



## LAND USE

Existing and future land use is a major focus of the West Anchorage District Plan (WADP). Initial guidance for addressing land use in West Anchorage is provided by *Anchorage 2020* and the Land Use Policy Map prepared as part of *Anchorage 2020* implementation.

According to the vision outlined in the *Anchorage 2020* Land Use Policy Map (Figure A-1), the West Anchorage planning area contains two town center commercial districts, two neighborhood commercial centers, a major transit-supportive development corridor, large residential clusters, expansive park lands, the TSAIA, and the Lake Hood Seaplane Base. In order to achieve the vision in *Anchorage 2020*, the locations of recommended land uses and intensities of development were incorporated into an un-adopted 2006 Draft *Anchorage Bowl LUPM* (shown in Figure C-5). The last adopted LUPM dates back to 1982. The future adopted WADP will include a LUPM that could amend the *Anchorage Bowl LUPM* for its final adoption.

This section presents the existing land use pattern and zoning districts contained within West Anchorage. It also describes analyses that will be conducted to in order to produce a Draft West Anchorage Land Use Map described above.

### Land Use Pattern

Three major factors affect how land is managed, developed and used:

- who owns the land (private, State, Federal, MOA)
- how land is zoned (which governs the type and intensity of land use), and
- how land is currently used (commercial, industrial, residential, park)

Land ownership, particularly for public lands, may place limitations on how land can be used or even provide statutory guidance on land use. Each zoning district allows a range of permitted or primary uses and a range of conditional uses; *specific uses not listed under either of these two categories are not allowed, unless the property is re-zoned.*

For example, commercial zoning District B-3 permits primary and accessory use of everything from large “box” retail to churches to multi-family residential development. Conditional permitted uses must meet additional standards for approval; in B-3 that could include camper parks, correctional community centers, or snow disposal sites. An industrial use, such as manufacturing or warehousing, is not permitted in a commercial district.

**Non-Conforming Uses** - The way land is used today may not reflect the current zoning because it may have been developed before MOA zoning laws were adopted. This is called “non-conforming”. Non-conforming uses may have “grandfather rights” until there is a substantial change to the existing structure or use. After the substantial change, then it must comply with the new land use regulations. Examples include industrial businesses operating in the commercial districts in the Spenard Corridor. In addition, many commercial uses have non-conforming aspects of their use, particularly sites with large parking lots with no landscaping or pedestrian amenities otherwise required by **Anchorage Land Use Municipal Code 21 (Title 21)**.

Figure C-1 demonstrates how land is being used currently in West Anchorage<sup>1</sup>. It demonstrates that there is limited vacant land available. MOA updated its land use records through the use of property data, aerial photography, and some site visits.
















A majority of the land uses in West Anchorage are related to aviation activity within the airport property, public recreation facilities like Kincaid Park, other public lands and facilities such as the wastewater treatment plant; and large areas of residential development. Commercial and industrial uses are concentrated along high-traffic roads and rail corridors, and do not compose the majority of land use in West Anchorage.

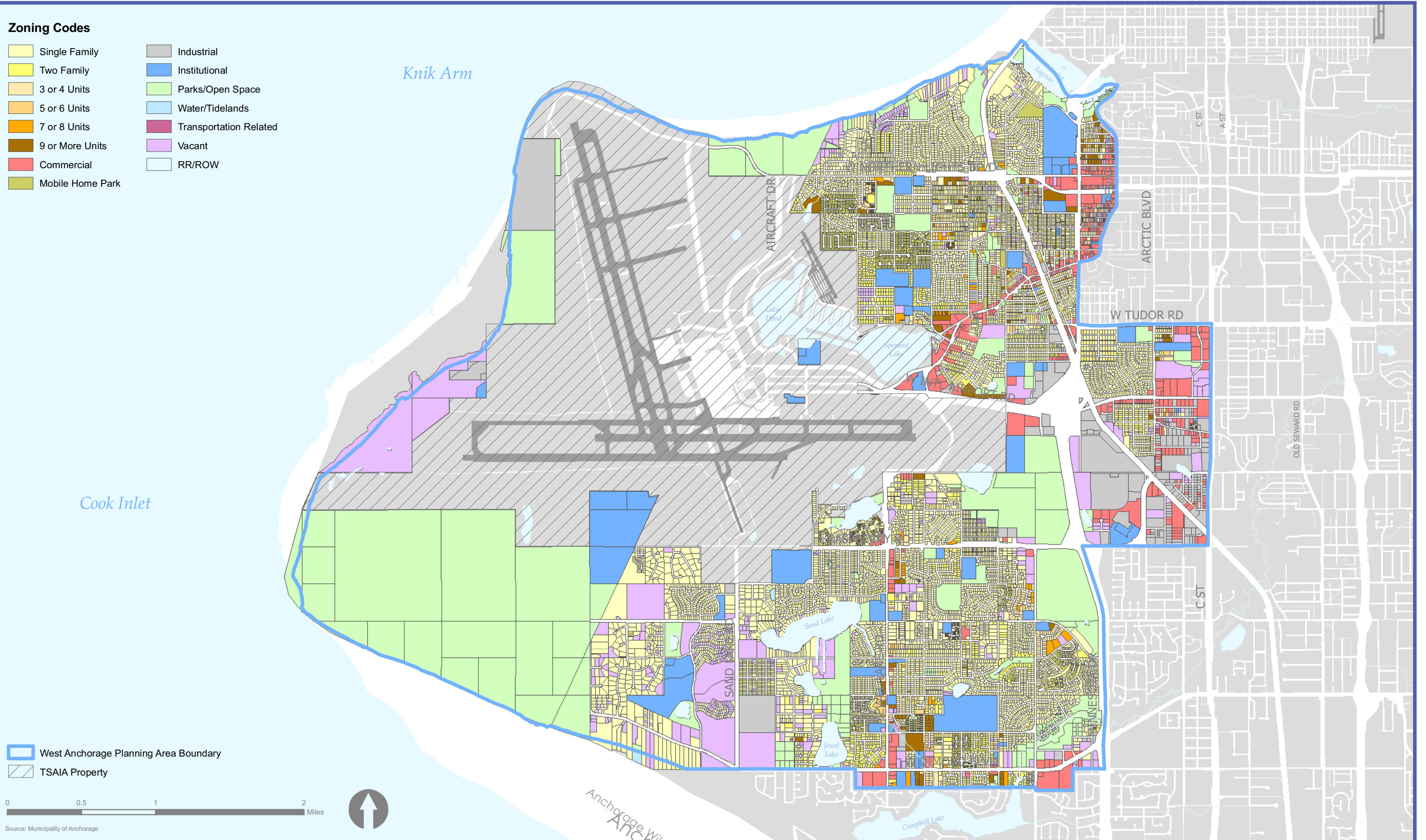
Of the over 13,000 acres of land in the proposed West Anchorage Planning Area, Figure C-2 shows generalized existing ownership. The airport property, shown as the hatched area, is nearly 3,940 acres, owned by the State, and 30% of the total planning area. (There are sizable tidal areas under state jurisdiction, but they are excluded from this calculation.)

