



**Municipality of Anchorage**  
**Planning Department**  
**Memorandum**



**G.3.**

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**DATE:** March 10, 2025  
**TO:** Planning and Zoning Commission  
**THRU:** *HB* Mélisa Babb, Planning Director  
**FROM:** *DMF* Daniel McKenna-Foster, Senior Planner, Long-Range Planning Division  
**SUBJECT:** PZC Case No. 2025-0021, Text Amendment to Title 21 Regarding Updating Requirements for Site Plan Review of Park Projects

**BACKGROUND**

The MOA Parks and Recreation Department contacted the Planning Department in January 2025 with a request to consider updates to AMC 21.05.040G.2.b.ii., which requires a major site plan review for parks projects over \$500,000. Parks and Recreation staff explained that this threshold has not been updated considering the increase of materials costs and inflation in over a decade. Parks and Recreation staff further explained:

- Park development projects are already required to go through a public hearing process at the MOA Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) per subsection (A) of AMC 21.05.040.G.2.b.ii.
- The Parks and Recreation Department also already involves and presents projects to local community councils, including CAGs (community advisory groups), to help define/approve park development projects.
- Tikishla Park development was a fairly recent project that the department processed through the Urban Design Commission (UDC) as a Major Site Plan Review, as the total development costs of the project were \$860k (in 2021). Included in these costs were \$300k in playground equipment, safety surfacing, and amenities, as well as \$130k in pre-design, design engineering, public involvement, and construction administration/inspection professional services.

The actual construction costs were \$430k. This project was fairly straightforward, and no additional conditions were added by the UDC to add value to the project. The costs of processing the UDC Major Site Plan Review were in excess of \$20k in consultant fees, as well as an additional 3 plus months of project development timeline.

"Additionally, a cost comparison with the 2024 Average Bid Tabs and Term Contractor pricing revealed that the construction costs for the Tikishla Park development alone would have exceeded \$790k—an increase of 1.8 times in just three years. This significant rise reflects a broader trend in Alaska's construction industry, driven by factors such as inflation, increasing material costs, labor shortages, supply chain

disruptions, and evolving regulatory requirements. These challenges have contributed to a sharp escalation in project costs, impacting both public and private sector developments alike."

Considering historical MOA construction bid tabs, Parks and Recreation staff proposed increasing the threshold for major site plan review to \$750,000.

### **COMMENTS RECEIVED**

The Planning Department received "no comments or objections" from the following eight agencies: the Traffic Engineering Department; the Development Services Department—Right of Way, Addressing, and Private Development; the Project Management and Engineering Department-Watershed Management Services, the Anchorage Water & Wastewater Utility, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, and the Girdwood Board of Supervisors.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of this ordinance.

### **RECOMMENDED FINDINGS**

1. Construction and labor costs have increased over the past decade.
2. This proposal will help the Parks and Recreation Department deliver projects that benefit the community.

Attachments: 1. Draft Ordinance  
2. Comments Received

**Draft Ordinance**

**PZC Case No. 2025-0021**

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Submitted by: Chair of the Assembly at  
the Request of the Mayor  
Prepared by: Planning Department  
For reading: \_\_\_\_\_

**ANCHORAGE, ALASKA**  
**AO No. 2025-\_\_\_**

**AN ORDINANCE INCREASING THE FINANCIAL THRESHOLDS FOR A MAJOR  
SITE PLAN REVIEW OF PARKS PROJECTS IN THE ANCHORAGE BOWL AND  
TURNAGAIN ARM BY AMENDING THE USE-SPECIFIC STANDARDS IN  
ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE 21.05.040, COMMUNITY USES.**

(Planning and Zoning Commission Case No. 2025-0021)

**WHEREAS**, the Municipality's system of parks and recreation areas is a valued asset and priority of the community; and

**WHEREAS**, the code section that regulates which types of park improvements must undergo different types of major or administrative reviews has not been updated in several years; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of small-scale park improvements has increased with inflation, materials prices, and labor, and this compounds with longer review processes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Parks and Recreation Department already involves and presents projects to local community councils, including CAGs (community advisory groups), to help define/approve park development projects regardless of size; now, therefore,

**THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:**

**Section 1.** Anchorage Municipal Code Chapter 21.05 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**CHAPTER 21.05: USE REGULATIONS**

