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## APPENDIX

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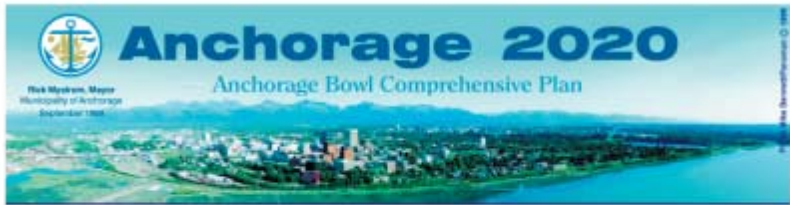
[APA Public Education Award](#)

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# Four Possible Growth Scenarios

## Possible Choices for Anchorage's Future.


The following four possible scenarios for Anchorage's future growth and development were published in a newspaper insert September 1999. The scenarios described in Chapter 4 show how different choices about key planning issues shape future land use, housing, transportation, and open space. Each scenario is depicted by a map inset of projected population growth and a generalized land use density map. The "preferred scenario," which is the basis of the recommendations in ANCHORAGE 2020, is a blend of aspects from the Urban Transition and Neighborhoods scenarios.



### What Will Anchorage Look Like in 20 Years?

Where will new residents settle over the next 20 years? Where will people work, shop, and play? Will there be room to grow? The municipal Community Planning Department is updating the long-range plan that will be our community's answer to these questions. The foundation will be a sound land use plan that considers all aspects of development: social and economic, transportation, environmental, and fiscal. The Community Planning Department prepared this insert to encourage residents to talk about Anchorage's choices for growth and development. Come join us at one of the Open Houses this fall. Help make Anchorage a great place to call home.

## Anchorage Today - Taking Stock



**ANCHORAGE TODAY**

In 1982, when the last Comprehensive Plan was adopted, Anchorage was in the midst of an economic boom. Some forecasts estimated Anchorage would have 500,000 people by now. Today, the outlook is very different.

**JOBS.** In the last decade Anchorage's economy prospered. Employment rose every year. Unemployment is at an all-time low. The long-term forecast is for continued modest growth in jobs and personal income.

**POPULATION.** The decade, Anchorage gained more residents than any decade after 1950. Since 1990, Anchorage's growth rate has averaged 1.7 percent yearly. Immigration has slowed. Today about 258,000 people live in the Municipality of Anchorage.

Anchorage's total population is forecast to reach 360,700 by 2020, an increase of 102,000 persons. About 70 percent of this

population increase is projected to live in the Anchorage Bowl, the rest in Chugiak-Eagle River, on the military bases, and along Turnagain Arm. About 30,000 additional housing units will be needed in the Anchorage Bowl.

**Room to Grow.** The most important land planning issue for the Anchorage Bowl is room to grow—especially room for homes, but also for business, industry, and public uses. Almost 80 percent of the Bowl's 614,000 acres is already developed or dedicated to specific uses. About 8,200 acres—less than one-tenth of the Anchorage Bowl—is vacant and suitable for development. Another 5,000 acres are marginal for development, and 3,750 acres are unsuitable due to steep slopes, soils, wetlands, or natural hazards.

Of this vacant land, 6,525 acres are either suitable or marginal for development and zoned for residential use. About two-thirds of this acreage is on the Hillside, and over half is zoned for single-family homes on 1-acre lots.

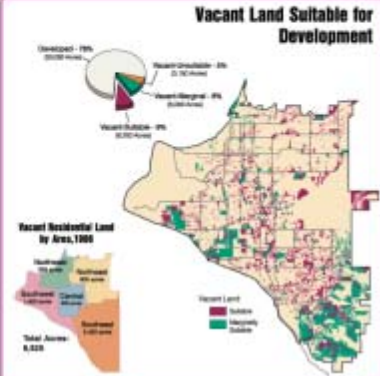
If all the vacant residential land in the Anchorage Bowl is developed as it is now zoned, we will be able to add about 17,000 more residents and 21,000 more homes. That is much less than the population growth (90,000 people) and housing demand (100,000 homes) forecast for 2020.

