus of community activity for smaller subareas of Anchorage. They are intended to include a mix of retail shopping and services, public facilities and medium- to high-density residential uses.

Neighborhood commercial centers are less intense neighborhood-oriented commercial nodes that are designed to fill in the gaps between the larger town centers.

Industrial reserves are intended to ensure that strategically located industrial land is primarily used for industrial purposes.

Transit-supportive development corridors tie major elements of the Land Use Policy Map together. Most of the town centers are linked to one or more major employment centers by transit-supportive development corridors. For example, the town center located near the intersection of Jewel Lake Road and Dimond Boulevard is connected to the major employment centers in Midtown and Downtown by the transit-supportive development corridor located along Jewel Lake Road and Spenard Road.

The overall intent is to create a city in which there will be more opportunities to live a less automobile-dependent lifestyle. If one chooses, one could live in a town center and meet most daily needs by walking to nearby retail and community facilities. During the workweek, residents of town centers could use the high-frequency bus service provided along the transit-supportive development corridors to reach their job sites in major employment centers. Once at work, bus riders could walk to nearby retail establishments to eat lunch or conduct noontime errands without having to rely on a car.

The concepts contained in the Land Use Policy Map attempt to move the city toward a healthier balance between automobile usage and other modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, carpooling, and bus transportation. Currently in Anchorage, residents are heavily dependent on the automobile for getting around. As Anchorage offers more transit service, builds more walkable streets, and develops more concentrated residential and commercial activity in selected areas, growth in automobile travel is expected to slow. Transportation improvements will combine public transit, pedestrian, and bicycle and vehicle travel to ensure mobility, access, livability and sustainability.

Major Employment Centers

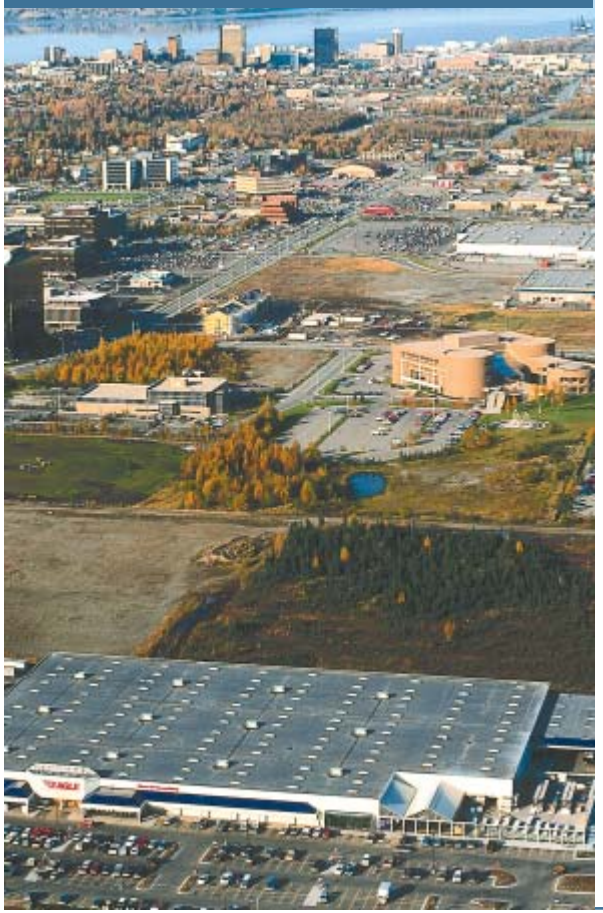
Intent:

Three specific areas of the Anchorage Bowl are intended to provide the highest concentrations of office employment (greater than 50 employees/acre), and the attendant infrastructure to support a mix of high-intensity land uses in order to support a more balanced transportation system. Medium- to high-density residential developments are intended to surround these core employment centers. Higher density mixed-use development that includes residential uses would also be encouraged within the employment center core. There is an emphasis on connectivity among the land uses to include and facilitate pedestrian and transit facilities along with traditional auto access.

Limiting the number of employment centers to the three areas identified on the Land Use Policy Map has an advantage in that it encourages the concentration of medium- to high-density office development in well-defined, compact employment centers. Over the past 20 years, medium- to high-density office employment has been scattered throughout the Anchorage Bowl, resulting in more travel in single-occupant vehicles. This plan seeks to increase employment densities to 50 to 75 employees per acre in major employment centers. Presently, the Downtown area has attained this employment density; however, the Midtown, and University-Medical areas have begun to develop with higher densities and have the potential to accommodate significant density increases. The University-Medical area, for example, is Anchorage's leading workplace for education (estimated 3,000 jobs), health care and social services (estimated 5,000 jobs), and miscellaneous support services (estimated 500 jobs). The 8,500 jobs account for about 7 percent of the total jobs in the Anchorage Bowl. Although other areas such as the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport and the Dimond Center area have high overall employment totals, a relatively low-density employment pattern has been established which would be difficult to change.

Mixing supportive retail uses, such as restaurants, branch banks, and shopping, with office developments is another important major employment center feature. Having a car available at midday is less important

Redevelopment of key business areas is happening in all areas of the city.



to workers in mixed commercial / office developments because those services are available within walking distance. Auto-oriented retail businesses should be discouraged in employment centers as they are generally low-density developments and not conducive to a good pedestrian environment. A current example includes Central Business District zoning, which prohibits auto-oriented retail uses.

Walking should be the mode of choice for short trips within major employment centers. To create a more walkable environment, priority should be given to the development of a pedestrian network. Pedestrian design guidelines incorporating landscaping, street furniture, limited protection from weather and street noise, and pedestrian-scale lighting should be adopted.

New building construction within the employment areas should be oriented to the street and parking lots located behind buildings where possible. Large setbacks associated with commercial and office buildings are major impediments to pedestrian activity.

To create the vitality that major employment centers need to be successful, public focal points such as plazas and parks should be enhanced or added. The Loussac Library and Midtown Park could serve as such a focal point for a portion of the Midtown Employment Center. The incorporation of public art within the centers would also enhance pedestrian interest.

Implementation:

Implementation begins with Land Use Policy #23 (see Chapter 5). Additional direction and details will be provided in each area's district plan: the Central Business District Plan, the Midtown District Plan, and the University and Medical District Framework Master Plan. Additional tools will be new Title 21 land use ordinances, including revised B-2 and B-3 zoning district regulations.

Redevelopment/Mixed-Use Areas

Intent:

Redevelopment/mixed-use areas are distinct sections of the Bowl where redevelopment of underutilized parcels and infill development of vacant parcels will concentrate on pedestrian-oriented residential and mixed-use development that support and connect to major employment centers. These areas are intended to develop into "urban villages," to provide a balance between the housing supply and neighborhood amenities and the concentration of jobs in the nearby employment centers. Connectivity between redevelopment areas and employment centers will include pedestrian and transit links.

