

## Plan Overview

This plan and the Heritage Land Bank have the challenging responsibility of responding to the HLB mission, as well as the needs of the Municipality as a whole, the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, the characteristics of this specific site, and the concerns of residents surrounding their properties. This Site-Specific Land Use Plan aims to meet these competing goals through the following set of objectives.

### Land Use and Infrastructure Plan Objectives

Decisions on the “North Knoll” parcel (HLB Parcel #1-071) are relatively straightforward. The site is steep, difficult to reach and difficult to development. Consequently the plan recommends this area be retained in public ownership. This parcel would be a logical addition to the adjacent Chugach State Park.

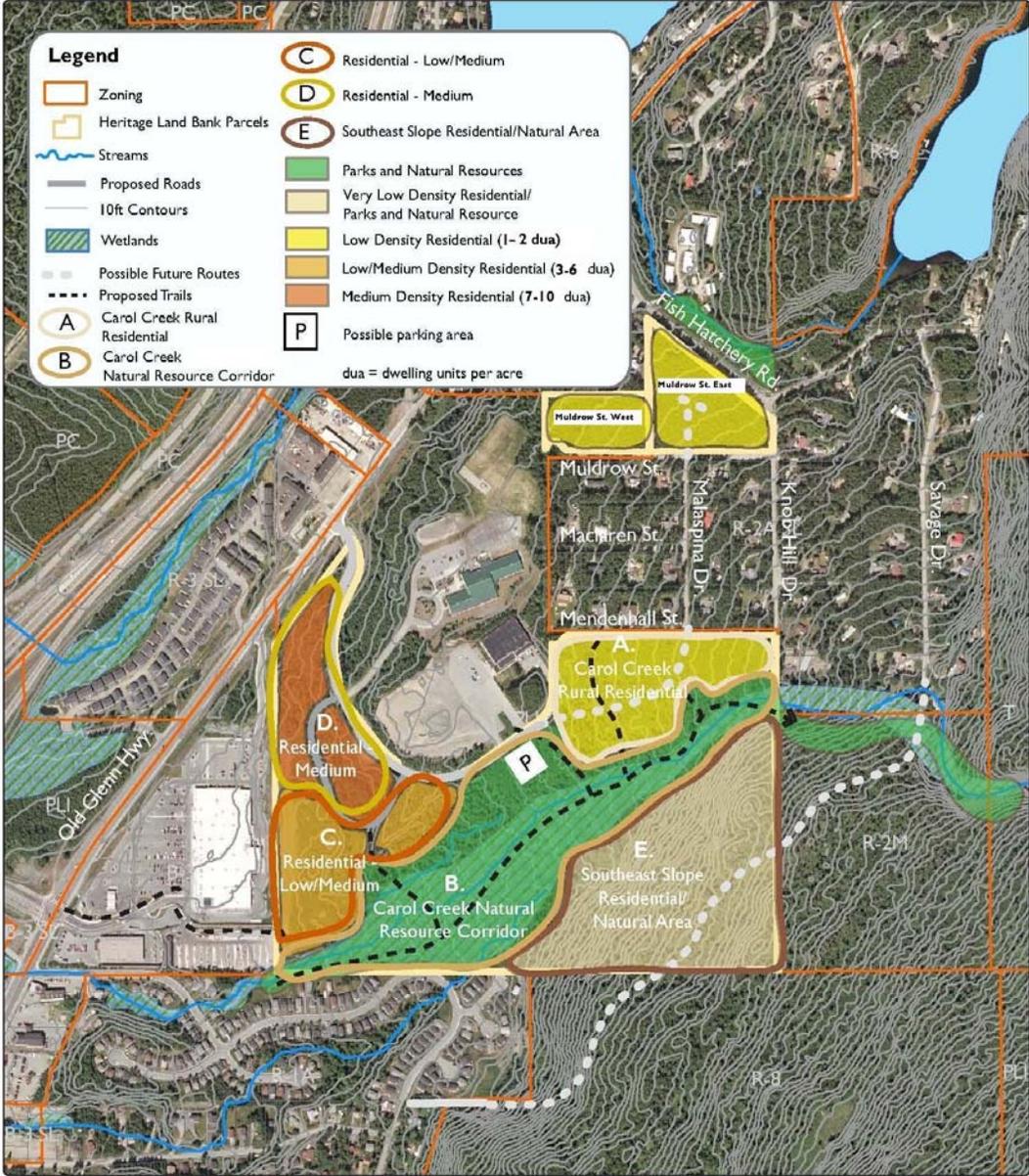
The objectives for the remaining parcels are based on their location in a transitional area between the Old Glenn Highway commercial corridor and the low-density residential areas to the east. Specific objectives include:

- Respect and protect the quality and character of the existing low density residential neighborhood.
- For parcels or portions of parcels immediately adjoining existing residential areas, allow for new residential uses at densities comparable to the existing, adjoining residential uses.
- Protect and work within the constraints and opportunities of the natural setting of the area. In particular protect Carol Creek and associated wetlands and groundwater resources.
- On the portions of the Carol Creek parcel southwest of the McDonald Center and outside the Carol Creek greenbelt (areas C & D on map 2), allow for low and low/medium-density housing. Limited, accessory office and/or commercial uses is also possible in this area, but only under a Planned Unit Development. The planned residential use, along with the school and the McDonald Center, provide a logical transition between intense commercial uses to the west, and low-density residential uses to the east.
- Establish a set of development standards for the low and low/medium-density residential uses to ensure these are high quality residential areas, sized and developed to be appropriate for their location in this transitional area.
- Retain and improve opportunities for access to open space, trails and other outdoor and indoor recreation amenities, for local residents and for visitors from outside the immediate neighborhood.

