Planning Department
MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

OUR DOWNTOWN
The Heart of Anchorage
A Project to Implement the Downtown Comprehensive Plan

OUR DOWNTOWN:
ANCHORAGE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021
A VISION FOR NOW
3/11/2022 – Assembly Work Session

OUR DOWNTOWN ~ LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is with gratefulness and respect the Planning team wishes to acknowledge the traditional homeland of *Dena'ina* Athabaskans and the contributions Alaska Native Peoples make to our community and society today.

We would especially acknowledge the traditional importance of the area considered for this Downtown Plan (*Dgheyay Kaq*) and for Ship Creek (*Dgheyay Leht*) as the traditional First Salmon Ceremony site ~

ANCHORAGE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021

PLANNING TEAM:

Municipal Planning Department *– Craig Lyon, Kristine Bunnell, Tom Davis, and Daniel Mckenna-Foster*

Huddle, AK *– Holly Spoth-Torres, and Michelle Fehribach*

Agnew::Beck *– Shanna Zuspan, and Katie Sovic*

Bettisworth North *– Mark Kimerer, Mèlisa Babb, and Corey DiRutigliano*

STAKEHOLDERS:

DTCC, FVCC, ADP, AEDC, ACDA, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority – Trust Land Office, First National Bank of Alaska, Visit Anchorage, Anchorage Chamber, AHFC, AIDEA, Anchorage Museum, Utility Companies, MOA Departments, DOT&PF, AHPC, NVE, NCG, 3rd Avenue Radicals, AK AIA, AK APA, AMATS, ARRC, PZC, Assembly, Community, Debenham Properties, Weidner Apartment Homes, Arete LLC.

TIMELINE: January 2021 – present 2022

- Website Launched
- Community Meetings:
  - ✓ DTCC – Monthly
  - ✓ GHCC and FVCC – (3)
  - ✓ Kick-off and Plan Roll out (2)
  - ✓ Urban Design and Utility Subcommittees (5)
  - ✓ Director's Draft Plan Review (1)
  - ✓ GAP Funding Working Group (3)
  - ✓ Agency/Group Presentations (7)
- October – Public Hearing Draft Plan Published
- December – Planning & Zoning Recommendation

2022:

- March – Assembly Hearing and Adoption

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 ~ CODE DIRECTION

AMC 21.03.070.B.2: Targeted Plan Review (10-Year Intervals)

The Director shall initiate a targeted review of the plan at least once every 10 years, or in conjunction with an area-wide rezoning, in order to make it consistent with economic and demographic trends, recent and proposed land use decisions, and adopted studies and plans.

TRENDS REPORT – Population / Jobs

2007 DOWNTOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – TARGETED REVIEW

Trends Report

OUR DOWNTOWN – STEP 2

1/20/2021 – Public Meeting Kick-off

OUR DOWNTOWN
The Heart of Anchorage
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Population*

- 2007 Downtown population was estimated at **1,894** in 2002 and was projected to increase to 4,673 residents by 2025 (Appendix A, page 47 of the 2007 Downtown Plan).
- Census Tract 11 estimates approximately **895 residents** (ACS 2019) down by 43 estimated residents living Downtown in 2018 (ACS 2018).
- Census Tract 11 was used in both studies to estimate the number of residents living in Downtown Anchorage.

* AEDC said we are still expected to lose residents for the next three years

Jobs*

- The 2007 Downtown Plan stated there were about 16,697 jobs in the 99501-zip code area in 2004. This would include areas outside of the Downtown core.
- We were not able to make a comparison jobs estimate for this plan due to Pandemic-impacted employment numbers. Before the Pandemic, a very rough estimate of around 21,000 jobs was found in 99501.

*AEDC said we are adding jobs on 3/1/22! Good news for Anchorage and Downtown. Our economy is picking up!

TRENDS REPORT – Successes!

- Smart Growth America – A Few Good Blocks
  - Elizabeth Place – 50 Homes
  - Block 96 Flats – 50 Homes
- Downtown Edge – 22 Homes
- Qanchi Place – 28 Homes
- Museum Renovations
  - Design District Declaration
- 6th Avenue Transit Center
- Townsquare Park Master Plan
- ADP Membership Drive
- Over 100 Events and Event Programming
- ARRC Historic Terminal Renovation
- Anchorage Local Landmark Register Ordinance
- Marketing and Branding Strategy
- 4th Avenue Mushing District Declaration
- Downtown Code Reformat
- Downtown Housing Incentive
- East Downtown/Fairview Economic Development Tax Abatement Zone
- Anchorage Original Neighborhoods Historic Preservation Plan
- 2010 Historic Building Survey Study
- Ship Creek Framework Plan
- 3rd Avenue Former Native Hospital Master Plan
- Enhanced Year-round Street Cleaning
- Core Streets Sidewalk Upgrades
- 4th Avenue Street Lighting Upgrade Project
- Willawaw Social Club Redevelopment
- New Covenant House
- AEDC Live Work Play Housing Task Force
- Business Recruitment Strategy
- Cruise Operator Recruitment Strategy
- Seismic Engineering Report
- 9th Avenue Reconstruction
- Transit Route Study and reallocations
- Parking System Improvements
- McKinley Tower Renovation
- Linny Pacillo Mixed-use Parking and Office

