

**TURNAGAIN COMMUNITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2022-05:
REGARDING AO 2022-21, PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF WOODLAND PARK SUBDIVISION
PARCELS SOUTH OF WEST NORTHERN LIGHTS BLVD., EAST OF TURNAGAIN ST.**

WHEREAS, the Turnagain Community Council (TCC) is an all-volunteer, self-governing neighborhood organization recognized in the Municipality of Anchorage Charter; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of community councils is to provide a direct and continuing means of citizen participation in government and local affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage acquired 12 parcels in the Woodland Park subdivision, located south of West Northern Lights Boulevard, east of Turnagain Street, west of the Alaska Railroad line, within Turnagain Community Council's boundaries as part of the in the mid-1980s as part of the West Northern Lights Blvd. Improvement Project Phase I; and

WHEREAS, this documented intended use for this property at that time was to keep the land as undeveloped open space, specifically as "buffer protection for the remaining houses, and a park-like landscaped environment with sitting or playing areas,"¹ has been maintained annually by the Parks and Recreation Department, but which was never formally dedicated as or developed as a park; and

WHEREAS, this property provides an important connection point between Turnagain neighborhoods, as the southern access point for the pedestrian bridge crossing West Northern Lights and a route to connect with Fish Creek Trail to the south;

WHEREAS, Fish Creek Trail is an important connection running through West Anchorage, connecting Turnagain and Spenard neighborhoods, and which will be connected to the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail as part of the Fish Creek Trail to Ocean project; and

WHEREAS, this property also provides immediate neighbors, and others who use it, with green open space, the property serves many functions of a local park; and

WHEREAS, the neighborhoods immediately served by Turnagain Street have long had issues with traffic congestion, bike and pedestrian safety, on-street parking within a narrow right of way, and despite there being a design and planned future upgrade for this road, the project has not been funded to date; and

WHEREAS, development of the Rustic Goat and multi-unit housing in 2014 created additional traffic, parking and safety issues in north Turnagain Street neighborhood, which was later addressed by creation of a new public parking lot on the westernmost of the Woodland Park Subdivision parcels, which is currently leased by Turnagain Crossing LLC for use by Rustic Goat customers; and

WHEREAS, AO 2022-21 would authorize the Municipality to seek disposal of these parcels; and

WHEREAS, Turnagain Community Council testified before the Assembly on February 12 and March 22, 2022 requesting that the Assembly postpone their vote on this ordinance until more thorough public notice to the neighborhood could be given, and local community outreach be conducted by the Council; and

WHEREAS, Turnagain Community Council held a special meeting about this topic on March 7, 2022; a community meeting at the site on May 21, 2022; and conducted a community survey in May 2022, a summary of which is attached as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, a majority of participants in the meetings and survey, as well as additional feedback received by e-mail, phone and in person with the Board identified as living in the vicinity of this property; use the property regularly as a public open space, and who value it as a community amenity; and who expressed concerns about negative impacts to the neighborhood from new development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Turnagain Community Council opposes authorization to dispose of the Woodland Park parcels as specified in AO 2022-21, unless the disposal is limited to the existing parking lot, to become permanent parking for the Rustic Goat.

¹ *West Northern Lights Boulevard Draft Design Study Report Project No. 84-E-011 (October 9, 1984), page 4*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Turnagain Community Council **requests that the Assembly amend AO 2022-21 as follows, to retain what the neighborhood values and address existing challenges that may be exacerbated by any future development proposed:**

1. Exclude the 4 parcels east of the Barbara Street right of way (Lots 1PA, 4PA, 5P and 6P), offering for sale only the lots 1Q-12Q; retain these parcels in public ownership, to be retained as open space and in future dedicated as a park.
2. If the lots east of Barbara Street are not excluded from the sale, retain public access via right of way or easement between the pedestrian bridge and Barbara Street, to permanently secure public access as an important connection point for the future Fish Creek Trail to Ocean to the north.
3. Require that the current owner of the Rustic Goat development, Turnagain Crossing LLC, be granted first right of refusal to purchase the westernmost lot containing the parking lot currently being leased by Rustic Goat for customer parking.
4. Require that the Muni complete a traffic study of existing conditions on Turnagain Street, from West Northern Lights Boulevard. to West 34th Avenue, and make this study available to the public and potential purchasers.
5. Require that the future owner of the property, whether a private entity or the Municipality, retain and continue maintaining the vegetative buffer and landscaping on the north side of the property adjacent to West Northern Lights.