The overall effect of this package of uses (existing and planned) creates a walkable, multi-use district. This includes newly designated open space and new residential uses, plus the existing school, recreation facilities, and commercial uses. While occurring at a much smaller scale than downtown Eagle River, this mix of uses can offer similar advantages, including proximity of housing to jobs, recreation, shopping and transit; convenience for residents; and reduced reliance on the automobile.

The following Land Use Recommendations Map (also on page 6 of the Executive Summary as **Map 2**) illustrates recommended uses. Additional recommendations follow and detail how these objectives are to be met.

# Land Use Recommendations for HLB Parcels, Chugiak-Eagle River



 Alaska State Plane, Zone 4, NAD 1983  
 December 1, 2008  
 Map by Agnew::Beck Consulting for Heritage Land Bank.

 All data courtesy of Municipality of Anchorage.

## Recommended Plan – Land Use

### North Knoll Property (40 Acres)

**Background and Intent:** While currently designated for low density residential development by the Chugiak-Eagle River Plan, for a number of reasons this site is better used for other purposes, and is not included in the table above. The site is largely surrounded by the undeveloped natural lands of Chugach State Park, and has significant environmental constraints due to its steep slopes. Water, sewer and power are not available and would be costly to provide. The absence of any existing or obvious future road access further hinders possible use of this site. Developing this parcel would require securing a new easement and constructing a new road posing significant challenges. As a result of these considerations, the site will be retained in public ownership and left undeveloped, and made available for low-intensity public uses, such as hiking or ski trails.

The preferred method to carry out this intent for the north knoll property is to work with Chugach State Park to trade the 40-acre parcel to the state for land of comparable value, in a location that is more developable and more beneficial to the Municipality and Chugiak-Eagle River community.

**Alternatives Considered:** No other options were considered.

**Land Use Designation:** Park & Natural Resource

#### Development Policies:

- Retain the land in public ownership and a natural state. Limit development to include non-motorized, multi-use trails, and if appropriate a trailhead.
- Reserve, at a minimum, a public access easement across the southeast corner of this property. The 1986 Chugach State Park Trail Plan indicates a proposed trail crossing the southeast corner of the property. This route is identified as the “Chugiak Hillside Ski Trail” and is described in the trail plan as a scenic six-mile cross country ski and summer hiking trail.
- Adhere to Chugach State Park land management directives.

### Muldrow Street Parcels (11 acres)

**Background and Intent:** The two adjoining parcels (west 3.7 acres and east 7.8 acres) have few development constraints with generally good soils and no designated wetlands, steep slopes, or creek corridors. The one physical limitation worth noting occurs at the northwest end of both parcels. In these areas, groundwater coming down from upslope gets closer to the surface, resulting in wetter soils and a change in vegetation. These portions of the sites are likely still developable, but will require more detailed site-specific evaluation, and may require larger lot areas to meet on-site wastewater standards.

The parcels have access on three sides from local neighborhood roads. Other basic infrastructure, such as water and sewer, does not currently reach the site. The nearest water/sewer service line is along the Old Glenn Highway. Onsite systems are used for water and wastewater in the area.

These sites will be used for residential development, at a density and with a character similar to the existing low density development of the surrounding neighborhood.

**Alternatives Considered:** Possible uses of this site that were considered include public use and a range of residential uses. The smaller (3.7 acre), western parcel had been zoned PLI to accommodate the possible expansion of the adjacent Fire Lake Elementary School. Discussions with the Anchorage School District indicated they do not anticipate the expansion of Fire Lake Elementary and, if expansion was required in the future, it could occur on the school’s existing large site, thus they do not need the parcel for future use. Public recreational uses for this parcel were also ruled out after talks with the Eagle River

Parks and Recreation Department determined that significant recreational opportunities exist in the area. A complete inventory of existing and planned park and recreation projects in Eagle River can be found in Appendix E: Existing Fields and Sports Facilities.

Two residential options were considered through the planning process. One was to allow for half-acre lots, comparable to those immediately west of the site on Harold Loop. This would require extending public water and sewer service to the parcels. The second option, adopted by this plan and preferred by local residents, is to use this land for residential development at a density matching the larger, one acre lots south and east of the site. This option was selected due to the high cost of extending water and sewer to the area, and in deference to neighborhood concerns. A more detailed discussion of the roads needed for this site can be found on page 39.

**Land Use Designation:** Low Density Residential (1-2 DUA)

**Development Policies:**

- Residential will be developed at a density and character that fits with adjacent development.
- Total residential units allowed will not exceed 11 single family, detached homes with a minimum lot size of 40,000 s.f..
- Access to and within the site will be designed to minimize creation of increased traffic volumes and speeds. New access shall not directly cut through the site connecting Muldrow Street to Fish Hatchery.
- See additional development standards in following sections.