Medium- to high-density residential mixed-use areas have been designated near the major employment centers. The intent is to create more opportunities for people to live close to work. This not only shortens commuting distances, but also leads to the creation of more lively employment centers.

In Anchorage, as in most American cities, there is presently an imbalance between the number of jobs in an area and the supply of housing available for workers filling those jobs. One of the areas of greatest disparity between jobs and housing is Midtown, where workers outnumber residents by a ratio of more than three to one.

Opportunities to address worker / resident imbalances through the development of new housing units on vacant lots are limited. In most cases, new housing in these areas will have to be built on under-utilized or redeveloped properties.

To create viable residential communities next to employment centers, additional retail and support services may be needed in these areas. Public improvements, such as neighborhood parks and pedestrian improvements, should also be considered as a means of

encouraging new housing development.

To minimize impacts on established neighborhoods and to support a well-planned and integrated development, consolidation of small lots prior to redevelopment will be encouraged.

Implementation:

Land Use Policies 10, 14, 17, and 20 provide the foundations for the redevelopment/mixed-use concept. Implementation includes development of district plans: Central Business District Plan, Midtown District Plan, and University and Medical District Framework Master Plan. Changes necessary to ensure that residential and pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development are accomplished will be directed by new Title 21 ordinances, including:

1. *zoning district revisions and design standards; and,*
2. *economic incentives such as reinvestment incentives, transfer and purchase of development rights, and tax increment financing methods.*

Evolving town center in the Huffman Business Park area

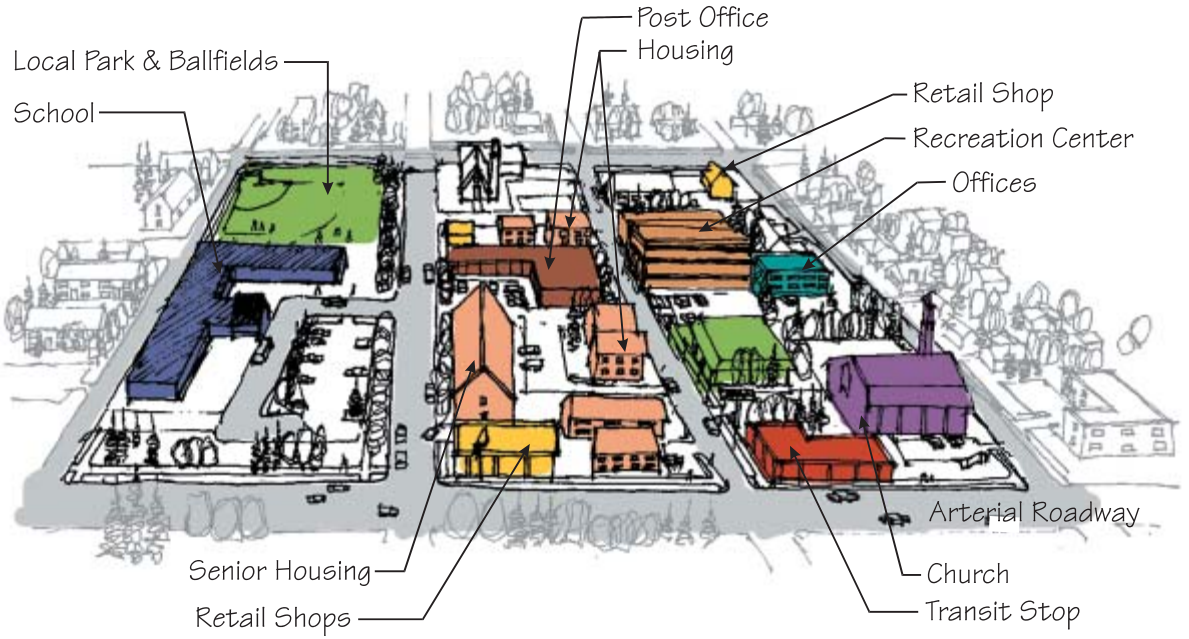
Town Centers

Intent:

Town centers are designed to function as a focal point for community activities for seven discrete geographic sub-areas of the Bowl. They are intended to be located 2-4 miles apart, with each encompassing an area that services 30,000-40,000 people. Town centers are generally one-half to one mile in diameter. Their core is to be a mix of community-serving retail, public services, and public/civic facilities, including and/or surrounded by medium- to high-density residential development. Necessary to their design is an efficient pedestrian-access network connecting the core uses, residential neighborhoods, and transit facilities. Most town centers shown on the Land Use Policy Map already have various elements of this concept.

The town centers should be a focal point for the location of public facilities, such as post offices, community recreational facilities, branch libraries, and schools. Most of the town centers identified in the Land Use Policy Map already have some of these facilities. For example, the Spenard Town Center, located near Minnesota Drive and Northern Lights Boulevard, has an indoor ice arena, a post office, and a school.

A wide range of retail shopping and services is important to the life of town centers. Most of the daily needs of residents should be obtainable from shops located in the town center core, with grocery stores probably being the most important. Day care centers are also important building blocks. The configuration of the shops in the core area should seek a balance between pedestrian and auto comfort, visibility, and accessibility. Anchor stores and smaller shops should reflect the character of the area and be located closer to the street-side property line with most of the parking in the rear.



Conceptual layout of a town center

Without medium- to high-density housing surrounding the retail and civic core, a town center would be just another shopping area. A mix of housing densities, ownership patterns, price, and building types is desirable. In most cases, the residential portion of a town center will provide a combination of duplexes, townhouses, and apartment buildings with overall density targets of 12 to 40 dwelling units per acre.

Unique public spaces should be created within each of these town centers to create a distinctive identity and sense of place. These can take various forms, such as linear parks centered along a creek or wetland, community parks, enhanced street environments, or unique architectural features.

The town centers identified in the Land Use Policy Map were selected because they already have many of the town center elements described above. Additional planning will be needed to implement the entire concept.

Implementation:

Town centers are guided by Land Use Policy #24, and are typically linked by transit-supportive development corridors (Land Use Policy #34). Specific plans will delineate boundaries, suggest preferred land uses, and create design details for each town center. Changes necessary to enact these area-specific plans will be effectuated by Title 21 ordinance revisions.

Neighborhood Commercial Centers

Intent:

This land use concept comprises neighborhood-level commercial/retail facilities that serve smaller clusters of residential neighborhoods than town centers.

This designation allows neighborhood-oriented commercial uses in and adjacent to residential areas. It has been created in response to increased urbanization, the need to reduce the number and length of auto trips, and a desire to improve quality of life in all neighborhoods. These commercial areas are intended to provide small-scale, attractive, and convenient services for residential areas.