Development in the Anchorage Bowl is already adjusting to the anticipated shortage of vacant land in three ways:

**1. Build out on vacant land.** We are rapidly developing the Anchorage Bowl's remaining vacant land. About three-quarters of new single-family home construction is in South Anchorage.

**2. Build up on higher densities.** We are building more multi-family housing. Last year, 38 percent of new housing units in the Anchorage Bowl was multi-family.

**3. Build elsewhere.** Every year since 1994, more single-family homes have been built in the Mat-Su Borough than in the Anchorage Bowl. The pace of single-family construction is also picking up in Chugiak-Eagle River.



## Anchorage 2020 - Goals and Choices

**GOALS**

**What Are Our Goals?**

In January 1999, the Planning and Zoning Commission approved Draft Goals and Objectives for Anchorage 2020. Many of the goals address land use issues:

1. Diversify neighborhood character and a variety of affordable, quality housing.
2. Enhancement of residential neighborhoods.
3. A balanced equity of uses for commerce, industry, recreation, and transportation facilities at compatible locations.
4. Appropriate land use and transportation planning.
5. Conservation of open space, greenbelts, wetlands, and natural areas.
6. Well-served, well-served public facilities and services.


Next, the Anchorage community must make the policy choices that turn these broad goals into specific plan recommendations.

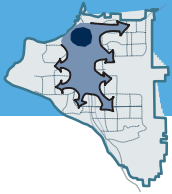
**CHOICES**

**How Can We Get There?**

The Community Planning Department has prepared four land use alternatives as a starting point for public discussion about planning choices. These alternatives, called plan scenarios, show how different choices about seven key planning issues (see inside and back pages) can shape future land use, housing, transportation, and open space. These four scenarios are only a starting point for public discussion. Other choices and scenarios are possible.

The next step is public discussion about the issues, choices and scenarios. Based on the discussion, the Community Planning Department will develop a "Preferred Scenario" which will likely combine ideas from several of the scenarios. The "Preferred Scenario" will become the framework for detailed recommendations on land use, transportation, and other issues for the Comprehensive Plan.





## Current Trends

### Existing Development Trends Continue

The Current Trends scenario continues existing land use policies and development trends. For the near future, there is no major revision of the 1982 Comprehensive Plan and current zoning map. Private land owners and developers will largely continue to determine the location, type, and pace of development.

### How will Anchorage change?

**Population and Economy.** The Current Trends scenario assumes moderate economic and population growth. Air cargo and tourism support new jobs in retail trade, services, and transportation at the airport, in the Downtown/Ship Creek area and in Midtown. Some retail and service jobs follow commuters to their home communities in Chugiak-Eagle River and the Mat-Su Borough.

**Land Use.** Ship Creek redevelopment, a healthy Downtown, and a major southward expansion of the airport are priorities. Strip commercial construction continues along major arterials, particularly in South Anchorage. Residential subdivision development on the Hillside causes ongoing controversy about extension of water and sewer services and increases in housing density. As new development absorbs the vacant land supply, activity shifts from South Anchorage to redevelopment opportunities in North Anchorage. The zoning map becomes more out of step with the needs of growth. Requests for zoning revisions for higher residential densities and changes in land use become more common and are resolved on a case-by-case basis.