**Carol Creek Parcels (Sections A – E on Map 2)**

The entire Carol Creek parcel (HLB Parcel #1-074) is approximately 92 acres. It is a large site that could accommodate a variety of land uses. The key feature that defines the site is Carol Creek and associated wetlands, which provide an important drainage function and natural resource corridor. The parcel naturally divides into distinct areas based on site topography and the presence of the wetland. Map 2, located on page 6 and again on page 31, outline these sections. For purposes of analysis and land use recommendations the Carol Creek parcel is described as three distinct areas:

- Carol Creek Rural Residential – Section A (10 acres)
- Carol Creek Residential and Natural Resource Corridor – Sections B, C & D (41 acres)
- Southeast Slope – Section E (23 acres)

**Carol Creek Rural Residential (Section A)**

**Background and Intent:** The Carol Creek rural residential parcel is a 10-acre site that is physically well suited for development, and offers an attractive location fronting on the Carol Creek natural resource corridor. The parcel is adjacent to an existing rural residential neighborhood that has strongly stated that any change in land use should blend well with the existing neighborhood character. In addition, the neighborhood uses the HLB lands along Carol Creek as an informal recreation area, and a fairly extensive system of trails has been developed. Trail access to Carol Creek will be preserved and included in the residential development.

These sites will be used for residential development, at a density and with a character similar to the existing low density character of the surrounding neighborhood.

**Alternatives Considered:** The primary options considered for this portion of the Carol Creek parcel related to residential density. One option was to take advantage of the site’s attractive setting and possible

access by way of the McDonald road area, and pursue residential development at 2-4 dwelling units per acre. The alternative ultimately selected was to replicate the lower density residential development occurring in the Fish Hatchery neighborhood to the north.

Determining the best roadway access to this site has presented a challenge. Community members are very concerned about any increase in traffic in the neighborhood and prefer to not have a new alternative connection into the area. The option selected by this plan is to extend the McDonald Center road through this area, consistent with Municipal-wide policy of aiming to have two ways out of any residential district, for safety and connectivity reasons. See page 39 for further discussion regarding roads.

**Land Use Designation:** Low Density Residential (1-2 DUA)

**Development Policies:**

- Residential will be developed at a density and character that fits with adjacent development.
- Total residential units allowed will not exceed 10 single family, detached homes with a minimum lot size of 40,000 s.f.
- Retain trail access to the Carol Creek natural resource corridor.
- See additional development standards in following sections.

**Carol Creek Residential & Natural Resource Corridor (Sections B, C & D)**

**Background and Intent:** This area of the Carol Creek parcel is situated above a cut embankment that was excavated for the adjoining Fred Meyer store. To the south this area includes the Carol Creek natural resource, wetland and creek corridor. North of this corridor, in the western portion of the site, is an area of approximately 15 acres located immediately behind Fred Meyer. This portion of the site slopes gently, and offers good views, decent access and good physical characteristics for development.

McDonald Drive offers the best potential route for access to the site as the embankment bordering Fred Meyer’s eastern boundary makes new road construction difficult. A well established foot trail at the southwest corner of the site does; however, provide practical, direct pedestrian access between the Carol Creek parcel and the Old Glenn Highway commercial area.

The approximately 26 acre creek corridor and associated wetland is the unique feature of the parcel. This area will be retained in public ownership. The parcel will be managed to ensure the integrity of the wetlands, preserve important drainage functions, and protect water quality; provide non-motorized trails and recreation opportunities to area residents and visitors from beyond the neighborhood; and to help maintain the quality and property value of the surrounding neighborhoods. It is the intent of the Heritage Land Bank to set aside portions of this natural resource corridor in a wetland mitigation bank. The decision on whether some portion of this area may become Municipal Parklands will be made in the future.

The intent for the remainder of the Carol Creek parcel is to provide low and medium density residential uses that compliment the surrounding setting. These uses will be limited in size and intensity, to provide an appropriate transition between the low density residential area to the east; Carol Creek, the school and the McDonald Center; and the more intense uses to the west, including the Fred Meyer store and the Old Glenn Highway. Planned uses will take advantage of the opportunities for development that come from this mix of surrounding uses, while maintaining the qualities of the area appreciated by existing residents.

**Alternatives Considered** - Various ideas considered through the planning process for development of this area, focused on whether to allow for commercial activities and the intensity and type of commercial uses, and the density of residential development. From the outset there was wide support for the retention of the Carol Creek corridor in public ownership. Community views on the developed 14.5 acre portion of the property varied over the course of the process. In general there was much less concern regarding development in this area than in the other two parcels (discussed above) that directly adjoin the

existing residential neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup> Initial alternatives for residential development suggested aiming for 60-80 dwelling units, with option for a range of attached and detached residential styles. Likewise, initial proposals for commercial uses proposed a range of uses, including neighborhood-serving commercial and service office uses. The plan now recommends focusing on residential use, allowing up to 50 units at a 3-6 units/acre on the southern parcel (area C) and up to 60 units on the western parcel at densities between 7-10 units/acre (area D). Commercial development in this area would be limited to accessory activities associated with the Muldrow recreation center and/or the residential development itself.

