

Comment-Response

March 10, 2025

10-Year Review of Community Council Boundaries

**Public Hearing Draft
PZC Case No. 2024-0100**

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RESPONSES TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT BOUNDARIES

Attachment 8, *Comment-Response*, provides the staff responses to public comments and proposals from Attachment 7 that collectively recommend 11 changes to the public hearing draft recommended boundaries. In addition, staff recommends a boundary correction, which is listed as a twelfth proposal.

Each staff response summarizes the public comment, references the relevant *boundary review criteria* from the public hearing draft *Report and Recommendations* (Attachment 3, pages 9-11) to evaluate the public comment, and then identifies options and recommends a preferred option.

The recommendations in this Attachment 8 are the basis for the recommendations in the March 10, 2025, Staff Report Memo.

1) **Boundary Study Area #8:** **West of Baxter Road South of Northern Lights Boulevard**

Public Hearing Draft report and map references:

- Boundary study area evaluation and recommendation: Attachment 3, pp. 25-26.
- Map of Boundary Study Area #8: See Attachment 6, Boundary Study Area Map 6.
- Public Hearing Draft Community Council Boundary: Attachment 2, Map 6.

Comment: University Area Community Council (UACC) does not support the public hearing draft recommendation for Option B, to transfer the area east of Boniface Parkway to Baxter Road from University Area to Scenic Foothills Community Council, and recommends Option A, to retain its existing boundary with Scenic Foothills at Baxter Road. (Attachment 7, page 61.)

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* finds that, *on balance*, the criteria do not support the UACC recommendation, and that there appears to be a stronger basis for moving forward with the public hearing draft recommendation for Option B (Attachment 3, pp. 25-26) for further discussion, as follows:

Representation criteria:

- Both community councils provide active representation for their neighborhoods. However, although the municipal code establishes that population size shall not be used as a boundary review criterion, the leadership of each shared concerns regarding having enough population to support participation by active members, and that meeting attendance can be low.
- Per 2020 U.S. Census figures, UACC has 10,004 residents. Although it stands to gain 1,764 residents from its merger with Tudor Area Community Council, loss of the 3,891 residents east of Boniface Parkway would reduce its population to 7,877.
- Per 2020 U.S. Census figures, Scenic Foothills has a population of 7,943. If the area east of Boniface is transferred to its district its population would grow to 11,834.

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Natural Communities criteria:

- Neighborhoods east of Boniface Parkway share proximity, topography, scenic views, and physical characteristics with Scenic Foothills neighborhoods. The neighborhoods along Campbell Airstrip Road are particularly distant from the University Area and near the Scenic Foothills neighborhoods across Baxter Road.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

- Boniface Parkway is both a physical and a traffic barrier. It would be a stronger boundary between the community councils than is the current boundary at Baxter Road.

Community Desires criteria:

- Available evidence indicates that at least some residents west of Baxter Road identify more with the neighborhoods of Scenic Foothills than with University Area. 9 respondents to the project's survey questionnaire indicated that the neighborhoods to the west of Baxter Road are more aligned with the neighborhoods of Scenic Foothills. This was the second highest response volume requesting a boundary change in all boundary study areas.
- There is not unanimity among members of the University Area Community Council or residents in the affected area. Several residents of the affected area who are active at UACC meetings and serve on the board desire to remain in UACC. Of the 22 UACC members who responded to the project's questionnaire survey, 6 said no changes to boundaries should be considered, 8 were not sure, and 8 said that changes to boundaries should be considered.
- UACC passed a resolution in favor of Option A, to retain existing boundary at Baxter Road with 6 in favor, 1 opposed, and 1 abstention.
- Scenic foothills passed a resolution in favor of Option B, to transfer the area east of Boniface Parkway to Scenic Foothills, with 12 in favor and 1 opposed.
- Additional information regarding community preferences, such as an area-specific questionnaire survey, would support an informed decision.

Options and Recommendations: Move forward with Option B as recommended on page 26 of the public hearing draft *Report and Recommendations* (Attachment 3), which is to transfer the area between Baxter Road and Boniface Parkway from University Area Community Council to Scenic Foothills Community Council. Further discussion regarding community impacts and preferences is anticipated before the Assembly.

2) Boundary Study Area #21: Sitka Street Park

Public Hearing Draft report and map references:

- Boundary study area evaluation and recommendation: Attachment 3, pp. 37-38.
- Map of Boundary Study Area #21: Attachment 6, Maps 5 and 5b (pp. 9-10).
- Public Hearing Draft Community Council Boundary: Attachment 2, Maps 5 and 5b.

Comment: Fairview Community Council does not support the public hearing draft recommendation for Option A, to retain its existing boundaries with Airport Heights, and recommends Option B instead, to transfer the western half of the Merrill Field Airport open space area south of 15th Avenue from Airport Heights to Fairview, as shown in the map on page 4 of this memo. Fairview argues that splitting the open space could strengthen common cause in advocating for open space improvements and neighborhood interests (Attachment 7, pages 15-16).

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* finds there is a basis to support the proposal, as follows:

Natural Communities Criteria:

- The western portion of the open space abuts Fairview residences and includes a trail loop used by Fairview residents. The eastern portion of this open space contains Sitka Street Park playground and areas along Sitka Street most important to Airport Heights.
- Residents of Fairview and Airport Heights use this open space, advocate for park and trail improvements, and can be impacted by activities and projects in this parcel.

