5. NEIGHBORHOOD CORE IMPROVEMENTS



A. INTRODUCTION

A series of alternative development scenarios illustrates opportunities for redevelopment that could occur in the center of the Government Hill neighborhood. These scenarios assume that an organization would be established that could negotiate with property owners to assemble lands in ways that would improve efficiency for redevelopment.

Each scenario illustrates the interaction of some key variables. These include the ways in which streets and intersections are constructed, the mix of uses that could result, and the character of the spaces created through redevelopment.

The scenarios in this chapter are developed as preliminary planning concepts. It is not anticipated that any specific redevelopment would actually follow any one of these scenarios

exactly. Instead, they illustrate how some general principles could be combined to yield an enhanced neighborhood center. In many cases, ideas from several of these scenarios could be combined and slightly reconfigured.

The intent is to demonstrate a degree of flexibility in implementation. In order to be successful, the plan must retain a sufficient degree of flexibility in order to respond to varying conditions over time.

While these are "big ideas," they each have the ability to be phased to varying degrees. Some require a more substantial investment in infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, parks) than others. Some have a strong first-phase opportunity, in which a "sense of place" can be established in an initial phase. Others have a stronger final phase when more substantial buildout occurs.







Government Hill residences



Government Hill neighborhood street in winter



Apartment complex on Government Hill

This text summarizes the key features of each scenario, with the commentary organized into a series of important variables related to the character of development, specific systems improvements that are conceived and the phasing implications.

In each of the scenarios, building footprints and parking layouts are suggested that illustrate the general intent of the scenario. It is understood, however, that specific building shapes, sizes and uses would change as the plan is implemented. In the illustrative plans, buildings are assigned numbers, which is to facilitate market testing and general discussions.

Phasing concepts are shown in simple bubble diagrams overlaid on the alternative scenarios. These reflect preliminary ideas about how parcels may be assembled and streets improved.

KAC Project Considerations



KAC 35% Design Schematic

The proposed Knik Arm Crossing project would cause demolition of some existing commercial buildings along the western edge of the neighborhood center. This will result in a reduction in the amount of land that is available for redevelopment for civic, commercial, and higher density residential uses in the

neighborhood center. And, while the proposed cut-and-cover would, when completed, provide space for parking that could support commercial uses, the abutting parcels will be of sizes and shapes that will be difficult to generate enough square footage to justify development.

Redevelopment of land along these edges also would be dependent upon the phasing of the cut-and-cover project, for timing of their redevelopment. This could discourage short- and mid-term investment in these areas. For example, businesses that may be dislocated because of the cut-and-cover project may not find suitable places in the remaining portions of the neighborhood center and may be more inclined to move elsewhere in the region.

The reduction in parcels with appropriate redevelopment characteristics also could result in an overall net loss of businesses in the area, particularly those that serve the neighborhood itself. This could affect the viability of the historically significant residential portions of the neighborhood, in terms of sustaining them as attractive areas for homeowners to invest and maintain their properties.

For these reasons, the redevelopment scenarios that are presented in this neighborhood plan seek to create new parcel configurations that can provide more efficient use of land. They also propose expanding the mixed-use area to the east, in order to establish some areas that can redevelop soon and not be directly impacted by, or delayed by, the potential cutand-cover project. This would help to mitigate the potential impacts on investment and redevelopment opportunities that may result from the bridge project.

A key factor in planning for the revitalization of the neighborhood center is the future of the land identified as the "cut-and-cover" area in the proposed KAC project. The KAC 35% design schematic provides a general location for this feature, with details to be developed later. Each of the alternative scenarios includes diagrammatic indications of a range of improvements that could occur in that location. These features are conceived such that they could be supported on a tunnel cover, or as elements that could be constructued at grade if no tunnel occurs. The concepts focus on amenities tha would serve the public in general, and that would also support more intensive uses on abutting lands. As such, this area would serve as a central gathering spot for the community and connect the east and west sides of the neighborhood. These amenities are projected to occur at any time during the implementation of an enhanced neighborhood center. That is, early development in other parts of the neighborhood center is not directly dependent upon construction scheduling in this area.