RESOLUTION PASSED by the Turnagain Community Council on this 2nd day of June, 2022.

Vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain.



Anna Brawley, President
Turnagain Community Council

June 2, 2022

Date

Turnagain Community Council | TCC Resolution 2022-05, Exhibit A

Community Outreach: Disposal of Woodland Park Parcels, W. Northern Lights Blvd. & Turnagain St.

Summary of Outreach

In March 2022, Turnagain Community Council (TCC) requested additional time before the Assembly makes a decision on whether to sell (dispose of) 7 parcels owned by the Muni in the Woodland Park subdivision. **TCC conducted community outreach**, targeting neighbors in the immediate area of the properties, who are most likely to use the land and would be most affected by future change in use.

TCC used three outreach methods; a summary of responses follows. Residents were encouraged to tell neighbors about the survey and meeting.



Objectives

1. Inform the community about the status, what is known and unknown, about the proposed sale
2. Collect feedback from the community about the land currently, as well as thoughts, preferences, ideas and concerns about possible future uses if the land is developed or changed.
3. Summarize themes and shared priorities of neighbors, to inform TCC's recommendation to the Assembly about what the neighborhood would like to see happen.

Community Meeting: May 21, 2022

TCC organized an **in-person community meeting** on a Saturday morning. **About 30 people attended**, although some did not stay for the full meeting. The group started onsite at the parcels, with an opportunity to observe and talk about the site. TCC provided an update on what is known about the property, original intent when the land was cleared in the 1980s and developed as park, what has happened so far, and what may happen if the land is sold and developed.



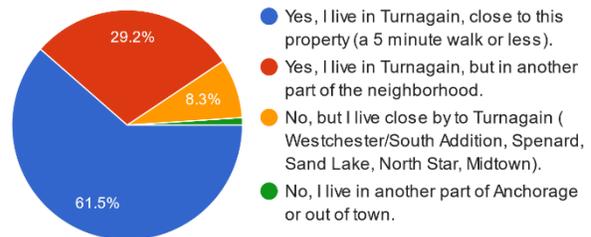
The second half of the meeting was held at Turnagain Social Club, where small groups discussed the questions above and reported back themes.

Online Survey (Google): May 10-24, 2022

The survey was open for 2 weeks, advertised through the TCC e-mail as well as a QR code and link on the flyer for the May 21 meeting. **96 people responded**: 90% of responses within the Turnagain neighborhood overall, and about 60% said they live within a 5-minute walk of the property. Survey questions were open-ended response, the same ones discussed in the community meeting.

Are you a resident in Turnagain?

96 responses



Other Outreach and Feedback

Since February, several people reached out by e-mail to share comments, or communicated with TCC board members. A few neighbors in the immediate area also took time to knock on doors, chat with their own neighbors, and encourage people to participate in the meeting and the survey, handing out flyers and sharing more information about the project.

Turnagain Community Council | TCC Resolution 2022-05, Exhibit A

Community Outreach: Disposal of Woodland Park Parcels, W. Northern Lights Blvd. & Turnagain St.

What Did We Hear from Neighbors?

Many people use this land, primarily as an **access point in the neighborhood** to the pedestrian bridge, trails and other destinations. It is also a popular **place for dog owners** to walk or play with their dog outside. It is clearly well-used by many in the neighborhood as an **open grassy space**. Others reported not using the land at all, only passing through it, and/or seeing it as they drive past. Others only reported using the parking lot when visiting Rustic Goat.