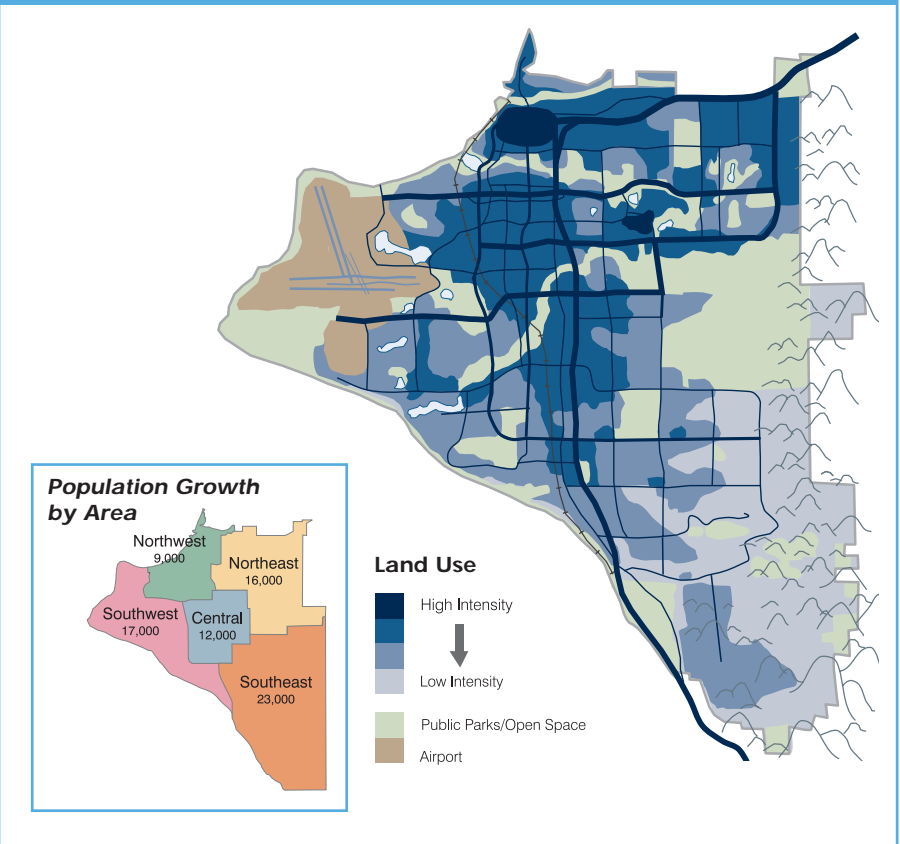
**Housing.** As the supply of single-family lots shrinks, rising land prices favor small-lot subdivisions, development of marginal tracts, and a delayed shift toward multi-family housing development. Housing prices rise; affordable housing is scarce. Altogether, two-

thirds of new homes are multi-family. Most new single-family homes are in South Anchorage. Multi-family development occurs where opportunity allows. Older mobile parks and run-down housing are replaced with higher density dwellings.

**Transportation.** Land use patterns require extensive additions and upgrades to the road system. Residential growth and southward expansion of the airport require new road links (Bragaw/Dowling/Raspberry) and an upgrade of major arterials (Seward Highway, east-west arterials, Glenn Highway). Residential growth on the Hillside requires extensive local road improvements. Even with major road construction, congestion may worsen. Transit service stays the same or is reduced.

**Open Space.** Relatively low residential densities and loss of residential land to airport expansion and other non-residential uses heighten pressure to use undeveloped land. This limits opportunities for creation of new parks. Some public natural areas are developed for active recreation such as sports fields.

## What Will the Changes Look Like?

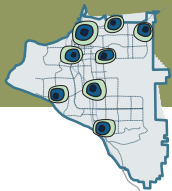


### What do we have to do?

This scenario follows the existing Comprehensive Plan and zoning map. Changes are made on a case-by-case basis at the request of developers and public officials.

### What are the risks?

Land use decisions are based on short-term market conditions, without regard for the long-term growth needs and goals of the community. Development may make inefficient use of land and require additional public facilities and road improvements.



## Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods Are Most Important

The Neighborhoods scenario regards neighborhoods as the most important aspect of community life. Schools, community centers, local parks, and neighborhood shopping districts become centers for educational, recreational, and social activities and local business. Each neighborhood has a mix of housing types.

### How will Anchorage change?

**Population and Economy.** The overall population and economy in this scenario are similar to the Current Trends scenario, but workplaces are more decentralized. Each neighborhood shopping district supports its share of local businesses and employment.