Example street view



Example scenario sketch



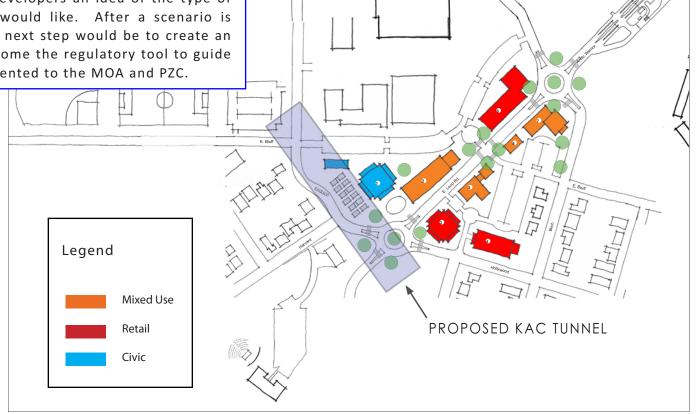
Example birds eye view of proposed neighborhood center

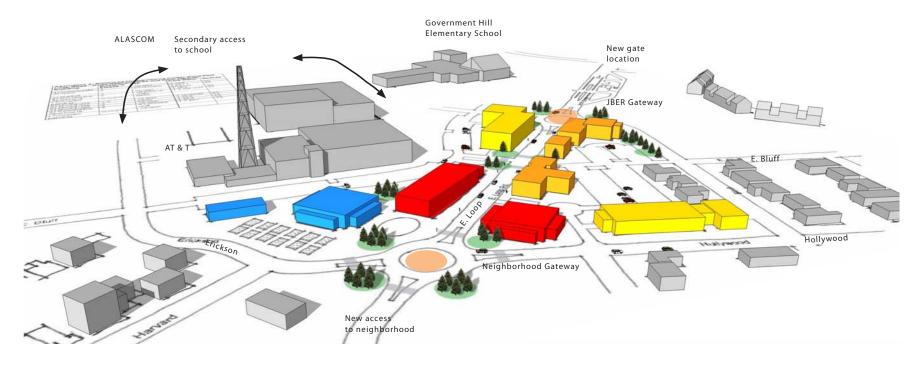
B. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS CREATING TWO BLOCKS OF MAIN STREET

The Scenarios in the plan are meant to present options for redevelopment of the commercial core. They reflect the vision set forth by the community during a series of public workshops. They are a visual representation of the type of development the community will actively be engaged in promoting. Until a specific scenario is endorsed by the Government Hill community, the scenarios will not have a regulatory effect per se, but they can serve to give interested developers an idea of the type of development the community would like. After a scenario is chosen by the community, the next step would be to create an overlay district that would become the regulatory tool to guide development applications presented to the MOA and PZC.

SCENARIO 1

This scenario yields a very strong two-block "main street" when completed. It requires cooperation from KAC, ADOT&PF, with agreements from JBER from the outset. One advantage is that the community hall could be a part of the lid construction.





A. CONCEPT

- A solid, two-block-long "Main Street" along E. Loop Road
- Secondary mixed-use street along Hollywood Drive
- "Prime intersection address" at E. Loop Road and Hollywood Drive/Erickson Street
- Additional "key intersection" mid-block along E. Loop Road at Bluff Drive
- Landscaped gateway entry experience along Erickson Street at
 E. Loop Road and Harvard Avenue with roundabout

B. KEY FEATURES

Parcels

- Two large parcels facing E. Loop Road
- Two medium-size parcels, facing E. Loop Road at entry to JBER

Intersections

- Redesign intersection at E. Loop Road and Erickson Street/ Hollywood Drive (in conjunction with street realignment), possibly with a roundabout
- Redesign intersection of Arctic Warrior and E. Bluff Drives
- Extension of Birch Street connects to Arctic Warrior Drive and continues to the school (with a second roundabout)

Streets

- Realignment of E. Loop Road in the commercial core
- Realign Harvard Avenue to connect with E. Bluff Drive
- Parallel flow from commercial center to JBER entry on two-way streets
- Improved access to the school (with direct road off of Harvard Avenue/E. Bluff Drive)
- Easy east-west flow along Harvard to Hollywood Drive
- Also relatively easy east-west flow along E. Bluff Drive

Parking

- Major parking reservoirs along E. Bluff Drive (less dependent upon KAC outcome)
- Between E. Loop Road and Birch Street; potential festival lot (also less dependent upon KAC outcome)
- On street

Pedestrian systems

- Improved sidewalks in neighborhood center
- Major crossing at E. Bluff Drive and E. Loop Road.
- Crossings set back from roundabout along E. Loop Road.
- Improved sidewalk/trail access to school

C. PHASING CONSIDERATIONS

This concept requires major street revisions, and later portions of the redevelopment are dependent upon certainty of KAC.