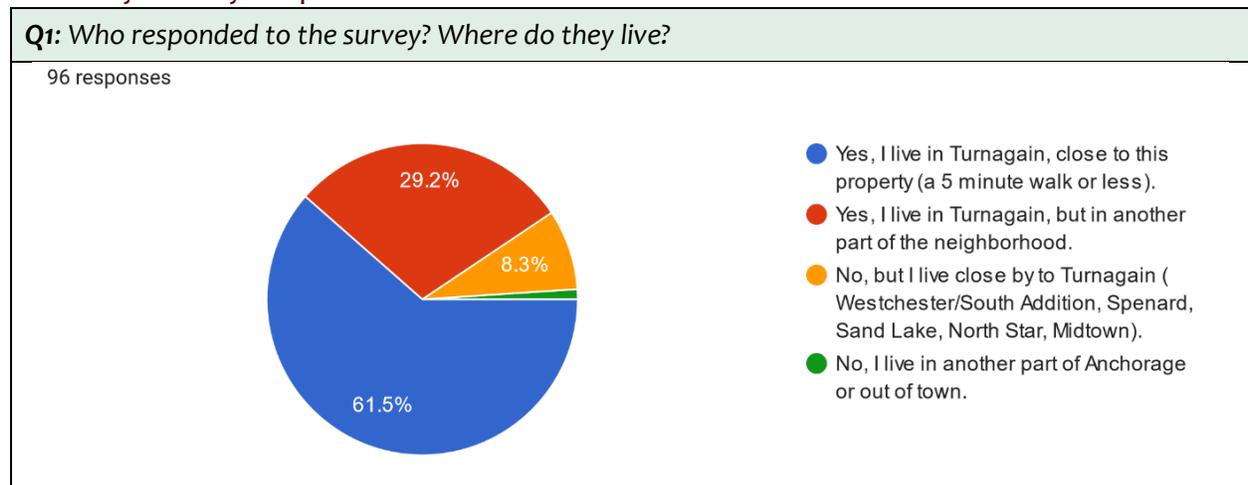
The clear majority of those who gave their views have concerns about future development at this site, and wish to see the land remain as green space. Not only does the site provide green space that neighbors value highly, additional development in this area presents a number of challenges, outlined below, the top issue being traffic congestion. Other people who participated, including some who live in the immediate area, were open to the idea of development, especially small-scale housing that would be compatible with the existing neighborhood. Some were also open to the idea of a small-scale commercial space, but did not want to see the land developed with a strip mall, drive-through or other intensive use.

Many people identified the **significant feasibility issues and constraints** that would need to be accounted for when determining whether a potential development is feasible at this site:

- **Address existing traffic congestion and road safety** issues on Turnagain Street, as well as potential increases in traffic from the development;
- **Address parking issues**, if the current parking lot is removed or changed to accommodate new development, as this fills an important parking need for Rustic Goat;
- **Manage access challenges**, such as the very narrow alley south of the land and limited space for circulating cars; and
- **Potential physical constraints** such as soil quality and stability, seismic concerns, steep slope and existing rights of way and easements.

Most who use this land as a park want to see the land **formally dedicated as a park and improved with park amenities**: ideas included lighting, benches, a dog park play area, playground, and other features. In particular neighbors identified the parcels east of the Barbara Street cul de sac as having significant value, and likely being less feasible to develop given their location and access points.

Summary: Survey Responses



Turnagain Community Council | TCC Resolution 2022-05, Exhibit A

Community Outreach: Disposal of Woodland Park Parcels, W. Northern Lights Blvd. & Turnagain St.