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 ~ KEPT, UPDATED, or NEW

☑ KEPT ~

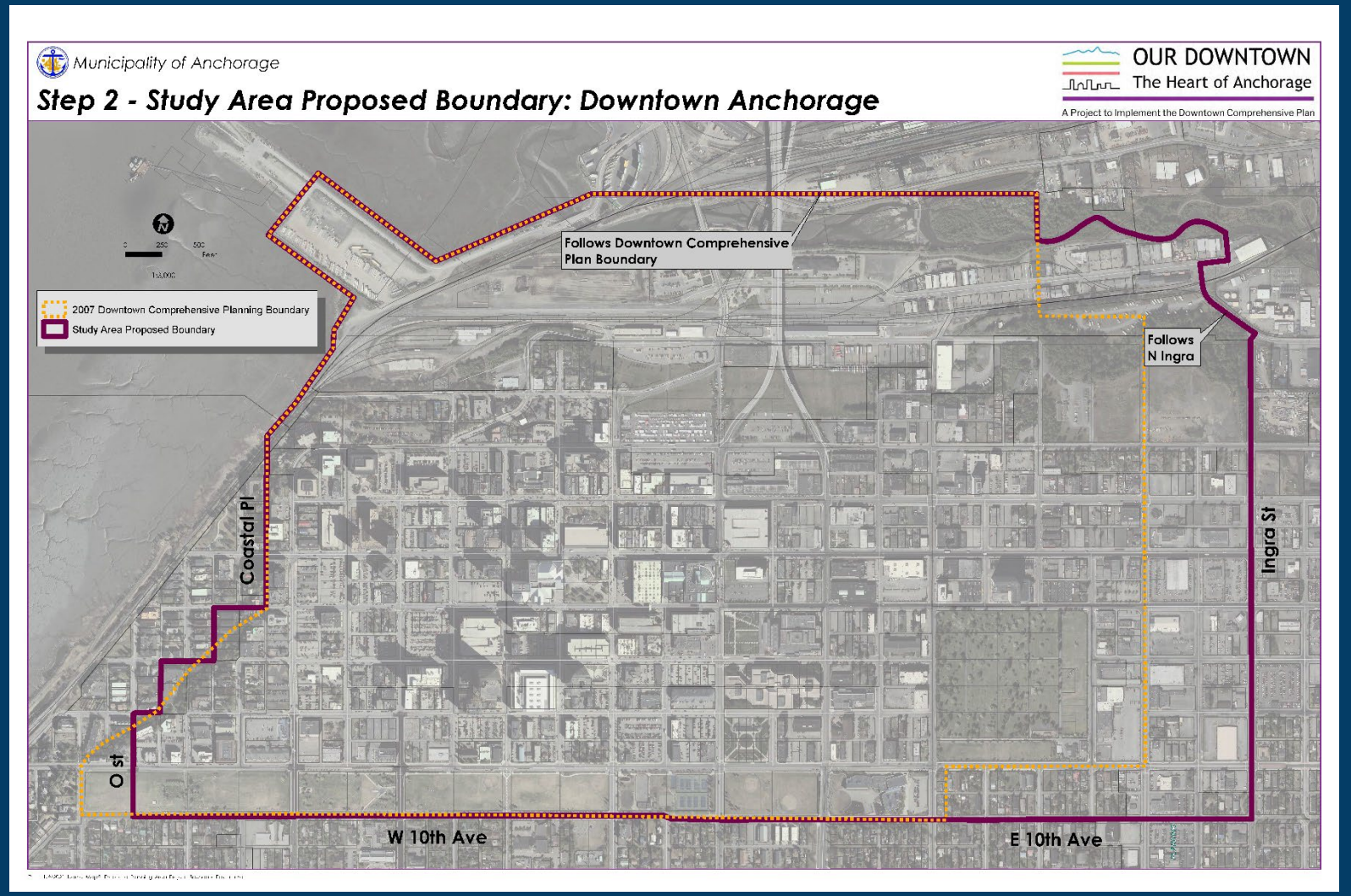
- 2007 Overarching Goals
- Some of the 2007 Plan Content

☑ UPDATED ~

- Study Area Boundary Map
- 2007 Plan Vision
- Planning Factors ☛ Development Factors
- 2007 Design Guidelines
- 2007 Implementation Actions
- Incorporated information from the Ship Creek Framework Plan, 2040 Land Use Plan, Original Four Neighborhoods Historic Preservation Plan.

☑ NEW ~

- Early Action and Chapter 8 Action Items
- Oklahoma City and Smart Growth America Strategies

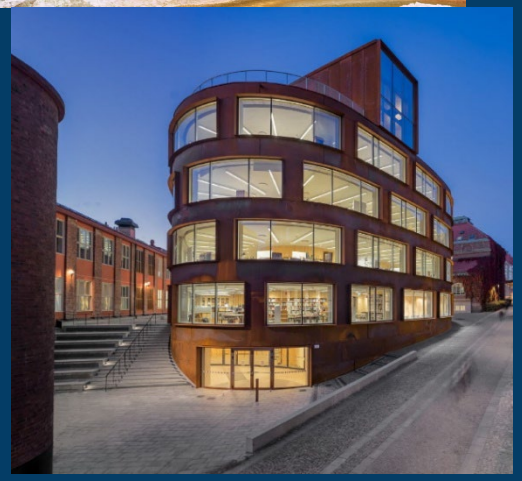


DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 – STRATEGIES – NEW!

From Oklahoma City and Smart Growth America

Page 47:

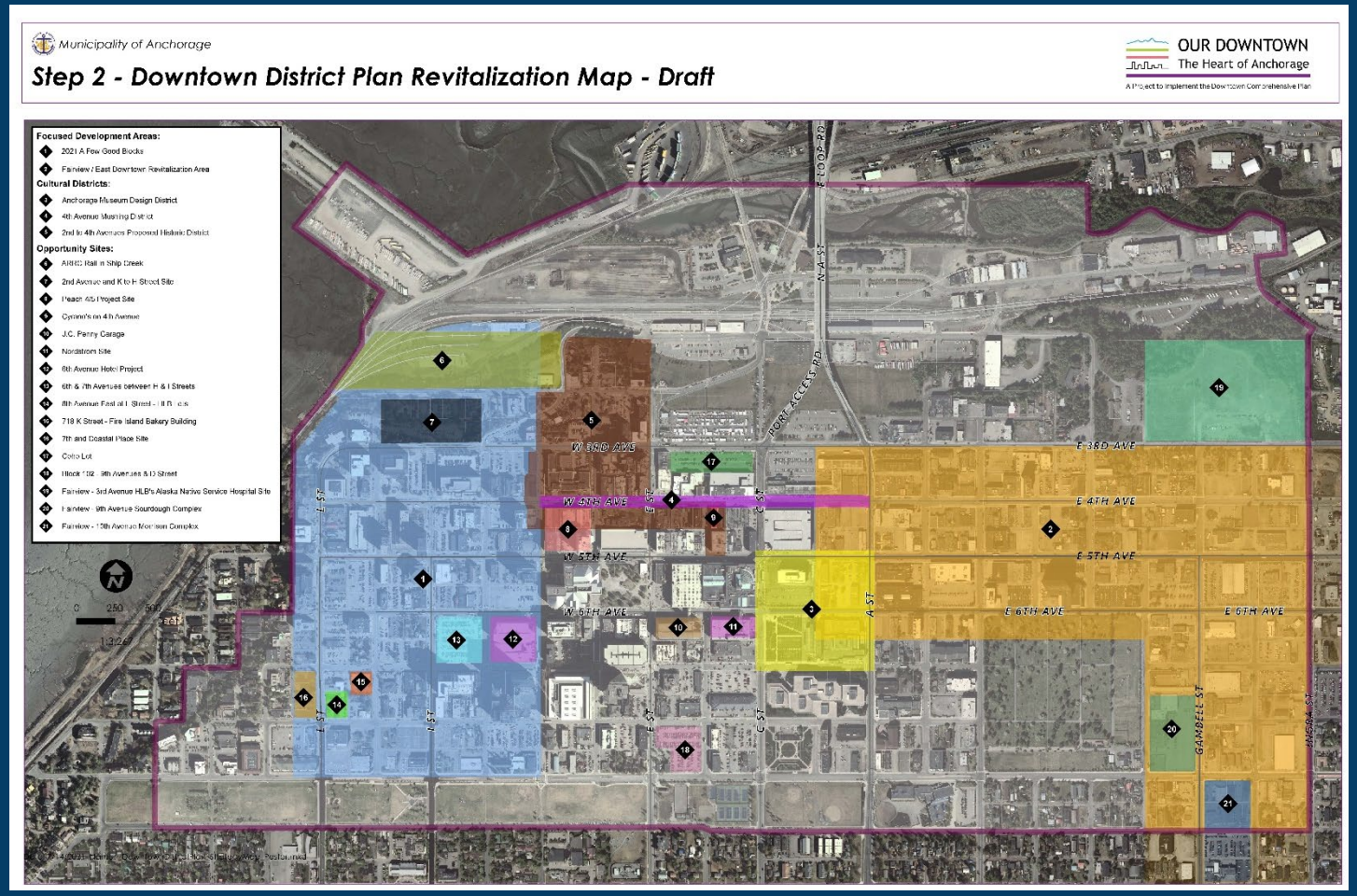
- **Strategy #1:** Focus the Effort – Chapter 3 – Revitalization Map includes Focused Development Areas, Cultural Districts and Opportunity Sites
- **Strategy #2:** Build Great Housing – Chapter 6 includes code updates, parking and utility coordination processes and incentives.
- **Strategy #3:** Get Important input from Women in the Community – Chapter 5 identifies Quality of Life actions to support communication, events, tourism, and historic preservation.
- **Strategy #4:** Lead By Example – Chapter 4 adds new incentives, housing trust fund, and public/private partnerships.
- **Strategy #5:** Make Connections to Surrounding Neighborhoods – Chapter 7 supports trail projects, upgraded transit, bicycle use and safe pedestrian facilities.
- **Strategy #6:** Make Downtown Safer – Chapter 5 supports ADP's Clean, Safe, Vital Downtown program, PM&E lighting upgrades, implementation of the Community Homeless Plan.