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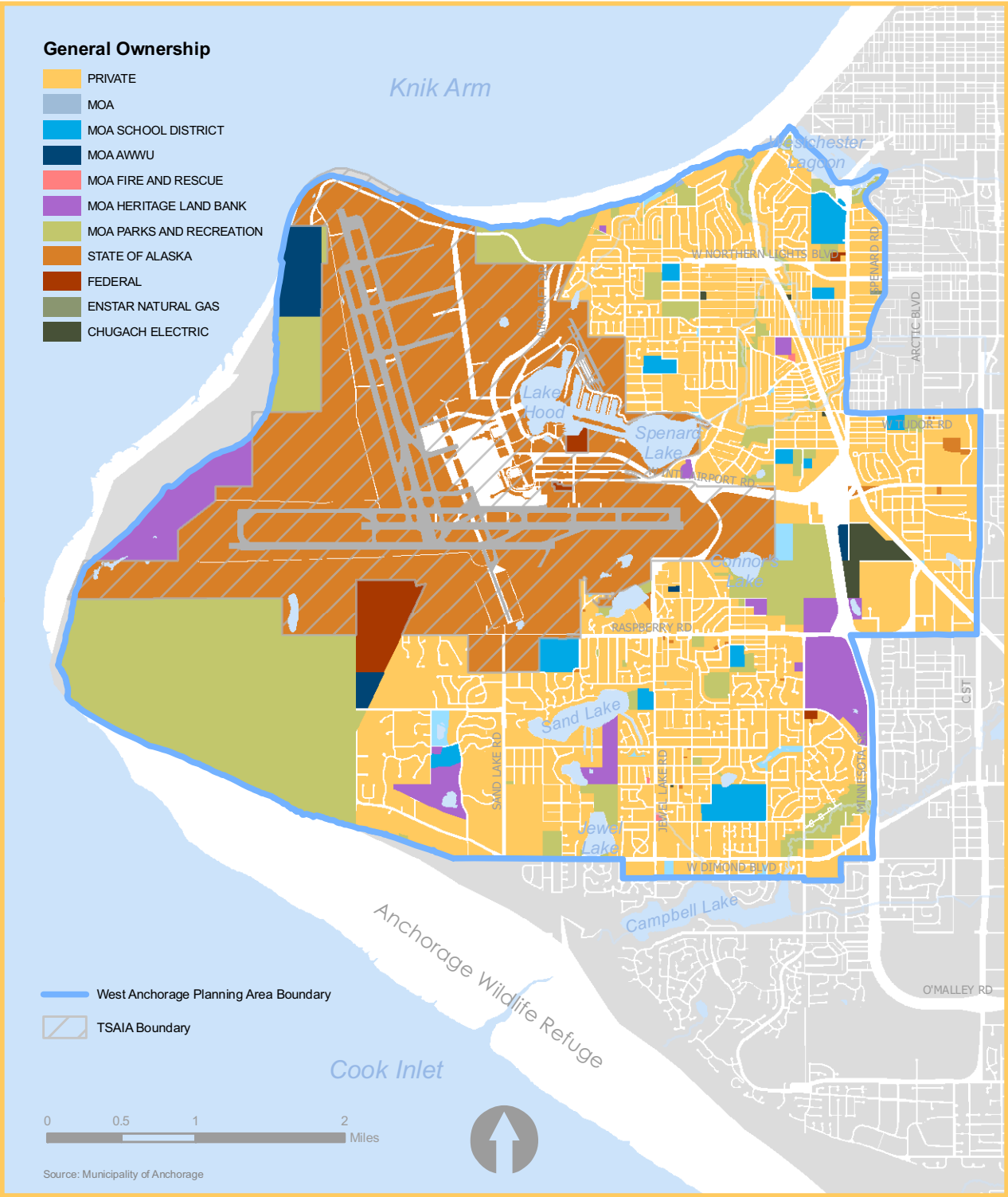
<sup>1</sup> Figure C-1 is an estimate of actual land use because it only shows the *primary* use. There may be *secondary* uses of individual parcels that do not show. For example, one parcel may contain three duplexes and a single family home, but the primary land use will be displayed as Two Family Residential.