Q2: “How do you interact with land currently?”		Q3: “How do you see other people use it?”	
Q2: How do you interact with this land?	TOTAL	Q3: How do you see other people use the land?	TOTAL
Walk or bike <u>through</u> the property	33	Walk or exercise dog	25
Walk or play with dog	16	No, don't see them using it	24
Use the pedestrian bridge (walk or bike)	14	Yes, see them using it (unspecified)	21
Enjoy open space/views/buffer area	14	Walk, run or bike <u>through</u> the property	21
Picnic and/or spend time on grassy area	12	Play games: soccer, frisbee, kite flying, etc.	13
Don't use the property	11	Children playing	12
Use parking lot (public lot serving Rustic Goat)	11	Sit on grass, picnics, etc.	11
Walk or bike connection to other destinations or trails	11	Use the parking lot for Rustic Goat	8
Drive past the property	10	Open space, enjoy view	8
Walk, run or bike past the property	10	Use the pedestrian bridge	7
Child(ren) play here	8	Loitering, drug use or problem behaviors	4
Play games here: frisbee, soccer, golf, etc.	7	Walk or bike to other destinations or trails	2
Live nearby/can see this property from home	4	Cars or activity at cul de sac	2
Winter use: play in the snow, or mentions winter	4		
Q4: “If developed, what is important to keep?”			
	Q4: If developed, what is important to keep?	TOTAL	
	Open space / park land	58	
	Path, trail or sidewalk / access across property	16	
	Pedestrian bridge / access across Northern Lights	15	
	Parking lot (serving Rustic Goat)	12	
	Trees and landscaping	11	
	Buffer from Northern Lights / Railroad	10	
	Nothing (would prefer development)	8	
	Scenic view	4	
	Memorial next to pedestrian bridge	1	
Q5: “If developed, what would fit well here?”			
Q5: If developed, what would fit well here?	TOTAL		
Dedicate as a park	27	Develop park amenities:	12
Mixed use: housing and retail/commercial	17	Playground equipment	11
Housing: unspecified	15	Picnic tables and/or shelter	9
Keep part of property as open space or park	13	Sports: tennis, pickle ball, fields	5
Commercial: restaurant, coffee shop, etc.	10	Dog park	4
Commercial: retail	10	Benches	3
Keep as is (open space, no amenities)	7	Paths and walkways	2
Landscaping and vegetation, buffer	7	Bike amenities / pump track	2
Housing: multi unit rental	5	Community Garden	2
Housing: affordable	4	Outdoor community gathering space	2
Parking lot (generally and/or for Rustic Goat)	4	Little free library	1
Housing: multi unit condos	3	Skateboard park	1
Housing: single family	2	Trash can / dog waste station	1
Housing: seniors/assisted living	2		
Fence along Northern Lights for safety	2		
Commercial: office	1		

Turnagain Community Council | TCC Resolution 2022-05, Exhibit A

Community Outreach: Disposal of Woodland Park Parcels, W. Northern Lights Blvd. & Turnagain St.

Q6: “If developed, what would NOT fit well?”		Q7: “If developed, what concerns about impacts? What should be avoided?”	
Q6: If developed, what would NOT fit well here?	TOTAL	Q7: Concerns about impacts, what to avoid	TOTAL
Housing: Multi-family or large-scale	26	Traffic, congestion	33
Commercial: Retail or strip mall	18	Loss of green space/open space	22
Housing: any	17	Should be park, or stay as is	13
Any development that creates traffic or parking issues	16	Cheap or unattractive development	11
Any development (leave as is, or as park)	13	Loss of public access (pedestrian bridge, paths, trail)	10
Commercial: any	10	Unsafe crossing at Turnagain St. (from R.G. to parking)	9
Tall or very large developments	9	Not enough parking available	8
Commercial: Car-oriented business (garage, gas station, drive thru)	7	Narrow alley	8
None (any development is better than current)	7	None / no concerns	6
Park (should not have amenities)	7	Environmental and drainage impacts	6
More parking lots (keep only existing parking)	7	Loss of view (mountains)	5
Housing: Cheap or low quality	5	Loss of public space	4
Commercial: Alcohol (bar or liquor store) or marijuana establishment	5	Impacts of not developing / opportunity cost	4
Industry: Manufacturing, construction, heavy equipment	5	Noise and quietness	4
Anything that restricts access to trail/bridge	5	Attracts problem behaviors	3
Full development on parcel (leaving no green space)	4	Construction impacts, if developed	3
Housing: Expensive or high quality	2	Unknown, depends on future plan	3
Commercial: Adult-oriented business (book store, club)	1	Emergency or hazard situations / access	3
Commercial: Office	1	Snow removal	2
Unsafe walking/biking routes (road w/out sidewalks)	1	Should not be park, unsafe for kids / next to road	1
Ball fields	1	Interfering with Railroad tracks	1

Summary: May 21 Meeting Themes

Q1: Who attended the meeting? Where do they live?
Of the people who attended, most live within a few blocks: the sign-in sheet shows people on 29 th and 30 th Avenues, Brookside Drive, Turnagain Street, Barbara Street. A few, including TCC regular participants, live in other parts of the neighborhood to the east, west and south.
Q2: “How do you interact with this property currently? How have you seen others use it?”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk or bike over the pedestrian bridge (x5) • Ride bike or walk through (x2) • Walk on park grounds (x2) • Walk dog (a few participants brought their dogs to the meeting while walking) (x2) • Use as access to Coastal Trail and other trails • Play games: soccer, frisbee/disc throwing, water balloon fights • Post-workout cool-down (stretching) • Summer: used as park, winter: used as playground • Have seen issues of loitering, drug use and discarded needles • Able to access in wheelchair • Flyfishing practice • Skateboarding area • “Like it because it’s empty” – not many amenities, has open space

Turnagain Community Council | TCC Resolution 2022-05, Exhibit A

Community Outreach: Disposal of Woodland Park Parcels, W. Northern Lights Blvd. & Turnagain St.