The option for commercial use was considered in areas C and D. Initially it was concluded that this area was appropriate for limited commercial uses with a focus on non-retail uses such as professional offices. Ultimately the decision was made that, to be consistent with Chugiak Eagle River Comprehensive Plan, such commercial uses should be focused in downtown Eagle River.

Late in the process, a number of community members expressed a desire to have the 14.5 acre area behind Fred Meyer reserved for sports fields, an indoor recreation center, a paragliding landing area or other public recreational uses. These suggestions were considered but were not recommended, primarily because the MOA Parks and Recreation Department demonstrated that recreation needs in the area are already adequately met by existing or planned facilities. These include Harry McDonald Recreation Center immediately north of the site which will undergo an expansion within the next year and the Fire Lake Elementary School which already has sports fields and a playground available for use by community members. In addition, the Eagle River Parks and Recreation Department has several projects in the works to increase the number of fields and recreational areas in the community. The Parks Department has already worked with local para-gliders and agreed to reserve a landing area just west of the existing McDonald Center parking lot. The Parks Department believes the set of planned and existing facilities meets local needs, and that expanding beyond this level would exceed the community's resources to support such expansion in the future. A detailed inventory of existing and forthcoming parks and recreation projects in the Chugiak-Eagle River area can be found in Appendix E: Existing Field and Sports Facilities.

Another proposal brought forth by a community member for the Carol Creek parcel involves developing a ski slope above the parcel and using the HLB parcel for access, base operations, and a gondola. This ambitious proposal has been suggested off and on over the last 25 years. The proposed land use designations presented in this plan do not strictly rule out this type of development. To be commercially viable a ski area almost always requires base area residential and perhaps commercial development, which is not dramatically different than what is suggested under this plan. To be acceptable to the community such development, including the accompanying parking and access improvements, would have to be constrained in size and character, as is required generally under this plan. As currently outlined, this plan does not endorse the ski area or the more intense development it would require. However, if the ski development advocates can assemble a viable financial and permitting package, they could conceivably be the party to acquire the HLB parcel once it is offered for disposal, and then work to with HLB and the community to revise this plan and proceed with their project.

### **Land Use Designations**

- Section B - Parks and Natural Resources – 26 acres
- Section C - Area Low/Medium Density Residential (3-6 dwelling units/acre) – 8 acres
- Section D - Medium Density Residential (7-10 dwelling units/acre) – 7 acres

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<sup>2</sup> During the public meetings that took place as part of this plan virtually no one from the neighborhood south of the Carol Creek parcel attended or expressed any concern in this process. Residents of this newer, moderate density neighborhood may be less affected and/or less troubled by the prospect of new development than lower density areas to the north.

Limited Commercial Uses accessory to the residential and the adjoining McDonald Center are possible as part of the residential development in area C and D.

### **Development Policies:**

- Residential – South (Section C). This area will be developed at a medium density, including the option for 2-3 story attached townhouse style residential units and/or small detached homes. This housing should reflect the comprehensive plan’s goals of providing quality housing for a diverse range of income groups, and housing convenient to commercial areas, employment and major transportation corridors. Total housing in the area will not exceed 30-50 total dwelling units.
- Residential – West (Section D). This area will be developed much like the area described above, with the exception that on this sub-section density may rise up to 10 dwelling units/acre. The upper end of this density range equates 3 story townhouses or stacked flats. No more than 60 units would be developed. Somewhat higher residential densities are allowed in this area because of its relatively more “urban” setting – adjacent to and between the Old Glenn Highway and the McDonald Center parking lot.
- Medium Density Residential must be defined to fit well into this transitional area. This means, for example, retaining a sense of the natural setting, low impact signage, landscaped parking, and pedestrian linkages to the larger commercial development immediately to the west. See following section for specific standards.
- Limited commercial uses would be possible as part of the residential development in areas C or D under a planned unit development (PUD) conditional use approach. A PUD is a conditional use which may be implemented in a variety of zoning districts following AMC 21.50.130. A PUD requires a more extensive public and agency review process than would otherwise be required, including a hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission. Under a PUD conditional use, a developer is allowed up to 10% of the floor area of the residential component of the project as commercial use. Commercial uses that may be appropriate in the area are those that would support the residential uses or be linked to recreation activities at the McDonald Center or the Carol Creek greenbelt and trail. Examples of such uses include an office service center serving home based businesses, or a small coffee or sandwich shop. See subsequent section for additional commercial area development standards.
- The Carol Creek natural resource corridor will preserve and protect critical wetland habitat and drainage function while allowing for low impact recreational uses. Include a non-motorized trail system that will provide an attractive recreational and functional linkage between the existing and planned residential, civic and commercial uses. Other specific policies for this parcel include:
  - Once this area is split out from the full Carol Creek property the resulting tract cannot be further subdivided.
  - The tract will be available to be used for mitigation bank.
  - Development of improvements such as the parking lot, trails, and any additional recreational facilities such as trails will require a site plan review
- See additional development standards in following sections.