**Land Use.** Neighborhood business districts support more commercial land uses. Downtown/Midtown/Diamond regional centers support less. The airport stays inside its present boundaries and operations are managed to lessen noise, traffic, and other impacts on nearby neighborhoods. This saves more land for residential and other uses.

**Housing.** New residential growth is spread almost evenly between North and South Anchorage. Overall, the mix of new housing types (one-third single-family, two-thirds multi-family) is similar to the Current Trends scenario but the geographic distribution is different. Each neighborhood offers a choice of housing types and densities, including some affordable housing. Higher density multi-family housing is clustered around numerous commercial sub-centers rather than located in one central area.

**Transportation.** Neighborhoods become more self-sufficient and more pedestrian-friendly. This reduces overall traffic. Continued residential growth in South Anchorage requires new road links (Bragaw Extension), upgrade of other major north-south arterials

(New Seward, Old Seward), and extensive local road improvements. Less growth in North Anchorage than under the Current Trends and Urban Transition scenarios eases traffic congestion on east-west arterials.

**Open Space.** New local parks, greenbelts, local trails, recreational facilities and similar neighborhood amenities take priority over new regional parks and large recreational facilities.

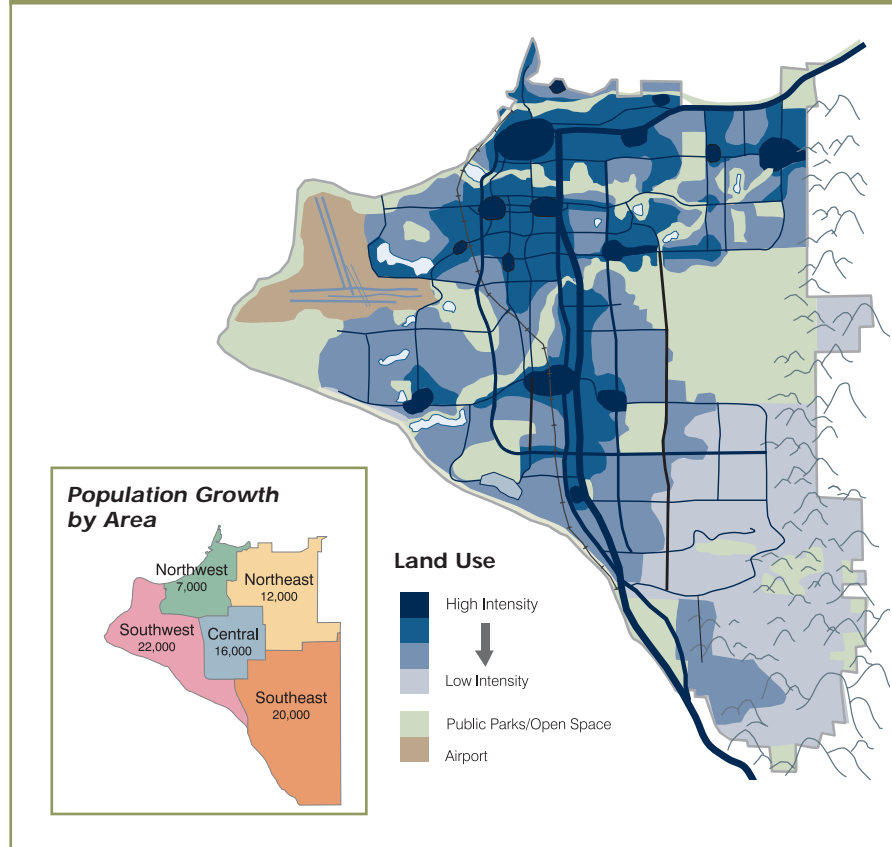
### What do we have to do?

The Comprehensive Plan sets thresholds for growth and establishes broad land use policies for each neighborhood, and they have a stronger role in local decisions. Each neighborhood prepares its own detailed plan. Major revisions are required to the existing land use plan and zoning maps. Public priorities stress improvements to quality of neighborhood life and promote private reinvestment in aging residential and commercial properties.