# Zoning Codes

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Single Family    |  Industrial             |
|  Two Family       |  Institutional          |
|  3 or 4 Units     |  Parks/Open Space       |
|  5 or 6 Units     |  Water/Tidelands        |
|  7 or 8 Units     |  Transportation Related |
|  9 or More Units  |  Vacant                 |
|  Commercial       |  RR/ROW                 |
|  Mobile Home Park |  |



# West Anchorage District Plan



**Table C-1. Summary of Land Uses and Residential Units in West Anchorage**

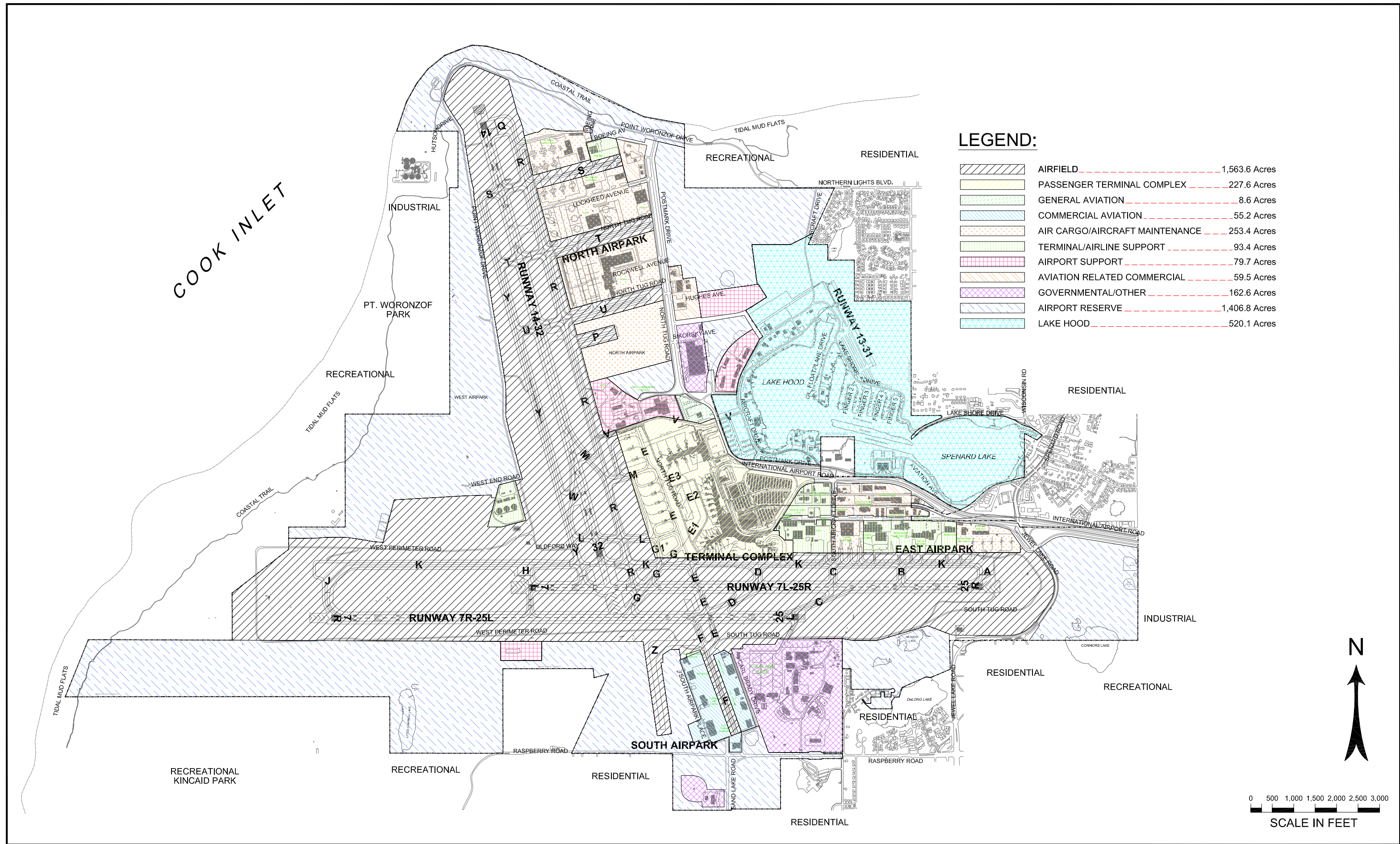
Land Use	Acreage in West Anchorage	Percent of Total Land Use	Residential Units
Residential Total	2,844	22%	17,482
Single Family	2,153	16%	7,866
Two Family	373	3%	3,393
Multi Family <sup>a</sup>	318	1%	6,223
Commercial	376	3%	74
Industrial	476	3%	11
Institutional <sup>b</sup>	580	4%	15
Park & Open Space	2,404	17%	0
Railroad and ROW <sup>c</sup>	1,497	11%	0
Vacant	806	6%	0
Waterbodies <sup>d</sup>	227	2%	0
TSAIA <sup>e</sup>	4,607	33%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,817</b>		<b>17,691</b>
Source: MOA, 2009 Existing Land Use Study			
<sup>a</sup> Multi Family designation includes three or more units and mobile home parks.			
<sup>b</sup> Does not include the commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, tidal, vacant, and air transportation related uses within the TSAIA property.			
<sup>c</sup> Right-of-Way is subject to geodatabase model coverage limitations. This category also includes miscellaneous surface transportation-related facilities.			
<sup>d</sup> There are sizeable tidal areas under state jurisdiction excluded from this calculation.			
<sup>e</sup> See Table C-2 for detailed description of all uses within TSAIA property.			