White Architects, Sweden, KTH School of Architecture, Treesranch.com

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 ~ NEW

Strategy #1- *Focus the Effort*



- ☑ **NEW ~ Chapter 3**
  - Revitalization Strategies and Policies
  - Revitalization Strategy Map
  - Action Items
    - CIP priorities
    - Downtown Investments Program
    - Housing GAP Trust Fund

The MOA will direct limited resources to the Focused Development Areas, Cultural Districts and Opportunity Sites…to leverage investments and incentives to revitalize Downtown with housing and businesses to accelerate economic recovery in Anchorage – starts on page 45.

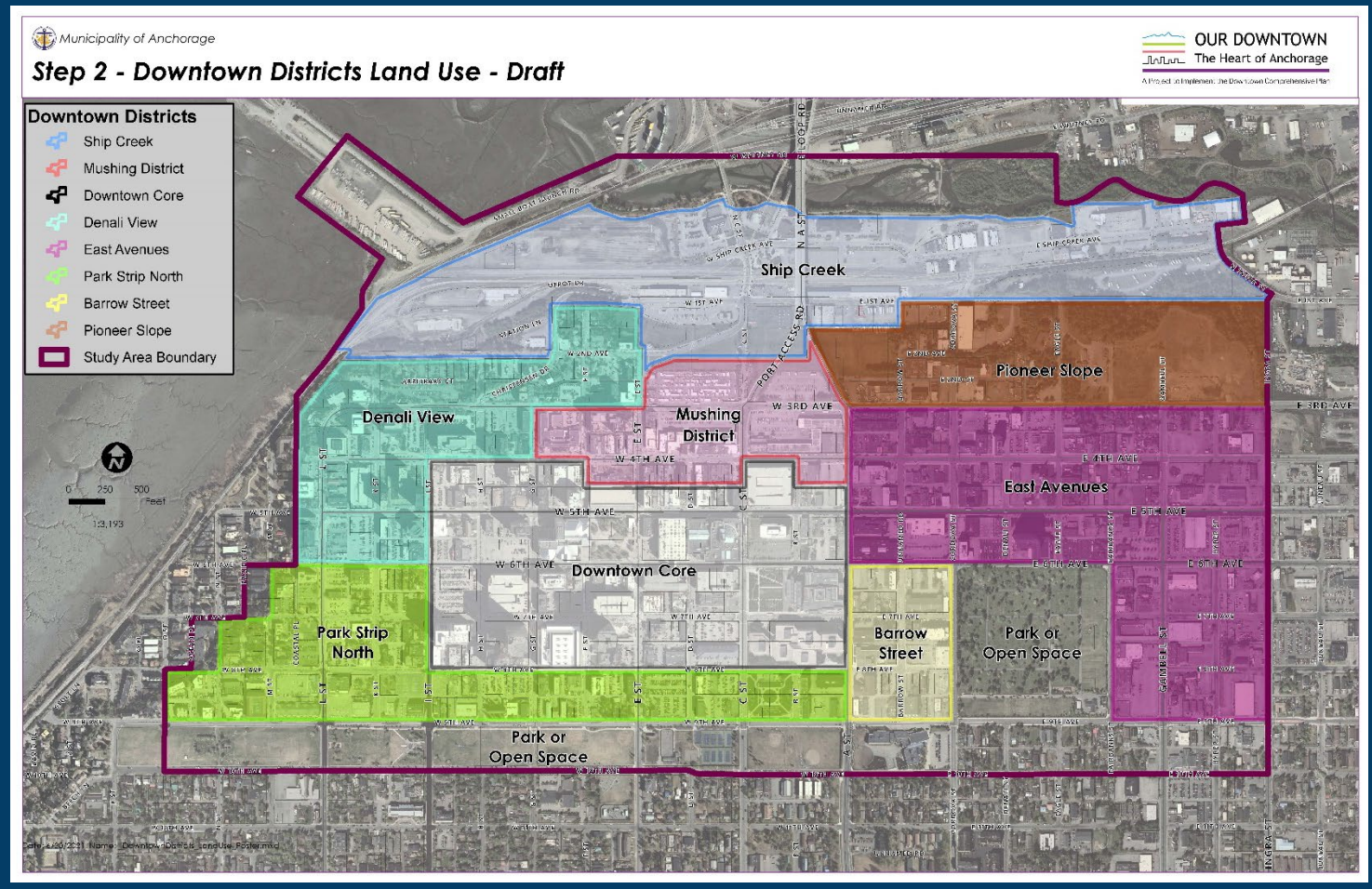
DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 ~ NEW

Strategy #2 – Build Great Housing ~ Strategy #4 – Lead By Example

☑ **NEW ~ Chapter 4**

- Land Use & Economic Development Strategies, Policies
- Land Use Plan Map
- Action Items:
  - Redevelopment Program / Office
  - Amend AMC Chapter 12.35
  - Amend Timelines on 4-unit housing and Fairview East Downtown Tax Abatement Zone
  - Rehab and Reuse Incentives
  - DT Code Update
  - Other tax incentives

Leverage investments, Provide Incentives to attract new businesses both government and private, Enhance the pedestrian experience, Increase development intensity, Ensure seismically safe development, Identify and promote the distinct subdistricts – Starts on page 57.