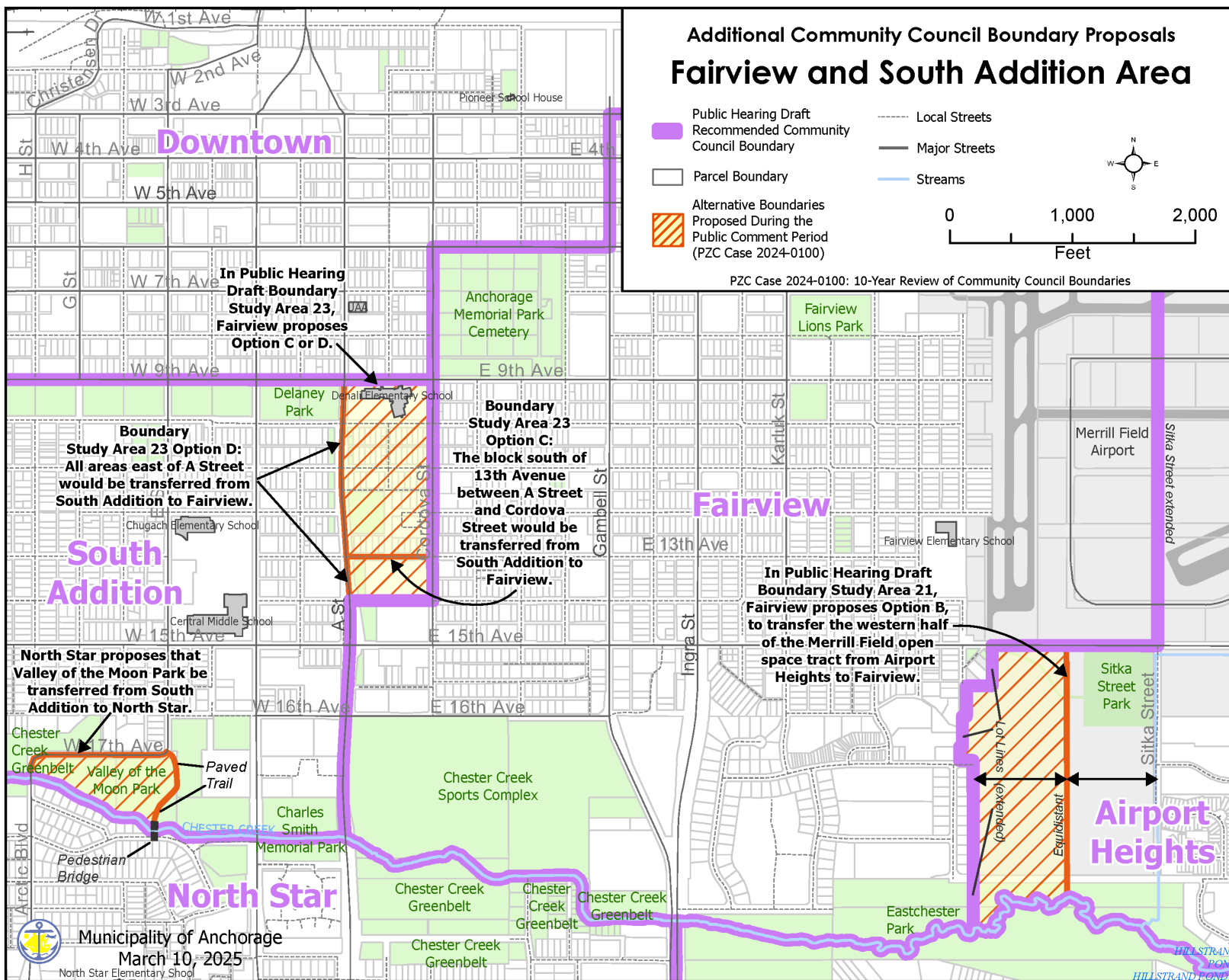
Identifiable Boundaries Criteria:

- There is no particularly strong boundary feature available. The current boundary is the backyard property lines and fences of Fairview residences abutting the open space.
- Splitting the open space tract in half would effectively employ the undeveloped wetland forest as the boundary between the two neighborhoods.

Community Desires Criteria:

- Airport Heights recommends retaining the existing boundary (See Attachment 7). Its members desire that Sitka Street Park playground and open space area adjoining Sitka Street remain a part of Airport Heights.

Options and Recommendations: Change the recommendation for Boundary Study Area #21 to Option B on page 38 of the public hearing draft *Report and Recommendations* (Attachment 3), which is to transfer the western half of the Merrill Field Airport open space area from Airport Heights Community Council to Fairview Community Council. Retain the eastern half including the Sitka Street Park playground in Airport Heights.



3) Boundary Study Area #23: West of Cordova Street from 9th to 15th Avenue

Report and Map References:

- Boundary study area evaluation and recommendation: Attachment 3, pp. 39-41.
- Map of Boundary Study Area #23: Attachment 6, Area Maps 5 and 5b (pp. 9-10).
- Public Hearing Draft Community Council Boundary: Map on page 4 of this memo.

Comment: Fairview Community Council does not support the public hearing draft recommendation for Option A, to retain its existing boundaries with South Addition west of Cordova Street. It recommends to instead follow Option C or Option D. Option C would transfer all areas east of A Street between A and Cordova Streets from South Addition to Fairview. Option D would transfer only the two vacant blocks between 13th Avenue and Central Lutheran Church from South Addition to Fairview. Fairview argues that Denali Elementary should be in Fairview because its attendance area is largely in Fairview, and that the neighborhood areas east of A Street are more aligned with Fairview (Attachment 7, pages 15-16).

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* finds that although the criteria do not, *on balance*, support Option C (to transfer all areas east of A Street to Fairview), there is enough basis to support changing the public hearing draft recommendation to Option D (to transfer the two vacant blocks south of 13th Avenue), as follows:

Natural Communities criteria:

- Areas east of A Street are more proximate to the neighborhood of western Fairview.
- West of Cordova Street between 10th and 13th Avenues, the scale and physical attributes of residences have commonalities with South Addition, while residences east of Cordova Street (in Fairview) tend to have a higher density and scale.
- South of 13th Avenue, the two vacant blocks are designated for high-density, large-scale multifamily or mixed-use housing, which is more consistent with Fairview east of Cordova Street.
- The Denali ES attendance area is east of A Street including primarily Fairview neighborhoods; however, the school also includes an area-wide optional program.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

- Either A Street or Cordova Street can provide identifiable north-south boundary line, although A street is the stronger, simpler boundary.
- Either 9th or 15th Avenue would provide the most identifiable east-west boundary line; however, 13th Avenue can provide an identifiable boundary better than the current community council boundary at the rear property line between Central Lutheran Church and the vacant blocks south of 13th Avenue.

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Community Desires Criteria:

- North of 13th Avenue and west of Cordova Street, the residents/property owners strongly identify with South Addition, are active members of South Addition Community Council, and desire to remain in South Addition.
- South of 13th Avenue, there are no permanent residences. Central Lutheran Church, on the northwest corner of Cordova Street and 15th Avenue, has in the past expressed its desire to remain in Fairview. (It is currently in Fairview Community Council.)
- South Addition Community Council recommends Option A, to retain the existing boundary between A Street and Cordova Street at the north property line of Central Lutheran Church.

Options and Recommendations: Change the recommendation for Boundary Study Area #23 to Option C on page 40 of the public hearing draft *Report and Recommendations* (Attachment 3), to transfer the area between Cordova and A Streets south of 13th Avenue (and north of Central Lutheran Church) from South Addition Community Council to Fairview Community Council. North of 13th Avenue to 9th Avenue, continue to use Cordova Street as the community council boundary.

4) Boundary Study Area #32: Spenard Beach Park

Report and map references:

- Boundary study area evaluation and recommendation: Attachment 3, pp. 50-51.
- Map of Boundary Study Area #32: Attachment 6, Maps 7 and 7a (pp. 12-13).
- Public Hearing Draft Community Council Boundary: Attachment 2, Maps 7 and 7a.