## Land Use Trends

Recent land use trends in West Anchorage include the following:

- Development on Anchorage International Airport – As TSAIA has expanded its role as a leading domestic and international air cargo hub, and responded to the needs of the aviation industry; additional development has occurred on the airport including the North and South Airparks and consideration of an additional North-South runway (see Figure C-3). TSAIA land leased to Kulis Air National Guard Base near South Airpark will be returned to TSAIA inventory upon relocation of Kulis operations to Elmendorf Air Force Base in 2011. This property, with improvements, may be made available to others. With these new developments and current short-term and long-term trends in the aviation industry, TSAIA will be assessing development associated with their mission, taking into account community concerns regarding their impacts.





- Residential development in the Sand Lake gravel pits – As Anchorage continues to grow, obtaining land for new residential development has become a challenge. The Sand Lake gravel pits are continuing to be filled and will become vacant land. Development of portions of the Sand Lake gravel pits for residential and public facilities (schools) have responded to demand. This demand is likely to continue.
- Commercial and visitor industry development – The southern end of Spenard Road and International Airport Road are seeing an increase in commercial development in vacant or underdeveloped parcels, particularly in response to increased visitor demand. This has led to hotel and related service development. The emergence of a diverse mix of entertainment, service, and boutique-style stores within the boundaries of Spenard Road, Benson/W. Northern Lights Boulevard, and Minnesota Drive is an exciting trend that could provide a model for other areas in West Anchorage.

The total acreage of the land uses on the airport shown in Figure C-3 can be found in Table C-2. There are approximately 253 acres dedicated to air cargo facilities. This includes over one million square feet of building space, 471,000 square yards of apron, and 37 acres of auto parking and landside support.

**Table C-2. Land Use Acreage on TSAIA Property**

Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total TSAIA acreage
Airfield	1,564	34%
Passenger Terminal Complex	228	5%
General Aviation	9	0%
Commercial Aviation	55	1%
Air Cargo/Aircraft Maintenance	253	6%
Terminal/Airline Support	93	2%
Airport Support	80	2%
Aviation Related Commercial	60	1%
Governmental/Other	163	4%
Reserved for Future Airport Development <sup>a</sup>	1,407	33%
Lake Hood	520	11%
Other (including Tidal/Water and Roadways/ROW)	177	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,607</b>	
Source: TSAIA, 2009		
<sup>a</sup> Includes some land leased to MOA by formal agreement, easement, or permit under a short-term maintenance agreement for park or natural resource use, or have long-term community value either for park use or as natural open spaces.		

The total acreage of TSAIA is 4,607 when including some tidal and right-of-way (ROW) land which represents 33% of the entire West Anchorage Planning Area.

## Existing Zoning Pattern

West Anchorage is divided into zoned use districts that are defined by *Title 21*. *Title 21* applies not only to development, but also to design and modifications of buildings, roads, and landscaping. Figure C-4 is a generalized existing zoning map. Parcel-level detail that includes zoning “special limitations” (SL) assigned to certain parcels is available online using the Munimapper: <http://munimaps.muni.org>.

**Special Limitations** - A parcel may have a special limitation assigned to its zoning district. It may require any number of additional definitions to its zoning district. Examples include: a special site plan review, a limit to the total number of units, or additional buffers.