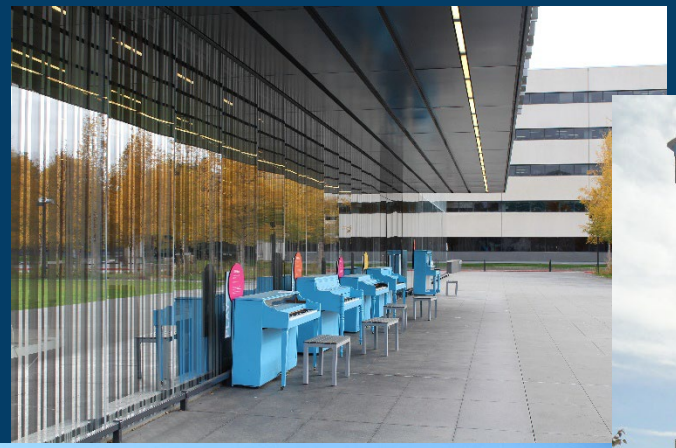


DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 ~ UPDATED

Strategy #3 – Get Important input from Women in the Community ~ Strategy #6 – Make Downtown Safer

☑ **NEW ~ Chapter 5**

- **Quality of Life Policies and Actions**
  - **Creative Placemaking**
  - **Importance of Cultural Districts**
  - **Signage and Wayfinding**
  - **Tourism and Nomad Worker Attraction**
  - **Clean streets and sidewalks**
  - **Allow street closures – Events and Eating Outdoors**
  - **Importance of Historic Buildings**



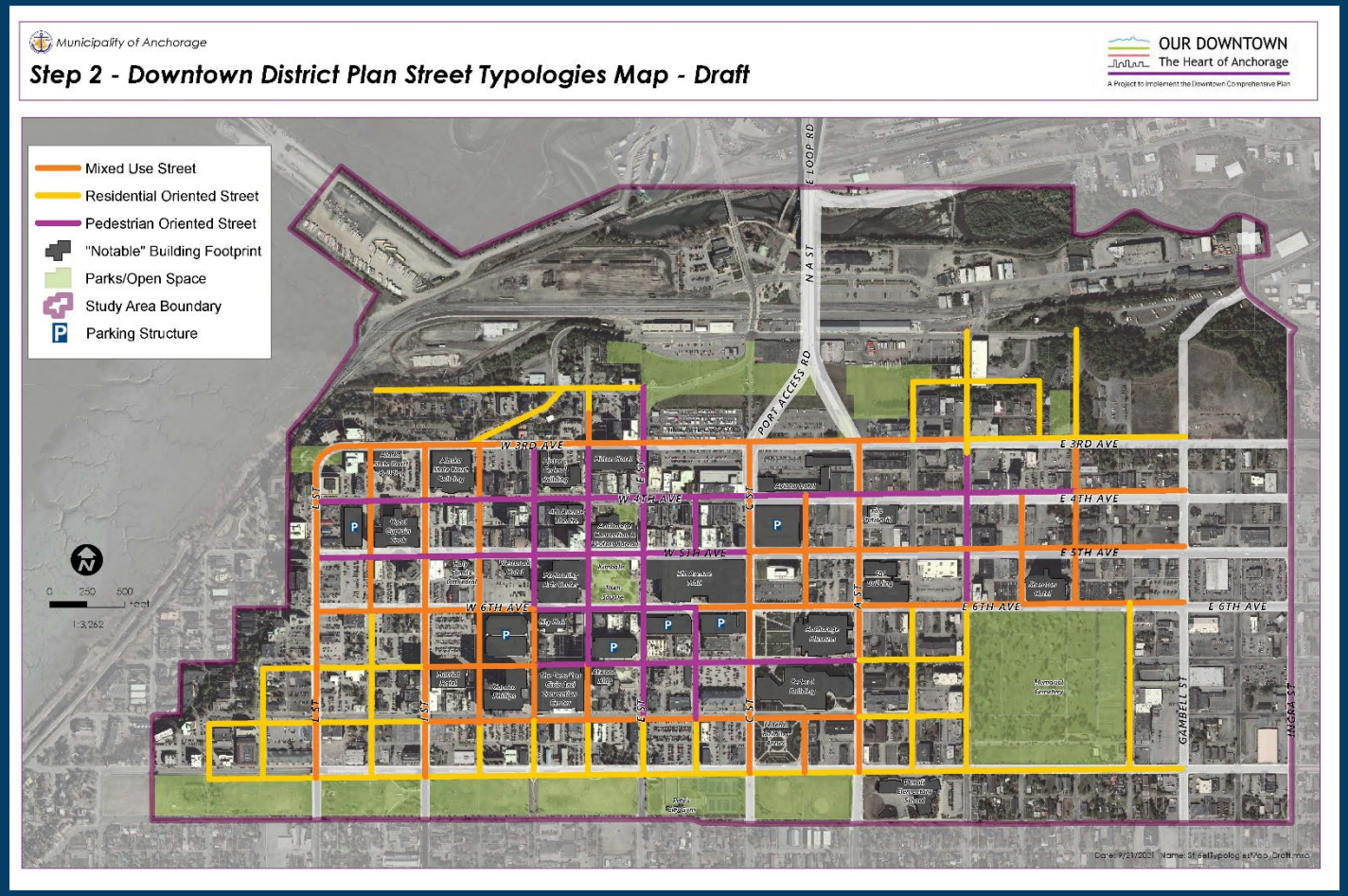
Market and Brand Downtown, Fund and Construct Wayfinding and Signage, Support ADP's Safety Program, Support Downtown Arts and Cultural Programming, Support Historic and Cultural Activities and Preservation efforts, Fund and maintain parks and open space – Starts on page 71.

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 ~ UPDATED

Strategy #1 – Focus the Effort ~ Strategy #2 – Build Great Housing ~ Strategy #3 – Get Important input from Women in the Community ~ Strategy #5 – Make Connections to Surrounding Neighborhoods

☑ **UPDATED ~ Chapter 6**

- Northern Climate Factors
- 2007 Design Guidelines
- Incorporation of Street Typology Map
- Action Items:
  - Downtown Code Update
  - Downtown-specific sign code
  - Utility capacity determination
  - Land capacity determination



Amend Northern City Design Guidelines to incentivize access to solar and views, Update the 1970s bonus point system, Provide a context-sensitive design code, Determine gaps in services to reduce development costs, Ensure the connection between the streets and buildings, Support economic development and Streamlined communication processes – Starts on page 77.

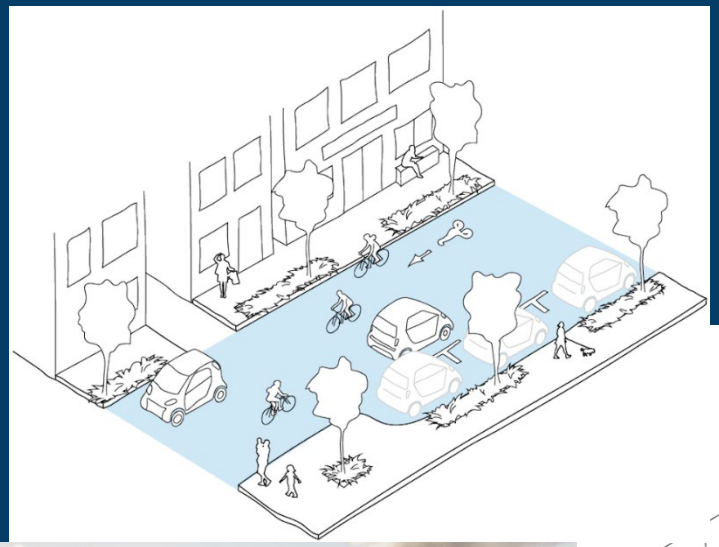
DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 ~ UPDATED