### **Southeast Slope (Section E)**

**Background and Intent:** This portion of the parcel is very steep with some select flatter areas that could be developed for carefully engineered house sites, with superior views. The main challenge with this site, aside from its steep terrain, is access. Legal and physical access to Section E is from Chardonnay Circle as

shown on Plat #84-296. Nearby access to this site could be from Savage Drive above Knob Hill Drive or the adjacent Brandywine neighborhood streets.

The intent for this parcel is to keep open the future option for very large lot, appropriately designed rural residential development. In the near term, the area would remain as publically owned open space, as HLB owns a number of other parcels with better near term development potential. This development may be more viable in the future as market conditions and access options improve.

**Alternatives Considered** –Development options considered throughout the planning process included leaving the area undeveloped, using it for recreational purposes such as a sledding hill or beginner ski slope, or locating a model, attractive, low-density residential neighborhood. The conclusion recommended above reflects the uncertainty regarding access, and the desire to ensure environmental and visual impacts are minimized.

**Land Use Designation** - Residential (very low density; <1 DUA/ Park & Natural Resource – 23 acres.

#### **Development Policies:**

- In the near term allow the land to remain in its natural state.
- Retain the future option for very low density development, with strict development standards that limit impacts to the terrain and visual quality, and set clear drainage and roadway standards.
- Allow at most 5 residential parcels on this site.
- See additional development standards in following sections.

#### **Residential Development Objectives**

Design objectives below are intended to supplement existing regulations and ensure new development is consistent with this plan, complements existing neighborhoods, and results in attractive, well-designed buildings and sites. These standards are to be used to craft “special limitations” (SLs) when the tracts are rezoned prior to HLB disposal; the objectives will also guide the platting and site plan review processes. A site plan review is recommended for each development scenario listed below. The site plan review recommended for future development should be found in conformance with these objectives prior to approval.

## Density Recommendations by Area

### Low-Density, Single-Family Detached Residential (Muldrow Parcels & Carol Creek (Section A, Map 2))

#### Overall Intent

New development should preserve character of existing low-density, residential rural neighborhood.

#### Development Objectives

- Encourage retention of existing neighborhood character with diversity of single-family detached housing styles.
- Develop street network that extends existing pattern.
- Retain natural vegetation and trees within building setbacks around periphery of each lot to be consistent with rural, wooded character; exceptions are allowed for driveways, which shall meet municipal standards.
- Retain natural drainage and contours to greatest extent possible. Work with existing topography to minimize the amount of grading, cut, and fill.
- Minimize percentage of lot covered by impervious surfaces.
- Plan development to protect the quality and quantity of subsurface water used by existing residents.
- The site plan review recommended for future development should be found to be in conformance with these objectives prior to approval.

### Low- and Low/Medium-Density Residential (Sections C & D, Map 2)

#### Overall Intent

New development should retain a strong sense of the natural setting, provide diversity in building styles and orientation, and create a sense of community.

Low/Medium Density allows a variety of building styles, including townhouses, duplexes, and multi-family dwellings. Small, single-family detached “cottage homes” are also permitted. A primary objective is to avoid developing in the style of site condominiums found across the old Glenn Highway from the Carol Creek area. Undesirable qualities include monotonous character (structure lack variety, layout is uniform), predominance of garages and parking areas, and lack of natural vegetation and/or space for replanted vegetation.

#### Development Objectives

##### General and Site Design:

- Create a neighborhood that is safe, accessible, and easy to move through for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Ensure that new development takes into account the natural area, the character of surrounding neighborhoods, and maximizes views.
- Encourage site design that protects or enhances the natural amenities of the area through retention of existing trees and vegetation.
- South parcel (parcel C): provide a mix of structure types including townhouse style buildings, duplexes and single-family cottage style homes.
- Provide adequate on-site snow storage space or store snow off site to ensure the integrity of the landscaped or natural vegetated areas.

- Provide clear delineation between individual yards and road/private driveway with use of walkways/sidewalks and landscaping.
- Minimize predominance of driveways, parking areas, and impervious surfaces.

#### Building Orientation:

- Create a sense of community by orienting buildings so they have a relationship with the natural setting or common open space areas.
- Require variety by varying building placement in relationship to the street and adjoining buildings.
- Vary design in buildings to reflect differences in site locations; for example, corner buildings should have different side facades and window treatment than buildings in interior locations; buildings on slopes should use stepped foundations that reflect a response to local changes in topography.
- Encourage northern design elements to protect solar access and reduce wind exposure and to provide quality development that is responsive to its surroundings and climate.

#### Circulation – vehicular and pedestrian:

- Ensure that construction of neighborhood roads and walkways considers all modes of transportation including pedestrians, cyclists and automobiles to maximize the efficiency and safety of the circulation system.
- Provide safe and direct pedestrian pathways to nearby amenities and to building entrances.

#### Drainage:

- Retain natural drainage and contours to maximum extent feasible. Work with existing topography to minimize the amount of grading, cut, and fill.
- Manage drainage, snow melt and storm water run-off from new development to minimize adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.
- Encourage use of permeable surfaces and use of infiltration islands and drainage areas to minimize storm water runoff.