\*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*

**21.05.040      COMMUNITY      USES:      DEFINITIONS      AND      USE-SPECIFIC  
STANDARDS**

\*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*

**G.      Parks and Open Areas**

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**2.      Park, Public or Private**

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**b. Use-Specific Standards in the Anchorage Bowl**

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ii. All development projects in municipal parks require a site plan review, as follows:

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(C) All development projects costing more than \$750,000[\$500,000] or disturbing more than one acre of land and in parks classified by the Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan as community use area, special use area, or natural resource use area (over 30 acres) shall be approved by major site plan review in accordance with 21.03.180D. For the purposes of this subsection, vegetation removal for public safety, natural resource protection and enhancement (such as invasive species removal and reforestation), ecosystem health, and general routine maintenance is not considered land disturbance.

(D) All development projects costing \$750,000[\$500,000] and disturbing one acre or less of land, and all development projects in parks classified by the Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan as neighborhood use area or natural resource use area (30 acres or fewer) shall be approved by administrative site plan review in accordance with 21.03.180C. Trails that are reviewed under section 21.03.190, Street and Trail Review, are exempt from this administrative site plan review. For the purposes of this subsection, vegetation removal for public safety, natural resource protection and enhancement (such as invasive species removal and reforestation), ecosystem health, and general routine maintenance is not considered land disturbance.

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**c. Use-Specific Standards in Turnagain Arm**

- i. All master plans, and any development projects costing more than \$750,000[\$500,000] in municipal parks identified in the Anchorage Park, Greenbelt and Recreation Facility Plan Volume 3: “Turnagain Arm” shall be approved by major site plan review in accordance with 21.03.180D.
- ii. All development projects costing \$750,000[\$500,000] or less in municipal parks identified in the Anchorage Park, Greenbelt and Recreation Facility Plan Volume 3: “Turnagain Arm” shall be approved by administrative site plan review in accordance with subsection 21.03.180C.

\*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO 2015-142(S-1), 6-21-16; AO 2018-59, 7-31-2018; 2019-11, 2-12-19; 2021-54, 6-22-21; AO 2021-89(S), 2-15-2022; AO 2024-24, 4-23-24)

**Section 2.** This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and approval by the Assembly.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of the Assembly

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Municipal Clerk

(Planning and Zoning Commission Case No. 2025-0021)

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**Comments Received**

**PZC Case No. 2025-0021**



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## MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 5, 2025

TO: Current Planning Division Supervisor.  
Planning Department

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

FROM: Randy Ribble, Assistant Traffic Engineer

SUBJECT: Traffic Engineering Department Comments

**2025-0021      Review and Recommendation by Planning and Zoning Commission of an Ordinance of the Anchorage Municipal Assembly increasing the financial thresholds for a Major Site Plan Review for Parks Projects in the Anchorage Bowl and Turnagain Arm by amending the Use-Specific Standards in AMC 21.05.040 Community Uses**

Traffic Engineering has no objection to the proposed amendments to Title 21 as indicated in proposed ordinance language. The proposed modifications have no impact to site access from adjacent rights of ways.

## **Kimmel, Corliss A.**

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**From:** Walters, Michael S.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 4, 2025 9:29 AM  
**To:** Blake, Lori A.; Kimmel, Corliss A.  
**Subject:** 2025-0021 Request for Reviewing Agency Comments

ROW has the following comments for case number 2025-0021:

ROW has no comment or objections on the proposed action.

Regards,

Michael S Walters  
Senior Plan Reviewer  
Right of Way Section  
[michael.walters@anchorageak.gov](mailto:michael.walters@anchorageak.gov)  
Office: 907-343-8226  
Cell: 907-727-7637  
Fax: 907-249-7910



## Kimmel, Corliss A.

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**From:** Wilson, Karleen K.  
**Sent:** Friday, January 24, 2025 2:55 PM  
**To:** Blake, Lori A.; Kimmel, Corliss A.  
**Subject:** RE: 2025-0021 Address Reviewing Agency Comment

No comments from Addressing.

Sorry had wrong number I last email subject

Regards,

**Karleen Wilson**

Addressing Official  
907.343.8168 (desk)  
907.343.8466 (shared Addressing)  
[Official Address Map](#)

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**From:** Wilson, Karleen K. <karleen.wilson@anchorageak.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 24, 2025 2:53 PM  
**To:** Blake, Lori A. <lori.blake@anchorageak.gov>; Kimmel, Corliss A. <corliss.kimmel@anchorageak.gov>  
**Subject:** 2025-0020 Address Reviewing Agency Comment

No comments.

