



Photo: Chugiak-Eagle River Star

GUIDELINES FOR GROWTH

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The Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan is intended to serve as a guide for future development. This chapter defines the goals and objectives that are to set the basic direction for development in the Chugiak-Eagle River area. It also indicates policies and programs needed to assist in guiding the land development process.

Goals describe in broad, general terms a desired future condition which is consistent with community ideals. Goals are timeless in that there is no specific date by which they must be achieved. Objectives are specific statements of particular ends, expressed in measurable terms, that respond to the goals. Policies are statements of principle or guidelines to direct subsequent actions in pursuit of the goals. Strategies are specific means for accomplishing desired objectives.

Goals, objectives, policies and strategies are listed for the following elements: Economic Development, Natural Environment, Land Use and Housing, Public Facilities and Services, and Historic and Archaeological Resources. They were developed after extensive consideration of the issues, concerns and projected needs of the Chugiak-Eagle River area.

I. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Goals

- a. Improve and expand the local economic base in a manner which is tied to community goals, resources and assets and which provides a range of employment opportunities, and an adequate supply and variety of goods and services.

2. Objectives

- a. Provide increased employment opportunities for local residents by encouraging the establishment of a moderately balanced economic base with a 20 percent local employment level.
- b. Encourage and reinforce the continued growth of the business districts in Eagle River and Peters Creek.
- c. Encourage the development of local-serving and regional business enterprises to help strengthen the community's economic base.
- d. Encourage the development of economically viable, commercial recreation enterprises, such as sports fisheries, campgrounds, theme parks and year-round resort developments.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Prepare an economic development plan that identifies the following:
 - Acceptable types of commercial and/or industrial enterprises;
 - Available resources to stimulate economic development and redevelopment efforts; and
 - Specific business recruitment and retention strategies.

II. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Goals

- a. Ensure that natural systems are protected, maintained and enhanced.
- b. Ensure that development plans adequately address impacts on the environment.
- c. Protect the health, safety and welfare of residents from natural hazards, such as floods, avalanches and areas of high seismic risk.

2. Objectives

- a. Preserve and protect high value wetlands, stream corridors, aquifer recharge areas and other important natural features.
- b. Preserve and protect valuable wildlife habitat and the diversity of existing natural vegetation types in the area, including critical coastal areas.
- c. Preserve natural drainageways and ensure that area drainage needs are integrated into development plans.
- d. Protect areas with slopes of 25 percent or greater.
- e. Discourage development in the 100-year floodplain.
- f. Ensure the proper location, design, installation, operation and maintenance of on-site wastewater disposal systems and protect on-site water supplies from contamination.
- g. Help improve the quality of life by minimizing air, water and noise pollution.

3. Policies/Strategies

a. Wetlands

- High value wetlands identified in the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan shall be preserved in their natural state. For developable wetlands, appropriate mitigation techniques, as specified in the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan, shall be used to the maximum extent practicable.
- Identify and inventory water and wetland resources.
- Update the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan.
- Permitted development on wetlands shall use construction and design methods that will minimize construction impacts and, to the extent practicable, retain natural hydraulic functions.
- The Municipality shall minimize alterations in the quality of the natural flow of water supplying wetlands and shall protect critical wetlands from adverse dredging, filling and other construction-related activities, and from the seepage of toxic materials.

b. Coastal Habitats

- Construction setbacks from coastal bluffs shall be provided to preserve the stability of the bluffs.
- Development in tidal flats, estuaries, beaches, tidal creeks and coastal flood zones shall be avoided, except where identified in the Coastal Zone Management Plan for water-dependent uses. Permitted activities shall, to the extent practicable, avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

c. Vegetation

- Retention and re-establishment of vegetation shall be included in the development review process.

d. Drainage

- Develop an areawide drainage plan which evaluates the establishment of service areas.