Comment: Spenard Community Council does not support the Department's public hearing draft recommendation for Option A, to retain Spenard Beach Park. It instead recommends Option C, to share Spenard Beach Park between Turnagain and Spenard by including it in both community council districts, overlapping their areas (Attachment 7, page 52).

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* (in Attachment 3) finds that the criteria do not support the proposal and that there is a stronger basis for retaining the existing boundaries with Spenard Beach Park in Turnagain Community Council, as follows:

Representation criteria:

- According to the Parks and Recreation Department, all community councils near a park receive equal notice and public involvement opportunity regarding projects and management activities in the park. Overlapping the community council districts in Spenard Beach Park would not affect or improve public notification, comment, or stewardship opportunities for Spenard Community Council in the park. The Parks and Recreation staff consulted by the Planning Department on this issue explained that per municipal code (AMC 2.40), the public outreach process to a park's community councils always includes the neighboring councils within 1,000 feet of the park. Solicitations for advocacy are directed equally to all community councils within 1,000 feet of a park because the Municipality understands that communities near a park use and care for the park, regardless of community council district boundaries.
- Parks and Recreation staff identified examples of this, including the *Russian Jack Springs Park Master Plan* (Russian Jack and Northeast CCs) and the *Eastchester Park Master Plan* (Airport Heights, Rogers Park, and Fairview CCs). For park master plans and major park improvements, Parks and Recreation puts together Community Advisory Groups that include all relevant councils and user groups. For recent Spenard Beach Park improvements, Parks and Recreation has been working with both Turnagain and Spenard Community Councils. In all these instances, all councils are given equal opportunity to weigh in, Park and Recreation staff attends all council meetings, and Parks and Recreation earns resolutions of support from each individual council.

Natural Communities criteria:

- Spenard Beach Park is South of Lakeshore Drive on Lake Spenard and is within the boundaries and jurisdiction of the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport / Lake Hood Seaplane Base. The Municipality manages it as a park through a lease agreement with the Airport.
- The Municipality categorizes Spenard Beach Park as a *Community Use* park, which serves a broader purpose than a *Neighborhood* park. Community parks focus on

meeting the recreation needs of a larger section of the Anchorage community, including social contact between a wide variety of community members from different neighborhoods and backgrounds.

- Spenard Beach Park is closer to the residential neighborhoods of Turnagain than to the residences in Spenard Community Council, which are separated from it by the Spenard Road commercial corridor to its southeast and the Turnagain neighborhood subdivisions to the northeast.
- The rest of the Airport also impacts both community councils and is divided among the adjoining community councils without overlapping their districts.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

- Overlapping districts would conflict with the municipal code's boundary review criteria in AMC 2.40 that community councils be *divided one from another* by identifiable physical or traffic barriers.
- It is important for community council districts to remain separate, divided one from another by contiguous boundaries, to avoid confusion in maps for the public. Municipal GIS data for creating maps such as community council district boundaries is used by a variety of municipal agencies and other organizations and individuals who make the maps. Users of the municipal GIS data would need to know how to interpret and render the overlapping community council districts on maps for public use. To minimize instances of confusing or erroneous maps, it is likely that the municipal GIS division would need to distribute the mapping data with a handout for cartographers in other departments and organizations that explains how to use the data to create maps with overlapping districts, and how to symbolize and label those. Regardless of GIS division time and efforts, someone will inevitably misuse or misinterpret the GIS data through no fault of their own. It would be unrealistic to expect someone who wants to make a map of the community councils to know Turnagain Community Council district overlaps with Spenard Community Council, or where that overlap would be. The GIS division believes that the Municipality would be setting itself up for years of constantly having to communicate the issue and having to be vigilant about monitoring maps made with the data. Planning staff believes it would set the public up for confusion.

Community Desires criteria:

- Turnagain Community Council supports the public hearing draft recommendation to retain the park within its district to "align with the natural and historic boundaries," however, is open to sharing the park within both community council districts to support both community councils providing stewardship for the park.

Options and Recommendations: Move forward with Option A as recommended on page 51 of the public hearing draft *Report and Recommendations* (Attachment 3), which is to retain existing boundaries, with Spenard Beach Park in Turnagain Community Council.

5) Boundary Study Area #33: South of Dimond Boulevard to 92nd Avenue

Report and map references:

- Boundary study area evaluation and recommendation: Attachment 3, pp. 51-52.
- Map of Boundary Study Area #33: Attachment 6, Maps 10 and 11 (pp. 16-17).
- Public Hearing Draft Community Council Boundary: Attachment 2, Maps 10 and 11.

Comment: Taku Campbell Community Council no longer supports the public hearing draft recommendation to transfer the area south of Dimond Boulevard to 92nd Avenue between Minnesota Drive and Seward Highway from Taku Campbell to Bayshore/Klatt. Taku Campbell now recommends Option A, to retain its existing southern boundary at 92nd Avenue.

Taku Campbell expresses that its current boundaries provide representation aligned with neighborhoods' geographic, historic, and demographic characteristics, and that transferring the residents south of Dimond Boulevard including Dimond Estates Mobile Home Park and Mt. Vernon Street area would disrupt community cohesion divide natural communities. It states there is a lack of clear benefits to transferring this area (Attachment 7, page 54).

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* finds there is a basis to support the proposal to retain existing boundaries, as follows:

Natural Communities criteria:

- Taku Campbell has clarified that the area south of Dimond is not peripheral to its district. Dimond Estates Mobile Home Park and Mt. Vernon are closer to Taku Campbell neighborhoods north of Dimond Boulevard than to Bayshore/Klatt neighborhoods, which are southwest of Minnesota/O'Malley.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

- Dimond Boulevard is a more identifiable, recognizable boundary than 92nd Avenue, which is not constructed west of Old Seward Highway.

Community Desires criteria:

- 3 of 5 Taku Campbell members who responded to the project's survey questionnaire agreed its current boundaries align with natural communities; 1 was neutral and 1 disagreed.
- 8 of 10 Bayshore/Klatt members who responded to the project's questionnaire agreed its current boundaries align with natural communities; 1 was neutral and 1 disagreed.
- Bayshore/Klatt Community Council has not submitted a resolution.

Options and Recommendations: Change the recommendation for Boundary Study Area #33 to Option A on page 51 of the public hearing draft *Report and Recommendations* (Attachment 3), which is to retain existing boundaries.