### What are the risks?

Not all neighborhoods will be receptive to this approach, particularly those which currently have little commercial development. The emphasis on neighbor-

### What Will the Changes Look Like?



hoods may undermine broad community goals. Some neighborhoods may object to multi-family and low- or moderate-income housing in their area. Neighborhood commercial districts may not prove competitive with regional centers.



## Urban Transition

Traditional Urban Center / Mixed-Use Development

The Urban Transition scenario envisions a more traditional urban character in Downtown, Midtown, and nearby neighborhoods, balanced by a more suburban/rural neighborhood character for South Anchorage.

### How will Anchorage change?

**Population and Economy.** This scenario assumes slightly higher population and job growth than the Current Trends scenario. Quality of life is valued as a means to attract high-skill, high-wage industries. Support for education is stressed. This scenario would capitalize on Anchorage's role as a world and statewide center for trade, transportation, communications, air cargo, high-value services, health care, finance, education, and management.

**Land Use.** This scenario promotes more compact development, higher residential densities, and compatible mixed uses. Residential land south of the airport is rezoned to allow for airport expansion. This loss of residential land is offset by restoration of poorly located, underused industrial and commercial tracts elsewhere for residential use. The Hillside is developed with select revisions to current land use and water/sewer plans.

**Housing.** About three-fourths of new homes are multi-family, partly in response to Anchorage's changing population—more seniors, “empty nesters,” and young adults, but relatively fewer family households. Conservation and redevelopment of the aging housing stock in older neighborhoods is a priority. More multi-family housing is built in North Anchorage where appropriate infrastructure exists. This relieves some development pressure on parts of the Hillside where environmental site conditions and limited public services constrain growth.

**Transportation.** More compact, mixed uses in North Anchorage make it pedestrian-and transit-

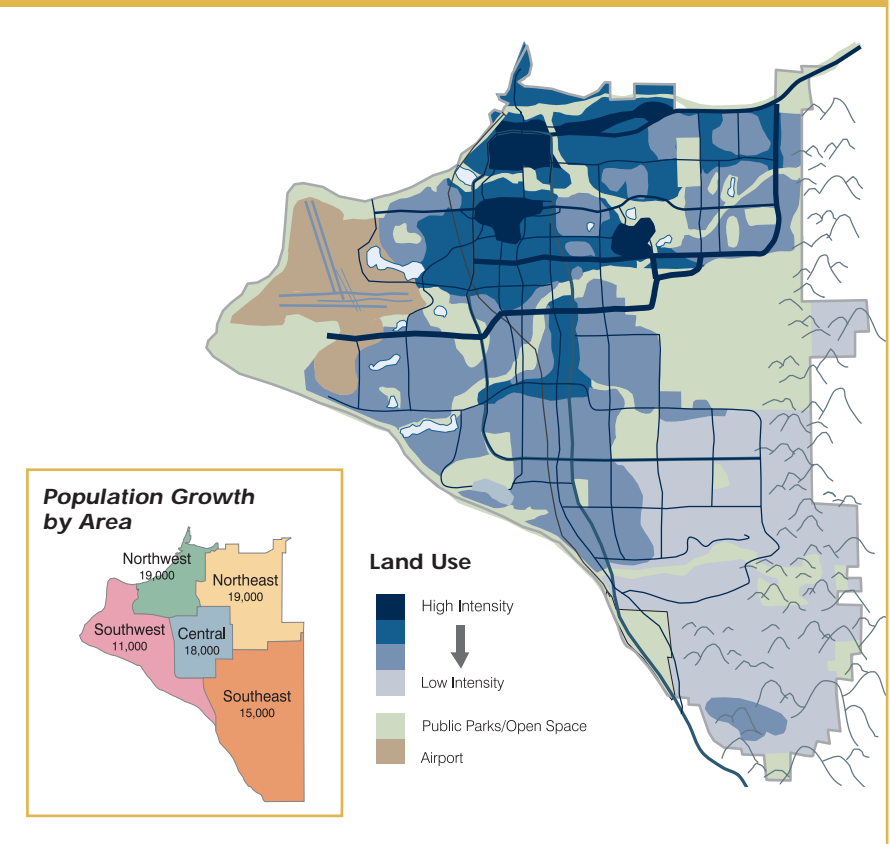
friendly. This decreases vehicle use for daily trips, decreases need for parking, and increases transit use. South airport expansion increases the need for improved access via the Bragaw/Dowling/Raspberry corridor. Population and job growth in North Anchorage requires major improvements to heavily traveled east-west streets such as Northern Lights and Tudor Road. Landscaped, multi-use trails link major activity centers.