- Discharge or divert storm run-off, to the maximum extent possible, to natural drainageways or on-site.
- Promote the use of stormwater detention facilities.

e. Steep Slopes

- Special care shall be exercised to preserve vegetation in steep slope areas in order to prevent soil erosion.
- Development on steep slopes shall consider factors such as site coverage, gradient, soil type, hydrology, vegetation and the substrata.
- Development on steep slopes shall, during all phases of construction, incorporate control measures to prevent flooding, minimize erosion, assure safety, and prevent eroded material from entering established drainage systems or natural water courses.
- The Municipality shall seek to preserve open space in steep slope areas through planning, subdivision, cluster zoning and planned unit developments.

f. Air Quality

- An adequate air quality monitoring program (including carbon monoxide) shall be maintained.
- Where feasible, consider and implement road dust control measures.
- Promote necessary air quality education needed for federal funding.
- Meet or be more stringent than federal standards for toxic air products.

g. Water Quality

- Measures shall be taken to ensure that on-site wastewater disposal systems are properly sited, designed, installed, operated and maintained.
- Establish and maintain an educational awareness program for homeowners/developers, contractors/installers and government officials responsible for the viability of on-site systems.
- Ensure adequate funding for proper regulation and enforcement of on-site septic system requirements.

- In new development, place emphasis on the retention of ground cover, minimization of impermeable areas, and maintenance of water intake areas. Such measures shall be stressed, especially in aquifer recharge areas.
- Continue the stream corridor protection program by acquiring land and easements for greenbelts, by protecting existing vegetated strips along streams, and by establishing stream protection setbacks for all watercourses (streams and lakes.)
- Monitor all streams to establish background levels of water pollutants.
- Sufficient land shall be preserved for snow disposal sites in newly developing areas as a means of preserving water quality.
- The quality of urban run-off shall be maximized and the quantity shall be minimized through the use of stormwater detention facilities or filtration systems and the establishment of street sweeping programs.
- Point source discharge to area creeks and lakes shall be prohibited.

h. Natural Hazards

- Development in high hazard areas shall be discouraged.
- Identify natural hazards to guide land use decisions.
- Make information on natural hazards available to the public.
- Develop and enforce standards to regulate development in natural hazard areas.

III. LAND USE AND HOUSING

A. GROWTH

1. Goals

- Ensure an orderly, efficient pattern of development that reflects the diverse needs of the community and encourages growth that is consistent with historical land uses and the natural environment.
- Promote a range of rural, suburban and urban lifestyles.
- Optimize the provision, use and efficiency of public facilities and services.
- Ensure that land use patterns provide safe and healthy environments that are separated and protected from incompatible land uses and their effects.

- e. Encourage a range of employment opportunities.
- f. Encourage the development of continuous trails throughout the area.

2. Objectives

- a. Preserve and enhance the identity of established community areas.
- b. Provide timely updates of major land use and public facility / services plans to accommodate changes in the community's population and in demographic, economic and environmental conditions.
- c. Promote infill development appropriate to the community.
- d. Coordinate community development planning with other planning efforts for public facilities and services, transportation, and parks and recreation.
- e. Ensure the fair, equitable and consistent enforcement of municipal regulations.
- f. Maintain the area's small town and rural lifestyle.
- g. Develop adequate means of financing necessary capital improvements.
- h. Ensure that new development is supported by adequate infrastructure or is consistent with the carrying capacity of the land.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. It is the intention of the Comprehensive Plan that zoning and platting decisions be guided by the Plan, including its maps and its stated goals, objectives, policies and strategies.
- b. Provide an adequate level of funding to Zoning Enforcement to assure consistent enforcement of municipal regulations in the Chugiak-Eagle River area.

B. COMMUNITY DESIGN

1. Goals

- a. Encourage development patterns and site designs which protect natural amenities, scenic vistas and general community character.

- b. Improve the appearance and function of arterials and major collectors through the use of appropriate design techniques.