#### Building Design and Articulation:

- Ensure a diversity of housing unit styles by incorporating features that create variety and visual interest. Require a variety of building models that include variations of window placement, entrance location, garage sizes and placements, and façade details.
- Encourage use of ground floor and front facade windows.
- Provide building entrances that are prominent, inviting and visible from the street by adding elements such as porches.
- Add architectural features such as porches, balconies, bays, varied roof heights, variations in façades to include recesses and extensions, and other building elements to visually reduce the mass of the building and create visual interest. Simple, unadorned box shape buildings are not permitted.
- Maximize light, views and privacy through window placement.
- Sides and rears of buildings should display a similar level of quality and detail as the front façade when visible from the street. On corner lots, blank walls should be avoided.
- Encourage articulation of design features such as projections, recesses, varied rooflines, and building heights.
- Encourage a variety of garage sizes (single-car, tandem, double) to minimize the percentage of garage doors dominating the front elevation.

- In row housing or townhouse style housing, garages are encouraged to be recessed into the building, with windows, projecting balconies, living space and landscaping as dominating features facing the streetscape.

## Recommended Plan – Roads & Other Infrastructure

### Roads

**Background and Intent:** There are two points of road access into the project area: the Fish Hatchery Road and the McDonald Center Road. Fish Hatchery Road provides the only access to a system of smaller residential streets, serving up to 70 homes. The McDonald Center road provides access to the sports center and the Fire Lake School. This “road” is actually a driveway, that is, it is not built to normal Municipal standards.

This plan concludes that the existing Fish Hatchery Road residential road system should be connected westward into McDonald Drive. This extension will provide an indirect but functional alternative access to the existing residential area, increasing safety and emergency access. This intent reflects a Municipality-wide policy of creating connectivity between adjoining neighborhoods.

As identified in a site visit with PM&E Private Development and verified with recorded plats, all subject parcels in the Plan currently have legal and physical access from existing roads.

Section A is accessible off the Old Glenn Highway on Fish Hatchery Road. Section B, the natural resource corridor, will be accessible via various trails from McDonald Drive. Sections C and D are accessible off the Old Glenn Highway on McDonald Drive. Section E is accessible off the Old Glenn Highway on Rachel Avenue to Beaujolais Drive to Chardonnay Circle (Plat 84-296). The Muldrow parcels are accessible off the Old Glenn Highway on Fishhook Road. All roads providing primary access are classified as local roads in the OS&HP.

Triggers for road upgrades or a connection between Sections C and D, and Section A and the Muldrow parcels, will be determined by Fire Code with regard to public safety. The number of residential dwelling units may generate the need for an additional access. The McDonald Recreation Center is in the permitting process for a substantial expansion. This may trigger McDonald Drive to be upgraded to collector standards, especially since an elementary school also uses the same driveway.

A temporary public use easement (PUE) through Section A will be included on the tract plat that allows for a potential road connecting McDonald Drive and Mendenhall Street. This PUE will be subject to relocation based on the topography and final design of Section A.

It is estimated that approximately 70 homes currently use the road system in the Fish Hatchery neighborhood, generating on average 700 trips per day. The new residential development objectives at the Muldrow Street and Carol Creek parcels will add at most 20 homes to this road system, adding approximately another 200 trips on the road system, an increase of 28%. The current and anticipated new development will not generate enough trips to create congestion problems on the roads or at intersections. However, even without the additional residences added on HLB properties, the area is large enough and includes sufficient numbers of homes to warrant a second way in and out of the neighborhood.

Other specific planned access improvements and policies are listed below:

- McDonald Drive will be upgraded to municipal standards for a collector street up to the Harry McDonald Center; east of the center the road would comply with rural road standards.
- The Municipality will work with the school and State DOT to provide for safe pedestrian access along the McDonald access road, including safe pedestrian walkways along McDonald drive and street crossing(s) to Fire Lake Elementary and McDonald Center. Ultimately, a controlled

intersection (stop light) may be required at the intersection of McDonald Drive with the Old Glenn., primarily as a result of residential development on the east side of the highway. These improvements are to include enhanced pedestrian safety and street crossing(s) to Fire Lake Elementary and McDonald Center.

- Public streets built within the low/medium and medium density residential area will be built to residential standards. New roads constructed within the Muldrow parcels will comply with rural road standards.
- New access for the Muldrow Street residential parcels will be designed considering the existing safety concerns regarding traffic on Fish Hatchery road. Access may originate from Muldrow Street and/or Fish Hatchery Road; however, the connection shall not be a cut-through road by extending Malaspina Drive north. This policy will prevent the creation of a new, more direct through route into residential areas south of Muldrow.
- Individual developers will determine the specific site and lot layout of residential areas, including roads, consistent with policies established in this plan.
- As development plans unfold, there may be a need to dedicate drainage and utility corridors through the parcels.
- A road to serve the southeast slope, low-density residential development area may be needed if that development occurs in the future. As this road would traverse a steep area, the following objectives will be followed:
  - Choose a route that requires the least amount of cut and grading; design the route to be minimally visible from off site.
  - Design the road to work with existing topography, e.g., contouring across the property either just above the open space corridor, or two thirds of the way up the slope in the area where there are several flatter, potential home sites.
  - Design road to minimize impact with adjacent open space corridor.
  - Road design objectives should follow rural guidelines.
  - Avoid switchback roads.