There are four broad zoning categories in West Anchorage:

- **Residential** – There is a range of residential zoning districts in West Anchorage. Single and two family units are designated throughout the north side of Northern Lights Boulevard in Turnagain and throughout Sand Lake on the west and east sides of Sand Lake Boulevard. Multi-family residential units are allowed closest to transit corridors including Spenard Road, Jewel Lake Boulevard, Dimond Boulevard, and Minnesota. Housing density in some areas is constrained by environmental factors.
- **Business/Commercial** – General business zoning is concentrated along the entire Spenard Road corridor and the portion of West Dimond Boulevard between Minnesota and Northwood Drive; the corner of Dimond Boulevard and Jewel Lake Road is zoned for a community business district, and the corner of Raspberry Road and Jewel Lake Road is zoned for local/neighborhood business district. Business Zoning District permitted uses are generally quite broad.
- **Industrial** – Both light and heavy industrial zoning districts within West Anchorage. They are located adjacent to the airport along International Airport Road and at the Minnesota/International interchange. The majority of the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) corridor from Spenard Road running south is zoned for industrial activity. There are industrial zoning activities within the airport property, but these are addressed below.
- **Public Lands & Institutions/Transition Lands** – Public Lands and Institutions (PLI) in West Anchorage (including the designation for parks, open space and green belts within PLI district [PLI-p]) include the very popular Kincaid Park, part of Connor's Bog, and public access points to Jewel Lake. West Anchorage contains the largest quantity of public land (parks) in the Bowl aside from Far North Bicentennial Park. Traditionally, MOA has reserved some public lands for future school sites. Note, the airport property contains a variety of zoning districts, and the lack of an overall airport zoning district is addressed below.



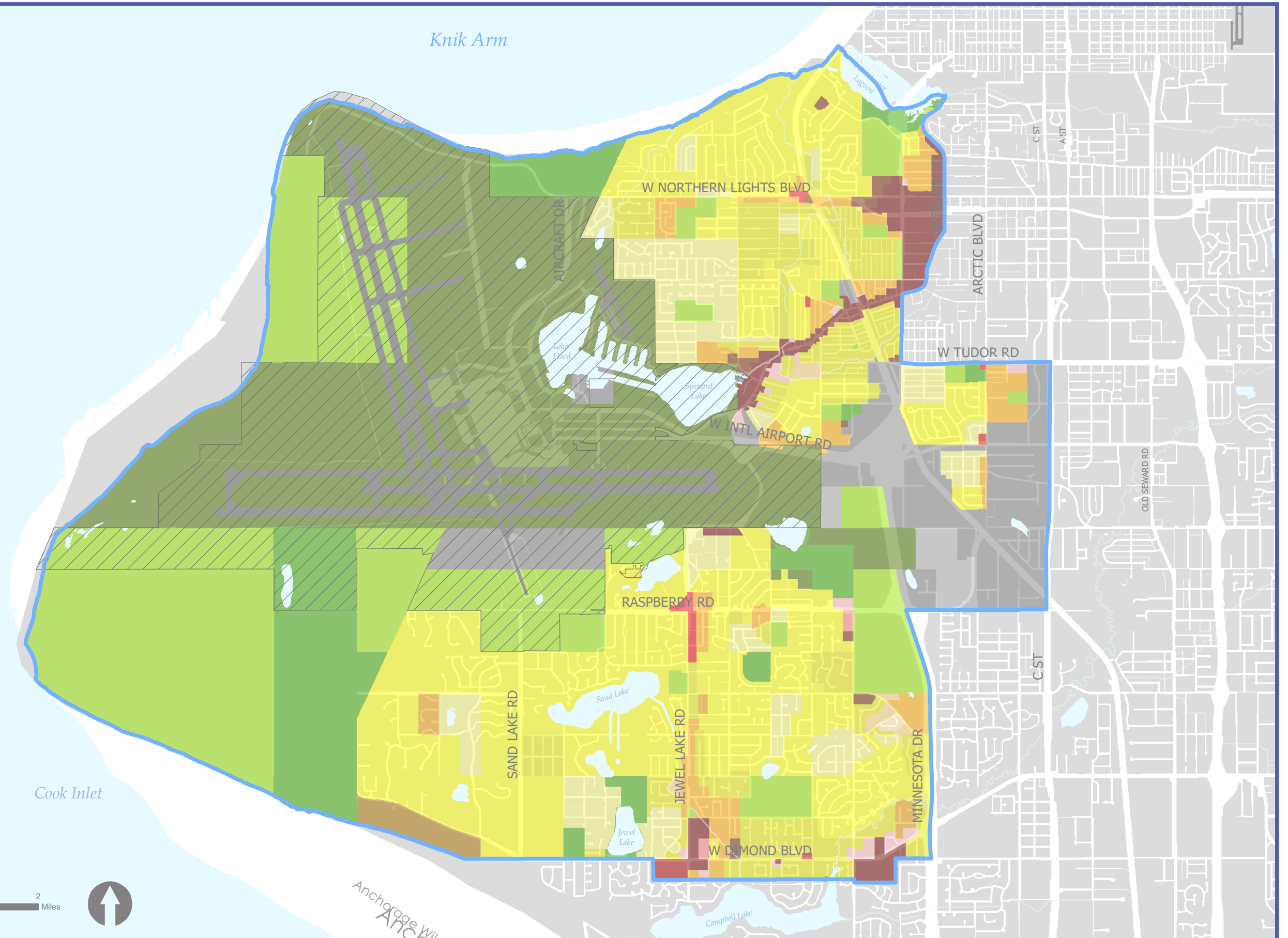
# Zoning Codes

- (R-1; R-1A) Single Family Residential
- (R-2A; R-2D) Two Family Residential
- (R-2M) Multiple Family Residential
- (R-3; R-4) Multiple Family Residential
- (R-5) Rural Residential
- (R-6) Suburban Residential
- (R-O) Residential Office
- (I-1) Light Industrial
- (I-2) Heavy Industrial
- (B-1A) Local and Neighborhood Business
- (B-1B) Community Business
- (B-3) General Business
- (PLI) Public Lands & Institutions
- (PLI-p) Public Lands & Institutions--Park
- (T) Transition

- West Anchorage Planning Area Boundary
- TSAIA Property

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Source: Municipality of Anchorage



A summary of zoning district acreage is found in Table C-3; the percentage of zoning type is displayed for the West Anchorage area, as well as for the Bowl.