**Open Space.** Greenbelts and trails enhance higher density residential areas. More open space is conserved and regional trail extensions are developed.

### What do we have to do?

The Urban Transition scenario requires extensive revision of the current land use plan and zoning maps. Public incentives and a public redevelopment agency are needed to leverage private investment to meet public goals. Public amenities, open space, and northern design enhance the appeal of urban living in North Anchorage. Public-private partnerships help provide attractive multi-family housing choices at various price levels.

### What Will the Changes Look Like?



### What are the risks?

Property owners and neighborhoods may object strongly to zoning changes. If future residents prefer a low-density, auto-oriented lifestyle, the transition zone will not attract development and this scenario will not succeed. In that case, public investment to encourage a more urban type of development will not achieve its goals.



## Slow Growth/Satellites

Anchorage Becomes A Workplace For The Region

The Slow Growth/Satellites scenario pursues slower population growth in the Anchorage Bowl to conserve open space and maintain Anchorage's established residential character and "traditional" lifestyle. Anchorage continues to grow as a regional workplace and marketplace for satellite residential communities in Chugiak-Eagle River and the Mat-Su Borough. Public initiatives aim to enhance Downtown/Midtown as an attractive, convenient place to work and shop.

### How will Anchorage change?

**Population and Economy.** Population growth is slower than current projections for the Anchorage Bowl, but higher for Chugiak-Eagle River and the Mat-Su Borough. Downtown Anchorage is the center for regional employment, finance, trade, services, transportation, and public administration for Southcentral Alaska and the State. Some retail trade and service businesses gravitate to Chugiak-Eagle River and the Mat-Su Borough. Commuters make up a growing share of Anchorage's workforce.

**Land Use.** More population growth north of Anchorage, plus Glenn Highway improvements and new commuter rail service, reposition Downtown as the workplace and marketplace for the region. Midtown and the university area also grow as employment centers. The airport continues to develop, but within its current boundaries. Future residential growth is consistent with current zoning and subdivision regulations. New retail development shifts to North and Northeast Anchorage and to suburban areas outside the Bowl. Retail growth in South Anchorage slows.

**Housing.** Fewer new housing units are built: about 45 percent are single-family homes and 55 percent are multi-family. Homebuilders target upscale markets. Local housing prices rise. Most moderate-priced single-

family homes are built in Chugiak-Eagle River and the Mat-Su Borough.