<p>Q3: “If this land is sold and developed, what is important to keep?”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to keep ~50% of land for park and green space, east of Barbara St. cul de sac (x2) • Pedestrian overpass (x5) • Keep green space! (x5) There is less open green space south of Northern Lights in this area • View toward the mountains to the east – rare in our area to have open view • Keep bike and pedestrian trails • Keep fire access (emergency turnaround at Barbara St) (x2) • Keep the trees and landscaping as buffer next to the road (x3) • Alley access (one way) (x2) • Existing parking for Rustic Goat (x2) – some favored keeping it as a lease
<p>Q4: “If this land is sold and developed, what could fit well here? What wouldn’t fit?”</p>
<p>(would fit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing new: don’t change it! • “Develop it as a park,” amenities: playground equipment, benches, climbing structure (x4) • “Small” housing development (x2) • Add more parking: if it is private development and public use, parking for park users (x2) • Dedicate a buffer next to Northern Lights (legal protection so that part is not developed) • Building or site design that looks good in the neighborhood • Mixed use: housing with small commercial or retail • Something built by a nonprofit developer, like Cook Inlet Housing or Habitat • Affordable housing: tiny homes, example: Strawberry Rd. Cottages (CIHA built, Sand Lake)
<p>(would not fit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No commercial (x3) • No dense housing (x3) / “high rise apartments” • No drive through businesses, fast food etc. • No hotel, B&B, hostel or short-term stay use that brings a lot of traffic • No treatment centers, rehab, halfway houses • Building something on the eastern side toward railroad would be difficult, many constraints • Traffic and access: alley is narrow, limited road access, Turnagain St. and Barbara St. are also narrow. Many more cars would not fit here.
<p>Q5: “What concerns about impacts to the site / surrounding area? What should be avoided?”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already concerned about traffic on Turnagain St. (x4) • Increase in traffic / more congestion at traffic light (x4) • Increase in noise (x3) • Impacts of railroad noise on property • Construction impacts (“2 years of dust and noise!”) • Decrease in sun access/sunlight, such as if property built to max height (3 stories) • Concern about overuse: more people, and/or less area for public use • Concerned a developer will “max it out” (build on all area)/sprawl by not leaving green space • Snow removal and storage, especially where there is parking (x2) • Need to relocate or address existing utilities that run across property (underground)

Turnagain Community Council | TCC Resolution 2022-05, Exhibit A

Community Outreach: Disposal of Woodland Park Parcels, W. Northern Lights Blvd. & Turnagain St.

Other Questions or Issues Raised “Parking Lot”

1. What easements or rights of way exist on the property now? Where does State DOT right of way start? Are there existing right of way or protections for the pedestrian bridge access?
2. Would the trees/landscaping along Northern Lights be removed? Can it be kept?
3. How will emergency (fire truck) access be impacted? If Barbara Street cul de sac is removed, what would be in its place?
4. Could sidewalks be added, on the property or leading to the property? (Turnagain St.)
5. Will parcels be replatted and rezoned into one large property, or retain original zoning?
6. Would the existing Rustic Goat parking lot be dealt with separately from the others?
7. What is the allowed height limit in zoning on the parcels – what could get built, how tall?
8. Will there be a traffic study, of existing traffic issues and potential increase?
9. When would the neighborhood KNOW whether something would get built, and what will be specifically proposed?
10. Is development feasible here? When and how will we know?
11. When would Turnagain Street be upgraded (repaved, redesigned for safety etc.)?
12. Is railroad noise an issue now for people living in the area? How would new development be impacted by train noise?
13. How is this land being disposed – by competitive bid or sole source? Can this be required?