**Table C-3. Zoning District Acreage in West Anchorage**

	<b>West Anchorage (acres)</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>	<b>Anchorage Bowl (acres)</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Residential ( R )	5,039	37%	37,740	11%
Commercial ( B )	356	3%	3,285	1%
Industrial ( I )	793	6%	4,868	1%
Transition ( T ) Non-airport	392	3%	174,402	53%
Airport Property				
Air Transportation Related	4,607	33%	3,320	1%
Roadways/ROW and Tidal/Water	918	7%	N/A	
Public Lands ( PLI + PLI-p )				
Institutions ( PLI )	1,862	13%	105,826	32%
Parks/Open Space ( PLI-p ) <sup>a</sup>	767	6%	3,762	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,817</b>		<b>329,884</b>	
Source: MOA				
<sup>a</sup> Some PLI lands are used as parks so the total Parks/Open Space value appears underestimated.				

Descriptions of zoning districts are summarized in Table C-4. The spatial distribution of zoning districts is found in Figure C-3.

**Table C-4. Existing Zoning Districts in West Anchorage**

	<b>Zoning District</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Max # of residential units allowed per lot</b>	<b>Intent of this zoning designation</b>
<b>Residential</b>	R-1	Single Family Residential	1	Low density urban and suburban
	R-1A	Single Family Residential	1	Low density urban and suburban (larger lot size)
	R-2A	Two Family Residential	1 2	Low density urban and suburban (larger lot size)
	R-2D	Two Family Residential	1-2	Low density urban and suburban
	R-2M	Multiple Family Residential	8	Medium density urban and suburban
	R-3	Multiple Family Residential	5+	Medium density urban and suburban
	R-4	Multiple Family Residential	11+	Medium to high urban
	R-5	Rural Residential	5+	Low density rural
	R-6	Suburban Residential	5+	Low density rural adjacent to urban and suburban
	R-0	Residential Office	11+	Urban and suburban residential office where commercial may damage established neighborhoods. Residential units are not allowed.
<b>Business</b>	B-1A	Local and Neighborhood Business	1-2 Non Residential	Convenience business uses which serve daily needs of nearby neighborhoods in small, compact areas
	B-1B	Community Business	Multiple Family Non Residential	Consumer-oriented business uses at small, compact sites near intersections
	B-3	General Business	Multiple Family Minimum 12 dwelling units per acre Non Residential	Commercial uses in areas exposed to heavy traffic
<b>Industrial</b>	I-1	Light Industrial	NA	Urban and suburban light manufacturing, processing, storage, wholesale and distribution operations, and limited commercial use. Allows efficient use of land while still attractive and compatible for a variety of uses.
	I-2	Heavy Industrial	NA	Heavy manufacturing, storage, major shipping terminals and other related uses including those allowed in commercial districts.

	Zoning District	Name	Max # of residential units allowed per lot	Intent of this zoning designation
Public Lands	PLI	Public Lands and Institutions	NA	Areas of significant public open space, public or quasi-public institutional uses, and land reserve where specific use is not yet identified. PLI-p denotes park lands.
	T	Transition	NA	Suburban and rural areas that, due to other development, topography or soil, are not developing and are not expected to develop in the near future along definitive land use lines. Permitted uses are intended to be flexible; as development patterns start to emerge, more restrictive zoning classification will be proposed.
Source: MOA				

The 2006 Draft LUPM established two new mixed-use zoning districts in West Anchorage that will appear in the 2010 Adopted Title 21. Their general purpose is to encourage the development of adjacent residential/non-residential uses in existing commercial areas. They can be applied to existing commercial areas to encourage new housing opportunities and compact redevelopment connected by a network of pedestrian and bicycle-friendly streets and sidewalks. They are described briefly in Table C-5.

**Table C-5. New Zoning Districts in West Anchorage**

	Zoning District	Name	Max possible # of residential units	Intent of this zoning designation
Mixed-Use	NMU	Neighborhood Mixed Use	40-45 per acre	Facilitate the development of mixed-use at the neighborhood scale where the commercial uses primarily serve the daily needs of nearby neighborhoods.
	CMU	Community Mixed-Use	40-45 per acre	Facilitate the development of mixed-use at the town center or sub-regional scale. Medium to higher-density housing should be located in and around the district.
Source: MOA, 2009c				

## Airport Zoning

The current MOA Zoning map (Figure C-3) contains a variety of zoning districts within the TSAIA property including: I-1, T, PLI, and PLI-p. There is a need to “allow” air transportation related activities within the airport property, but the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), ADOT&PF, and MOA have different design standards, regulations, and jurisdictions.