General Development Phasing

Phase 1: Development of Buildings 2, 3, 4, and 5

Phase 2: Buildings 1, 6, 7, and 8

Relationship to KAC

- Concept probably requires KAC to merit intersection improvements
- Uncertainty about KAC could delay development of Buildings 1,
 2, and 3

Relationship to JBER

Phase 1a: Agreement for intersection improvements at Arctic Warrior Drive and E. Bluff Drive

Phase 2: Agreement for additional land for Buildings 6, 7, and 8, with related parking



Scenario 1 Plan with Phasing Detail

Scenario 1 Viewpoints "Two Blocks of Main Street"





View of community gardens along Erickson Street



View looking north along Loop Road

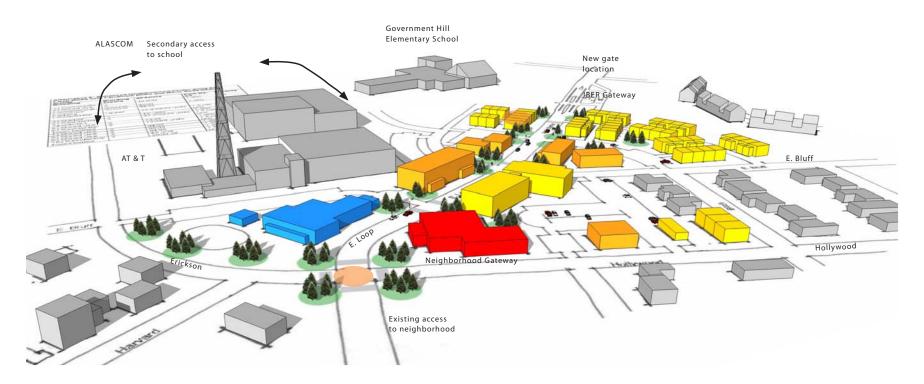
TWO BLOCKS OF MAIN STREET WITH MINIMAL STREET REALIGNMENT

The Scenarios in the plan are meant to present options for redevelopment of the commercial core. They reflect the vision set forth by the community during a series of public workshops. They are a visual representation of the type of development the community will actively be engaged in promoting. Until a specific scenario is endorsed by the Government Hill community, the scenarios will not have a regulatory effect per se, but they can serve to give interested developers an idea of the type of development the community would like. After a scenario is chosen by the community, the next step would be to create an overlay district that would become the regulatory tool to guide development applications presented to the MOA and PZC.

SCENARIO 2

This scenario yields a very strong two-block "Main Street" and a secondary commercial street (Hollywood) when completed. It can be phased while waiting for KAC outcome. As such, the initial phase would be modest but could be strengthened if an agreement with JBER is timely. One advantage is that the community hall could be a part of the KAC lid construction.





A. CONCEPT

- A solid, two-block long "Main Street" along E. Loop Road
- Secondary mixed-use street along Hollywood Drive
- "Prime intersection address" at E. Loop Road and E. Bluff Drive
- Additional "key intersection" mid-block along E. Loop Road
- Landscaped gateway entry experience along Erickson Street at
 E. Loop Road and Hollywood Drive

B. KEY FEATURES

Parcels

- Two large parcels, facing E. Loop Road
- Two medium-sized parcels, facing E. Loop Road at entry to JBER, plus additional parcels with residential development

Intersections

- Redesign intersection at E. Loop Road and Erickson Street/ Hollywood Drive
- Redesign intersection of Arctic Warrior and E. Bluff Drives

Streets

- Realignment of E. Loop Road in the commercial core
- Extension of Birch Street connects to Arctic Warrior Drive and continues to the school
- A later new residential street parallels the curve of the extended Birch Street
- Improved access to the school
- Easy east-west flow along Harvard Avenue to Hollywood Drive
- Also relatively easy east-west flow along E. Bluff Drive

Parking

- Major parking reservoirs along E. Bluff Drive (less dependent upon KAC outcome)
- Between E. Loop Road and Birch Street (also less dependent upon KAC outcome)
- On street

