

See AO 00-124(S)
as amended

Submitted by: Assembly Member Fairclough
Prepared by: Department of Law
For reading: FEBRUARY 20, 2001



ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AO No. 2000-124(S)

1 AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE GIRDWOOD COMMERCIAL AREAS AND
2 TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN AS AN ELEMENT OF THE ANCHORAGE
3 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND AMENDING CHAPTER 21.05 OF THE ANCHORAGE
4 MUNICIPAL CODE.

5
6 THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:

7
8 Section 1. The Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan – Girdwood, Alaska, Draft
9 dated November 1, 1999, is hereby adopted, with the recommended amendments by the Planning
10 and Zoning Commission in Resolution No. 2000-032, as an element of the Municipality of
11 Anchorage Comprehensive Plan, with the following additional amendments:

12
13 Maps 7, 9, 10, and 1 are amended by adding the word “Potential” before “Rail Corridor.”

14
15 Maps 10 and 11 are amended to show the East Valley Access roadway running up the west
16 side of Alyeska Basin Subdivision, rather than tying into Timberline drive.

17
18 Page 18, paragraph b., is hereby amended to read as follows:

19
20 b. *Alaska Railroad Spur.* Extend a spur of the railroad into the Valley (several
21 alignments were studied) connecting a station along the existing rail corridor
22 with the Alyeska Prince Hotel/New Ski Base (with other intermediate stations
23 also possible depending on alignment). Use single-unit, self-powered rail cars
24 for Valley service, but leave open the potential to also run short [CONSISTS
25 OF] traditional rail passenger equipment as well.

26
27 Page 18, paragraph e., is hereby amended to read as follows:

28
29 This Transportation Master Plan includes the following major transit elements:

- 30
31 • Local bus transit circulation within the Valley;
32
33 • Investigation of route alignment and feasibility, both physical and
34 financial, of a rail spur into Girdwood Valley
35 [IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RAIL SPUR BY THE ALASKA

RAILROAD]; and,”

- Development of a multimodal center[S] at the Valley Entry. Development of additional multimodal centers as needed, with or without a rail component [AND THE NEW RESORT BASE].

Page 19, *Phase 1 – Core Area Shuttle*, is hereby amended as follows:

This shuttle would serve all of the markets listed above. It would have particular value if rail service [THE RAIL SPUR] were implemented [AS A MEANS OF PROVIDING LOCAL MOBILITY FOR PEOPLE ARRIVING BY TRAIN].

Page 19, *Phase 2 – Intercept Connector*, is hereby amended as follows:

During the second phase, shuttle service would be extended along Alyeska Highway to the Seward Highway. This service would interconnect with the rail service [SPUR] through multimodal centers (described below) located at the Valley Entry and also potentially at the New Resort Base [PRINCE HOTEL].

Page 20, *Implementation of a Rail Spur*, is hereby amended as follows

As part of the process to develop this Transportation Master Plan, an effort was made to estimate the potential demand for rail service and to determine the general physical feasibility of a new rail spur extension into Girdwood. The system may [WOULD] include a spur from the Alaska Railroad mainline to an internal valley terminus and/or a commuter station at the Alaska mainline with shuttle service to internal valley locations.

Page 23 is amended by deleting the following

Rail spur implementation will be controversial since opposition to it has been expressed by some Girdwood residents.

Page 25, at the first sentence in the first paragraph under the subheading *Guiding Principles for Rail Spur Implementation*, is amended to read as follows:

Based on the potential impacts and benefits, any [THE] recommended program for rail spur implementation should include [IS DESCRIBED BY] the following list of guiding principles. It is important to keep in mind that, if the Municipality and the Alaska Railroad decide[S] to implement the rail spur, it will be required to undertake an extensive environmental analysis and public

involvement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), other Federal regulations and Alaska statutes.

Page 26, *Role of the Rail Spur in Girdwood Valley*, is amended to read as follows

- 1 Based on the available data to date, t[T]he best physical alignment for the rail spur is alignment 1A as shown on map 8 and map 11.
- 2 The actual implementation of a rail spur will require further environmental analysis and engineering development with extensive public review and involvement.
- 3 If developed, t[T]he rail spur may [WILL] play an important role in Girdwood Valley's future mobility."

Page 27, at the last paragraph at the end of the subsection *Potential Role of the Rail Spur in Girdwood Valley*, is amended to read as follows:

Eventually, as development of the valley continues, the railroad could [WILL] serve as a critically important transportation mode bringing people to Girdwood without the attendant impacts of motor vehicle traffic. The opportunity to develop a multimodal transit system with internal bus circulation connection to a rail spur may be [IS] one the most important elements of the Transportation Master Plan with [AND HAS] the potential to fundamentally shape the future of Girdwood Valley. There are few bold steps the Municipality can take to ensure the achievement of the objectives identified for Girdwood Valley. The rail spur may be [IS] one of them.