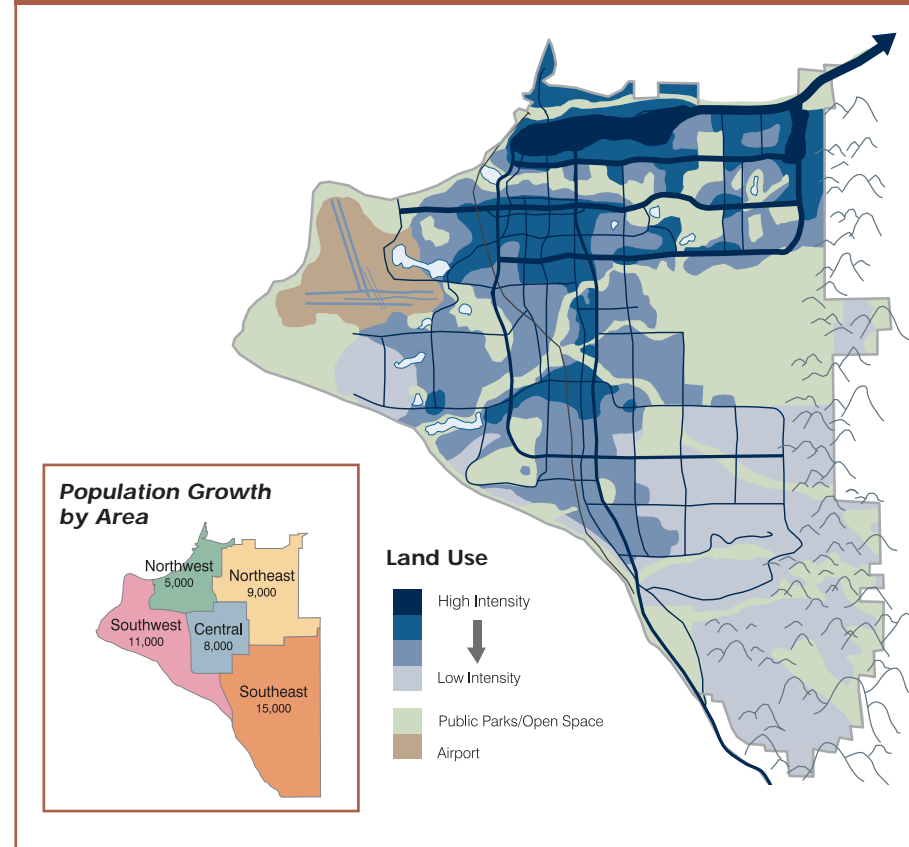
**Transportation.** Glenn Highway traffic levels climb as more people commute to work from Eagle River and the Mat-Su Borough. Traffic increases on major east-west roads in North Anchorage. Improvements are needed at the Glenn/Seward interchange. The feasibility for commuter rail service from the Mat-Su Borough to Downtown is improved, especially if supported by transit service to major work centers in the Bowl. Lower local growth also slows traffic growth and limits congestion in South Anchorage.

**Open Space.** Major additions are made to natural open space, greenbelts, local parks, and wildlife habitat. More private open space is retained to conserve the natural landscape.

### What do we have to do?

This scenario requires public officials and citizens to accept restrictive zoning and platting regulations that limit the location and density of new residential development. Public investments in roads, parking, park acquisition, transit, and amenities enhance Downtown.

### What Will the Changes Look Like?



Stronger growth management measures may be needed for Chugiak-Eagle River.

### What are the risks?

This scenario diminishes the long-term capacity of the Anchorage Bowl to absorb future growth. Slower growth may discourage private investment. Anchorage's economy may falter if its share of regional business stagnates. Development impacts are shifted to areas that may be less well prepared for rapid growth.

## Glossary of Terms

**Accessory Dwelling Unit** – A small additional living unit, including separate kitchen, sleeping, and bathroom facilities, attached or detached from the primary residential unit.

**Development** – Any change to improved or unimproved real estate including all structures and other modifications of the natural landscape above and below ground or water, on a particular site.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR)** – The gross floor area of all buildings or structures on a lot divided by the total lot area. (FAR = total building floor area divided by total lot area).

**Impact Fees** – A fee imposed on a development to help finance the cost of public improvements or services. Such fees may apply to any form of development: commercial, industrial or residential.

**Infill** – New development on unused parcels located within already developed areas.

**Infrastructure** – The facilities and services needed to sustain given types, levels, and patterns of land development. Infrastructure typically includes streets, utilities, drainage systems, schools, parks, and police and fire stations.

**Minimum Residential Density** – It is the least number of residential dwelling units per acre that is allowed within a residential use district. It is a regulatory tool for assuring that urban land and urban services are adequately used.

**Mixed Use** – The development of a tract of land, buildings(s), or structure(s) with a variety of complementary and integrated uses such as, but not limited to, residential, office, retail, public or entertainment, in a compact urban form.