Pedestrian systems

- Improved sidewalks in neighborhood center
- Major crossing at E. Bluff Drive and E. Loop Road
- Improved sidewalk/trail access to school

C. PHASING CONSIDERATIONS

General Development Phasing

Phase 1: Development of Buildings 2, 3, 4, and 5

Phase 2: Buildings 7, 8, and 9

Phase 3: Building 1

Phase 4: Residential edge next to JBER

Relationship to KAC

Uncertainty about KAC could delay development of Building 1

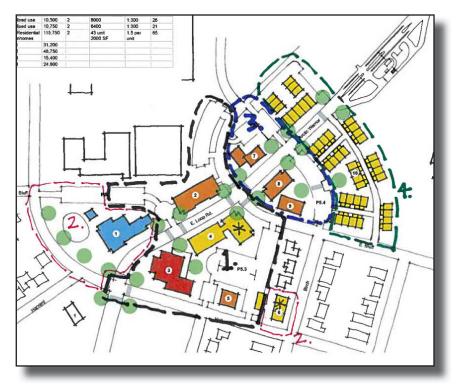
Relationship to JBER

Phase 1: Agreement for minor intersection improvement at E. Bluff Drive and E. Loop Road

Phase 2: Agreement for additional land for buildings 7, 8, and 9 with related parking and related street

Phase 3: None

Phase 4: Agreement for additional land for housing



Scenario 2 with Phasing Detail

Scenario 2 Viewpoints "Two Blocks of Main Street with Minimal Street Realignments"





View looking north from intersection of Erickson Street and Loop Road



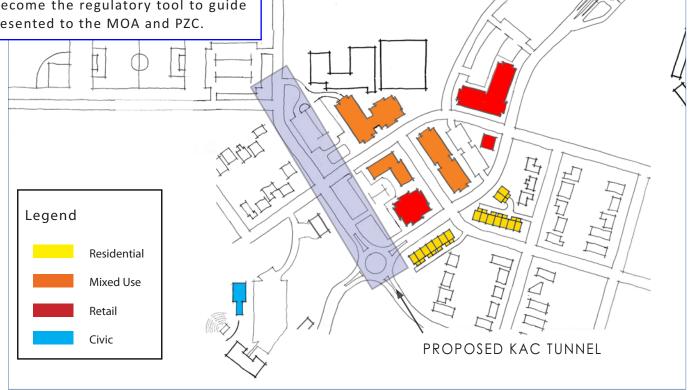
View looking south along Loop Road

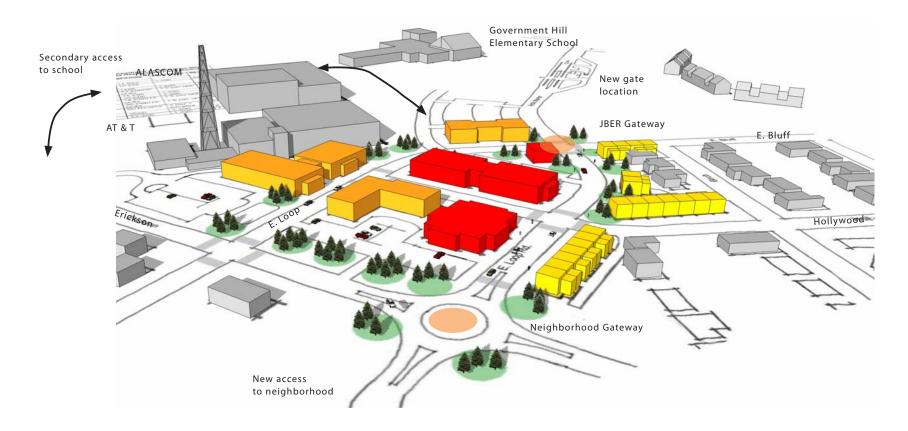
CREATING A VILLAGE CENTER

The Scenarios in the plan are meant to present options for redevelopment of the commercial core. They reflect the vision set forth by the community during a series of public workshops. They are a visual representation of the type of development the community will actively be engaged in promoting. Until a specific scenario is endorsed by the Government Hill community, the scenarios will not have a regulatory effect per se, but they can serve to give interested developers an idea of the type of development the community would like. After a scenario is chosen by the community, the next step would be to create an overlay district that would become the regulatory tool to guide development applications presented to the MOA and PZC.

