



## Chapter 2: *Building the Plan*

The East Anchorage District Plan is rooted in the wisdom of the district’s stakeholders and citizenry. This chapter describes the Plan’s public engagement efforts to involve a broad group of citizens from across the district in a combination of stakeholder interviews, district-focused public workshops, as well as through the use of a frequently updated project website and an online survey. These efforts offered residents and stakeholders an opportunity to learn about the planning process and to share their opinions, ideas and future visions for the district.

### *A Plan Built on Community Input*

Early in the Plan’s development, an advisory committee was formed to offer guidance and feedback at key decision-making points throughout the process and to ensure the Plan’s alignment with community goals. The committee was comprised of representatives from the community council, school district, local churches, JBER, local businesses, as well as East Anchorage residents. Key tasks involved providing contacts for local stakeholders and developers, assisting with community outreach, and reviewing the Plan’s goals, priorities and proposed strategies.

#### **ENGAGING RESIDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with a variety of public and private entities including developers, community leaders, social service agencies, local, state and federal government agency officials, economic development groups, business



and property owners, schools, non-profits, housing, and transportation and recreation organizations. Interviewees were asked to share their perspectives on the opportunities and challenges in East Anchorage, its positive attributes, their overall views on living in the district, and their hopes for the future.

In addition to targeted interviews, the city hosted a district-wide workshop and four open houses. At the workshop, citizens were asked where new growth should and should not occur within the district, the general look and feel the new growth should take, and the type of transportation, park and trail improvements needed. Open houses were conducted to obtain feedback on initial workshop results, emerging concepts and proposed strategies.

### KEY THEMES FROM THE COMMUNITY'S PERSPECTIVE

Overwhelmingly, interviewees and workshop participants desired to retain the residential character and diversity of the district and expressed a strong interest to offer jobs, attract employers, and develop mixed-use centers that allowed people to live in the vicinity of jobs and shopping. Although in support of new residential uses and infill, residents often expressed their concern that East Anchorage was the recipient of more density than other parts of the city, and that undesirable uses are often placed in the district when not wanted elsewhere. People expressed a need for enhanced workforce training, consolidated social services, better jobs, and improved and varied housing opportunities.

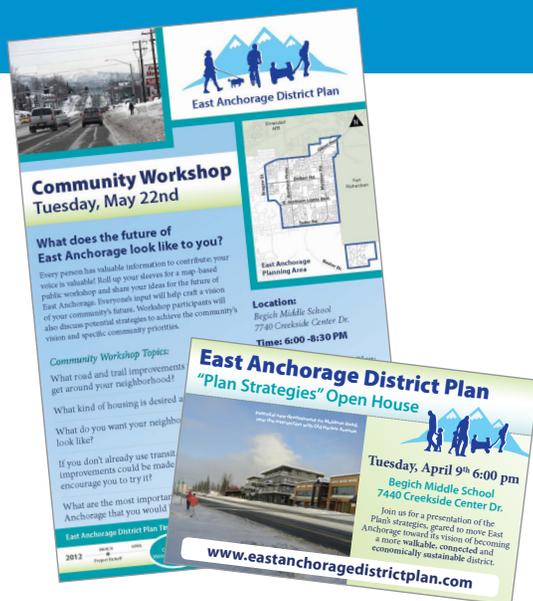
**REVIEW DRAFT**

### Other key themes that emerged from the interviews, workshops and survey included:

- Revitalizing and beautifying Muldoon from DeBarr to Glen Highway is a high priority.
- Support for the Anchorage 2020 Centers, and a desire to see mixed-use development in these areas.
- A desire to focus on the town center at Muldoon and DeBarr.
- An interest in retaining open space on the recently acquired property on the east side of Muldoon at DeBarr.
- A need for year-round recreation options in and around the district.
- A desire for more housing options.
- A plan to convert aging mobile home parks over time – with a sensitivity to replacing affordable housing for residents and retaining residents in the district.
- Prioritize safety improvements and maintenance on arterials, including Muldoon, Boniface, DeBarr, Northern Lights, and Tudor.
- A desire for more trails, increased biking and walking options, and improved transit options.

### East Anchorage District Plan Outreach

Throughout the planning process, different outreach methods such as email blasts, posters, flyers and postcards were used to communicate to a wide spectrum of audiences. This outreach was used to announce the workshop and open house dates, and drive people to the project website to learn more and provide feedback. The project website was a key element of the public engagement and included project news, events, documents, and presentations. In addition, citizens and stakeholders were invited to participate through an online survey, posted on the website.



## Guiding Principles for the East Anchorage District Plan

Guiding principles are a set of accepted guidelines that capture the values and priorities of East Anchorage and ultimately help us answer the question: “How do we define success in the East Anchorage District Plan project?” They are used to develop the goals, objectives, and strategies for the Plan, and also set the standards for evaluating strategies and the Plan’s recommendations.

Guiding principles are based on what we have learned from Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan, stakeholder interviews and input from the advisory committee, and finalized after further evaluation and prioritization with the advisory committee.

The East Anchorage guiding principles are grouped in six topic areas:

- Economy
- Community and Housing
- Equity and Opportunity
- Environment
- Transportation
- Process and Implementation

### ECONOMY (E)

1. Cultivate a quality of life and a financial climate that encourage businesses to start up or expand in East Anchorage.
2. Foster cooperation among civic, business, and government stakeholders for continued economic success.
3. Recognize quality of life, natural beauty, and diversity of East Anchorage as important elements to attract and keep businesses and residents.
4. Enhance employee training opportunities through cooperation with education institutions and employers.

### COMMUNITY AND HOUSING (CH)

1. Reuse vacant or underutilized sites to accommodate growth while maintaining livability by promoting new housing types to accommodate future needs.
2. Through planning and zoning, provide a wide range of housing types and densities in safe, attractive neighborhoods. These neighborhoods should offer a choice of lifestyles that are in harmony with our natural setting, and designed to accommodate our weather conditions.
3. Help communities create and celebrate their identity by developing neighborhood gateway sites.

### **EQUITY AND OPPORTUNITY (EO)**

1. Ensure all residents have equal access to quality housing, jobs, education and health care.
2. Develop ways of minimizing the displacement of low-income households as neighborhood values appreciate.
3. Celebrate East Anchorage's many cultures, lifestyles and ethnicities and work for inclusiveness.

### **ENVIRONMENT (EN)**

1. Ensure that there are parks, trails and open spaces that are easily accessible to residents throughout the community.
2. Maintain and enhance a network of natural open spaces throughout the community that preserves and enhances East Anchorage's scenic vistas, fish, wildlife, and plant habitats, and protects their ecological functions and values.
3. Consider open space as essential infrastructure just like sewer, water and roadways.

### **TRANSPORTATION (T)**

1. Create and maintain safe, attractive pedestrian and bicycle connections between neighborhoods, schools, commercial areas and neighborhood centers.

2. Identify new or enhanced local roads to better connect existing arterials and state roads.
3. Ensure new and existing commercial corridors offer a range of transportation options to support businesses and nearby residents.
4. Improve snow removal practices, especially on sidewalks for safe conditions all year.

### **PROCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION (PI)**

1. Foster a civic community that encourages public involvement in decision making.
2. Ensure transparent and inclusive planning efforts.
3. Coordinate with other agencies and plans to ensure that large projects support livability goals.