**Alternatives Considered:** Decisions regarding access, both for the existing neighborhood and for planned new development, were the most challenging and controversial elements of this planning process. Residents understandably are concerned about adding new traffic to their quiet neighborhoods. Alternatives considered but not recommended included providing no new connection between the McDonald Road and the Fish Hatchery road system. While this was strongly urged by local residents, the decision was made to make this road connection, to provide a second access in case of emergencies and an option for the neighborhood to reach the sports center and school by a more direct route. As outlined above, this new connection will be designed to provide only an indirect connection, in order to reduce use of this route.

Another option considered but not recommended at this time was to provide a new road linking the two road systems, but to install a gate so the road could only be opened and used for emergencies. This was not recommended for several reasons. In addition to not providing the option for regular use by local residents, there has been a history of problems with emergency-only gates, including the inability to get them open during emergencies, the tendency of snow to pile up in front of the gates and block access, and the challenge of finding and keeping a reliable gatekeeper. Such gates typically either devolve into being permanently open, or permanently shut.

In considering this option of a gated road, the concept of having a gate that would be closed only when the McDonald Center is hosting a major event, such as hockey championships or a car show, was also reviewed. The intent of the gate would be to prevent these infrequent larger traffic volumes from accessing

Fish Hatchery Road from the McDonald Center as an alternative route to the Old Glenn Highway through the neighborhood. Without traffic counts and objective measures to evaluate the need for such a gate, it is not recommended at this time, but merits future review upon development of the area.

#### **Development Policies:**

- Provide access to new areas of development, and connectivity to and between existing neighborhoods.
- Plan new roadway developments in a manner that reduces traffic speeds, maximizes safety, creates attractive streets that maintain rural character, minimizes environmental impacts, and encourages use of alternatives to the automobile (walking, biking).
- Future developers shall pay for the construction of roads to municipal standards and work jointly with municipal agencies and the local road service area to pay for maintenance and upgrades of the roads.
- A TIA (traffic impact analysis) may be required by the MOA traffic department as part of the approval process for the McDonald Drive developments.
- Any subdivision of the Muldrow Street and Carol Creek parcels prior to sale will require construction of subdivision improvements like roads, utilities, pathways, lighting, etc.

#### **Public Water and Sewer, On-site Wells and Septic Systems**

**Background and Intent:** The Harry McDonald Center currently is connected to Municipal water and sewer; the surrounding residential neighborhoods rely on on-site wells and on-site wastewater systems. Portions of the surrounding neighborhoods have a history of challenges with on-site systems – most notably the residential area above Knob Hill Drive, where ground water resources are limited, and several homes rely on surface water from Carol Creek.

Specific planned water and wastewater policies:

- Approximately 20 additional wells and on-site wastewater treatment systems will be developed to support the rural residential development proposed for the Muldrow Street parcels & Carol Creek, Parcel A. This is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Update, which states public sewer will only be extended beyond present service districts to the Powder Reserve area, and to serve the area between the Old and New Glenn Highways from South Birchwood to North Birchwood (the “Eklutna 770”).
- Residents in the neighborhoods adjoining the planned new residential areas are concerned about adequate well water and water pressure. Consistent with standard Municipal subdivision policy, prior to approving a subdivision plat, test wells need to be drilled and soil samples collected to determine the adequacy of water for the subdivision and affected adjoining areas (Title 21, section 21.15).
- The wetland and stream corridor along Carol Creek will be retained in public ownership to help maintain Carol Creek water quality.
- Subdivision or development of the Carol Creek tract will require a flood study to determine the elevation and extent of the 100 year flood along Carol Creek.

**Alternatives Considered:** The use of public water and sewer was considered for both the new Carol Creek and Muldrow parcel residential areas, which would require parcels of no less than 2 dwelling units per acre. This was not pursued because of the high cost, and the desire of local residents to limit residential density (see [Table 1: Summary of Area Density Recommendations](#), page 5).

#### **Development Policies:**

- Develop appropriate water and sewer facilities to accommodate the proposed areas of development.
- Ensure that new wells and on-site systems do not impact existing systems or water quality.
- Explore options to pay for necessary extension of public water and sewer to serve the Carol Creek low and medium density residential areas. This will require cooperative arrangements between the MOA, as it improves the McDonald Center, and the private developers of Carol Creek residential projects.

## **Parks and Natural Resources Standards**

The proposed 26-acre natural resource area is the backbone of the uses planned for the Carol Creek parcel. Preserving this wetland and creek corridor is essential to maintain the quality of the surrounding neighborhoods, preserve and protect critical wetland habitat and important drainage functions, improve property value, and provide recreation opportunities to area residents.