SCENARIO 3

This scenario is dependent upon certainty of outcome for KAC and coordination with ADOT&PF and also requires an initial agreement from JBER for at least the road realignment. An initial phase could yield a modest commercial center, but the strength of the concept does not appear until later phases are in place.





A. CONCEPT

- Two key (parallel) neighborhood center streets
- Pedestrian-oriented, "Main Street" feel along Hollywood Drive between Harvard and E. Loop Road
- Secondary mixed-use streets along Harvard Avenue and E. Loop Road
- "Prime intersection address" at E. Loop Road and Hollywood-Drive / Erickson Street
- Additional "key intersection" mid-block along E. Loop Road (at Bluff)
- Landscaped gateway entry experience along Erickson at E. Loop Road and Harvard Avenue

B. KEY FEATURES

Parcels

- Two large parcels, facing E. Loop Road in initial phases
- Additional large (residential) parcel at JBER interface
- Smaller parcels along eastern edge

Intersections

- Redesign intersection at E. Loop Road and Erickson Street (in conjunction with street realignment), possibly with a roundabout
- Redesign intersection of Arctic Warrior Drive and E. Bluff Drive

Streets

- Realignment of E. Loop Road in the commercial core
- Realign Harvard Avenue to connect with E. Bluff Drive
- Parallel flow from commercial center to JBER entry on two-way streets
- Improved access to the school (with direct road off of Harvard Avenue/E. Bluff Drive)
- Easy east-west flow along Harvard Avenue and Hollywood Drive

Parking

- Major parking reservoirs along Erickson Street; potential festival lots (in the potential lid area)
- Along E. Bluff Drive and Arctic Warrior Drive
- On street

Pedestrian systems

- Improved sidewalks in neighborhood center
- Improved crossing at E. Bluff Drive and Arctic Warrior Drive
- Major pedestrian crossing at E. Loop Road and Harvard Avenue, at Hollywood Drive
- Improved sidewalk/trail access to school

C. PHASING CONSIDERATIONS

This concept requires major street revisions, and later portions of redevelopment are dependent upon certainty of KAC.

General Development Phasing

- Phase 1: Development of Buildings 6, 7 and 8
- Phase 2: Major mixed use development of Buildings 1, 2 and 3 (abutting lid area)
- Phase 3: Residential development along the eastern edge of the neighborhood center



Scenario 3 with Phasing Detail

Relationship to KAC

- Concept works with, or without, the tunnel
- Uncertainty about KAC could delay development of Buildings 1, 2 and 3

Relationship to JBER

- Phase 1a: Agreement for intersection improvements at Arctic Warrior Drive and E. Bluff Road
- Phase 1b: Agreement for additional land for Building 8 and related parking
- Phase 2: None (focus is on western edge of neighborhood center)
- Phase 3: None (focus is on eastern edge of the center)

Scenario 3 Viewpoints "Village Center"





View looking west along the new Main Street



View looking north on new north - south street



View looking north from intersection of Erickson Street and Loop Road

URBAN DESIGN POLICIES

The illustrations in this chapter reflect urban design policies present in Anchorage 2020-Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan (Anchorage 2020), as well as design policies specific to the Government Hill neighborhood. The overarching design policies from Anchorage 2020 were used to guide the development of the more specific neighborhood design policies presented in

this plan.

The intent is to demonstrate that the policies specific to the Government Hill Neighborhood Plan are a reflection of not only recent public planning efforts related to the GHNP, but also encompass a much broader planning base spanning over a decade of citywide planning efforts.

C. ANCHORAGE 2020 URBAN DESIGN POLICIES

POLICY #	ANCHORAGE 2020 DESIGN POLICIES	
41	Land use regulations shall include new design requirements that are responsive to Anchorage's climate and natural setting.	
42	Northern city design concepts shall guide the design of all public facility projects, including parks and roads.	
43	Plans for major commercial, institutional, and industrial developments, including large retail establishments, are subject to site plan review.	
44	Design and build public improvements for long-term use.	
45	Connect local activity centers, such as neighborhood schools and community centers with parks, sports fields, greenbelts, and trails, where feasible.	
46	The unique appeal of individual residential neighborhoods shall be protected and enhanced in accordance with applicable goals, policies, and strategies.	
47	Provide distinctive public landmarks and other public places in neighborhoods.	