At the time of this publication, there is ongoing discussion between MOA Planning Department and TSAIA staff on the formation and provisions of a new airport zoning district. It would be incorporated into *Title 21* and define land uses or permitted activities covering the entire TSAIA property. “Airport overlay districts” are strategies used by other communities to help manage compatible uses *adjacent* to airport property. An overlay applies requirements in combination with the underlying base zoning. A Height



Zoning Overlay District already exists in *Title 21* to limit the height of structures directly adjacent to the airport for safety reasons.

## **Land Ownership**

Land ownership in West Anchorage is a mix of private property, municipal land, State land, and Federal land. The majority of land in private ownership consists of residential, commercial, and industrially zoned tracts of land. Municipally owned parcels consist of public parks such as Kincaid Park and Balto Seppala Park; schools sites; and HLB lands. As shown in Figure C-2, HLB properties comprise some existing park and school lands, and also include vacant lands between Sand Lake and Jewel Lake, a large swath of land surrounding the Minnesota Drive/Raspberry Road interchange, and a parcel between McRae Road and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Spenard.

A large percentage of land in West Anchorage is owned by the State, including TSAIA and the Lake Hood Seaplane Base which together comprise 33% of the planning area. Federal lands are generally limited to Federal facility sites around the airport. Therefore any decisions about land use would require multi-agency negotiations.

## **Recommended Land Uses for West Anchorage**

Having presented a brief description of land use and zoning, as well as some context about how land ownership affects land use, the next section is about recommended land uses for the future.

Figure C-5 displays the western portion of the overall *Draft Anchorage Bowl LUPM* that was produced in 2006, to be adopted after the adoption of the *Title 21* in 2010. It is intended to designate future land uses to help achieve the goals outlined in the *Anchorage 2020*. The *Anchorage Bowl LUPM* process can be tracked here: [http://www.muni.org/PLANNING/Land\\_Use\\_Map\\_PHD.cfm](http://www.muni.org/PLANNING/Land_Use_Map_PHD.cfm)

The *West Anchorage LUPM* that will be produced as a part of this WADP planning process would modify the adopted *Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan LUPM*.