6) Boundary Study Area #40: in Chugach State Park

Report and map references:

- Boundary study area evaluation and recommendation: Attachment 3, pp. 56-59.
- Maps of Boundary Study Area #40 in Chugach State Park: Attachment 6, Boundary Study Area Maps 4, 9, and 13.
- Public Hearing Draft Community Council Boundary: Attachment 2, Maps 4, 9, and 13.

Comment: Basher Community Council does not support the public hearing draft recommendation for Option B, to remove the 40-acre Chugach State Park tract which was once a private inholding and is now a part of Chugach State Park, from the Basher Community Council district. Basher recommends Option A instead, to retain this 40-acre tract in Chugach State Park in Basher's district boundaries. Basher expressed that it has historically been very involved in issues affecting the 40-acre tract in Study Area #40 and desires to retain as much influence as it can over that area (Attachment 7, pages 3-4).

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* finds that the criteria do not support the proposal and that there is a stronger basis for moving forward with the public hearing draft recommendation, as follows:

Representation criteria:

- Consultations with the State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), including the public involvement coordinator, chief planner, and Superintendent of Chugach State Park (CSP), demonstrate that removing the 40-acre tract of Chugach State Park from Basher Community Council's district boundaries will have no impact on its public notice, public comment, or participation and advocacy opportunities in CSP planning, development, or management decisions. Basher will receive the same notice and involvement opportunities as a community council adjoining the park. Specifically:
 - Wendy Sailors, public outreach coordinator for the State of Alaska DNR, explained in a consultation with municipal Planning staff on January 17, 2025, that all state agencies use a statewide online public notice system for any public comment announcement. Public notice requirements are based on the type of proposals. Decision-making and advisory boards follow an open meetings requirement. Chugach State Park-related public outreach and engagement efforts are directed at community councils that are near and adjacent to the park because those communities have an interest in what is going on in CSP just outside their boundaries. For example, Ms. Sailors has attended Glen Alps and Rabbit Creek meetings regarding projects in CSP outside those community councils' boundaries.
 - Monica Alvarez, Section Chief for Resource Assessment and Development at DNR, and formerly the project planner for the current *Chugach State Park Management Plan* and *Chugach Access Plan*, explained that updates to state park management plans involve a substantial public process and public noticing that would include all community councils nearby. Ms. Alvarez attended the meetings of community councils while working on the two plans. In addition, the CSP Advisory Board holds open public meetings monthly to discuss park management actions with opportunity for the public to participate. Extending

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community council districts into CSP would be based on a perceived sphere of influence that community councils do not really have over the State of Alaska;

- Ben Corwin, the Superintendent of Chugach State Park, in consultation with municipal Planning staff on January 21, 2025, explained that CSP improvement projects such as trail or trailhead improvements are consistent with the CSP Management Plan. For such projects, the State reaches out to the adjacent community councils directly, attend community council meetings or invite them to CSP Advisory Board meetings, which are posted on the state's public notice page. CSP outreach is to all community councils that are adjacent to the park. Most community council districts do not extend into CSP, and Mr. Corwin had not realized that any community council districts extended into the park. Whether a community council abuts the CSP or extends into the park, the community council would be impacted the same by park improvement projects and so is included in the same notice and comment opportunities.

Natural Communities criteria:

- Chugach State Park is a natural resource park and under ownership and management of the State of Alaska DNR. It is a natural wilderness area with public trails and trailheads serving the broader community. There are no private residences in CSP, and CSP is not a part of any local neighborhood.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

- The 40-acre tract is within Chugach State Park and has no identifiable boundary or physical feature that separates it from the rest of Chugach State Park; the tract property line is unmarked and the forest and alpine areas within versus around outside the tract are indistinguishable. The tract boundary is a relic plat and has no management function.

Community Desires criteria:

- Glen Alps and Rabbit Creek Community Council, whose districts also include a parcel within CSP, support the recommendation of Boundary Study Area #40 to remove these parcels from their districts.

Options and Recommendations: Move forward with Option B as recommended on page 58 of the public hearing draft *Report and Recommendations* (Attachment 3), which is to remove the three parcels in Basher, Glen Alps, and Rabbit Creek Community Councils, which were once private inholdings and are now a part of Chugach State Park, from those community council districts.

7) Boundary Study Area #40 (in the Tidal Flats):

Report and map references:

- Boundary study area evaluation and recommendation: Attachment 3, pp. 56-59.
- Maps of Boundary Study Area #40 in the Tidal Flats: Attachment 6, Anchorage Bowl Map (page 1), Turnagain Arm Map (page 3), and Boundary Study Area Maps 1, 2, 5, 11, 13, and 14.
- Public Hearing Draft Community Council Boundaries: Attachment 2, Anchorage Bowl Map (page 1), Turnagain Arm Map (page 3), and Boundary Study Area Maps 1, 2, 5, 11, 13, and 14.

Comment: Birchwood, Government Hill, Old Seward/Oceanview, and Turnagain Community Councils do not support the public hearing draft recommendation for Option C, to adjust the coastal boundaries of community councils along Cook Inlet from “mean low or lower water” to “mean high water” (i.e., shifting the boundary from mean low tide to mean high tide so that the tidal mudflats are no longer in the community council districts. The four community councils recommend Option A instead, to retain coastal district boundaries at “mean low or lower water” (Attachment 7, see community council resolutions that begin on pages 7, 22, 34, and 58).

Their comments include that some residents live in homes overlooking the tidal flats and care about what occurs on them. Birchwood expresses that it is an advocate of Beach Lake Park and the mouth of Peters Creek, which it says include tidal flats. Old Seward/Oceanview cites that the outdoor activity area within the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (ACWR) at the base of Oceanview Bluff and west of the Seward Highway is a geographic focus and common interest among its residents and the broader community. Turnagain and Government Hill expressed the underlying concern: that the boundary change would limit the community councils’ standing to address nearshore development, activities, and infrastructure that could impact a neighborhood, and questions what harm is caused by current use of the low tide line. Turnagain and Government Hill cite examples such as the aircraft fuel pipeline from the Port to the international airport that is buried in the mudflats, and a proposed relocation of a portion of the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail into the mudflats.

Response: The staff assessment of the *boundary review criteria* finds that the criteria do not support retaining the coastal boundaries at *mean low or lower water*, and that there is a stronger basis for moving forward with the public hearing draft recommendation, as follows:

Representation criteria:

- Consultation with the Section Chief for Resource Assessment and Development at the State of Alaska DNR on February 21, 2025, indicates that removal of the tidal mudflats from a community council district will make no difference to public notice, comment, or participation or advocacy opportunities for community councils regarding planning, permits, or leases for activities in the tidal flats. Specifically:
 - The State of Alaska manages Cook Inlet waters, including the tidal flats, out to the 3-mile limit. The State of Alaska DNR would be the agency to issue a permit or a lease for a land authorization, including in the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (ACWR). A short-term permit has no public notice requirements. Lease and easements would be noticed to the public through the state’s online public notice system. Requirements for public notice are established by statute (AS 38.05.945). This statute lists the types of organizations that receive notice and

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is the state's most stringent notice requirement. Community councils are not on the list of entities to receive public notice. It does not matter if a community council extends into the tidal mudflats or not.