ANCHORAGE 2020 URBAN DESIGN POLICIES, CONTINUED

POLICY #	ANCHORAGE 2020 DESIGN POLICIES		
48	Subdivision plats and site development plans shall be designed to enhance or preserve scenic views and other significant natural features in accordance with applicable goals, policies, and strategies.		
49	Site plan layout and building design for new development shall consider the character of adjacent development. The Municipality may require layouts and designs to incorporate the functional and aesthetic character of adjacent development.		
50	Healthy, mature trees and forested areas shall be retained as much as possible.		
51	The Municipality shall define Anchorage's historic buildings and sites and develop a conservation strategy.		
52	Site and design residential development to enhance the residential streetscape and diminish the prominence of garages and paved parking areas.		
53	Design, construct, and maintain roads to retain or enhance scenic views and improve the general appearance of the road character.		
54	Design and construct neighborhood roads and walkways to ensure safe pedestrian movement and neighborhood connectivity, and to discourage high-speed, cut-through traffic.		
55	Provide pedestrian and trail connections within and between residential subdivisions in new plats, including replats.		

D. URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

DESIGN ELEMENT	POLICY #	GHNP POLICY	OPTIONAL DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS (PRIORITY & ADVISORY)	
for review, while adv	* Priority design recommendations would be consistently recommended by the Planning Division on projects that come to the CDD for review, while advisory design recommendations, although highly desired by the community, would be optional for the project. Project reviews will take into consideration the uniqueness of each development when making design recommendations.			
WINTER CITY DESIGN	UD-1	Promote design specific to accommodating all seasonal activities to promote contact with nature, year-round usability, user participation, cultural continuity, and creation of comfortable micro-climate conditions.	 Priority Wide sidewalks to include snow storage and accommodate year-round walking/biking. Advisory Covered walkways Arcades on building frontages Heated sidewalks in neighborhood square 	
COMPLETE STREETS	UD-2	Streets in Government Hill should be designed as "complete streets" to serve all modes of transportation equally and promote an active pedestrian-oriented environment.	-	
STREETSCAPE DESIGN	U D - 3	Design the streetscape in Government Hill's Neighborhood Center to encourage pedestrian activity and establish a distinct identity for Government Hill.	 Priority Crosswalks are slightly raised for drainage away from walking surface Distinctive striping or paving patterns Use of snow-tolerant vegetation Berms and vegetation to direct snow drifts away from building entrances. Sidewalks and pedestrian walkways that are separated from roadways Provide snow storage areas Advisory Snow storage areas that double as planter spaces during summer months 	

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES, CONTINUED

DESIGN ELEMENT	POLICY #	GHNP POLICY	OPTIONAL DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS (PRIORITY & ADVISORY) Priority = Recommended Advisory = Not mandatory
STREETSCAPE DESIGN	U D - 4	Reduce negative impacts on the neighborhood's livability and redevelopment potential from proposed transportation projects.	 Phasing transportation projects and/or improvements Use appropriate design and streetscape amenities Regularly maintain roads Involve the community in pre-design meetings including the context sensitive design phase
PUBLIC ART & HERITAGE CELEBRATION	U D - 5	Incorporate public art in outdoor use areas, at building entrances, and in parks. Include art in heritage interpretation schemes as well, and provide a series of historical markers to convey the history of Government Hill.	 Advisory Provide a focal point in public spaces (Examples include public art, water feature or distinctive plant arrangement) Include historic interpretive themes in art installations Include historical artifacts in heritage interpretation. Link interpretive markers anong public trails, in parks and streetscapes
SITE DESIGN	U D-6	Locate buildings to define the street wall along a block and to frame outdoor use areas. Locate parking to the side and the rear and link them internally. Clearly define pedestrian ways through the site.	landscaped material.