Neighborhood commercial centers might evolve from existing commercial developments or be introduced in a residential area. In either case, their scale and appearance should be compatible with adjacent residential development; and they should be highly responsive to the needs and character of nearby residential areas and traffic patterns. Some centers will be more auto-dependent due to the character of their location. The approved uses, site design, and building design should produce attractive, friendly, quiet, non-obtrusive, neighborhood-compatible developments. The actual locations of neighborhood commercial centers are to be determined through a neighborhood or district planning process. Site and architectural design, as well as operational aspects, will be critical to acceptance of these centers into existing residential areas.

Implementation:

This smaller scale land use is introduced and guided by Commercial Land Use Policy #25 (see Chapter 5). Most of the main implementation measures will be generated and customized for each site within that area's neighborhood or district plan. Additional guidance will be developed in Title 21 ordinances, including overlay zone regulations and streetscape and design standards.

Transit-Supportive Development Corridors

Intent:

These corridors represent optimal locations for more intensive commercial and residential land use patterns which will support and encourage higher levels of transit service. These corridors are not intended to represent a transit route map, but illustrate where new medium- to high-density housing development will occur.

The Land Use Policy Map identifies four transit-supportive development corridors, which generally connect town centers with the three major employment centers. A typical transit-supportive development corridor includes the following:

The recently renovated People Mover stops provide well-lit, sheltered places for those utilizing the city's public transportation system.

- medium- to high-density housing (over 8 dwelling units per acre) within one-fourth mile of the major street at the center of the corridor;
- small-scale commercial sites oriented to the street;
- multi-modal facilities, emphasizing bus, pedestrian, and bicycle transportation; and,
- expanded sidewalks, crosswalks, street furniture, bus shelters, and landscape improvements.

Higher residential density is a key to increasing transit ridership along these corridors. Residential densities of at least 8 dwelling units per acre will support frequent, cost-effective transit service. Therefore, land use policies that establish higher residential densities within one-fourth mile of the major street at the center of the transit corridor are encouraged.

Strategically located neighborhood retail uses that are oriented to the street should also be encouraged along transit corridors. The ability to make an intermediate stop at a grocery store or other retail on the way home from work has been shown to improve transit usage.

Transit-supportive development corridors are intended to be multi-modal, with the primary emphasis on bus, pedestrian, and bicycle transportation. Bus routes serving transit corridors should achieve a 15-minute headway during peak hours and a 30-minute headway during non-peak periods. (This reflects nationally accepted standards.) A more pedestrian-friendly environment also needs to be created to encourage short walking trips to neighborhood destinations and provide good access to bus stops. Expanded sidewalks, crosswalks, street furniture, bus shelters, and landscape improvements should be programmed as a part of roadway improvements along these corridors. Spenard Road between International Airport Road and Minnesota Drive is probably the best example of the kind of pedestrian environment that should be provided along transit-supportive development corridors.

Transit-supportive development corridors will still adequately accommodate auto traffic, and some roadway improvements may be needed to handle congested conditions. However, exceptionally wide and fast streets can inhibit transit usage by making it more difficult to cross the street to catch a bus. Intersections with dual left- and right-turn lanes can have a similar effect. As a result, major roadway improvements (for example, additional lanes) along transit corridors should be considered only as a last resort. Expansion of parallel routes should be first examined as a possible solution to congestion problems. If this is not possible, negative impacts on the pedestrian environment should be mitigated to the maximum extent feasible.

Although the Land Use Policy Map identifies transit-supportive development corridors, bus routes will not be limited to only these roads. For instance, it is expected that East 36th Avenue will continue to serve bus routes since it connects the Midtown and the University-Medical District major employment centers. East 36th Avenue is not designated a transit-supportive development corridor because of the limited opportunity to increase residential densities within one-quarter mile of the roadway.

Implementation:

This land use concept is detailed in Transportation Policy #34, and supported by Residential Policy #9, and Transportation Policies #30 and #37. Boundaries for these corridors will be delineated in district plans. Key implementation measures include:

1. *adoption of level of service standards for transit, guided by nationwide service standard norms;*
2. *amendments to the Long-Range Transportation Plan;*
3. *overlay zone regulations which may include: minimum residential densities, streetscape and design standards, allowances for mixed-use developments, setback restrictions, and other land use requirements;.*
4. *transit development plans; and,*
5. *transportation improvement programs.*

Industrial Reserves

Intent:

This designation is intended to identify and preserve strategically located industrial areas for industrial use.

Industrial reserves contain large vacant areas zoned for industrial use and are strategically located in relation to the port, railroad, and TSAIA. For example, as airport properties develop, industrial reserves may become increasingly important to TSAIA as new locations for siting non-runway dependent land uses, such as global logistics centers. Improved transportation links to those facilities will be needed. A significant portion of Anchorage's land base has been lost to non-industrial uses. Non-industrial uses will be limited to prevent land use conflicts and to preserve land for industry.

Other scattered industrial areas within the Bowl may be redeveloped to other uses over the next twenty years. Some industrial areas located within or adjacent to major employment centers, commercial centers, or neighborhood commercial centers will be encouraged to redevelop to commercial or residential uses in accordance with neighborhood or district plans for those areas.

Implementation:

Retention of these areas for future industrial uses will be accomplished by Land Use Policy #26 and proposed amendments to the I-1 and I-2 zoning district regulations. Additional site-specific strategies for some of these areas may be outlined in district plans.

Urban/Rural Services Boundary

Intent:

This plan recognizes the diversity of neighborhood character in the Bowl, including a rural environment in Southeast Anchorage. The intent of this concept is to formalize the location of the rural area based upon the density of development and the level of public facilities and services.

This concept matches municipal government and utility service levels with intensity of development. Upon establishing standards for public services, an urban / rural services boundary will formally designate areas to receive either urban or rural levels of service. Services to be evaluated, for example, include police, fire and emergency medical, water and sewer, storm drainage, parks, libraries, and road maintenance. The urban area will have higher density residential and commercial developments that require and support a wider range of services. The rural area will retain low residential densities with a more limited range of services. The urban / rural service boundary, coupled with adopted level of service standards for each government function, will permit the Mayor and the Assembly to more accurately allocate tax revenue to services and will enable citizens to measure municipal performance. A more precise location of the urban / rural services boundary will be determined upon completion of the Hillside District Plan.

Example of interface at the proposed Urban/Rural Service Boundary at mid-Hillside

The West Anchorage Planning Area encompasses areas where airport activities may impact neighborhoods.

Implementation:

The urban/rural services boundary will be established in the Hillside District Plan, and implemented through some of the Public Facilities and Services Policies and adoption of level of service standards for both urban and rural areas.

West Anchorage Planning Area

Intent:

This plan recognizes a symbiotic relationship between the airport and surrounding community, and that activities from one can impact the other. The West Anchorage Planning Area formalizes a collaborative planning process to address issues of mutual concern.