2. Objectives

- a. Help create cohesive neighborhood identity by continuing current residential patterns as vacant land is developed.
- b. Preserve the natural beauty of the area by protecting natural features and vegetation in all development, wherever practical.
- c. Preserve and enhance the identity of established community areas.
- d. Ensure the compatibility of commercial areas with the human scale by installing pedestrian improvements, such as benches and landscaping.
- e. Promote the livability of Chugiak-Eagle River as a winter place by identifying the area as a specific component in a municipal-wide winter cities plan.
- f. Promote the undergrounding of utility lines in suburban areas, especially in commercial districts.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Features that are valuable to community identity and the natural and aesthetic qualities shall be protected.
- b. Require sufficient right-of-way for sidewalks, trails and landscaping.
- c. Develop a plan for street and highway landscaping in the Chugiak-Eagle River area.
- d. Extend the screening provision for major highways to the New Glenn Highway from Peters Creek through Eklutna.

C. HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Goals

- a. Ensure an adequate supply of residential land which is of sufficient quality and variety to meet the needs of present and future residents and which is properly located in relation to community facilities and services.

2. Objectives

- a. Provide areas of varying residential densities and housing types to meet needs for diverse housing opportunities throughout the community.
- b. Support the provision of higher density residential development convenient to employment, commercial centers and major transportation corridors, where such densities are considered appropriate.
- c. Encourage the retention and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock, where the need exists and where practical, in order to promote neighborhood stability and continuity.
- d. Encourage the design and construction of safe, sound housing.
- e. Promote energy efficiency in existing housing and in new residential construction.
- f. Protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible land uses on adjoining tracts.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Support private and public efforts to provide alternative housing options for residents with low and moderate income, and for those with special needs, e.g. people requiring supervised housing because of age, mental or physical conditions.
- b. Residential development in urban and suburban areas shall occur at densities consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the availability of supporting utilities, services, transportation systems and other infrastructure components.
- c. Residential development in rural areas shall occur at low densities related to natural limitations and/or distance from suburban support facilities and services, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.
- d. Multi-family housing shall be encouraged in areas around employment centers and commercial and public buildings where public sewer and water services are available and where convenient access to major transportation corridors and recreational facilities is provided.
- e. Support community participation in public and private residential rehabilitation programs.
- f. Consider the application of standardized building codes to ensure safety and quality in the construction of residential buildings.
- g. Encourage and support programs, such as weatherization, that would help improve residential energy efficiency.

- h. Transition buffering shall be used where new development occurs between rural and urban densities and between residential and non-residential development.
- i. Include the Chugiak-Eagle River area as a specific component in a municipal-wide housing study to assess the quantity, quality and types of existing housing, to examine demographic trends and to project future housing needs.

D. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Goals

- a. Ensure an adequate supply of land in suitable locations for commercial and industrial development that is compatible with community needs and resources.

2. Objectives

- a. Encourage commercial and industrial development that takes into account potential impacts on other uses, access, utilities, parking, aesthetics and environmental quality.
- b. Promote continued use, expansion and development within established commercial and industrial areas determined to be suitable for continuing use.
- c. Discourage the expansion of existing strip commercial development and the addition of new strip commercial development, and encourage a more clustered pattern of commercial activity.
- d. Protect the supply of industrially zoned land by discouraging non-industrial uses within those areas.
- e. Promote the continued commercial use and development of the business district in downtown Eagle River, while including continued opportunities for adjacent high density residential development, in order to maintain a viable downtown area.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Generally, existing and future commercial and industrial areas should have the following characteristics:
 - A range of utilities and services appropriate for the category of development;
 - Adequate and efficient access to major transportation systems, without reliance on residential streets;