Specific development objectives for the natural resource corridor include:

- Ensure connectivity through the greenbelt to and from all surrounding neighborhoods and the adjacent commercial areas. Retain a “green window” along the road looking into the natural resource corridor.
- Provide a network of non-motorized trails within the corridor as well as a public access route leading to Chugach State Park to the east. Existing informal trails in the area provide a good sense of the locations and number of needed trails.
- Develop a parking area and trailhead on south side of the McDonald Drive, for users outside of the nearby neighborhoods.
- Design trails to minimize impacts on water quality and the natural environment. Allow only limited clearing of vegetation for trail development. If and when the trail is constructed east of HLB property into Chugach State Park, (crossing land currently held by the BLM), ensure that the trail is set back from the Creek, to protect water quality.
- Work with the Eagle River Parks and Recreation Department to improve and maintain the area. It is the intent of the Heritage Land Bank to set aside portions of this natural resource corridor in a wetland mitigation bank. The decision on whether some portion of this area may become Municipal Parklands will be made in the future
- Comply with Army Corps of Engineers requirements in order to obtain wetland mitigation credit for retention and conservation of the wetland.
- Note- Carol Creek and Muldrow have 15 foot “screen easement” in their original plat as well as a 100 foot creek maintenance development setback.

## **IMPLEMENTATION: STEPS TO DEVELOPMENT 7**

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Following plan adoption by the Anchorage Assembly, this plan will officially amend the Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan; parcels designated as “special study areas” in the C-ER Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map will be replaced with the plan land use recommendations (Map 2). As an officially adopted element of the comprehensive plan of the Municipality, the plan will be recognized as official Municipal policy.

Prior to HLB disposal of parcels and eventual development, the following steps should be taken.

**Rezone and Replat:** A tract plat is needed in order to effectuate the land use recommendations and establish boundaries for the recommended zoning districts per Table 6 below. The new zoning districts should contain special limitations to ensure development is consistent with residential development objectives recommended in this plan. Special Limitations will be based on this plan’s development guidelines.

**HLB Disposal:** HLB may proceed with the disposal of the residential tracts, as required by AMC 25.40.025. This process requires public notice including:

- Publishing in one or more newspapers of general circulation;
- Posting a sign on the land for the proposed action;
- Providing individual notice to all property owners within 500 feet of the outer boundary of the affected HLB parcel or providing individual notice to all property owners nearest the outer boundary of the HLB (whichever is greater);
- Notifying the Community Council within which the affected HLB land is located;
- Notifying all persons requesting general notice of proposed HLB land management activities.

This process also requires a HLB Advisory Commission (HLBAC) review hearing, public hearing at the Anchorage Assembly and Assembly approval of the disposal. HLB would proceed to convey the property/ies. To the extent practicable, HLB will include notice in the conveyance documentation of the requirement that development is to be consistent with this plan. After receiving comments from the general public regarding the possible disposal, as well as area Community Councils or other parties, the HLBAC will make its recommendation to the Assembly. The disposal must then be presented in a formal public hearing before the Assembly and approved by Assembly ordinance.

**Subdivision Application:** The new owner/developer of the property will proceed with the application for a preliminary plat per AMC 21.15.100, 21.15.110, and 21.15.115 for the areas zoned R-7 SL. Further subdivision of the multi-family tracts may also occur but is not necessarily required.

**Site Plan Review:** This plan recommends that Carol Creek Sections B, C and D be required to follow the site plan review process per AMC 21.15.030. The purpose of the site plan is to ensure the development is consistent with the development guidelines established by this plan, as well as special limitations of the underlying zoning. In some cases, the subdivision application and site plan review can occur concurrently.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD):** As indicated on page 33, the plan explains that the developer of the Carol Creek Residential area is allowed the option of a conditional use application to develop a PUD, which allows up to 10% of the total development square footage be used for local serving commercial uses. Should this option be used, AMC 21.50.130 provides standards to be used in conjunction with the plan development guidelines.

Table 6, Implementation Summary, recommends zoning districts for the HLB parcels.

Table 6: Recommended Zoning

PARCEL NAME		Land Use Recommendation	Recommended Zoning	Zoning Notes
North Knoll		Park and Natural Resources	PLI	
Muldrow Street West		Residential (low density; 1-2dua)	R-7 SL	Min. 40,000 sq. ft. lots
Muldrow Street East		Residential (low density; 1-2 dua)	R-7 SL	Min. 40,000 sq. ft. lots
Carol Creek -	Section A Rural Residential	Residential (low density; 1-2 dua)	R-7SL	Min. 40,000 sq. ft. lots
	Section B Natural Resource Corridor	Park and Natural Resources	PLI	
	Section C Residential	Residential (low/medium density; 3-6 dua)	R-2M SL	SL recommends administrative site plan review to conform to design standards; cap at 50 units
	Section D Residential	Residential (medium density; 7-10 dua)	R-2M SL	SL recommends administrative site plan review to conform to design standards; cap at 60 units
	Section E Southeast Slope	Residential (very low density/ Park and Natural Resources)	R-10 SL	SL to cap allowed number of units (5)

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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AMC 25.40

AMC 21.50.130

Chugach State Park Access Inventory

Chugach State Park Plan, 1986

Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan Update, 2006

Chugiak-Eagle River Long-Range Transportation Plan, 2007