In response to airport growth, community growth surrounding the airport, recreational uses on the airport, and related airport impacts to the surrounding community, **Anchorage 2020** creates the West Anchorage Planning Area. Along with related strategies, this planning district serves as a mechanism to formally identify, address, and resolve land use conflicts within and near the airport. Policies and strategies proposed in Chapter 5 call for the inclusion of lands surrounding TSAIA into a planning area for a West Anchorage District Plan. This subarea plan will address, limit, and mitigate the impacts of airport developments on surrounding neighborhoods, public infrastructure, recreational sites, and the natural environment. Preparation of this plan will be coordinated by the Municipality and will include representatives from a neighborhood planning team, the broader community, and the airport. The outcome of the West Anchorage District Plan will include a formal interface and coordination with the TSAIA Master Plan.

The shaded region on the Land Use Policy Map shows those areas near TSAIA that are most affected by noise, traffic, and air quality impacts from airport land uses. The boundary should be considered approximate and will be finalized in the district planning effort. The outer edge is intended to encompass those areas of the Bowl where TSAIA activities are known or anticipated to have potential or increasing conflicts with residential, transportation, and recreational land uses. It also includes sections of the Bowl where public infrastructure may be affected by expanded airport activities. The West Anchorage Planning Area also represents areas within an eight-minute travel time from the airport that could support airport-related activities, such as warehousing or global logistics centers. This travel time reference relates to national standards that global logistics and cargo companies use to link their land-based businesses with airport and other shipping needs.

Implementation:

This concept will be implemented through the development of the West Anchorage District Plan as noted in Land Use Policy #28

Fiscal Impact Analysis of the Alternative Plan Scenarios

Fiscal impact analysis is an economic tool that evaluates the public costs for services against revenues generated to support those services. This information, together with information about growth impacts on the quality of community life and the environment, is useful to assess planning alternatives.

As part of the process to evaluate the future growth scenarios, the Planning Department hired Tischler & Associates, Inc., a national firm that specializes in fiscal impact analyses. Tischler & Associates, Inc., evaluated the fiscal impacts of the four original scenarios, plus the preferred scenario on which the Land Use Concept Plan is based. The study covered the operating and capital costs of municipal general government services (cultural and recreational services, police and fire protection, health and human services, public transportation, public works) and the Anchorage School District.

Findings of the fiscal impact analysis indicate that the fiscal impacts of the different scenarios are essentially similar. This outcome is unusual. In most communities, fiscal impact analyses find significant variations in the impacts of alternative land use plans. This was not true for the Anchorage Bowl, perhaps because most new local development will involve infill or the development of areas already served with basic infrastructure.

The long-term fiscal outcome was broadly similar for all scenarios. The analysis did not provide a decisive reason to choose any one scenario on purely fiscal grounds. This provides the community latitude in adopting various aspects of land use alternatives for growth and development.

Growth Allocation Map

The Growth Allocation Map is the second component of the **Anchorage 2020**'s Land Use Concept Plan. Population forecasts indicate a need to plan for 81,800 more residents and 31,600 more housing units in the Anchorage Bowl by 2020. The Growth Allocation Map (pages 59 & 60) and related charts show the scale of added population and housing for each area of town. The Growth Allocation Map will guide the preparation of land use and residential intensity maps to be developed as part of neighborhood and district plans.

Vacant land in the Anchorage Bowl can meet only part of the forecasted housing demand. The balance must be met by other planning strategies, such as:

- requiring a minimum density for housing units on parcels zoned and developed for multi-family housing;
- redeveloping dilapidated or obsolete housing;
- redeveloping obsolete or under-used commercial and industrial property for housing;
- building higher density housing within transit-supportive development corridors, major employment centers, redevelopment / mixed-use areas, and town centers;
- avoiding the loss of new housing capacity from rezoning of residential land for other uses;
- protecting the integrity and quality of housing in existing residential neighborhoods; and,
- encouraging mixed-use development to include residential units in commercial areas.

The population allocation by subarea is based on:

- planning choices and strategies supported by public review of the scenarios;
- the capacity of vacant residential land in each subarea to support new housing, based on current zoning and development patterns; and,
- the potential for redevelopment.

The following Anchorage 2020 planning strategies guide the growth allocation:

Balanced Regional Growth. Future municipal growth is balanced between the Anchorage Bowl and nearby communities in the Chugiak-Eagle River and Turnagain Arm areas. This balance is important to sustain the long-term economic vitality of the central city and to avoid shifting an unfair burden of growth to outlying areas. On this basis, the year 2020 target levels of 81,800 residents and 31,600 dwelling units were used for the Anchorage Bowl. Another 22,700 persons and 7,300 dwelling units were allocated to Chugiak-Eagle River, slightly fewer than projected in the 1993 *Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan*.

Infill and Redevelopment. Infill (building on unused parcels in developed areas) and redevelopment (replacing or renovating obsolete buildings) are desirable to adapt to changing housing demands, to revitalize older neighborhoods, to better use existing public infrastructure, and to foster the development of transit corridors.

Neighborhood Diversity. The plan provides for a variety of residential neighborhoods. Diversity is achieved by promoting a wide choice of residential lifestyles that are generally consistent with the character of established neighborhoods—from higher density, mixed-use neighborhoods in more urbanized areas to predominantly single-family neighborhoods in more suburban and rural areas.

Multi-Family Housing. To meet future housing needs, about 70 percent of new housing units will be multi-family dwellings, compared to about half today. This is a major shift, but it fits with ongoing population and economic trends. More households will consist of seniors, empty-nesters, and non-family members, who are more inclined to prefer multi-family housing. Fewer, more costly single-family lots and slower growth in household income will make multi-family housing the affordable choice of more home buyers. A significant concern in the development of multi-family dwellings as infill and redevelopment is the creation of housing forms that detract from the neighborhood character. Incentives should be provided for the combination of lots and replatting of lot lines to promulgate housing types with more positive relationships to the street and surrounding residential properties.

Environmentally Sensitive Development. Areas where site conditions limit development potential are designated for low-intensity uses or for reservation as natural open space. Low-intensity uses or natural open space are also used to separate incompatible land uses, such as residential developments from industrial areas.

Residential Land Conservation and Restoration. As a rule, parcels zoned for residential development are reserved for housing. Undeveloped residential tracts with disturbed surfaces, such as the Sand Lake gravel pits, are restored to use. Similarly, undeveloped residential subdivisions impeded by adverse site conditions are resubdivided and developed, as appropriate. Finally, vacant or under-used industrial and commercial tracts may be redeveloped for residential use, but only where this type of development is compatible.