- Coastal community councils will receive consultation opportunities for major projects such as a relocation of the Coastal Trail, or Point Woronzof bluff erosion, regardless of whether their boundaries extend into the mudflats.

Natural Communities criteria:

- Community council districts are delineated based on neighborhood areas that form “natural communities” of residents, property owners and businesses, to provide forums and representation for those members in those neighborhoods. There are no neighborhoods or people out in the tidal mudflats of the Cook Inlet. Tidal mudflats are a part of the waters of the Cook Inlet, submerged at least part of the day. Tidal mudflats do not include the vegetated, low-lying coastlands of the ACWR or Peters Creek estuary that are of concern to Birchwood, Turnagain, and Old Seward/Oceanview.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

- Consultations with the Municipal Surveyor indicate that the location of mean low or lower water is unknown to the Municipality and State of Alaska DNR. In some places it may even extend out beyond the boundaries of the Municipality. There is no discernable physical feature in the tidal mudflats that marks mean low or lower water.
- The existing community council maps do not accurately reflect the location of mean low water. To correct the maps, the Municipality would need to consult with federal marine agencies (e.g., NOAA) to determine mean low water. The scale of the community council district maps of the Anchorage Bowl would need to be reduced to show how far out the community councils extend out into the Cook Inlet.
- Mean high water (i.e., mean high tide) is the shoreline between the marine waters (including tidal mudflats) and coastlands (upper beaches, sand dunes, vegetated estuaries, wetlands, and uplands). The shoreline is a discernable and mapped feature that provides an identifiable boundary based on delineation of land versus the sea.

Community Desires criteria:

- 4 of 11 coastal community councils, including Downtown, South Addition, Girdwood, and Turnagain Arm, support adjusting the boundaries to “mean high water.” 3 coastal community councils, including Chugiak, Sand Lake, and Bayshore/Klatt, did not submit comments.
- 4 of 11 coastal community councils do not support adjusting the boundaries to “mean high water.” However, their concerns seem based on a perceived public process and sphere of influence that do not exist, or a perception that the vegetated coastlands of ACWR or creek estuaries are included in the tidal mudflats. (They are not.)

Options and Recommendations: Move forward with Option C as recommended on page 59 of the public hearing draft *Report and Recommendations*, to adjust the coastal boundaries of the community councils to follow “mean high water.”

8) Small Boat Launch Area

Comment: Government Hill Community Council recommends that the Small Boat Launch pier area south of Ship Creek and seaward of the Alaska Railroad tracks be transferred from Downtown Community Council to Government Hill, as shown on the map on page 15 of this memo. Government Hill comments that the Small Boat Launch is managed by the Port of Alaska and has access only through Government Hill (Attachment 7, page 22).

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* indicates the criteria do not support the proposal and that there is a stronger basis for retaining the Small Boat Launch pier area in Downtown Community Council, as follows:

Natural Communities criteria:

- The longtime boundary between Government Hill and Downtown is Ship Creek. Areas south of Ship Creek including the Small Boat Launch have been a part of Downtown Community Council since its establishment in the 1970s.
- The Small Boat Launch and other areas south of Ship Creek are within the *Our Downtown: Downtown District Plan*. This plan sets forth the future land use and development vision for the boat launch and other areas south of Ship Creek. The *Our Downtown* plan and other area-specific plans for south of Ship Creek envision integrating the Small Boat Launch area into the mixed-use commercial and residential redevelopment oriented toward Downtown and the Alaska Railroad Depot.
- Areas north of Ship Creek are industrial and port facilities and a part of the *Government Hill Neighborhood Plan* area. These areas are envisioned to remain industrial facilities in nature associated with the Port of Alaska.
- The existing transportation barriers between the Small Boat Launch and the rest of the areas south of Ship Creek are anticipated to be reduced with the advent of planned trail connections, including the Coastal Trail and Ship Creek Trail connection project.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

- Ship Creek provides a strong, simple, recognizable boundary.
- Using the Alaska Railroad would complicate the boundary and necessitate using an arbitrary southern boundary south of the Small Boat Launch.

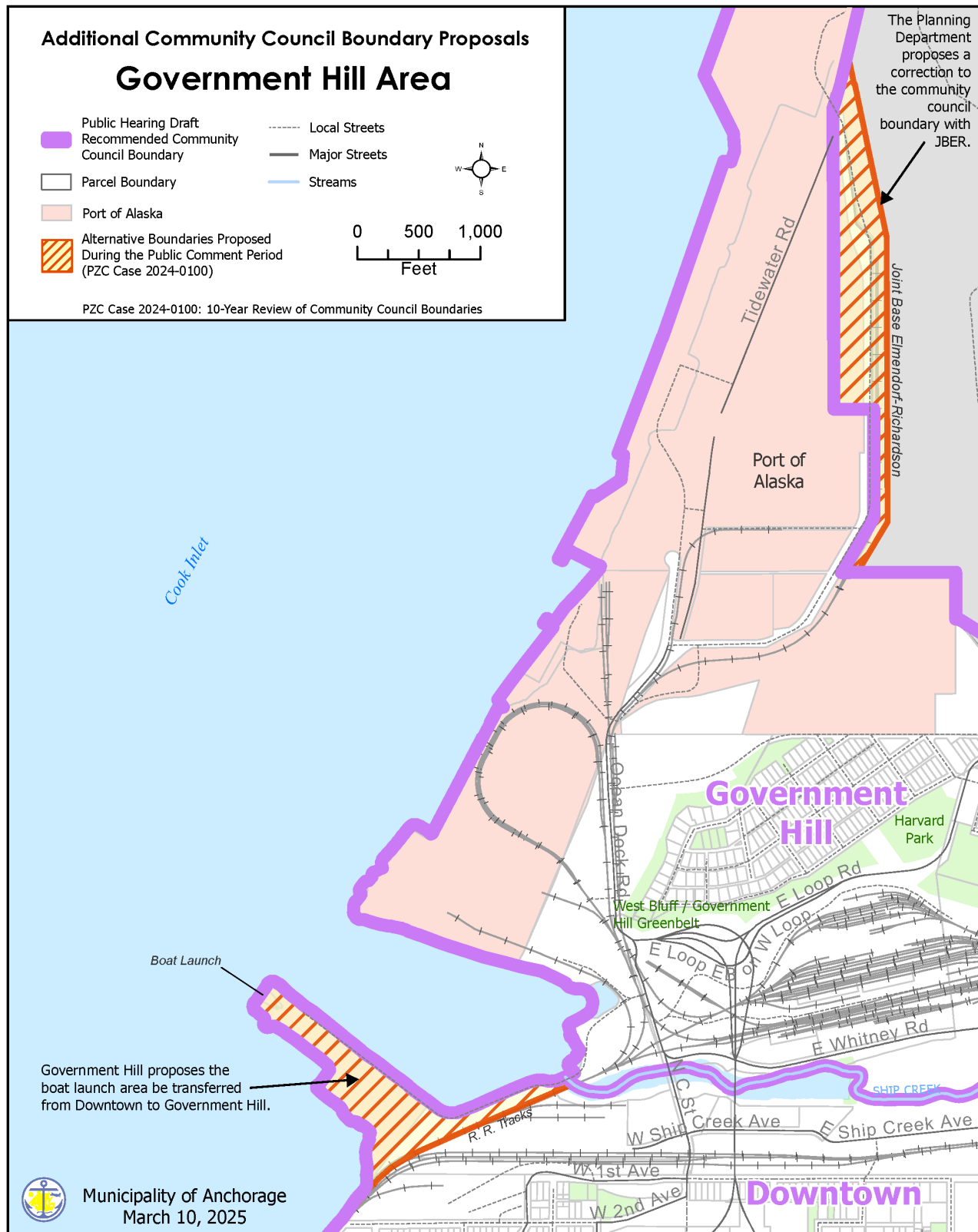
Community Desires criteria:

- Downtown Community Council desires to retain the Small Boat Launch area.

Options and Recommendations:

- *Option A (Recommended):* No change. Retain existing boundary between Government Hill and Downtown Community Councils at Ship Creek.
- *Option B:* Transfer the Small Boat Launch pier area from Downtown to Government Hill, using the boundaries depicted on the map on page 15 of this memo.

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9) Valley of the Moon Park

North Star Community Council recommends that Valley of the Moon Park be transferred from South Addition Community Council to North Star, as depicted on page 4 of this memo. North Star expresses that Valley of the Moon Park serves as a recreational and social hub for its residents. The park's location, proximity, and area topography align more naturally with the North Star neighborhood and its identity, needs and interests, and that it serves as a natural, existing centerpiece of North Star, similar to the relationship that Westchester Lagoon and Delaney Park have to South Addition, and it serves as a symbol of the neighborhood. The two community councils have a long history of collaboration on advocacy for the park, which has not been negatively impacted by the park lying exclusively within SACC boundaries and would not be negatively impacted if the park were transferred (Attachment 7, page 27).

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* indicates the criteria do not support the proposal, and that there is stronger basis for retaining the park in South Addition Community Council with the existing boundary at Chester Creek, as follows:

Representation criteria

- According to consultation with the Parks and Recreation Department, all community councils near a municipal park receive equal notice and public involvement opportunity regarding projects and management activities in the park. Transferring Valley of the Moon Park would not affect or improve public notification, comment, or stewardship opportunities for North Star Community Council in the park. The Parks and Recreation staff consulted by the Planning Department regarding this issue explained that per municipal code (AMC 2.40), the public outreach process to a park's community councils always includes the neighboring councils within 1,000 feet of the park. Solicitations for advocacy are directed equally to all community councils within 1,000 feet of a park because the Municipality understands that communities near a park use and care for the park, regardless of community council district boundaries. A park may be important to, cared for, and advocated for by a neighborhood regardless of it being located across a community council district boundary.
- Parks and Recreation staff identified examples of this, including the *Russian Jack Springs Park Master Plan* (Russian Jack and Northeast CCs) and the *Eastchester Park Master Plan* (Airport Heights, Rogers Park, and Fairview CCs). For park master plans and major park improvements, Parks and Recreation puts together Community Advisory Groups that include all relevant councils and user groups. For recent Spenard Beach Park improvements, Parks and Recreation has been working with both Turnagain and Spenard Community Councils. In all these instances, all councils are given equal opportunity to weigh in, Parks and Recreation staff attends all council meetings, and Parks and Recreation staff earns resolutions of support from each individual council.

Natural Communities criteria:

- The Municipality categorizes Valley of the Moon as a *Community Use* park, which serves a broader purpose than a *Neighborhood* park. Community parks focus on meeting the recreation needs of several neighborhoods and even a large section of the Anchorage community, including social contact between a wide variety of community members from different neighborhoods and backgrounds. It serves more than a neighborhood.

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- Valley of the Moon Park is across Chester Creek from some of the central residential subdivisions of North Star and serves as a primary public space for the North Star neighborhood community while also serving the broader Anchorage community. It is also adjacent across 17th Avenue to homes and residential areas in South Addition Community Council and serves South Addition residents as well.
- Valley of the Moon Park is geographically adjacent to two of the central neighborhoods of North Star and serves as a symbol (i.e., the rocket ship) of North Star.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

- Chester Creek forms the long-time boundary between South Addition and North Star and provides a clear, identifiable natural physical boundary.
- Using secondary streets and a pedestrian trail to transfer the Valley of the Moon segment north of Chester Creek would complicate the boundary and make it less clear.

Community Desires criteria:

- North Star passed a resolution in favor of its proposal with 10 votes in favor, 1 opposed, and 3 abstaining (Attachment 7, page 25).
- In response, South Addition passed a motion supporting retaining the existing boundary by unanimous consent (Attachment 7, page 47).

Options and Recommendations:

- *Option A (Recommended)*: No change. Retain existing boundary at Chester Creek.
- *Option B*: Transfer Valley of the Moon Park from South Addition to North Star, using the boundaries depicted on the map on page 4 of this memo.

10) Campbell Airstrip Road to Campbell Creek

Comment: Basher Community Council proposes that the portion of Far North Bicentennial Park located south of Campbell Airstrip Road and north of South Fork Campbell Creek, and the park and public lands 200 feet west of Campbell Airstrip Road, be transferred from Hillside and Campbell Park Community Councils to Basher, as depicted on the map on page 20 of this memo. Comments submitted by Ted Trueblood, chairman of the Campbell Airstrip Road Limited Road Service Area (LRSA), support the proposal.

Basher's comments refer to a recently proposed wildfire mitigation project along Campbell Airstrip Road and other projects along the road are important to the community fall in areas of public parkland outside of Basher's current boundaries (Attachment 7: Basher comment on pages 2-5; Ted Trueblood comment on pages 71-75).