Regards,

**Karleen Wilson**

Addressing Official  
907.343.8168 (desk)  
907.343.8466 (shared Addressing)  
[Official Address Map](#)

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**From:** Stewart, Gloria I. <gloria.stewart@anchorageak.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 17, 2025 5:34 PM  
**Cc:** Stewart, Gloria I. <gloria.stewart@anchorageak.gov>  
**Subject:** 2025-0020 & 2025-0021 Request for Reviewing Agency Comment

Hello all. Attached please find our Routing Coversheets for Case No. 2025-0020 & 2025-0021 (T21 Text Amendments) together with a Planning Dept. Memorandum to aid in your review of each case. Both cases are scheduled for review and recommendation before the Planning and Zoning Commission at a Public Hearing on 03/10/25. The routing materials can be viewed by clicking on the links below, scrolling to bottom of page and selecting Reviewing Agency Routing preceded by the case number of interest. **Please submit comments as instructed on the Memorandum.**

2025-0020      <https://www.muni.org/CityViewPortal/Planning/Status?planningId=18146>.

**Perry, Susan**

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**From:** LaFrance, Paul J.  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 6, 2025 8:38 AM  
**To:** Anchorage2040; Mckenna-Foster, Daniel R.  
**Cc:** Soule, Gregory G.  
**Subject:** PZC Case No. 2025-0020 & 2025-0021 - PD Review Comments

Hi Daniel,

**PZC Case No. 2025-0220** – PD has no objection to the proposed changes to the B-3 zoning district.

**PZC Case No. 2025-0221** – PD has no objection to raising the threshold to \$750,000 for an administrative site plan review for public park projects.

Thank you,

[Paul LaFrance, PE](#)  
*Private Development Engineer  
Development Services Department  
Municipality of Anchorage  
(907) 343-8310*



**Municipality of Anchorage**  
**Project Management and Engineering**  
**MEMORANDUM**



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**DATE:** February 7, 2025

**To:** Dave Whitfield

**FROM:** Kyle Cunningham

**SUBJECT:** Cases 2025-0020 & 2025-0021: Comments from Watershed Management Services.

Watershed Management Services (WMS) has the following comments for the March 10, 2025 Planning and Zoning Commission hearing:

- 2025-0020 - Review and Recommendation by Planning and Zoning Commission of an Ordinance of the Anchorage Municipal Assembly amending Anchorage Municipal Code Sections 21.04, 21.06 and Chapter 21.07 to simplify Specific Restrictions for residential development in the B-3 Zoning District.
  - WMS has no comments on or objections to this request.
- 2025-0021 – Review and Recommendation by Planning and Zoning Commission of an Ordinance increasing the financial thresholds for a Major Site Plan Review of Parks Projects in the Anchorage Bowl and Turnagain Arm by amending the Use-Specific Standards in Anchorage Municipal Code 21.05.040, Community Uses.
  - WMS has no comments on or objections to this request.

# MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** January 21, 2025

**TO:** Elizabeth I. Appleby, AICP, Senior Planner, Current Planning Division,  
Municipality of Anchorage Planning Division

Paul Hatcher, Senior Planner, Current Planning Division, Municipality of  
Anchorage Planning Division

**FROM:** Alex Prosak, P.E., Civil Engineer II, Planning Section, AWWU

**RE:** Zoning Case Comments

Decision date: March 10, 2025

Agency Comments due: February 10, 2025

AWWU has reviewed the materials and has the following comments:

**2025-0021 Review and Recommendation by Planning and Zoning Commission of an Ordinance increasing the financial thresholds for a Major Site Plan Review of Parks Projects in the Anchorage Bowl and Turnagain Arm by amending the Use-Specific Standards in Anchorage Municipal Code 21.05.040, Community Uses.**

1. AWWU has no comments or objections to this proposed Ordinance.

If you have any questions pertaining to public water or sewer, please call (907) 786-5694 or send an e-mail to [alex.prosak@awwu.biz](mailto:alex.prosak@awwu.biz).





THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

## Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Project Delivery and Statewide Planning  
Anchorage Field Office

4111 Aviation Avenue  
P.O. Box 196900  
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900  
Main number: 907-269-0520  
Fax number: 907-269-0521  
Website: dot.state.ak.us

January 29, 2025

Lori Blake and Corliss Kimmel, Office Associate  
MOA, Office of Economic and Community Development  
Planning Department  
P.O. Box 196650  
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650

[Sent Electronically]

Re: MOA Plat Review

Dear Ms. Blake and Ms. Kimmel:

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has reviewed the following zoning cases and has no comments:

- **2025-0020 – Title 21 Amendments B-3 Zoning**
- **2025-0021 – Title 21 Amendments Public Park Admin Site Plan Review Thresholds**

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has reviewed the following zoning cases and has the following comments:

- **2025-0016 – Eastchester Park Master Plan Review**
  - No objection to the proposed park master plan
  - DOT&PF will not allow any vegetation to be planted with DOT&PF ROW along the Seward Highway.
  - DOT&PF is currently conducting the Seward to Glenn PEL study. Some of the proposed alternatives will include a bridge over Chester Creek, replacing the current Chester Creek culvert and pedestrian tunnel. These alternatives would return Chester Creek to original conditions at the crossing improving fish habitat and stream ecology. However, it should be noted other proposed alternatives do not propose improvements at the Chester Creek crossing. Please visit the project

website for up-to-date information at: <https://sewardglennconnection.com/>. You can also contact project manager Galen Jones ([galen.jones@alaska.gov](mailto:galen.jones@alaska.gov)) for project information.

- **2025-0018 = Title 21 Amendments – Updated site standards**

- No objections to the proposed amendments.
- Any proposed pedestrian amenities, such as sidewalks or pathways must be entirely located within the right-of-way. This may require the dedication of property in areas where the amenities are to be installed, or the establishment of a Public Use Easement (PUE)
- All proposed facilities along DOT&PF owned and managed roads must receive approval from the DOT&PF Right-of-Way Division and must adhere to design standards.
- Any intersecting pathways connecting to DOT&PF right-of-way require approval from the DOT&PF Right-of-Way Division and must undergo a review process before an Approval to Construct (ATC) will be granted.
- DOT&PF supports the inclusion of the Director’s Waiver, as it is expected to streamline the process of waiving the requirement for pedestrian walkways on DOT&PF roads when DOT&PF determines such facilities are not in the best interest of the department or the traveling public.

All properties accessing DOT&PF roads must apply to Right-of-Way for a driveway permit, subject to provisions listed in 17 AAC 10.020. Any previously issued driveway permits become invalid once the property undergoes a platting action and must be reissued.

We recommend the petitioner verify all section line easements and DOT&PF road rights-of-way adjacent to their property. For assistance, the petitioner may contact the Engineering group within the Right of Way section in DOT&PF at (907) 269-0700. The petitioner is liable to remove any improvements within the easements and rights-of-way that impede the operation and maintenance of those facilities even if they are not shown on the plat, so it is in the petitioner’s best interest to identify the exact locations and widths of any such easements or rights-of-way before they improve the property.

If any section line easements or road rights-of-way exist within the bounds of their plat, we recommend the petitioner dedicate them. If there is an existing right-of-way or easement, the petitioner is unable to develop that portion of the property yet continues to pay property taxes on it; dedicating will remove that cost to the petitioner.

If there are any questions regarding these comments please feel free to contact me at (907) 269-0522 or [mark.eisenman@alaska.gov](mailto:mark.eisenman@alaska.gov).

Sincerely,



Mark Eisenman  
Anchorage Area Planner, DOT&PF

**Municipality  
of  
Anchorage**



*P.O. Box 390  
Girdwood, Alaska 99587  
<http://www.muni.org/gbos>*

***Suzanne LaFrance, Mayor***

*GIRDWOOD VALLEY SERVICE AREA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS*

*Briana Sullivan & Mike Edgington, Co-Chairs  
Jennifer Wingard, Brian Burnett, Kellie Okonek*

February 25, 2025

**GIRDWOOD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
LETTER OF NON-OBJECTION  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION CASE 2025-0021**

The Girdwood Board of Supervisors has no objection to planning case 2025-0021 Parks and Recreation Administrative Site Plan Review Thresholds.

This item was noticed for potential discussion at the Land Use Committee and GBOS meetings on February 10 2025 and February 25 2025 respectively.

*Jennifer Wingard*

Jennifer Wingard  
GBOS Land Use Supervisor