**Multi-Family Dwelling Unit** – A residential building designed for or occupied by three or more families, with the number of families in residence not exceeding the number of dwelling units provided.

**Multi-modal** – Includes different modes of transportation such as walking, transit, carpooling, bicycling, and single-occupancy automobiles.

**Natural Open Space** – Refers to natural areas within the urban environment that provide fish, wildlife and plant habitats in close proximity to neighborhoods.

**Neighborhood** – Geographic areas unified by shared characteristics, functional connections and spatial perceptions.

**Northern City Design** – Refers to architectural and design elements that specifically address and/or enhance living in our unique northern climate with its distinct geography, extreme light angles, length of days, cold temperatures, wind, snow and ice.

**Overlay Zone or District** – A zoning district that may include or encompass one or more underlying zones and that imposes additional land use or design requirements above that required by the underlying zone. Overlay zones often follow certain roadways (e.g., Spennard Road Overlay) or portions of downtown (e.g., Central Business District Overlay).

**Pedestrian** – An individual who travels on foot, bicycle, skis, or other non-motorized form of transport.

**Percent for Art** – A local, state or federal program whereby a certain percent of a project's total cost is required to fund a work of art for specific installation in the new structure. Typically, percent for art projects are decided through juried competition or from solicited commissions.

**Public Facilities** – Government-owned or -leased buildings, equipment, or land provided for a particular public purpose. Examples of public facilities are schools, fire stations, government offices, parks, recreation facilities, sports fields, open space, and infrastructure.

**Residential Density** – The number of residential dwelling units permitted per acre of land.

**Rural** – Land development and uses which are characterized as predominantly low-density residential, less than one dwelling unit per acre. These areas typically receive limited public services.

**Single-Family Dwelling Unit** – A building constructed on a single lot with a permanent foundation, designed

for long-term human habitation exclusively for one family, having complete living facilities and constituting one dwelling unit.

**Strip Commercial Development** – Commercial development characterized by its location and/or design. It includes commercial development that has expanded in a linear manner along a street away from commercial nodes. Strip commercial also refers to individual developments with certain architectural and site design styles. These are typically single-story malls or individual buildings with parking and access configurations convenient to automobiles. Strip commercial design elements commonly include highly visible signage, minimal architectural detailing, parking areas located between the street and the stores, and limited pedestrian facilities.

**Two-Family Dwelling Unit** – A building on a single lot designed for or occupied exclusively by two families and constituting two dwelling units, e.g., a duplex housing unit.

**Under-Developed Area** – Developed parcels with a large portion of the area in non-building uses such as surface parking or a storage yard, a high percentage of the structure(s) vacant, a low floor area ratio (FAR), or buildings which are abandoned, dilapidated, or otherwise seriously limited by physical deficiencies.

**Urban** – Land development of a higher density and intensity which is characteristically provided with services of an urban nature (i.e., central water and sewer, fire hydrants, paved roads often with curb and gutter, and an extensive road network).

**Useable Open Space** – Areas with suitable dimensions to be functional for and devoted exclusively to active or passive recreational uses for residents of individual subdivisions or neighborhoods. Useable open space may include parkland, play fields, walkways, or natural areas, and may be communal, private or combinations thereof.

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Susan R. Fison, Director

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## APA Public Education Award

### Anchorage Receives National Award



The citizen involvement process that led to adoption of the **ANCHORAGE 2020 - ANCHORAGE BOWL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN** received the 2001 Public Education Award from the American Planning Association.

The Comprehensive Plan process spanned more than three years. In order to involve the community, the Municipality used virtually all media avenues available for public outreach in an effort to educate the citizenry about planning issues and future growth choices for Anchorage.

This education program facilitated community awareness of planning principles and the role of planning in achieving Anchorage's vision for the next twenty years. The education component of the Comprehensive Plan was vital to framing Anchorage's future and to finalizing the community's preferred land use growth scenario.



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