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* finds there is basis to support the proposal, with a modification north of the Campbell Airstrip Road Trailhead to provide an identifiable boundary following a physical feature, as follows:

Representation criteria

- As discussed in proposals 4 and 9 earlier in the memo, transferring parkland between adjacent community council districts has no effect on opportunities for representation, public notice, public comment, or other involvement in park planning, development, or management. Basher's opportunities for involvement in wildfire mitigation, trailhead management, and park planning will not change from this proposal.

Natural Communities criteria:

- The Basher, South Bivouac, and Campbell Airstrip Trailheads and the forest and trails along the south side of Campbell Airstrip Road, and north of South Fork Campbell Creek and the Campbell Creek Gorge, are of more immediate interest and impact to the community of Basher than to Hillside Community Council.
- The paved, multi-use trail running along the west side of Campbell Airstrip Road, from the Campbell Airstrip Trailhead to Tudor Road, is of more immediate interest and impact to the community of Basher than Campbell Park Community Council.
- Basher has a strong interest in wildfire hazard mitigation along both sides of Campbell Airstrip Road as its primary evacuation route.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

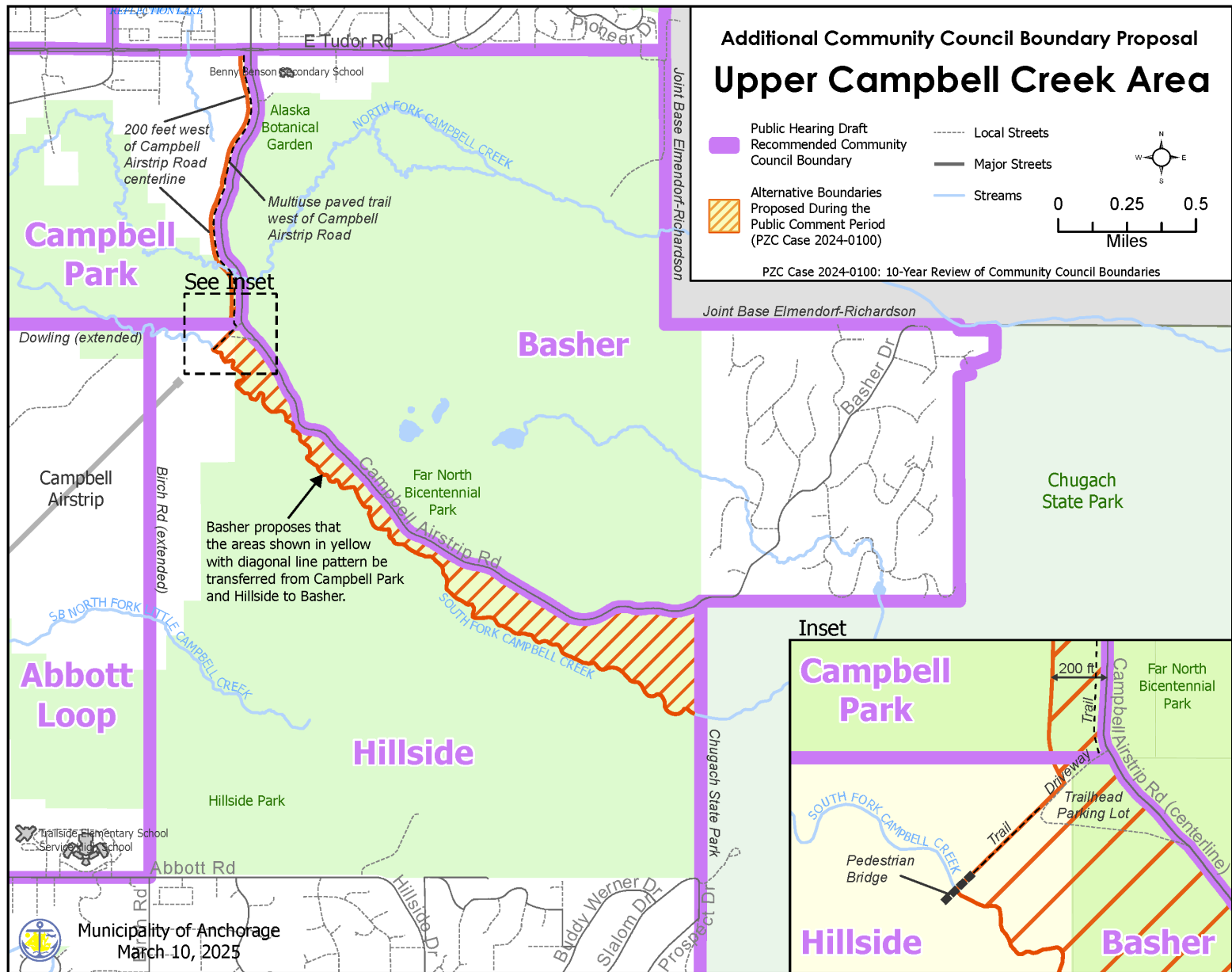
- The South Fork of Campbell Creek can serve as strong and identifiable a boundary as Campbell Airstrip Road does.
- North of the Campbell Airstrip Trailhead, the proposal to set the community council boundary at 200 feet west of Campbell Airstrip Road would create an arbitrary and non-identifiable boundary that follows no actual feature or rationale for its specific location. By comparison, the paved multi-use trail along the west side of Campbell Airstrip Road is an identifiable feature that can serve as a boundary. No other feature seems available in the vicinity.

Community Desires criteria:

- Campbell Park Community Council supports Basher's proposed boundary change.
- Hillside Community Council has not submitted comments.

Options and Recommendations:

- *Option A:* No change. Retain existing boundaries.
- *Option B (Recommended):* Transfer the portion of Far North Bicentennial Park south of Campbell Airstrip Road, east of the Campbell Airstrip Trailhead and creek pedestrian bridge, and north of the South Fork of Campbell Creek, from Hillside Community Council to Basher Community Council. From Campbell Airstrip Trailhead northward to Tudor Road, shift the western boundary of Basher Community Council with Hillside and Campbell Park Community Councils to become a combination of the trail connecting from the pedestrian bridge over Campbell Creek to the Campbell Airstrip Trailhead and the paved multi-use trail that runs along the west side Campbell Airstrip Road.
- *Option C (as proposed by Basher):* Transfer the portion of Far North Bicentennial Park south of Campbell Airstrip Road, east of the Campbell Airstrip Trailhead and creek pedestrian bridge, and north of the South Fork of Campbell Creek, from Hillside Community Council to Basher Community Council. From Campbell Airstrip Trailhead northward to Tudor Road, shift the western boundary of Basher Community Council with Hillside and Campbell Park Community Councils to become a combination of the trail connecting from the pedestrian bridge over Campbell Creek to the Campbell Airstrip Trailhead and a line 200 feet west the centerline of Campbell Airstrip Road.