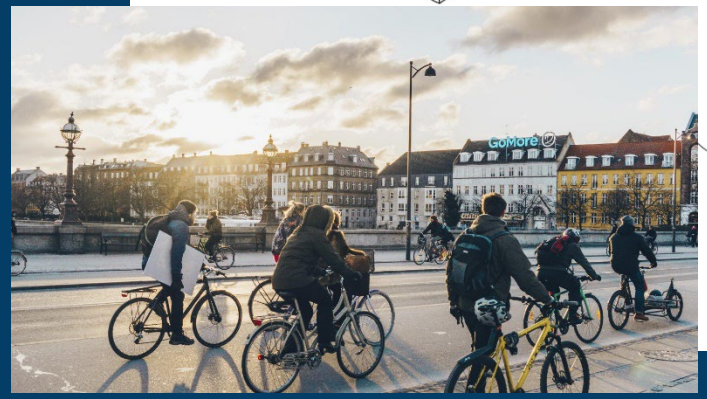
Strategy #1 – Focus the Effort ~ Strategy #5 – Make Connections to Surrounding Neighborhoods

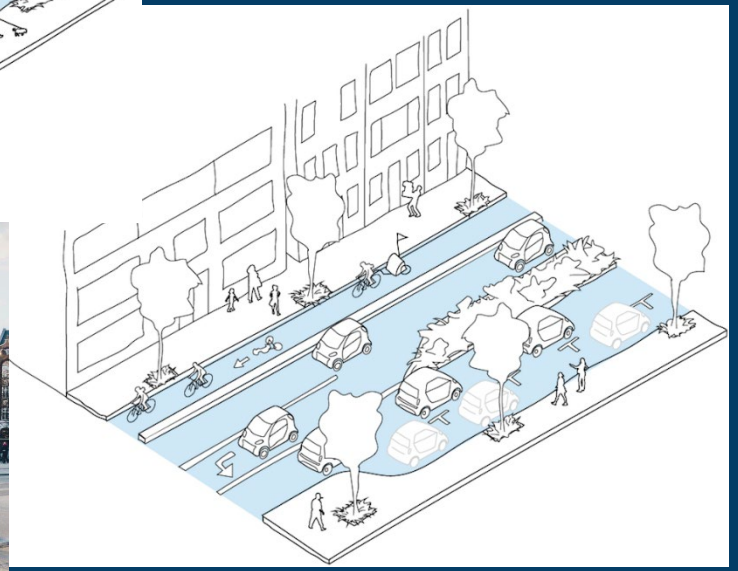
☑ **UPDATED ~ Chapter 7**

- Transportation and Circulation Strategies and Policies
- Major & Minor Streets Recommendations
- Action Items:
  - DT Streets Engineering Study
  - Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities
  - Trail Connections
  - Transit and Trolley
  - Parking Coordination Program
  - Low-income Worker Benefits

NACTO Minor and Major Streets Recommendations for pedestrian use and comfort, Fund the Downtown Streets Engineering Study, Manage Parking with an APP, Reduce Single Occupant Vehicle numbers - increase access to trail connections with bicycle facilities and bicycle locked parking – Starts on page 97.





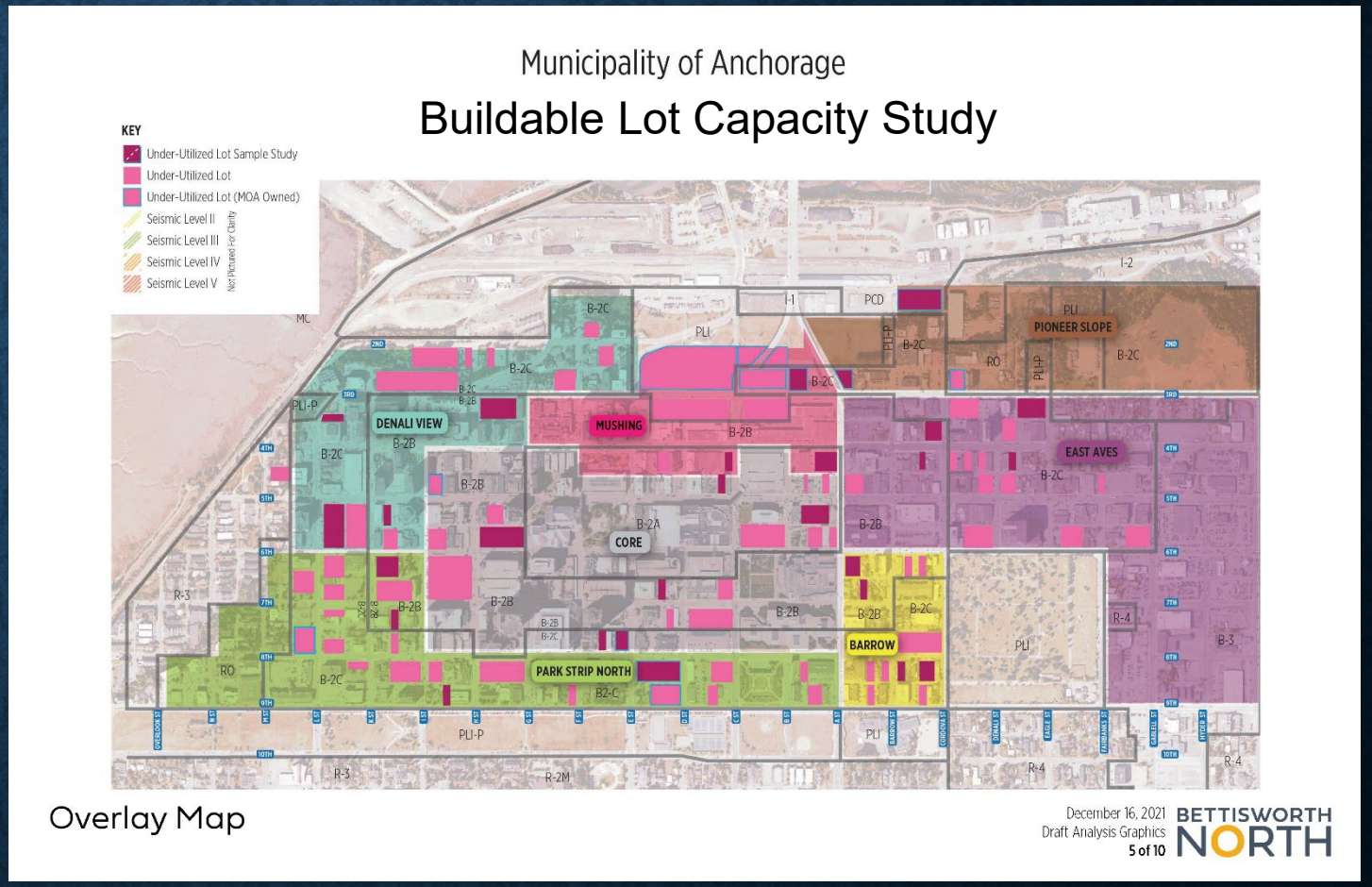


Martin Heiberg and NACTO.org

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021

EARLY ACTION ITEMS – Page 22:

- **Continue to Invest in the Few Good Blocks Area**
  ~Utilities, Development, Land-Owners, MOA Planning, ACDA, MOA RED – Revitalization Map page 53.
- **Create a Utility Coordination Process**
  ~Development Services – Discussions underway.
- **Fund and Complete DT Zoning Code Update ~ Capacity Study – Complete. Code update in process!**
- **Identify and Establish New Sources of Funding ~ Draft Report under review!**
- **Complete the DT Streets Engineering Study ~ *AMATS TIP Funding ~ October 2022?***
- **Update Historic and Cultural Information**
  ~Anchorage Historic Preservation Commission.



DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021

Possible with:

- **DT Code Updated**

ANCHORAGE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021

Downtown Plan: Denali View

The Denali View subdistrict is the second district characterized by broader mixed-use development. Law and professional offices and the Alaska Court System complex are centered here. Medium to high-density office uses are encouraged. The north and west bluffs of Denali View are impacted by seismic hazard zones #4 and #5. The Denali View subdistrict is part of the Original Townsite platted in 1915. It contains some of Anchorage's oldest remaining homes along 2nd and 3rd Avenues. Several buildings and viewsheds in this area could be eligible for nomination to the Anchorage Local Landmark Register. Single-family homes converted to offices provide affordable option for small businesses. This plan supports the continued use of historic buildings to ensure small businesses are not priced out of the Downtown area. Maker Spaces and Live / Workspaces consistent with the zoning for this land use district. L Street to 3rd Avenue is a prime bicycle and pedestrian connection from the Coastal Trail and is mentioned as the location for a bike boulevard.

Development Specifications

- Medium to high density
- 2-10 stories (seismic overlay considered)
- Housing, Office, Retail, Restaurants/Cafes, Laundry, Grocery, small public spaces,
- preserve view corridors
- 20 mph roads (Mixed Use roads and Pedestrian Roads on this block)
- Bike Boulevard connections to area trails

Site Features (Title 21 Design Amenities)

Mixed-use building located on block 56 (Seismic Zone 5)
Retail Ground level /Office Levels 2-3 / Residential Levels 4-5
Upper levels stepped back for viewsheds + solar access
Street trees, seating, pedestrian lights + landscaping
Widened textured sidewalks
Arcade and covered walkways
Enclosed bike parking
Restaurant entries at street level
Exterior seating + plaza for Dining
Parking structure accessible from alley

21-10-01 DRAFT CONCEPT

Imagine Block 56 | Block Overall Character

Development Specifications

Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Denali View
- Medium to High Density Housing + Mixed-Use
- Protect viewsheds and step buildings down in height to preserve view corridors
- Housing, Office, Retail, Restaurants/Cafes, Grocery, Laundry, small public spaces

Chapter 6 Urban Design; Streets
- Mixed-Use streets focus on providing safe enjoyable experience for all users
- Bike Boulevard to connect to areas /regional trail network

Title 21 Design Amenities

1. Mixed-Use building, parking below grade; L1 Retail; L2-3 Office; L4-5 Residential
2. Mixed-Use Tower; Parking below grade; L1 Retail; L2-5 Office; L6-9 Residential

Site Amenities

3. Entry Plaza, Retail + restaurant entries at street level
4. Exterior seating + plaza for dining
5. Street trees, seating, pedestrian lighting, Arcade/covered walkways and landscaping
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Crossings for pedestrian safety
8. Parking structure accessible from alley to minimize sidewalk crossing

OUR DOWNTOWN | Anchorage Downtown District Plan 2021 | DRAFT Concept Development Character + Amenities | November 4, 2021

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021

Possible with:

- **DT Code Updated**

Imagine Block 65 | Block Overall Character

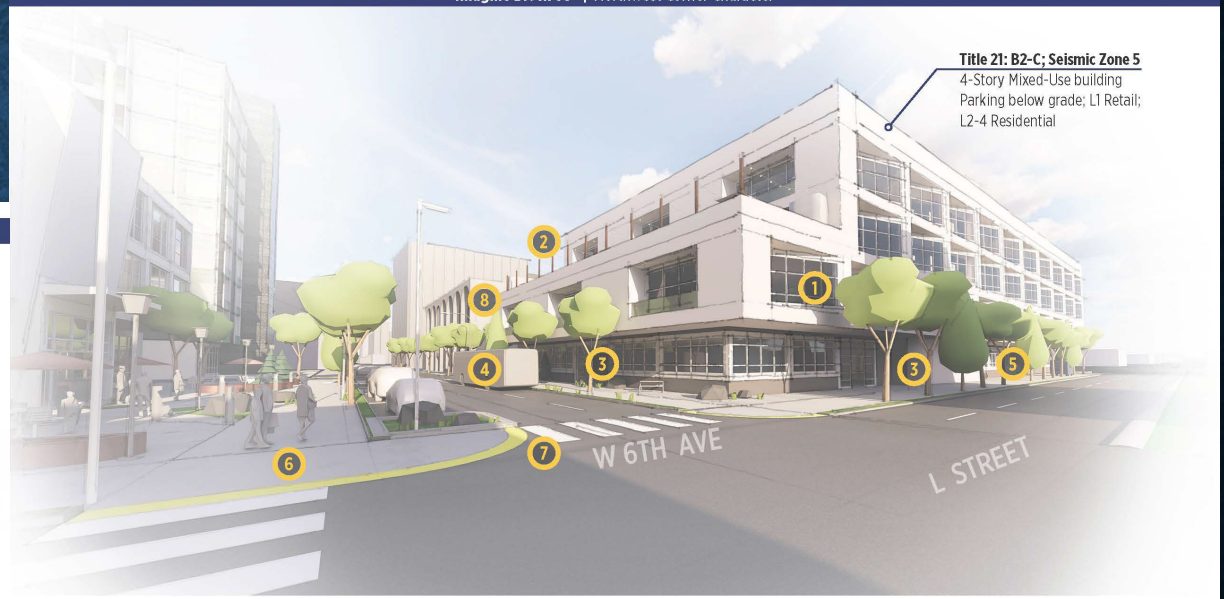
Development Specifications
Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Park Strip North
- Medium Density Housing + Mixed-Use
- Protect viewsheds, step buildings down in height to preserve views/sunlight access
- Housing, Retail, Restaurants/Cafes, Grocery, Laundry, small public spaces

Chapter 6 Urban Design; Streets
- Mixed-Use streets focus on providing safe enjoyable experience for all users
- Bike boulevard to connect to areas/regional trail network

Title 21 Design Amenities
1. Mixed-Use building, parking below grade
   L1 Retail + Grocery; L2-4 Residential + Terraces

Site Amenities
2. Stepped structure to maintain sunlight access for adjacent blocks
3. Retail + grocery entries at street level
4. Transit stops coordinated with amenities
5. Street trees, seating, pedestrian lighting, Arcade/covered walkways at retail entries and landscaping
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Crossings for pedestrian safety
8. Parking structure accessible from alley to minimize sidewalk crossings
9. Preserve cottage industry structures

Imagine Block 65 | Northwest Corner Character



Development Specifications
Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Park Strip North
- Medium Density Housing + Mixed-Use
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3. Retail + grocery entries at street level
4. Transit stops coordinated with amenities
5. Street trees, seating, pedestrian lighting, Arcade/covered walkways at retail entries and landscaping
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Crossings for pedestrian safety
8. Parking structure accessible from alley to minimize sidewalk crossings

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021

Possible with:

- **DT Code Updated**

Imagine Block 102 | Southeast Corner Character

Development Specifications
Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Park Strip North
- Medium Density Housing + Mixed-Use
- Protect viewsheds, step buildings down in height to preserve views/sunlight access
- South half: Housing, with layered public to private spaces
- North half: Retail, Housing, Restaurants/Cafes, Grocery, Laundry, small Public Spaces

Chapter 6 Urban Design; Streets
- Residential streets focus on providing safe enjoyable experience for all users
- Activate alleys with art, feature lighting, secure bike parking

Title 21 Design Amenities
1. Multi-Unit Housing, Parking at grade L1-3 Residential + Terraces
2. Mixed-Use Retail, Office + Housing. Parking structure wrapped by L1-2 Retail/Office, L3-7 Residential

Site Amenities
3. Lower structure to maintain sunlight access for residential units on north block
4. Landscaping, seating, pedestrian lighting, small yards and porches encourage street level activity
5. Pedestrian access on all street edges
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Crossings for pedestrian safety
8. Parking/utility access from alley side

Imagine Block 102 | Block Overall Character

Development Specifications
Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Park Strip North
- Medium Density Residential
- Protect viewsheds, step buildings down in height to preserve views/sunlight access
- South half: Housing, with layered public to private spaces
- North half: Retail, Housing, Restaurants/Cafes, Grocery, Laundry, small Public Spaces

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- Residential streets focus on providing safe enjoyable experience for all users
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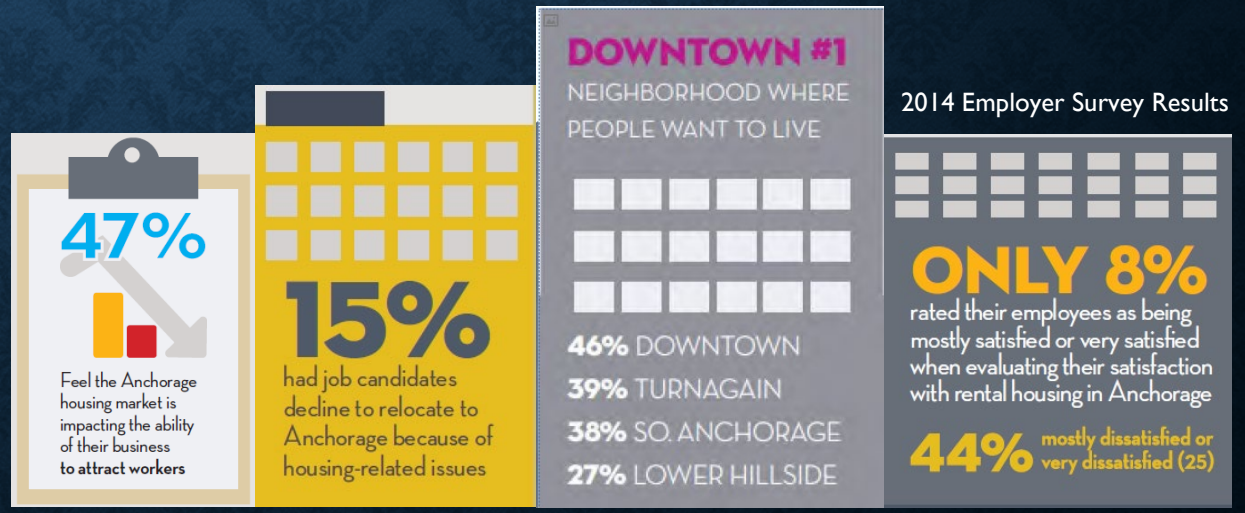
3. Lower structure to maintain sunlight access for residential units on north block
4. Landscaping, seating, pedestrian lighting, small yards and porches encourage street level activity
5. Pedestrian access on all street edges
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Building/Parking rooftop activation
8. Parking/utility access from alley side, activated with bike parking, etc

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021

Why the Focus on Housing?

Housing is Economic Development

"Housing is the foundation on which Anchorage can build a stronger economic future. Lack of affordable, available and livable housing has been cited by many local businesses as a challenge to attracting and retaining employees in Anchorage." – AEDC



DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021

Housing Target and What's Needed to Get There?

- Capacity study estimated 4700 housing units possible in DT.
- The GAP Housing Funding Study recommends **1400 new market-rate housing units in 5-8 years.**
- Tax Incentive Amendments.
- GAP Trust Fund Established.
- ACDA leads redevelopment in DT.

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021

Getting to 1400 by 2030!

Project Financing GAPs: Key Findings

3 Downtown Anchorage Examples

GAP PER UNIT

Project	NO INCENTIVE	12-YEAR TAX INCENTIVE	12-YEAR + $2M Patient Capital + Land Write Down	25-YEAR + Some Land Write Down
Current DT Project	$120,000	$70,000	No Gap	No Gap
40 units on 1/2 acre. Surface parked at .50 spaces per unit. Density: 80 DUA. All Stick Built.				
Block 102 – 8th & F	$110,000	$60,000	$20,000	No Gap
150 Units on .96 acres: North Parcel Only. Parking = .05 per unit. 40% parking onsite surface and remaining in adjacent lots or garages. Density: 155 DUA. All Stick Built.				
Block 28 – 3rd & H	$90,000	$50,000	$20,000	No Gap
200 Units on .80 acres: North parcel only. Parking = .05 per unit. 40% parking onsite surface and remaining in adjacent lots or garages. Density: 249 DUA. All Stick Built.				