- The use of natural or constructed buffers, barriers or transition areas separating commercial or industrial areas and their effects from existing or anticipated incompatible land uses; and
 - Consideration for the provision of trails where there has been historical use.
- b. The location and need for small, neighborhood-serving commercial areas not depicted on the Land Use map shall be guided by the following criteria:
- Adequate current and future access to the proposed site;
 - Compatibility with neighborhood development patterns and needs;
 - Adequate infrastructure;
 - Evidence of the economic need for commercial services within the affected neighborhood;
 - Utilization of buffering and other design techniques to mitigate off-site impacts; and
 - Demonstration that the scale of the services is consistent with the needs of the affected neighborhood.
- c. Commercial development shall be concentrated at strategic locations, such as major intersections, rather than being allowed to expand along major arterials.
- d. To the extent practicable, uses such as light manufacturing, construction, contracting, warehousing and wholesale distribution activities shall be developed in clearly defined districts.
- e. The amount of existing vacant or under-utilized commercial space in the area shall be considered before new commercial areas are developed.

IV. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

1. Goals

- a. Provide public facilities and services that are located, designed and maintained to accommodate current and future needs of the area in an effective, cost-efficient and timely manner.

2. Objectives

- a. Reserve suitable sites for public facilities and services in a timely manner.

- b. Ensure that adequate land and easements for public facilities are provided during development.
- c. Coordinate and ensure consistent application of population projections and growth assumptions used by the Municipality's various agencies and departments for community planning, and utility, facility and service planning, including projections used by the Anchorage School District for school facility planning.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Evaluate individual service area versus areawide service concepts to determine the most effective method for providing public services.
- b. Collect information on areawide services specific to Chugiak-Eagle River in order to accurately assess the need and optimum level of local public facilities and services.
- c. Investigate innovative methods of funding future capital improvement needs.

A. POLICE

1. Goals

- a. Ensure that neighborhoods and communities are safe and free from crime.

2. Objectives

- a. Encourage the development of a community police plan for the Chugiak-Eagle River area to determine an appropriate and acceptable level of police protection and crime prevention and the means to achieve it.
- b. Encourage the development and implementation of a curriculum/program plan for the Police School Liaison Officer Program.
- c. Encourage programs such as Crime Stoppers, Neighborhood Crime Watch, Business Security Survey and Safe Home Programs for Children.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Collect and maintain crime statistics and accident rates on a geographic basis and make this information readily available.

B. FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

1. Goals

- a. Ensure effective fire protection, emergency medical services and emergency response capabilities throughout the Chugiak-Eagle River area.

2. Objectives

- a. Provide optimal fire protection and emergency medical service to key public and quasi-public facilities.
- b. Develop a catastrophic emergency response plan for Chugiak-Eagle River.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Evaluate fire protection requirements for the various sub-areas to determine the adequacy of current service levels and if improvements should be provided on a service area basis or by the Anchorage Fire Service.
- b. Maintain an awareness by all fire and emergency service organizations of the need for closer cooperation to provide rapid response to emergencies involving public facilities, e.g. schools, public housing, and recreational and public assembly areas.
- c. Improve the fire prevention and suppression situation by identifying alternative strategies for application in remote or inaccessible areas where traditional service is cost-prohibitive.
- d. Investigate the need, effectiveness and cost-efficiency of alternative strategies, such as individual fire suppression systems (sprinkler systems, bulk water storage, etc.) and identify appropriate implementation tools, such as building codes, subdivision standards, tax incentives or other means.
- e. Upgrade the emergency communications system.
- f. Identify areas with inadequate water supplies for fire suppression and make recommendations for improving water availability.

C. HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

1. Goals

- a. Improve the quality, range, availability and accessibility of the range of health and social services.

2. Objectives

- a. Improve municipal comprehensive health and social services planning by responding to specific needs and conditions of the Chugiak-Eagle River area.
- b. Increase public awareness, accessibility, availability and scope of health and social services.
- c. Promote partnerships among government, business and non-profit sectors for the networking and coordination of human services delivery.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Consider providing all community health services at the Eagle River Satellite Health Clinic.
- b. Gather and evaluate health and social services data on a geographic basis, separate from a municipal-wide basis.
- c. Publish a health and social service resource directory.
- d. Encourage and support private provider efforts to serve populations such as the low-income, elderly, mentally ill, chemically dependent, indigent, uninsured and children in need of services.