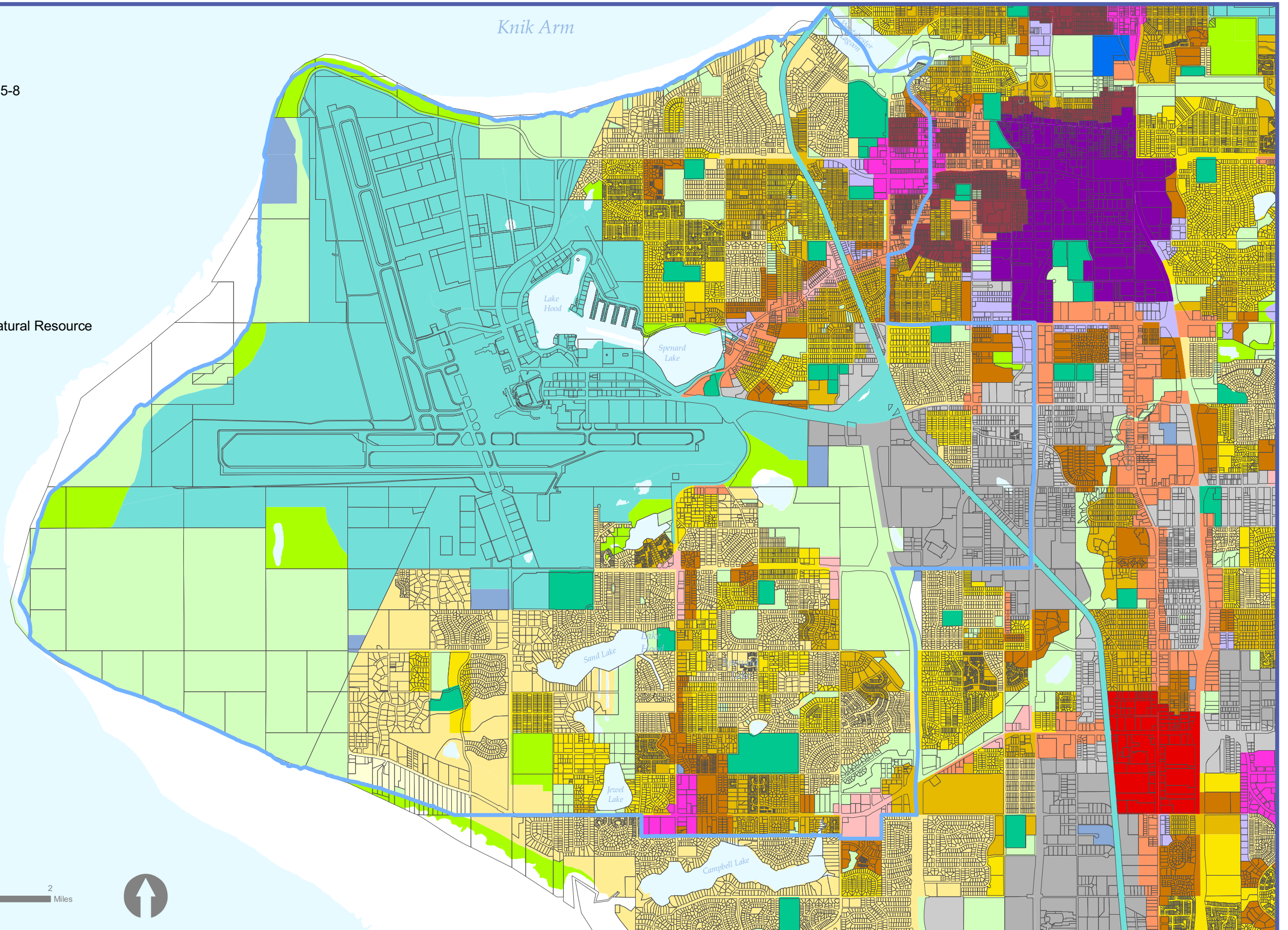
# Land Use Classifications

- Limited Intensity (0-1)
- Low Intensity - Detached Houses (>1-5)
- Low Intensity - Attached and Detached (>5-8)
- Low/Medium Intensity (>8-15)
- Medium Intensity (>15-35 or up to 40)
- City Center Intensity (>35)
- Commercial Corridor
- Office - Low Intensity
- Neighborhood Center
- Community Activity Center
- Regional Commercial Center
- Major City Center
- Industrial / Commerical Reserve
- Industrial / Industrial Reserve
- Parks and Natural Resource
- Other Area that Functions as Park and Natural Resource
- Water Use
- Major Institutional
- Schools and Community Institutional
- Public Utility / Facility
- Major Transportation Facility
- RR South Corridor

- West Anchorage Planning Area Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Source: Municipality of Anchorage



## **Analysis as a part of the Development of the West Anchorage Land Use Plan Map**

### ***Vacant Land Status***

Vacant land in West Anchorage is primarily composed of:

- Privately-owned lots that are not built,
- TSAIA lands reserved for future airport development,
- Open space that is not permanently designated for a future land use,
- Transition lands that are not designated for future use, and
- Any lands unsuitable for development.

Some land is vacant because economic factors have not contributed to its development. Other factors including land suitability or access to infrastructure may have delayed the development of some land.

### ***Development Suitability and Redevelopment Potential***

The land use narrative and map sections of any long range plan address build-out capacity, densities, and locations of future residential development. In order to achieve realistic numbers for these analyses, factors that affect land use and development must be evaluated and included in growth scenarios.

The two most consistent features that impact and modify land use and future development, beyond ongoing market and economic conditions, are *suitability* of vacant land and *potential for redevelopment* on existing developed parcels.

**Development suitability** data available in Anchorage includes: wetlands, floodplains, seismic susceptibility, slope, and soils. Evaluations and mapping of these characteristics on vacant land provides a detailed picture of where to expect future development and where lands may remain vacant.

**Redevelopment potential** is an assessment of a parcel's existing structure(s) value and condition against the site's tax valuation (or ability to generate revenue). The general theory is that for sites where the structure is less than 50% of the parcel's overall value, the presumption is that that lot is a strong candidate for new development at some time in the future, and possibly at a higher density.

Both types of evaluations contribute to a planning area's long-range capacity to accommodate future growth.

### ***Build-out Capacity***

An essential planning tool associated with long range plans is a build-out capacity evaluation. This exercise matches population projections for the planning focus (in this case thru 2030) with the projected growth and development of residential parcels. If the existing housing supply coupled with vacant land build-out under current zoning cannot accommodate the projected population for 2030, a long-range plan would present an updated land use map with appropriate changes to meet future growth

demands. These land use adjustments include residential density updates as well as complete changes of land use at particular locations to better meet projections and reflect long-term land use policy changes. Build-out analyses assess and reflect development suitability and redevelopment potential of previously developed parcels.

The WADP will start with the 2006 LUPM as a baseline to accommodate future population growth (as described in Chapter B Demographics, Economics, and Housing). Initially, a zoning and housing inventory was be conducted to determine the total number of housing units in West Anchorage and the number of housing units that would be available if “full build-out” of today's. A simplified illustration of this work is shown in Table C-6.

**Table C-6. Housing Units in West Anchorage**

<b>Total # units</b>	<b>Current # housing units</b>	<b># additional units at full build-out<sup>a</sup> (under current conditions)</b>
Residential		
Single Family	2,153	485
Two Family	373	437
Multi Family <sup>b</sup>	318	220
Commercial	74	-
Industrial	11	-
Institutional	15	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17,691</b>	<b>1,142</b>
Source: MOA		
<sup>a</sup> The number of potential new residential units if parcels build-out to their allowed density according to current zoning.		
<sup>b</sup> Multi-family designation includes three or more units and mobile home parks.		

Anchorage 2020 estimated an overall housing capacity deficit in the Bowl to meet projected demand. In order to achieve the policies described in Anchorage 2020, the 2006 LUPM land capacity analysis determined there was a residential land deficit for the Northwest subarea in and around the city's major employment centers. The central subarea was within range to accommodate residential growth, while northeast had an estimated surplus of residential land.