11) Glen Alps/Upper Hillside

Comment: Glen Alps Community Council proposes that the 40-acre quarter-section east of Michael Road between Upper Huffman Road and Upper De Armoun Road/Canyon Road be transferred from Hillside Community Council to Glen Alps, as shown on the map on page.22. Area resident Marc June also submitted comments to this effect. Glen Alps chair Rob Brown submitted results of a questionnaire regarding this proposal (Attachment 7 pp. 19, 70, 76).

Response: The staff assessment of the relevant *boundary review criteria* finds there is a basis to support the proposal, as follows:

Natural Communities criteria:

- The properties in the 40-acre quarter-section abut Glen Alps and share topography, weather, proximity to Chugach State Park, trailhead access, lot sizes, and community issues such as wildlife, runoff, being on the same power line circuits, and steep slopes.
- The quarter-section is within the Glen Alps Road Service Area, sharing interest in road maintenance, funding, and allocation of associated tax revenue with Glen Alps.
- The residential subdivision that developed from the Spendlove homestead is split between the community council districts. Spendlove Drive and Jeanne Road and the properties along them, including the properties adjoining Jeanne Road east of Michael Road, were a part of greater Glen Alps since the 1950s.

Identifiable Boundaries criteria:

- The current boundary between Glen Alps and Hillside Community Councils was simply drawn along a section line boundary in the 1970s and does not accurately reflect the actual neighborhood that is Glen Alps as it has developed. It is not easily identifiable, as it follows side yard property lines between abutting residences.

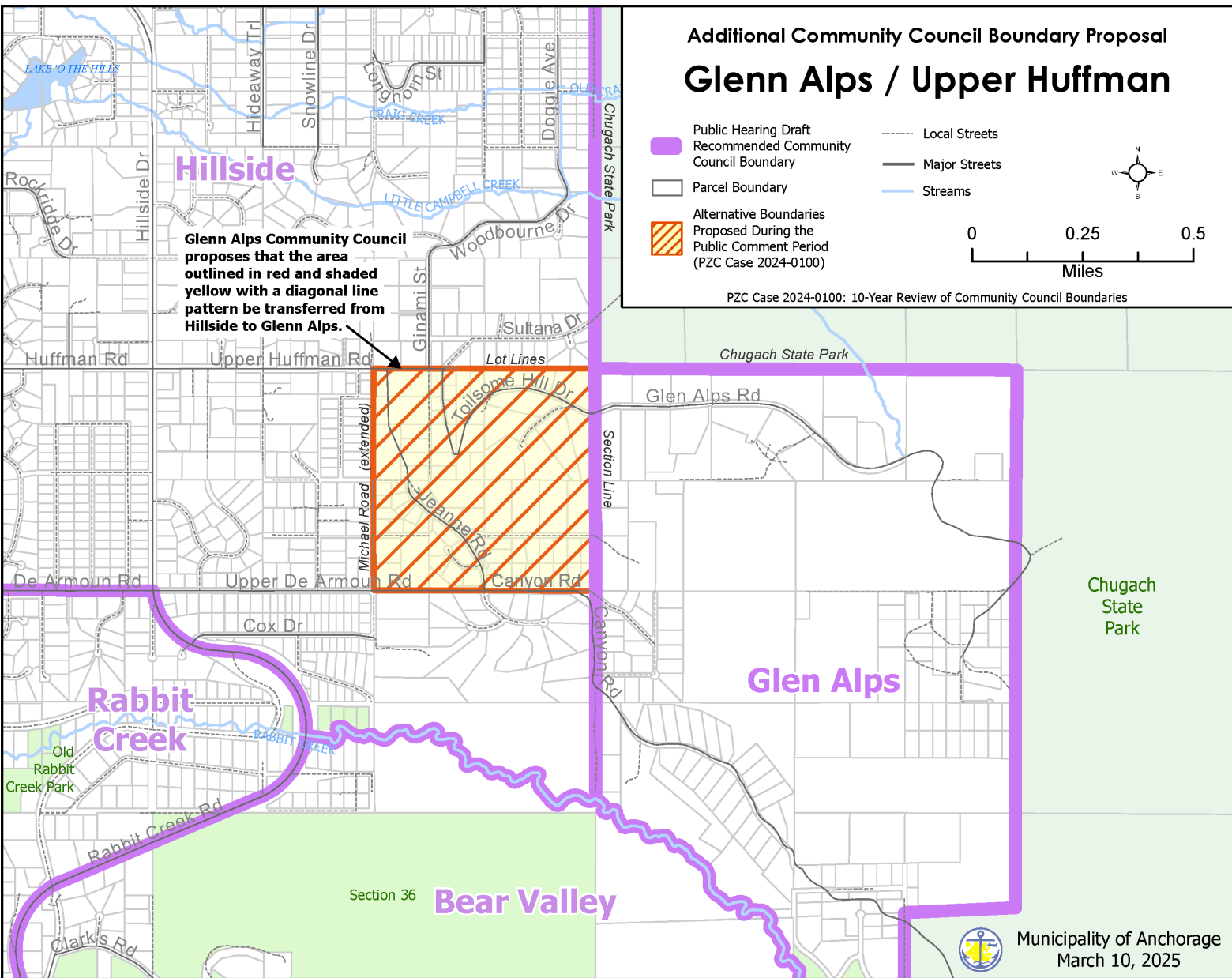
Community Desires criteria:

- 42 residents in the vicinity responded to a questionnaire survey created by the chair of Glen Alps regarding the proposal. 37 respondents including 21 out of 24 respondents who live in the affected area supported the proposal. 2 respondents including 1 who lives in the affected area opposed the proposal. 5 respondents including 2 who live in the affected area were indifferent.
- At least some residents of the Lewis & Clark Subdivision south of Upper De Armoun Road (i.e., just south of the 40-acre quarter-section) are not interest in transferring.
- Hillside Community Council has introduced a draft resolution for a vote in April.

Options and Recommendations:

- *Option A:* No change. Retain existing boundary.
- *Option B (Recommended):* Transfer the quarter-section comprising the area east of Michael Road between Upper Huffman Road and Upper De Armoun Road/Canyon

Road, shown in the map below, from Hillside Community Council to Glen Alps Community Council.



12) Port/JBER

The Planning Department recommends a correction to Government Hill Community Council's boundary where the Port of Alaska adjoins Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER). The correction would be to adjust the community council boundary to more accurately follow the management area boundary between the Port and JBER. A map of this area is on page 15 of this memo.