D. EDUCATION

1. Goals

- a. Ensure that adequate school facilities are available when and where they are needed.

2. Objectives

- a. Based on long-term enrollment projections and the location of future residential growth, identify potential school sites and select and acquire suitable sites in advance of actual need.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Student enrollment trends and projections shall be updated regularly.
- b. Seismic considerations shall be taken into account in the siting of public school facilities.

- c. School site selections, capital improvement programs and school bond ballot measures shall be coordinated to ensure timely site acquisitions for school construction.
- d. School site selection and acquisition programs shall be addressed in the review of proposed development plans and in the subdivision and planned community approval process.

E. PARKS, OPEN SPACE, GREENWAYS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

1. Goals

- a. Establish an integrated open space and greenways network which effectively links parks, recreational facilities, schools, residential and commercial areas, and which includes ecologically valuable open space lands.
- b. Establish a system of parks, from the neighborhood to the regional level, to serve all segments of the community.
- c. Provide a wide range of recreational opportunities to all segments of the community.

2. Objectives

- a. Protect open space corridors along streams, rivers and ridge crests.
- b. Develop a greenways program for the Chugiak-Eagle River area.
- c. Meet community needs for park space by bringing the area up to National Recreation and Parks Association standards for parks.
- d. Maximize the use of existing underdeveloped and new park lands.
- e. As lands are provided for parks, ensure that they are dedicated.
- f. Identify and acquire neighborhood parks within residential areas.
- g. Identify separate use areas for mechanized and non-mechanized recreational pursuits.
- h. Promote unique thematic recreational facilities and programming that relate to the community's history, culture and natural resources.
- i. Encourage the private sector to provide recreational facilities and activities.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Greenbelts and open spaces shall be legally designated along streams. A continuous bicycle, pedestrian and, where appropriate, equestrian access system shall be provided which links schools, parks and residential neighborhoods.
- b. Develop an updated Trails Plan for the Chugiak-Eagle River area, which would include trailheads and trails for better access to Chugach State Park, and provision for a Coastal Trail and trails for non-motorized use.
- c. The trail system shall be developed appropriate to its intended use in conjunction with road improvements and utility corridors whenever practicable, and through easement acquisition and dedication of trail rights-of-way. Construction of trails will follow as rapidly as possible.
- d. Provision shall be made for motorized recreational vehicle use on trails designated for that use.
- e. Neighborhood and community park land shall be acquired in anticipation of population growth and community development.
- f. The Municipality and School District shall, to the extent practicable, develop joint park/school areas to provide both educational and recreational services to neighborhoods in a convenient and efficient manner.
- g. If standard-size neighborhood parks cannot be acquired, school playgrounds and/or tot-lots and vest pocket parks shall be developed to meet neighborhood needs. Small park facilities, such as tot-lots and vest pocket parks, are to be primarily concentrated within high density residential areas.
- h. Provide large field areas for sports, such as soccer and additional facilities, at the Fire Lake Recreational Center.
- i. Update the Edmonds Lake Park and Beach Lake Park Master Plans.
- j. Develop access to the new Eagle River salmon fishery which respects environmental features and adjacent residences.
- k. Establish a public acquisition program for greenbelts along streams and rivers and for establishment of a coastal trail system.

F. WATER AND WASTEWATER

1. Goals

- a. Protect the public health and welfare by ensuring reliable, high quality, cost-effective water supply and wastewater disposal systems.