For this reason, the Transportation Master Plan adopts as part of its implementation elements the following policy:

The Municipality of Anchorage shall retain and preserve a potential Public Use Corridor along the '1A - Potential Rail Corridor' route of sufficient width for various transportation alternatives. The conveyance, use or development of Municipal lands within the Corridor shall not be undertaken without further approval from the Assembly, in conformance with this Plan and any amendment to this Plan. Temporary, short-term uses of the Corridor may be permitted.

The actual construction of a rail spur or other transportation alternative to the resort base area will also require subsequent approvals by the Assembly. A final decision may happen only after further detailed study and design, including analysis of the environmental and community impacts identified

1 through the NEPA process, which ensures that the alignment, design,
2 construction, and operation of rail service is consistent with the goals and
3 objectives of this Plan.

4
5 Page 77, at the caption for Figure 10-5, is amended to read as follows:

6
7 Valley Entry Multimodal Concept Design [CENTER] with highway oriented
8 commercial and commuter parking.

9
10 Page 86, *Recommended Circulation Improvements*, is amended to read as follows:

11
12 [CONTINGENT ON THE EXTENSION OF THE RAIL SPUR,] Alyeska
13 Resort is encourage to:

14
15 Page 87, at *Alaska Railroad Corporation*, is amended to read as follow:

16
17 Internal transit service and the valley entry multimodal center may be
18 dependent on the support of the Alaska Railroad for the transit objectives
19 expressed by the community of Girdwood as reflected in this plan [THE RAIL
20 SPUR].

21
22 Page 88, under subheading 2, *Resort Base Multimodal Center*, is amended to read as follows:

23
24 If the Girdwood Rail Spur is determined to be feasible, and is approved by the
25 Municipality of Anchorage, t[T]his facility should be built through a
26 cooperative effort of Alyeska Resort, the Municipality, and the Alaska
27 Railroad Corporation. Otherwise, this facility shall be designed and built with
28 the potential addition of future rail service in mind. It is assumed that funding
29 will be provided in part through a federal grant for development of a
30 multimodal transportation system for Girdwood Valley and in part through a
31 partnership with the Resort.”

32
33 Page 88, under subheading 3, *Alaska Railroad Girdwood Valley Spur*, is amended to read as
34 follows:

35
36 This project may [SHOULD] be implemented by the Alaska Railroad
37 Corporation, if approved by the appropriate regulatory agencies, including the
38 Municipality of Anchorage, after public hearing and comment [IN
39 COOPERATION WITH THE MUNICIPALITY].
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42

Page 91, under *To Do Immediately, Transportation Planning*, is amended to read as follows

Rail Spur. Subject to appropriation, the Municipality shall facilitate site investigation of Municipal lands within Girdwood Valley to determine the engineering and financial feasibility and suitability of a rail spur on available Municipal lands. The Municipality shall not convey any interest in lands in Girdwood Valley for a proposed rail spur without Assembly approval. The conveyance of an interest in Municipal lands for the construction of a rail spur shall not be granted prior to [insert date]."

[LAUNCH THE NEPA-REQUIRED ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND PUBLIC PROCESS FOR THE PROPOSED RAIL SPUR. IDENTIFY AND PRESERVE THE RAIL CORRIDOR BASED ON THE OUTCOME OF THE NEPA PROCESS. BEGIN PRELIMINARY DESIGN WHEN THE NEPA PROCESS HAS RESOLVED THE CHOICE OF ALTERNATIVE. MOVE INTO FINAL DESIGN.]

Page 92, *To Do Soon, Transportation Planning*, is amended by deleting the following:

Rail Spur. Construct the spur and initiate service.

Page 92, second bullet under *Commercial Areas Planning*, is amended as following language:

Connect the Girdwood School and New Townsite to the municipal water service.

Appendix A – Prior Studies and Plans, is amended to include in its list the **Areawide Trails Plan (1997)** and the **Girdwood Iditarod Trail Route Study (1996)**.

Section 2. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.05.030 is hereby amended by adding a new subsection W to read as follows:

W Girdwood Commercial Areas and Transportation Master Plan dated [effect date of this ordinance].

Section 3. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage and approval by the Assembly.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this _____ day of _____, 2001.

Chair of the Assembly

ATTEST:

Municipal Clerk

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