Major Transportation. Increased availability of transit and supportive land uses in major employment centers and at town centers is expected to reduce the growth of vehicle travel. Transportation studies,

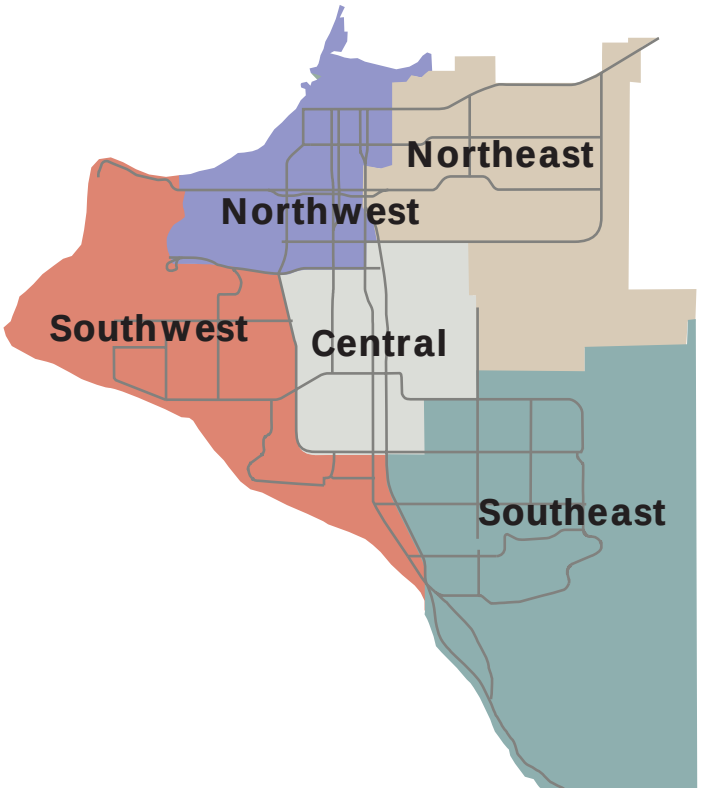
plans and programs will reflect the new emphasis on transit. Transportation improvements will be balanced among roads, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities. (See Transportation Planning – Next Steps, page 64.)

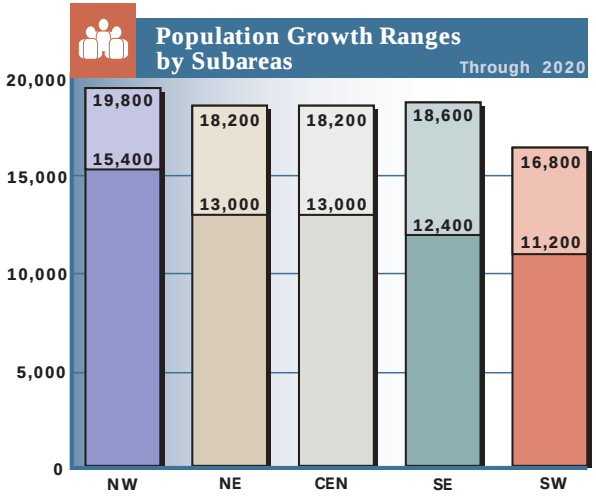
Natural Open Space. Major greenbelt and trail corridors and natural open space are conserved and locally enhanced to maintain the livability of higher density neighborhoods.

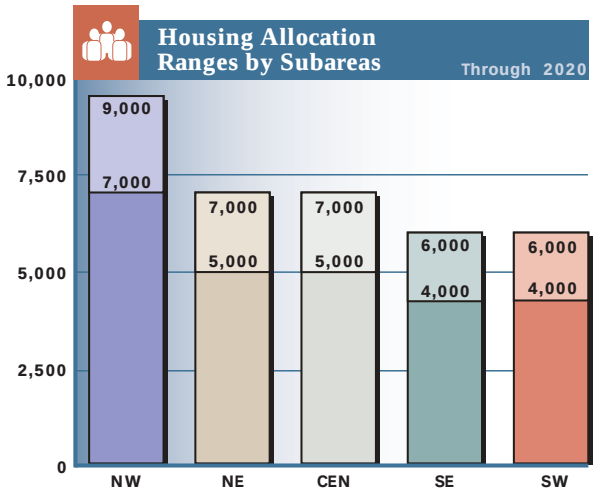
Growth Allocation by Subarea

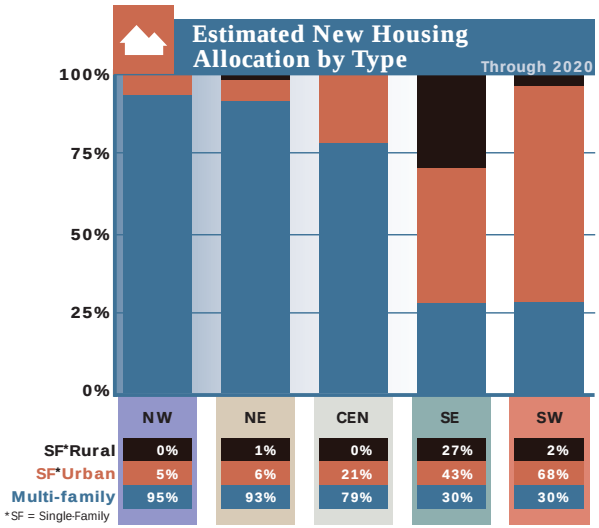
The growth allocation covers a 20-year period. Overall, growth is allocated relatively evenly among the five subareas. Zoning changes and increased housing density, especially in areas targeted for mixed-use redevelopment, are needed to meet future housing demands. But, at anticipated growth rates, the scale of residential land use change is relatively modest and changes will occur gradually.

Northwest. As the oldest settled part of Anchorage, this area has the greatest potential for renewal and redevelopment. In fact, local residential redevelopment has been ongoing for many years. This









Mobile Home Parks

Several large mobile home parks were created between the mid-1960s and early 1980s in response to rapid population influxes associated with major economic activity. During that period, mobile homes were one of the only home ownership options for low-income residents. In 1975, mobile homes represented 14 percent of the total housing stock, but today account for only 6 percent. No new mobile home parks have been created in the Anchorage Bowl since 1982.

Thirty-four percent of mobile homes in these parks are more than 30 years old while another 47 percent are more than 20 years old. According to the *Housing & Community Development Consolidated Plan*, a mobile home typically has a 30- to 40-year useful life before it is seriously deteriorated, dilapidated, or even unsound as a residential unit. The water and wastewater infrastructure within many mobile home parks is also aging and in some cases does not meet current municipal or state standards.

For some residents, mobile home parks offer an affordable housing choice and a desired neighborhood lifestyle. However, as the land supply in the Anchorage Bowl diminishes and these parks continue to age, there has been a trend toward redevelopment of the parks into new housing developments or other uses. This trend is a concern to those who wish to live in a mobile home park and do not want to relocate or cannot afford to move. One important aspect of mobile home parks is that the residents do not own but lease the space where their mobile homes are located. Consequently, there is interest in exploring alternative home ownership concepts. Public comments received during the review of **Anchorage 2020** expressed a need to retain mobile home parks as a housing choice within the Bowl.

area has the most multi-family housing, with high occupancy rates by seniors, non-family households, and single people. There are also some thriving older single-family neighborhoods. The growth allocation assumes a residential revival in the Downtown and Midtown mixed-use redevelopment areas, with a variety of multi-family housing styles and ongoing renewal of older residential neighborhoods. In general, vacant and older or under-used residential and commercial properties are targeted for redevelopment. Due consideration should be paid to noise issues related to air traffic at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport and Elmendorf Air Force Base.