2. Objectives

- a. Expand public water and wastewater systems in an orderly, efficient and cost-effective way, consistent with community growth needs and the providers' financial capacity.
- b. Coordinate the timing and phasing of public water and wastewater system expansions with projected demand and ensure an adequate rate of return on investment.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Areas for planned expansion of public water and wastewater systems shall be delineated from those areas where no public water and wastewater systems are proposed.
- b. Extensions of public water systems shall be built to adequate standards for fire protection, including volume, pressure and the provision of hydrants.
- c. Municipal water and wastewater master plans shall be updated to be consistent with this Comprehensive Plan. Other non-municipal utilities serving the area will be encouraged to use this Plan as the basis for updating master plans for their facilities.
- d. Utility systems shall not be extended to areas designated for low-density development on the Recommended Residential Density map, except where needed to resolve public health problems.
- e. Utility installation shall be coordinated to achieve savings, to avoid conflicting utility placement and to achieve the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The utilization of existing facilities shall be optimized. Reasonable effort shall be made to provide for coordinated planning between municipal and other service providers to prevent conflicting utility placement.
- f. Where the provision of public or private sewer and/or water utilities is determined to be infeasible and where natural site limitations exist relating to soils, topography and water, land development practices shall be related to the general capacity of the area to accommodate on-site systems.
- g. Support shall be given to the identification and use of alternative utility systems that help minimize dependence on on-site wells and septic systems.

- h. Where municipal sewer and/or water service extensions are planned, efforts shall be made to ensure that extensions are timed to keep pace with community growth needs.

G. SOLID WASTE

1. Goals

- a. Ensure the provision of safe, sanitary and environmentally clean solid waste collection and disposal services.

2. Objectives

- a. Help extend the life of the landfill by minimizing the quantity of solid waste being generated and disposed of, and by encouraging the recycling of glass, aluminum, newspaper and cardboard.
- b. Ensure the proper collection, storage, shipping and disposal of hazardous wastes.
- c. Evaluate methods for disposal of organic overburden generated from new development and identify sites for disposal.

H. TRANSPORTATION

1. Goals

- a. Ensure development of a transportation network that provides an acceptable level of service, maximizes safety, minimizes environmental impacts, provides alternate transportation types and is compatible with planned land use patterns.

2. Objectives

- a. Increase transportation system efficiency during peak-hour periods.
- b. Increase public transit ridership by making transit more available and practical.
- c. Improve transit access by providing continuously maintained sidewalks or trails to within one-quarter mile of 50 percent of the area's population.
- d. Periodically re-evaluate the feasibility of railroad and air transportation as options for commuters.
- e. Minimize residential and business relocations resulting from transportation projects.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. Develop a pedestrian and vehicular circulation plan for downtown Eagle River.
- b. Prepare and adopt a long-range transportation plan for Chugiak-Eagle River that includes consideration of the types and levels of needed public transit systems.
- c. Revise the Official Streets and Highways Plan.
- d. Investigate methods and develop strategies to increase funding for local road improvements.
- e. Reach and maintain dust and National Ambient Air Quality standards.
- f. Minimize impacts of transportation projects on designated wetlands.
- g. Promote the identification and use of alternative transportation modes to help reduce automobile dependency and traffic congestion.

V. HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

1. Goals

- a. Preserve, restore, protect and, where appropriate, allow public access to historic and archaeological sites determined to have local and/or State significance.

2. Objectives

- a. Encourage coordination of preservation and research efforts with federal, State and local governments and with education institutions, Native corporations and tribes, and other public or private organizations.
- b. Determine measures to evaluate the impacts of land development upon historic or archaeological sites.
- c. Encourage the preservation of historic and archaeological structures on site.

3. Policies/Strategies

- a. The preservation of historic sites and structures shall be supported in order to maintain a sense of continuity with the past.

- b. Inventory all historic sites and buildings located in the Chugiak-Eagle River area and determine which properties would be appropriate for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.
- c. Support the establishment of a museum to house and display artifacts which represent the area's history and archaeology.