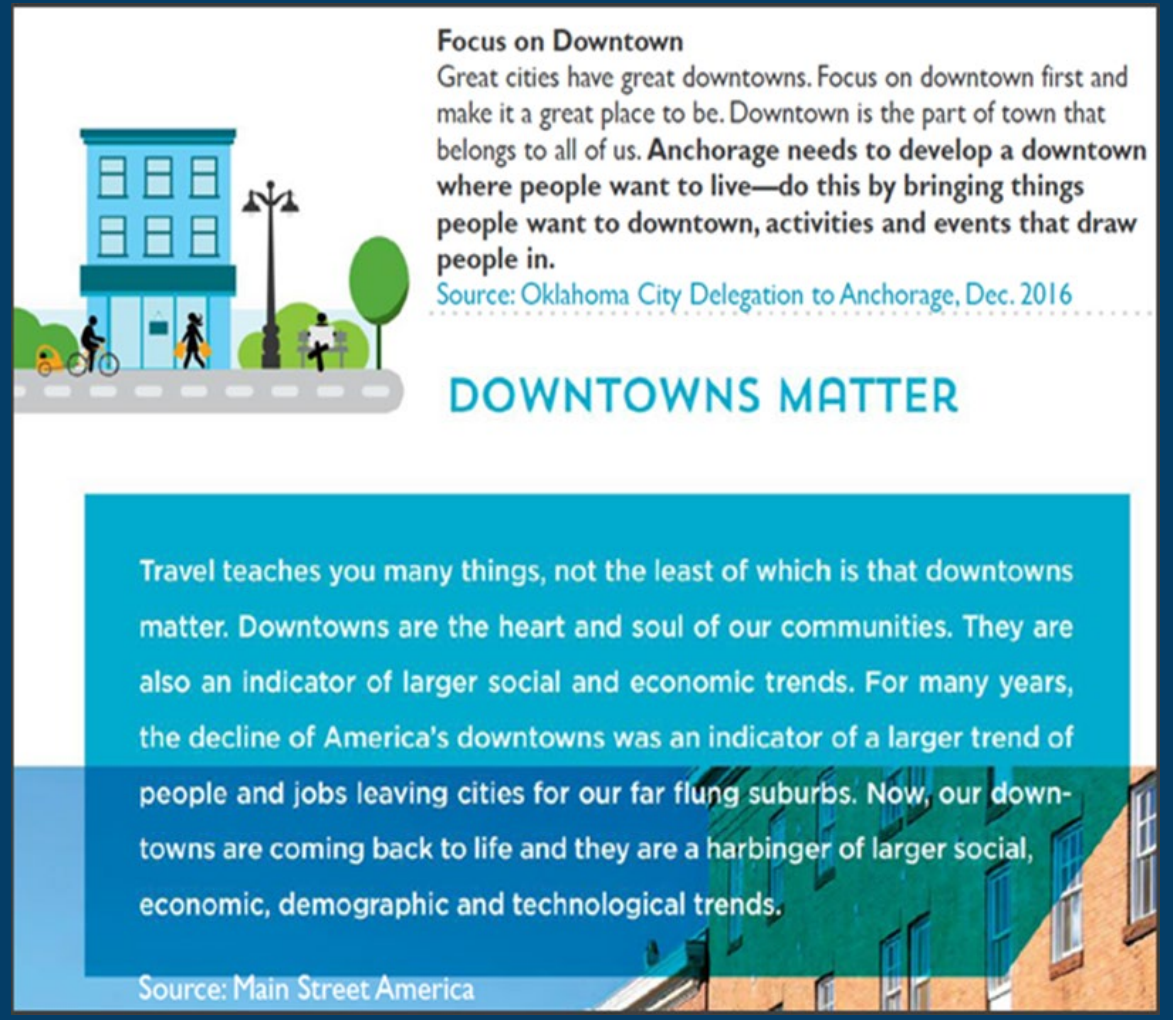
UNIT SIZE - RENTS

Studio – 450sf	$1,150
1 Bedroom – 550sf	$1,380
2 Bedroom – 800sf	$1,725
3 Bedroom – 1100sf	$1,800

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 – NEXT STEPS

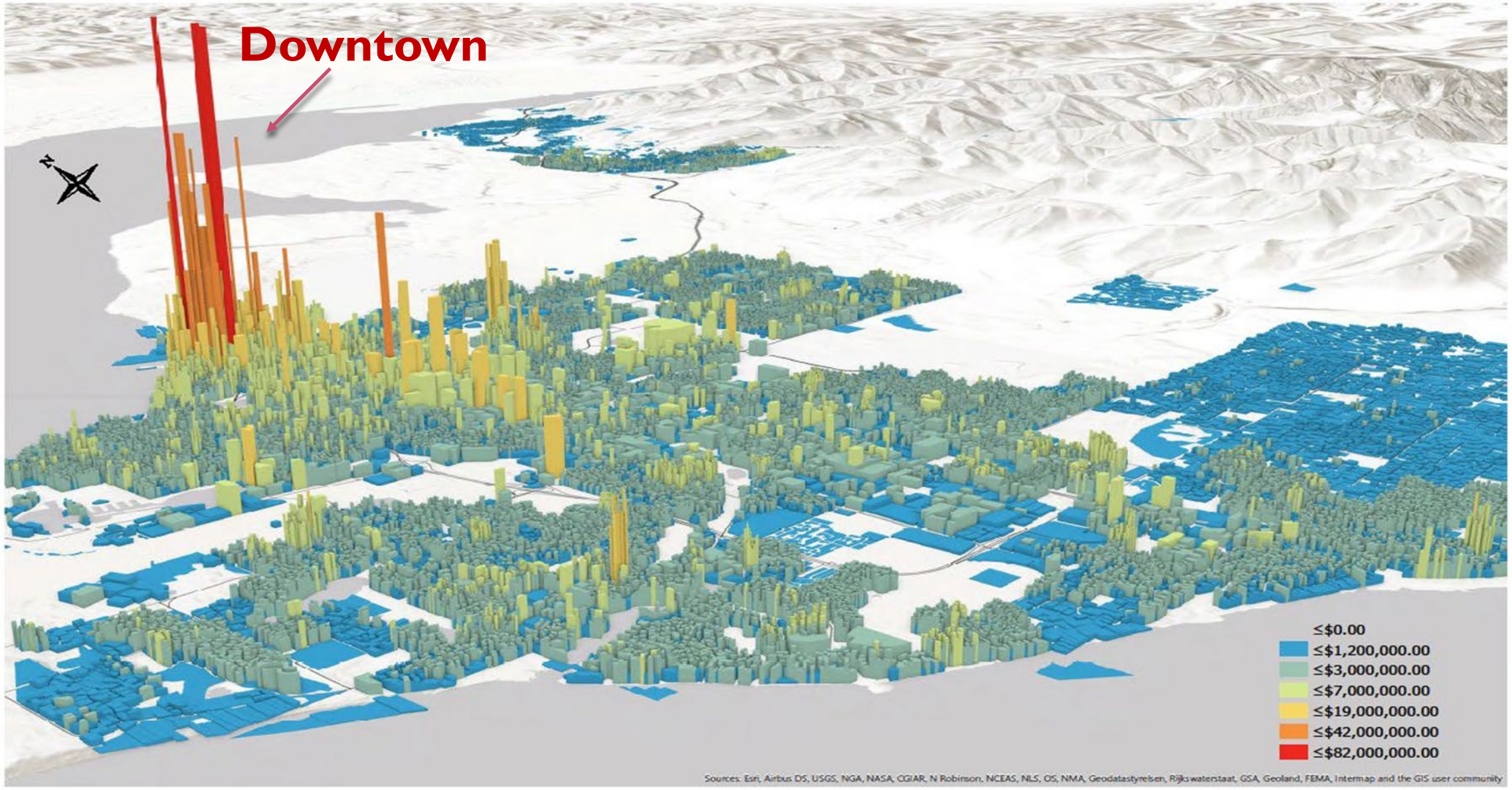
MOA and Partners Next Steps:

1. **Finalize GAP Housing Funding Study and present to Assembly with ordinance recommendations.**
2. **Finish Downtown Code Update.**
3. **Designate Few Good Blocks Focused Development Area as a Reinvestment Focus Area (RFA) consistent with *2040 Land Use Plan*. Our First RFA designation!**
4. **Secure funding for Utility Upgrades in RFA and start Utility Coordination Process.**
5. **Fund GAP Housing Trust Fund and establish low interest loan program to catalyze new market-rate housing.**



Taxable Value per Acre by Parcel (2019)

Municipality of Anchorage
Planning Department



DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021 – ITS UP TO US!

Assembly / Administration - Carry the Messages!

- 1400 Market Rate Housing Units by 2029!"
- "Housing is Economic Development!"
- "What works in Downtown will eventually work for the rest of Anchorage!"

Kristine.Bunnell@anchorageak.gov
Holly@huddleak.com

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