Northeast. Northeast Anchorage is the most populous subarea. The growth allocation assumes: development of remaining vacant parcels; promotion of higher density housing near designated town centers and along transit corridors; additional residential development in the vicinity of the University-Medical area; eventual redevelopment of some of the older mobile home parks, many of which are well located for new housing; and active conservation measures for older single-family residential neighborhoods. The Basher community is reserved for rural residential development. Due consideration should be paid to noise issues related to air traffic at Merrill Field and Elmendorf Air Force Base.

Central. This is an area of diverse land uses, with access to north-south transportation corridors. It has successful single- and multi-family subdivisions, plus examples of incompatible mixed uses and scattered small residential pockets. The growth allocation assumes: infill development of remaining residentially zoned parcels; extensive multi-family housing development along transit corridors; redevelopment of mobile home parks; and conversion of some under-used industrial tracts along the Campbell Creek Greenbelt for residential use.

Southwest. The growth allocation by type of housing for this subarea is similar to current housing patterns, about 70 percent single-family and 30 percent multi-family, with multi-family housing located near designated town centers. The growth allocation assumes that remaining vacant residentially zoned parcels are developed for housing. This includes the Sand Lake gravel pits and other vacant residential tracts directly south of the airport. To avoid loss of future housing capacity, any expansion of airport-related activities into residentially zoned areas would require increases in residential capacity elsewhere in the Anchorage Bowl. Due consideration should be paid to noise issues related to air traffic at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport.

Southeast. The growth allocation generally continues the pattern of single-family subdivisions and low-density residential use that now dominate this subarea. Most residential development within the urban portion of the proposed Urban/Rural Service Area Boundary (see Land Use Policy Map) follows established settlement patterns. However, limited revi-

Well-designed multi-family housing in Northwest Anchorage

sions to existing zoning are allowed, where practicable and cost effective, to satisfy the demand for small-lot home sites. Some medium-density multi-family housing development is assumed to take place along the western portion of the lower Hillside. All residential development in the rural portion of the service area boundary is low density.

Specific changes in the location of the sewer service area boundary and allowances for higher residential densities will be established in the proposed Hillside District Plan. Subdivision ordinance revisions to reduce fire hazards, provide slope development guidelines, and retain natural vegetation are proposed to foster sustainable development.

An example of well-designed multi-family homes

What Is Affordable Housing?

Affordable rental housing is housing that costs no more than 30 percent of a family's gross monthly income for rent and utilities. For home ownership, the combined mortgage, utilities, taxes, interest, and insurance costs should be no more than 38 percent of gross monthly income to be considered affordable. In a healthy, well-balanced community, the range of available housing should match what people in different income levels can afford to pay.

Generally, affordable housing programs target low- or very low-income individuals and families. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines low-income persons as those who earn less than 80 percent of an area's median income. Very low-income persons are those who earn 50 percent or less of an area's median income. HUD established the 1998 Area Median Income for Anchorage at $59,200 for a family of four.

The Municipality's *Housing & Community Development Consolidated Plan* contains a detailed assessment of Anchorage's housing and community development needs and establishes general priorities for the use of federal resources to address those needs. The *Housing & Community Development Consolidated Plan* is reviewed annually to see if any significant changes need to be made and if such changes warrant amending the Plan's goals and priorities.

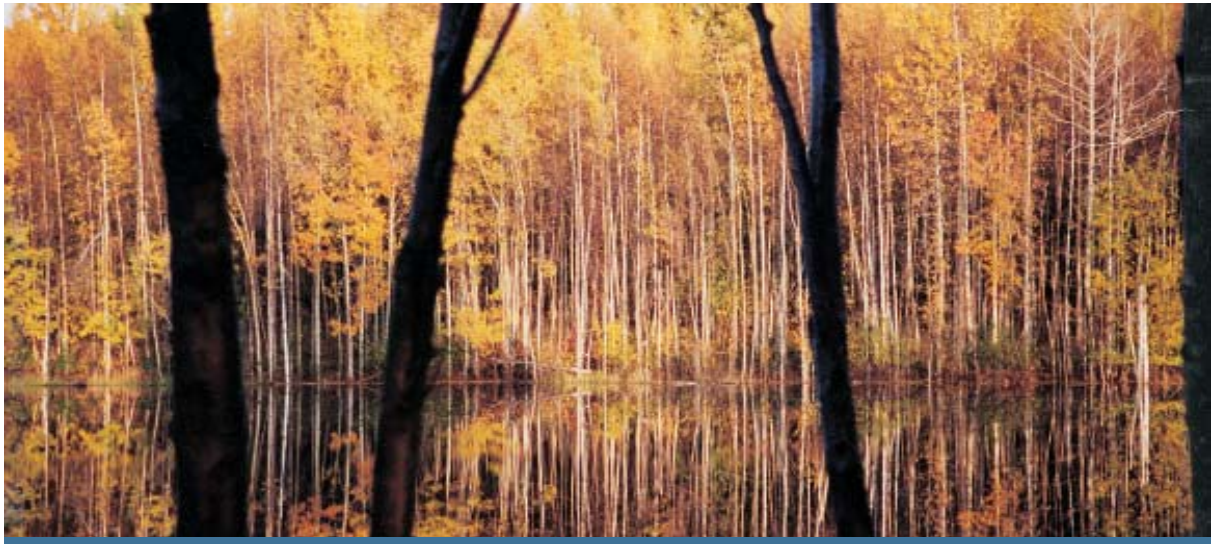
Conceptual Natural Open Space Map

Strong public interest in the retention of Anchorage's natural setting and urban wildlife populations led the Municipality to address natural open space and wildlife habitat in a manner not covered in previous comprehensive plans. **Anchorage 2020** proposes that new open space standards, management plans and methods, and priorities for open space protection be developed through continuing planning efforts, particularly by revision of the 1985 *Anchorage Park, Greenbelt and Recreation Facility Plan* and selective amendments to the Anchorage Municipal Code.

The Conceptual Natural Open Space Map shows an existing inventory of natural open spaces, regardless of ownership, that are important to the community for recreation, water quality, and for local wildlife populations. Due to the scale of the map, attention is focused on larger tracts of land. This map is included in **Anchorage 2020** to initiate natural open space as a formal municipal designation for future park planning actions. Past municipal plans have not consistently distinguished between open space areas, such as ballfields and other active recreational amenities, and natural areas that are important in an undisturbed state.