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES, CONTINUED

DESIGN ELEMENT	POLICY #	GHNP POLICY	OOPTIONAL DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS (PRIORITY & ADVISORY) Priority = Recommended Advisory = Not mandatory
PEDESTRIAN SYSTEMS	U D-7	Plan sidewalks, trails and pathways as an integrated circulation system for pedestrians. Include connections through mixed-use developments as well as along public realm routes.	 Provide a pedestrian link through mixed-use developments Provide sheltered connections between buildings Provide an arcade along a primary facade
PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN	UD-8	Any outdoorspace in the Neighborhood Center should be designed to be attractive year-round and to invite a diverse range of users.	Priority Interconnect public spaces Provide a focal point Design for a mix of users (diverse ages and interests) Design for year-round use
OUTDOOR SPACE DESIGN	U D-9		Advisory • Maximize solar access with building orientation • Incorporate year round street furniture
BUILDING ORIENTATION UD-10		Design buildings to orient to the street and define public spaces. Position buildings to frame outdoor spaces and orient to the sun. Establish a pedestrian-friendly street edge by providing sheltering canopies and arcades.	 Orient buildings to the street Provide a pedestrian friendly street edge

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES, CONTINUED

DESIGN ELEMENT	POLICY #	GHNP POLICY	OPTIONAL DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS (PRIORITY & ADVISORY) Priority = Recommended Advisory = Not mandatory
BUILDING ENTRY TRANSITIONS	UD-11	Orient an entrance to the street and other pedestrian way. Provide a sheltered transitional space at a building entrance.	Provide an air lock entry
BUILDING MATERIALS	UD-12	Use building materials that have a proven durability for the Anchorage climate and that also convey a sense of human scale. Preferred materals are concrete, brick, architectural block, stucco, wood, and fiber-cementous composite siding.	 Advisory Use brick to convey a traditional sense of scale Use concrete that is detailed to proved visual interest Use warm colors for year-round appeal Use fiber-cementous lap siding
CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN	UD-13	The Government Hill neighborhood will work with the Port of Anchorage to establish ways that the neighborhood center design and plans for redevelopment in the area can be designed to help strengthen Port boundaries and provide greater homeland security.	 Include Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design in consideration of development projects for Government Hill

E. KAC SPECIFIC DESIGN POLICIES

The design of the proposed KAC cut-and-cover, access roads, and associate project issues such as access into and out of the neighborhood, frontage streets, disruptions to the neighborhood during construction, noise, visual impacts, pollution, and land use impacts shall meet all applicable requirements and standards associated with municipal, federal, and state regulations outlined in the following documents:

Municipal Policies

- 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, 2012
- Official Streets & Highways Plan (OSHP), 2005
- Anchorage 2020 -- Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan, 2001
- Anchorage Bicycle Plan, 2010
- Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreational Facility Plan, 2006
- Design Criteria Manual (DCM), 2008
- Anchorage Pedestrian Plan, 2007

State and Federal Policies

- A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 6th Edition (AASHTO) 2011
- Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) FHWA 2009
- Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (AASHTO) 2011
- Alaska DOT&PF Preconstruction Manual (PCM) 2005
- Alaska Traffic Manual (ATM) ADOT&PF 2005
- Roadside Design Guide (AASHTO) 2006

In addition, the specific KAC Design Policies on the following page shall be included in the plan as elements to help mitigate KAC impacts on the neighborhood.

F. KAC SPECIFIC DESIGN PRINCIPLES

ISSUE	PRINCIPLE #	DESIGN PRINCIPLE
CIRCULATION	KACDP-1	Create and maintain a safe, convenient continuity of circulation between east and west sides of the neighborhood.
WINTER CITY DESIGN	KACDP-2	Create landscaping that serves as a signature element (using Winter City design principles.)
PUBLIC SPACE	KACDP-3	Create public park space.
PARKING LOTS	KACDP-4	Create landscaped parking lots that will serve adjoining uses.
COMMUNITY SPACE	KACDP-5	Include space for a recreational facility, such as an ice rink, and a community facility. Include a space for a community garden.
KAC INFRASTRUCTURE	KACDP-6	Ensure that site work (such as retaining walls, noise walls and planters) is compatible in design and materials with the historic character of the neighborhood.
KAC CUT-AND- COVER	KACDP-7	 a) Mazimizing the length of the lid should be considered in the design of the cut-and-cover in order to minimize impact of bridge traffic through the neighborhood. b) The lid of the tunnel should be an amenity for the community and should serve as a compatible transition from eastern to western areas of residential neighborhood. c) The lid should help reduce noise, exhaust fumes, and visual impacts resulting from KAC traffic. d) The lid should not divide the park. e) The lid design should include consideration of extending under Sunset Park to maintain the viability and use of this valued park community. f) The lid should be a visual asset, helping to connect the neighborhoods and providing civic uses. g) If the KAC tunnel is constructed, it should be designed to allow construction of amenities and community spaces to be feasible on its surface after completion.