Natural open space areas preserved through future planning actions will be important to the community for a combination of reasons. They will provide:

- open space connections between and within neighborhoods as community enhancements, wildlife and recreation corridors, and buffers between incompatible land uses;
- natural areas strategically located in parts of the Bowl that are deficient in such areas and/or where future infill and redevelopment actions may put a premium value on remaining parcels;
- sites that can retain and filter storm water, as needed to meet the terms of Anchorage's federal storm water permit, or are otherwise important to future watershed plans;



Anchorage has many beautiful natural open spaces within the Bowl.

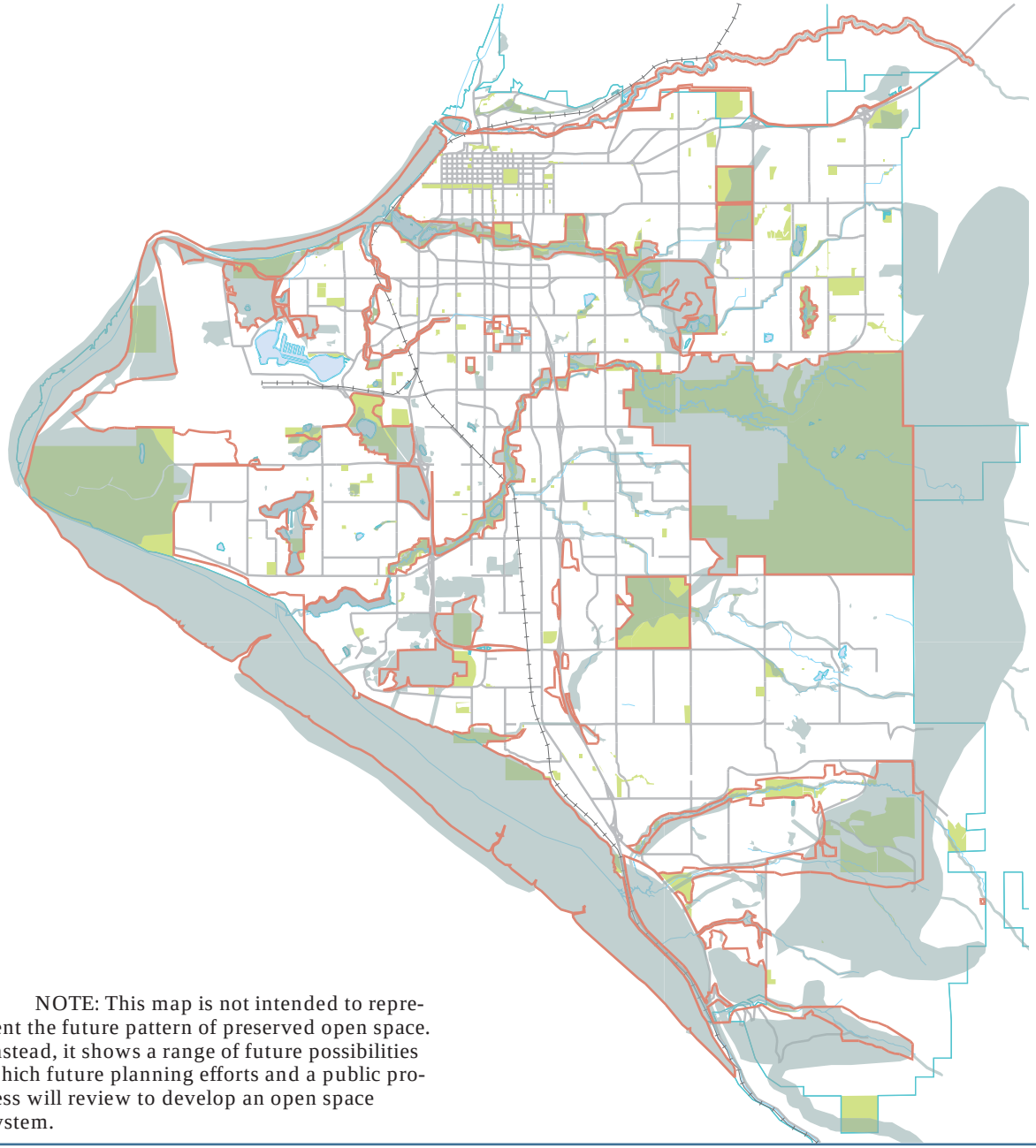
Urban Wildlife

A unique feature of Anchorage is its flourishing populations of moose, bears, and other mammals usually associated with wilderness areas. Anchorage's natural setting and its connection to wildlife are highly valued by residents. As a result, both items are significant components of **Anchorage 2020**.

As urban development increases, there is also an increase in human-wildlife conflicts. These clashes include damage to trees and gardens, traffic accidents and near accidents, and occasional life-threatening situations. Anchorage residents are concerned about these conflicts, but are adamant that wildlife should continue to be permitted to coexist in our urban environment. For the first time, Anchorage's Comprehensive Plan formally identifies the significance of urban wildlife and recommends implementation strategies to protect and enhance wildlife populations.

While **Anchorage 2020** includes an urban wildlife component, wildlife management is the responsibility of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This distinction is recognized in **Anchorage 2020** and the separation of management and habitat protection measures is clearly followed. Through a cooperative effort with other agencies, the State adopted an urban wildlife management plan, *Living with Wildlife.* The Municipality's efforts focus on habitat protection and design issues related to wildlife and the reduction of wildlife conflicts. The State addresses wildlife populations, their sustainability, and the minimization of conflicts. Both wildlife planning elements are linked and supplement each other.

Conceptual Natural Open Space Map



NOTE: This map is not intended to represent the future pattern of preserved open space. Instead, it shows a range of future possibilities which future planning efforts and a public process will review to develop an open space system.

The public, municipal staff, and The Great Land Trust's[1] Open Space and Wildlife Habitat Mapping Project identified over 140 open space sites in the Bowl, including some small parcels that are not shown on the Open Space Map.

[1]The Great Land Trust is a non-profit, non-partisan community organization dedicated to conserving lands and waters essential to the quality of life and economic health of communities in Southcentral Alaska.

Community Preference for Natural Open Spaces

Identified by the public as valuable to the community as a whole for a variety of uses. Compiled by The Great Land Trust and the municipal Planning Department from public workshops and nominations from community councils, business associations and community groups.

Important Wildlife Habitats

Habitats necessary to support local populations of selected species. Also, habitats important to regionally rare or declining species, or for species especially sensitive to disturbance. Compiled by The Great Land Trust and the municipal Planning Department from interviews with local wildlife experts and from scientific reports.

Existing Municipal Parklands

Lands dedicated or encumbered for use as parkland.

- additions to existing, incomplete, or newly established Anchorage Bowl greenbelts;
- areas important to the viability of local fish and wildlife populations;
- open spaces necessary to preserve or enhance Anchorage's unique natural setting;
- sites that give access to large units of open space, such as Chugach State Park and the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge; and,
- sites that provide buffers between incompatible land uses.

Transportation Planning – Next Steps

Land Use and Transportation Planning – What Next?

Anchorage 2020 integrates transportation with land use planning. Beginning with the Chapter 3 goals and continuing with elements of Chapter 4, including the Land Use Concept Map and planning principles, to numerous policies and strategies in Chapter 5, transportation and land use concepts are interwoven. These concepts include:

- the importance and role of year-round pedestrian access;
- integrating neighborhoods and public facilities with trails;
- introducing transit-supportive development corridors and establishing a minimum level of transit service frequencies;
- enhancing freight mobility through improved transportation links to the industrial reserves; and,
- highlighting multi-modal and alternative modes of transport.

Specific solutions for new roads and upgrades will be resolved through the following transportation planning process.

The Traffic Department's Transportation Planning Division has a transportation planning model that integrates land use and long-range transportation planning. Integrated land use and transportation planning requires answers to four basic questions:

1. Where do people live? This defines the origin of a trip.
2. Where are people going? This defines the destination of a trip taken for purposes such as work, shopping, visiting, or recreation.
3. What transportation choices are available? This identifies the possible modes of transportation (roads, transit, trails, freight routes) between points of origin and destination.
4. What routes are available? This describes the transportation system or network of roads, transit, trails, and freight routes between points of origin and destination.

The transportation planning model uses the Current Trends scenario to predict future traffic growth in the Anchorage Bowl.

The Land Use Policy Map recommends locations for major employment centers, redevelopment / mixed-use areas, town centers, neighborhood commercial centers, transit-supportive development corridors and industrial reserves. The growth allocation provides additional land use guidance regarding where future residential growth will take place. **Anchorage 2020** will provide an adequate basis for the development of new land use assumptions to be used in the development of the *Long-Range Transportation Plan*.

As **Anchorage 2020** proceeds, the Planning Department and Traffic Department will develop the *Long-Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP). The LRTP process will include the following steps:

- developing a generalized land use plan and generalized residential intensity map derived from **Anchorage 2020** policies;
- using the land use database as an input into the Anchorage Transportation Model;
- developing alternative transportation scenarios to meet the projected future transportation demand;
- evaluating alternative transportation scenarios utilizing the Anchorage Transportation Model;
- selecting a preferred transportation alternative; and,
- drafting a *Long-Range Transportation Plan* that recommends the preferred transportation network of roads, transit, trails, and freight systems. The location, size and frequency of these routes will be determined by residential and employment compatibility, capital and operation costs, environmental and air quality concerns, public acceptability, and general consistency with the proposed land use plan revisions.

The generalized land use plan, generalized residential intensity map, and the *Long-Range Transportation Plan* will be revised as needed to maintain compatibility between land use and transportation plans.

Anchorage 2020 Planning Principles

Throughout the public participation process, widespread community support was expressed for improving Anchorage's quality of life. Quality-of-life issues and a strong sense of identity are repeatedly reflected in the Design and Environment, and the Public Facilities and Services goals. Planning principles to implement these goals were distilled from the Draft Goals and Objectives and from public comment on the plan scenarios.

The Chapter 5 policies and strategies define how these principles will be implemented. (Most of these principles cannot be represented graphically and are therefore not shown on the maps in this chapter.) These principles are to be used as guidelines that direct future public and private development. They are to be used in conjunction with, and as supplements to, the Land Use Concept Plan.

Following is a summary of key principles related to the design of new development. These principles are the building blocks for the Land Use Concept Plan and the policies and strategies in Chapter 5. In most cases, they represent new land use directions and significant departures from historic trends.

Planning Principles for Design and Environment

- Design versatile public spaces and facilities for maximum year-round use to serve a variety of activities.
- Improve the architectural quality of commercial development through design standards that make sites appear less industrial and more attractive and functional for the user.
- Encourage architectural design that is responsive to our northern climate and seasonal light conditions.
- Adopt design standards that are suited to a northern urban environment to help revitalize streetscapes.
- Adopt design standards that minimize negative impacts from adjacent incompatible land uses.
- Design and landscape roads to maintain and enhance the attractiveness of neighborhoods, open space, and commercial corridors and centers, and to reduce adverse impacts on neighborhoods.
- Design and maintain roads, bus stops, sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails for year-round use.
- Promote community connectivity with safe, convenient, year-round auto and non-auto travel routes within and between neighborhoods, and to neighborhood commercial centers and public facilities.
- Encourage an adequate supply of quality, affordable housing that meets the diverse needs of Anchorage residents and that integrates with other housing to balance neighborhoods.
- Establish flexible building and subdivision design standards that emphasize compatibility with Anchorage's natural setting.
- Link subdivision design with a sense of place to highlight connections to Anchorage's coastal setting, watersheds, mountains, wildlife, and subarctic forest and vegetation.
- Link neighborhoods, schools, natural areas, parks, and greenbelts with open spaces and greenways, wherever possible.
- Conserve Anchorage's heritage of historic buildings and sites.
- Promote retention of natural groundcover, or the inclusion of new cover, to reduce and filter surface runoff.
- Protect Anchorage's scenic views.
- Protect the urban forest and other native vegetation in stream corridors, parks, and greenways; and restore their natural condition, wherever possible.
- Expand community greenbelt links within areas where these are deficient.
- Initiate and coordinate planning for land and water resources at the watershed scale.
- Preserve important wetlands for their ecological, hydrological, habitat, aesthetic, and recreational values.

Planning Principles for Public Facilities and Services

- Ensure that all neighborhoods are served by appropriate infrastructure, which may include utilities, sidewalks, roads, trails, bus stop shelters, and vehicle storage.
- Use public infrastructure to help revitalize or renew aging neighborhoods.
- Make efficient use of existing water, sewer, and electric power improvements.

Downtown Anchorage is a center of activity.

- Adopt level of service standards for the delivery of public services.
- Encourage equitable policies for financing public services and infrastructure.
- Explore new technologies for on-site water supply and wastewater disposal.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive solid waste management system that incorporates recycling and resource recovery, and conserves land.
- Provide good, safe, year-round pedestrian access to public facilities.
- Improve maintenance, landscaping and snow removal for streets, bus stops, sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, paved paths, and associated landscaping.
- Provide parks and sports facilities for a variety of recreational activities in locations that are convenient for users.
- Promote Downtown as the center for commerce, finance, government, arts, and culture.
- Develop high-quality, long-lived educational facilities.
- Locate and use public and institutional facilities to enhance community development and land use efficiency.
- Promote shared use of community resources, such as schools, recreational and cultural centers, libraries, parks, and churches.
- Encourage the following in the location and design of land use: reduce the future vehicle miles traveled per capita; provide better opportunities for multi-purpose trips; increase the accessibility, convenience and efficiency of transit; enhance bicycle and pedestrian movement; and, promote the development of an effective roadway network.
- Identify opportunities for shared infrastructure with military facilities for recycling and possible waste-product power generation.

A summer sunset from the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail