Chapter 2. Land Use

Overview

The Hillside District encompasses three distinct realms: a remarkable natural environment extending from tidal marshes to alpine tundra; a diverse residential community with over 20,000 people located within Alaska's largest metropolitan area; and a much loved outdoor recreation destination serving many thousands of resident and visiting hikers, bikers, skiers, berry pickers, and sightseers. Current Hillside zoning allows the area to grow from 8,500 units today to almost 14,000 units in the future, a potential increase of more than 5,000 units, or an additional 10,000-15,000 people.

Maintaining the environmental, residential, and recreational quality of the Hillside while accommodating this growth will not happen without new approaches to development. Key land use strategies to address this challenge include:

1. For the most part, retain the status quo in land use designations.
2. Develop and utilize a system of "built/green infrastructure" to encourage more efficient and effective connectivity of stream corridors, roads, trails, and natural drainage systems. Part of this strategy is better up-front identification of these features at the early stages of the subdivision process.
3. Use new processes for residential development to provide more flexibility in lot layout, reduce the impacts of anticipated growth, and protect the Hillside's rural character and natural environment; in particular, encourage the increased use of Hillside Conservation Subdivisions.
4. Establish new development standards for particularly sensitive environmental and visually prominent areas, specifically steep slopes, higher elevation areas, and ridgelines.

The role of community planning and land use planning is to take into account current issues and projected growth in order to plan future development, anticipate and prevent adverse impacts, and to enhance the quality of Hillside life. Growth will occur with or without the Hillside District Plan. The policies agreed upon through this process will shape and guide the character of that growth, ultimately helping to define what kind of community this area will be for decades to come.

Context: Planning Issues Summary

New residential development in the lower Hillside, on approximately 8,500-square-foot lots served by public water and sewer. This type of housing meets a demand for growth in Anchorage. However, the style and density is very different than much of the rest of the Hillside District.

Trees have a significant impact on neighborhood character. These photos show two areas of the same subdivision. Where even a limited number of original trees were kept (lower photo), the character of the neighborhood is different from the area where all vegetation was removed.

Diversity and Size

As described in the previous chapter (Chapter 1. Introduction), the Hillside is far from homogenous. It ranges from areas served by public water and sewer with townhouses and small-lot, single-family developments, to traditional low-density suburban development, to large-lot, rural residential areas, and at higher elevations, vacant wild land. The Hillside also contains commercial uses and opportunities for expanded neighborhood commercial. The Hillside is also bigger than many people realize: the area is roughly seven miles by five miles, a total of about thirty square miles. Plan policies need to reflect this diversity.

Quantity of New Growth

The Introduction chapter describes the existing pattern of development on the Hillside and the potential for future development. This plan takes a supply-side approach to the predictions of future Hillside growth. The plan presumes that the ultimate amount of growth on the Hillside will be governed by the supply of private land in the area, which is primarily located in the southeast Hillside. This area poses the greatest challenges to continued development due to its location and physical characteristics. Variations in the housing market will determine the rate at which build-out occurs. As noted above, the Hillside District is currently zoned to allow development of an additional 5,000 dwelling units.

Options for Water and Wastewater

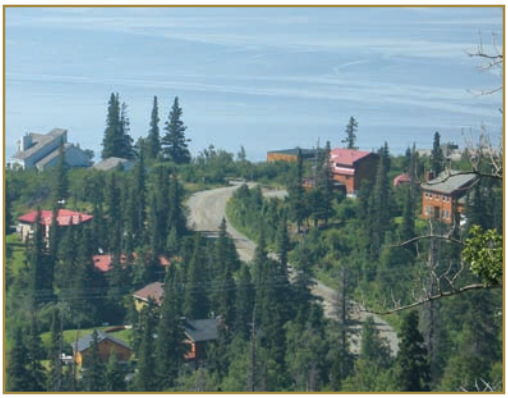
Hillside residents have generally expressed strong support for maintaining the viability of on-site well and septic systems across the district. There are, however, a few particular areas where these systems have performance problems. The Water and Wastewater Chapter of this plan describes this issue in detail, and recommends strategies to maintain Hillside water quality and address problem areas. The possibility of extending the maximum perimeter of public sewerage and allowing increased residential densities in the Furrow Creek watershed was in part a response to poor soils that create performance issues for traditional septic systems in portions of this area.

Environmental Quality

The land use pattern on the Hillside is largely established. Almost all the land is privately held and used for residential purposes. Most tracts are already subdivided into individual homesites. The most common zoning is for 1.25-acre residential lots. Most Hillside parcels have already been built upon. Options to protect natural resources, habitat, views, and other open space values are therefore somewhat limited, and rest largely with individual private property owners. In response to this situation, future development on the Hillside will be guided by built/green infrastructure, the use of conservation subdivisions, and new development standards.

Development Standards and the Development Review Process

Public comment has emphasized the need to improve the development review, approval, and enforcement process, the process that ultimately determines the character of Hillside development. New policies and standards are only as effective as their enforcement. The ongoing process to update Title 21, Anchorage's municipal land use ordinance, and recent updates to the Municipality's Design Criteria Manual have led to substantial improvements in development standards and procedures. The enforcement process is also much improved over what it was in decades past. Further improvements are possible, including improved Hillside-specific development standards and expanded requirements for submittal materials.



Two neighborhoods with similar sized lots (Paradise Valley and Prominence Pointe) display very different characters. Differences between the two are explained by the different ages of the subdivisions, as well as different approaches to grading, retention of natural vegetation, house size, and the fact that Paradise Valley is only 50 percent developed, whereas Prominence Pointe is largely built-out.

Goal and Policy Summary

GOAL 1. Location and Intensity of Development Guide the amount and location of future development while maintaining the quality and diversity of the Hillside District as a place to live, ranging from low-density rural areas, to single-family suburban neighborhoods, to areas with duplexes and multi-family housing.	
Primary Policy	**Implementation**
Hillside as a Whole	
1-A. Encourage a greater proportion of future Hillside growth to occur in the lower Hillside, in areas located closer to existing services and infrastructure; to a limited degree reduce the amount of future development in the southeast Hillside.	HDP Policies 1-B and 1-E.
Southeast Hillside Residential	
1-B. Maintain policies for the amount of development as adopted under current land use designations. Shift the current boundary of the Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage in the Upper Potter Valley area west to Greece Drive, south of England Avenue. *(See HDP Maps 2.2 and 5.7.)*	Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage boundary changed with adoption of the Hillside District Plan.
Central Hillside Residential	
1-C. Maintain the same land use designations and zoning in this area as were established prior to the beginning of this plan.	No action required.
Lower Hillside Residential	
1-D. Retain the current land use designation for the Furrow Creek area. Conduct a planning study to determine the future need and location of a sewer trunk as backbone infrastructure required based on land use patterns and development potential, evaluation of the data resulting from HDP recommendations and programs, soils, topographical conditions, lot sizes, failed septic systems and groundwater nitrate levels to determine the appropriate sewer service area boundary and cost feasibility.	MOA Planning Department, Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU).
Land Use Plan Map	
1-E. Adopt the official Land Use Plan Map for the Hillside, which provides greater specificity than the *Anchorage 2020* Land Use Concept Plan and replaces the 1982 Generalized Land Use Plan.	The Hillside Land Use Plan Map will be incorporated into the Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map to be adopted in 2011.

GOAL 2. Character of Development Guide the character of development of individual properties, homesites and subdivisions to help maintain assets such as quiet, trees and other natural vegetation, natural drainage systems, wildlife habitat, good views, access to open space, access to clean water, and dark night skies.	
Primary Policy	**Implementation**
2-A. Establish new standards for development, addressing drainage, grading, and retention of vegetation, to apply in the upper elevation and steeply sloping areas of the Hillside.	Objectives are established by the Hillside District Plan; codification by MOA through AMC Title 21, other actions.
2-B. Revise the current subdivision approval process to require submittal and approval of site environmental information at the pre-application meeting.	Objective established by the Hillside District Plan; MOA Planning Department.
2-C. Establish a new "Hillside Conservation Subdivision" ordinance allowing flexibility in subdivision layout to better protect environmental and neighborhood character.	Objective established by the Hillside District Plan;codification by MOA through AMC Title 21.

GOAL 3. Infrastructure and Efficient Growth Patterns Plan land use, transportation infrastructure and other infrastructure to serve anticipated growth to be efficient in terms of public expense, energy use, and other resources.	
Primary Policy	**Implementation**
(Plans for Infrastructure to Serve Anticipated Growth) A range of drainage, transportation, and water/wastewater policies.	See HDP Chapters 3-5.

GOAL 4. Public Facilities Retain land to serve anticipated needs for public facilities and public use areas, such as schools, drainage-related facilities, fire stations, parks, greenbelts, or other natural resource conservation areas.	
Primary Policy	**Implementation**
4-A. *(Schools)* The Municipality of Anchorage and the Anchorage School District will continue a joint effort to identify school sites on the Hillside to accommodate future growth.	Yearly review of ASD monitoring of demographic trends and population growth as part of ten-year CIP.
4-B. *(Fire Stations and Other Public Facilities)* Carry out site selection study to identify needed sites.	Cooperative effort by MOA Planning Department and MOA Fire Department.
Other Public Faciities	
(Drainage) Addressed in HDP Policy 5B. The built/green infrastructure approach identifies areas to be used for community drainage functions.	See HDP Policy 5-B and Chapter 3.
(Parks, Greenbelts, and Natural Resource Conservation Areas) Addressed in HDP Policies 2-C, 5-A, 5-B, 5-C, 6-A, 6-B, 10-A, 10-B, 10-C, 12-A, 12-B, 12-C, 12-D, 14-A, 14-B, 14-C, and 14-L.	See HDP Policies 2-C, 5-A, 5-B, 5-C, 6-A, 6-B, 10-A, 10-B, 10-C, 12-A, 12-B, 12-C, 12-D, 14-A, 14-B, 14-C, and 14-L.

GOAL 5. Environmental Quality Protect environmental quality on the Hillside, including: providing corridors for drainage, protecting natural systems such as aquifer recharge areas and stream corridors, protecting wildlife travel corridors and habitat, and providing open space for views and recreation.	
Primary Policy	**Implementation**
5-A. Maintain and protect environmental quality at three scales: 1) individual lots, using new development standards 2) subdivisions, using a combination of new development standards and the conservation subdivision approach, 3) watershed, using the built/green infrastructure approach and other plan strategies.	See related HDP policies in other plan chapters (specific citations included later in this chapter).
5-B. Working at the watershed scale, implement a mapped overlay of built/green infrastructure and use this information to guide the layout of future subdivisions.	Built/green infrastructure map approved with adoption of Hillside District Plan; Memorandum of Understanding among MOA Planning Department, MOA Project Management and Engineering Department (PM&E) apply this overlay to specific projects.
5-C. Create a Riparian Greenbelt Acquisition Program.	See HDP Policy 6-A.

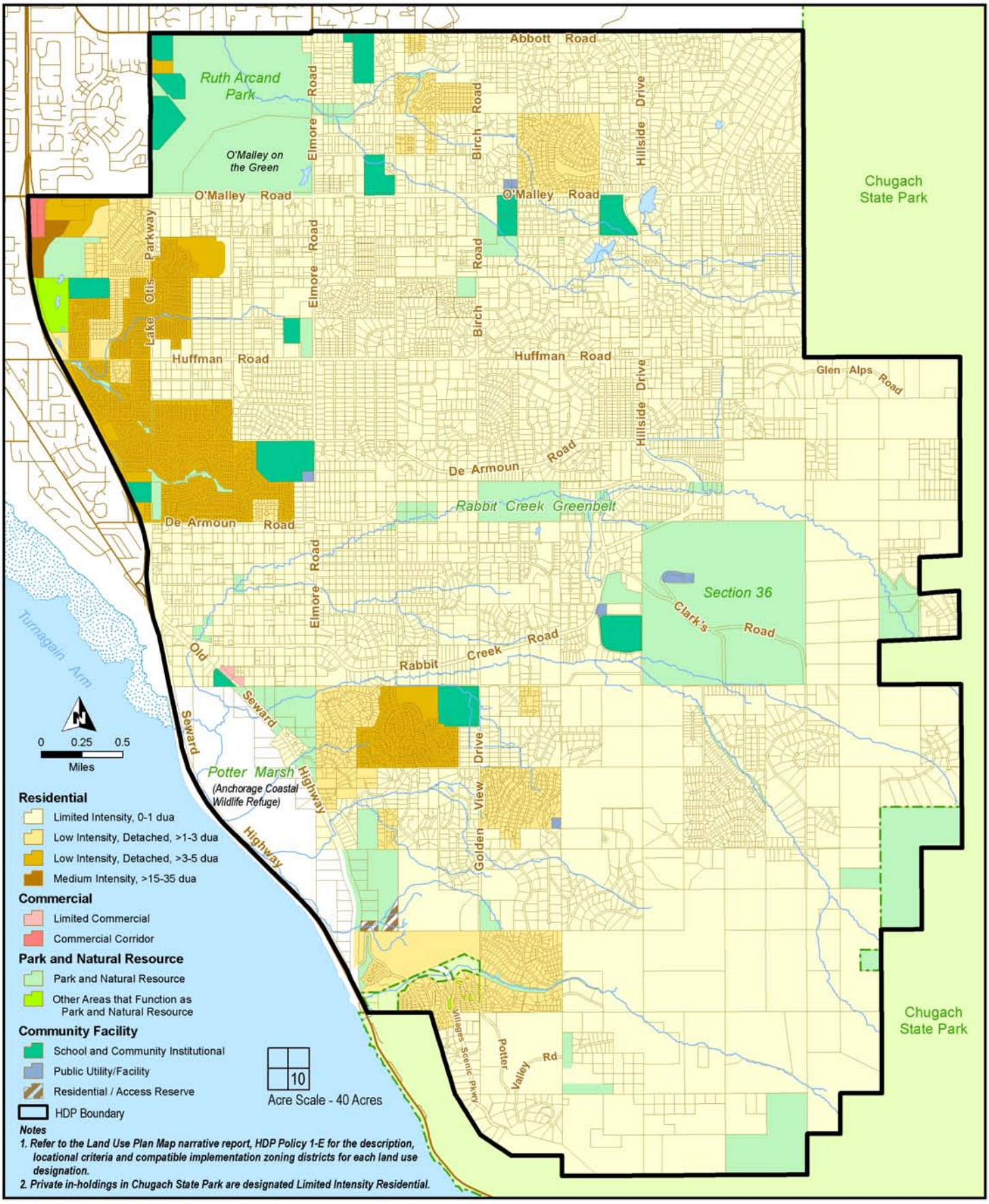
GOAL 6. Parks and Open Spaces Maintain, supplement and enhance a system of parks, trails, open spaces and other active and passive recreation areas.	
Primary Policy	**Implementation**
6-A. Establish priorities and implementation methods to meet deficiencies in neighborhood and community parks, develop natural resource and greenbelt acquisition programs and funding, conduct additional greenbelt and natural resource inventory planning, and enhance the Hillside built/ green infrastructure system.	Heritage Land Bank (HLB), MOA Planning Department, MOA Parks and Recreation Department, MOA Project Management and Engineering Department-Watershed Management Services, in consultation with the Alaska Department of FIsh & Game (ADF&G) or other natural resource specialists.
6-B. Parks development should be phased and scaled to fit the level of road service, the limitations of on-site water and septic systems, and the rural character of the neighborhood. The design shall consider user and neighborhood safety and security and minimize overall impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.	MOA Parks and Recreation Department, review agencies and boards.

GOAL 7. Visual Quality Protect views, both looking out from the Hillside and views of the Hillside as seen from the rest of Anchorage (for example, by maintaining vegetation, limiting cut-and-fill, and guiding the location and character of new residential development).	
Primary Policy	**Implementation**
7-A. Overall strategy: Maintain and protect views through protection of natural vegetation, drainage corridors, significant natural features, and topography at the scale of watersheds, subdivisions and individual lots.	Covered under other plan sections.
7-B. Establish new standards to reduce the visual impact of development on select, identified prominent ridgelines (identified on HDP Map 6.8).	Objective established by an overlay district; MOA.

Map 2.1

Hillside Land Use Plan

Hillside District Plan



Policies and Policy Background

Goal 1. Location and Intensity of Development
Guide the amount and location of future development while maintaining the quality and diversity of the Hillside District as a place to live, ranging from low-density rural areas, to single-family suburban neighborhoods, to areas with duplexes and multi-family housing.

Hillside as a Whole

Policy 1-A

Encourage a greater proportion of future Hillside growth to occur in the lower Hillside, in areas located closer to existing services and infrastructure; to a limited degree reduce the amount of future development in the southeast Hillside. (See Map 2.1, discussed in greater detail in HDP Policy 1-E.)

Background

Land use patterns on the Hillside are largely established. While the area will continue to grow, dramatic changes from these patterns are neither desirable nor practical. The Hillside District Plan directs a slightly higher percentage of future Hillside growth to lower Hillside areas closer to established services (jobs, commercial uses, roads, drainage and public water sewer), which in turn reduces driving, makes transit more practical and provides for more efficient provision of other public services. At the same time, this plan, through changes in the boundary of public sewer, will reduce the intensity of future development in one outlying portion of the southeast, upper Hillside.

Southeast Hillside Residential

Policy 1-B

Maintain policies for the amount of development as allowed under current land use designations. Shift the current boundary of the Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage in the Upper Potter Valley area west to Greece Drive, south of England Avenue (shown on Map 2.2 and Map 5.7).

Background

The southeast Hillside is defined as the area generally above Hillside Drive, south of Glen Alps and south of Rabbit Creek Road. This area takes in much or all of the Rabbit Creek and

What is Title 21?

The Hillside District Plan includes many references to Title 21. Title 21 is the land use section of the Municipality's regulatory code, and includes rules on zoning, subdivision, platting, and project review and approval processes.

Title 21 is in the process of a major revision. For more information, view the Municipality of Anchorage's Planning Department website.

www.muni.org/planning

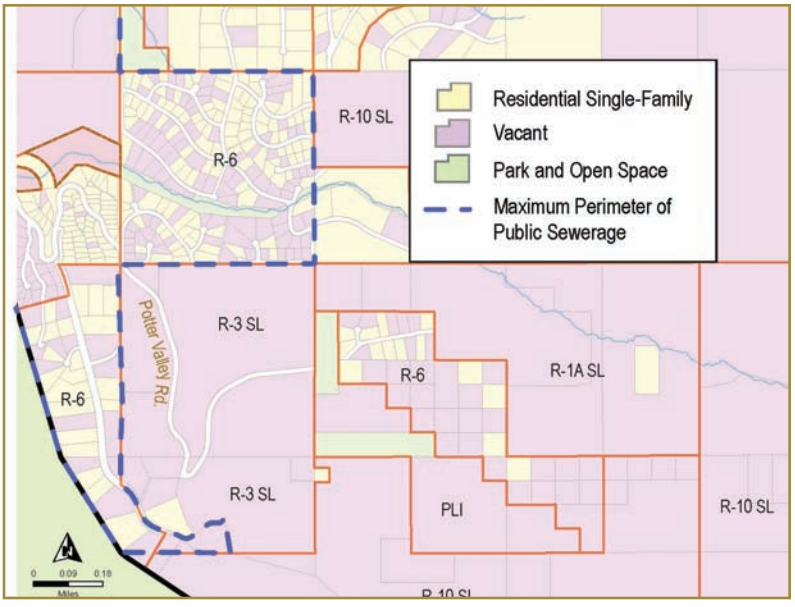
Rabbit Lakes trail above Canyon Road. This image reveals many of the issues facing the Hillside. The Hillside retains a sense of wild Alaska lacking in much of the rest of Anchorage. This rural character (larger lots, good views, trees, trails and a location at the gateway to Chugach State Park) makes the area both a great place to live and a great place to recreate. Because of these characteristics, and because of the Hillside's location within Alaska's largest metropolitan area, the area will inevitably grow and change. This chapter and the rest of this plan is designed not to say "no" to this growth, but to be more proactive in managing future development than has been the case in the past.

Potter Creek watersheds (shown on Map 1.5). This area includes most of the steeper and higher-elevation sections of the Hillside District.

While the Southeast Hillside provides a large expanse of vacant land, and has potential for home sites with beautiful views in a rural setting, the area also presents significant development challenges. Of the approximately 6,000 acres in the area, only about 1,700 acres of vacant private land are judged to be physically suitable for development. The limitations that make the majority of the area physically unsuited for development include steep slopes, shallow water tables, high winds and other environmental constraints. Past development has created a range of problems in this area, including problems with drainage, traffic, and (in some areas, such as Rabbit Creek Heights) poorly performing on-site wastewater systems.

This plan maintains existing residential land use designations and zoning in the southeast Hillside. As is shown on Maps 1.2 and 2.2, the majority of the area is classified for residential intensities of one dwelling unit per acre and much is currently zoned R-10. The R-10 zoning district was created for alpine and sloped areas and establishes minimum lot sizes based on slope: the greater the slope, the greater the minimum lot size. New development can occur in these areas, but will follow the new development standards and the built/green infrastructure approach.

Map 2.2
Southeast Hillside Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage as Established in the HDP (Southern portion of Hillside depicted below)



The Hillside District Plan shifts the Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage west to Greece Drive, south of England Avenue to match the land use designation in this area which is Limited Intensity, 0-1 DUA (see also Map 5.8).

Residential intensity in one area of Potter Valley in the 1982 Generalized Residential Intensity Plan calls for less than one dwelling unit per acre. The area, however, is currently zoned R-1A, which permits up to five dwelling units per acre. This plan calls for a shift of the Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage west of this area, to Greece Drive, south of England Avenue, meaning this area will have to develop under the requirements for on-site water and sewer. This change is warranted because this area is not physically wellsuited to support more intense residential development and is located at the periphery of the Municipality. (See Map 5.8.)

Overall, the recommended changes to the Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage boundary are not intended to drive land use decision making, rather land use decisions are intended to drive changes to the sewer boundary.

Central Hillside Residential

Policy 1-C

Maintain the same land use designations and zoning in this area as were established prior to the beginning of this plan.

Background

The central Hillside includes much of the northern half of the Hillside District, from Elmore Road east to Chugach State Park. Watersheds in this area include the systems that feed into Campbell Creek, the headwaters of Furrow Creek, and the lower portions of the Rabbit Creek watershed.

This area was developed earlier than the southeast Hillside. The large majority of private property in the central Hillside area is already subdivided and built upon. Most residents in the area are satisfied with the on-site well and septic systems that serve their homes. Extending public water and sewer services into this area would be very costly and is not likely in the foreseeable future. This is due to the area's location and distance from existing public water and sewer, and because it has largely already been subdivided at low densities. As a result, no changes in zoning are proposed. Infill development is likely to continue at a market-driven pace, ultimately adding about another 300 units in the area. The central area will be included in the district-wide service area for roads, trails, and drainage. Like the lower and southeast Hillside, this area needs better solutions to drainage, road and trail issues than can be provided by the existing collection of LRSAs and ad hoc neighborhood maintenance (described in detail in Chapter 6. Implementation).

Lower Hillside Residential

Policy 1-D

Retain the current land use designation for the Furrow Creek area. Conduct a planning study to determine the future need and location of a sewer trunk as backbone infrastructure required based on land use patterns and development potential, evaluation

Lower Hillside

Central Hillside

Southeast Hillside

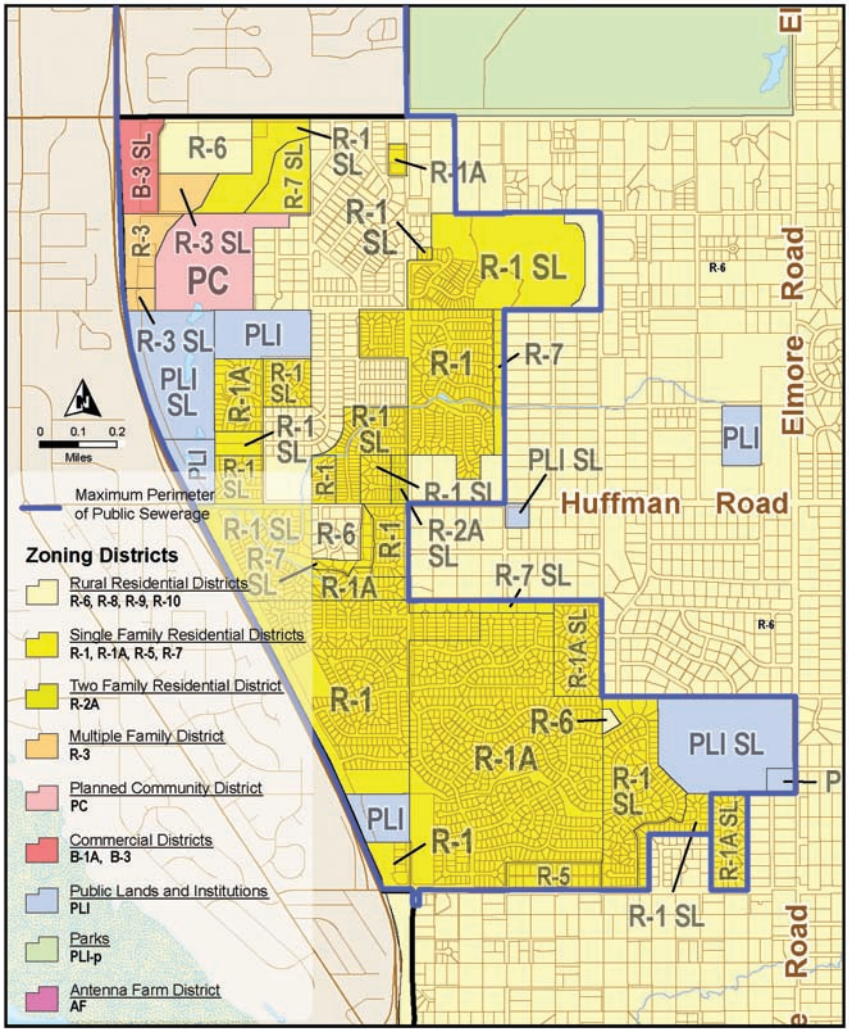
These photos provide a sense of the diverse character of different parts of the Hillside.

of the data resulting from HDP recommendations and programs, soils, topographical conditions, lot sizes, failed septic systems and groundwater nitrate levels to determine the appropriate sewer service area boundary and cost feasibility.

Lower Hillside Background

The lower Hillside takes in the lower reaches of two watersheds, Furrow Creek and Rabbit Creek. The lower Hillside extends to the western edge of the Hillside District (generally the New Seward Highway) and is bounded on the east by the north-south line that coincides with Elmore Road and between O'Malley and Huffman Roads, and between Huffman Road and Flyway Avenue west of Pintail. The lower Hillside contains the greatest mix of residential densities of any part of the Hillside. It includes large areas of larger-lot, low-density residential development served by on-site water and septic as well as substantial areas of moderate-density residential development served by public water and sewer. The lower Hillside is also closer to concentrations of commercial services and major transportation corridors than any other portion of the Hillside.

Map 2.3
Lower Hillside Zoning Designation



This map shows existing zoning in the lower Hillside and the existing location of the Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage.

The lower Hillside is made up of two subdistricts, each roughly one square mile in size. The northern subdistrict is generally bordered by O'Malley Road to the north and Huffman Road to the south, but includes one subdivision south of Huffman Road. This area is referred to as the Furrow Creek watershed, referencing the small stream that drains this area. (This area is not the existing, higher density Furrow Creek subdivision, located to the south.) The Furrow Creek watershed includes a range of lot sizes, including several relatively dense residential areas.

As Maps 1.2 and 2.3 show, the lower Hillside has a mix of zoning: Most of the western portions are currently zoned R-1

or R-1SL Single-Family Residential; portions farther east are zoned R-6 Suburban Residential, with one small transition area that is zoned R-7 Intermediate Rural Residential. All the R-6 and R-7 areas lie outside the municipally defined Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage. There are also two small areas zoned PLI and PLI SL, Public Lands and Institutions; and several commercial areas zoned B1A (to the south of area depicted in Map 2.3).

The Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan (pages 60-61) states that "limited revision to existing zoning is allowed, where practicable and cost effective, to satisfy the demand for small-lot home sites. Some medium-density multi-family housing development is assumed to take place along the western portion of the lower Hillside."

This plan examined opportunities to expand medium-density housing in the Furrow Creek area, but determined that these increases were not possible for the following reasons:

- The desire of the community to maintain the existing low densities that exist on much of the Hillside.
- The reality that the land use pattern in the area is already set to a significant degree and not easily altered.
- The fact that the one portion of the Hillside that still contains substantial undeveloped land is located at higher elevations, on sensitive terrain, well removed from jobs and commercial services, and is therefore not an area appropriate for higher density residential uses.

The Furrow Creek area as described above also has the following existing conditions:

- Includes a number of lots with a history of poorly performing on-site wastewater systems, as well as a large church and school currently relying on holding tanks;
- Is located next to existing areas of higher-density residential that are already served by public water and sewer;
- Has greater proximity to major transportation corridors and commercial areas; and
- Is within the Anchorage Roads and Drainage Service Area (ARDSA) and the Regulatory Commission of Alaska certificated service area; and
- Includes several 5- to 20-acre groupings of contiguous lots which have potential for development or redevelopment.

Rural – Urban Line

The concept of a Hillside urban/rural services boundary is referred to in the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan (page 56), "the concept matches municipal government and utility service levels with intensity of development." This concept is used in some other parts of the country, where the boundary line separates areas planned for growth and requiring a full array of urban services from rural areas where a much lower level of public services and infrastructure is expected and provided. Service levels in these situations are strongly correlated with land use: in rural areas service levels are uniformly low; in urbanized areas these services are expected and provided.

For the Hillside district, a single line separating "urban" and "rural" is not helpful because levels of service are not closely linked to the density of development. For example, the Hillside recently voted to add areas along Golden View Road into the Anchorage Roads and Drainage Service area because of a desire for a higher level of road maintenance, even though properties adjoining the road are outside the service area. This request was not linked to any change in land use intensity. Similarly, service levels for schools, police, fire, and recreation services are uniform across the large majority of the Hillside, irrespective of variations in density of residential development. In the limited instances where density and service levels *are* tightly connected (public sewerage and land use density) the Hillside District Plan does make clear where this boundary is located, and is also clear about residential land use densities (see the maps in the Land Use and Water and Wastewater Chapters for details).

View looking west down Huffman Road from the southeast corner of the Furrow Creek area, with the familiar McDonald's logo in the background.

Policy Background: Furrow Creek

The Hillside District Plan Framework document evaluated two alternatives in the Furrow Creek watershed area. One option allowed for modest increases in residential density. The other alternative (called the "base case" alternative) left zoning as it exists today. Ultimately, the adopted plan selected the base case scenario.

With regards to the issues of water and wastewater provision to the area, further evaluation and continued monitoring will occur with implementation of the actions and programs outlined in Policies 13-H through 14-D. This evaluation and planning will determine the future need and location of a sewer trunk as backbone infrastructure based on land use patterns, development potential, evaluation of the data from the new collection efforts, soils, topographical conditions, lot sizes, failed septic systems, and nitrate levels to determine the appropriate sewer service area boundary expansion potential and cost feasibility.

The southern portion of the lower Hillside, located between DeArmoun Road to the north and Rabbit Creek Road to the south is sometimes referred to as the "BLM lots." This area has a greater number of large lots than the Furrow Creek watershed, including many 2.5-acre lots (the size of the lots in this area's original subdivision). The defining natural feature of the BLM lots is Rabbit Creek canyon, slicing through the area from northeast to southwest. This area is outside of ARDSA and does not have the history of on-site wastewater problems found in the Furrow Creek area.

Compared to the rest of the Hillside, the BLM lots area has good proximity to major roads and established commercial centers, and borders on an area of relatively high-density suburban development. In one regard, the BLM lots are a better candidate for increased densities, because the area has a larger number of large lots and more undeveloped land than the Furrow Creek area. The plan concludes that these large lots are a stable and fundamental feature of the character of this area, such that no increase in residential intensity is warranted.

Land Use Plan Map

Policy 1-E

Adopt the official Land Use Plan Map for the Hillside, which provides greater specificity than the Anchorage 2020 Land Use Concept Plan and replaces the 1982 Generalized Land Use Plan.

Hillside Land Use Plan Map Background

Once adopted, the Hillside District Plan will update the Municipality of Anchorage Comprehensive Plan. The Hillside District Plan Land Use Plan Map is a policy document designed to guide future development decisions in the Hillside area. As such, it provides a broad plan for the overall pattern and distribution of future growth in the Hillside. The Hillside Land Use Plan Map,

once adopted, updates the 1982 Generalized Land Use Plan and Residential Intensity Plan for the study area.

The Land Use Plan Map provides a visual representation of long-term policies; it is not a detailed blueprint for future development, nor is it a zoning map that establishes specific land uses on a lot-by-lot basis. Rather, it is, in conjunction with the Hillside District Plan, a policy guide and legal basis for future zoning changes and other development decisions. The Municipality's Title 21 Land Use Regulations establish rules regarding development. These regulations are applied as zoning districts on the Official Zoning Map, which delineates zoning district boundaries in the Hillside area. Future amendments to Title 21 regulations, zoning changes and other land use decisions are intended to conform to the Comprehensive Plan, which includes the Hillside District Plan and Land Use Plan Map.

Amendments to the Land Use Plan Map

The Land Use Plan Map is a framework for future growth through the year 2029 and beyond. This framework provides a district-specific context for coordinating decisions regarding the development and redevelopment of various areas. The Land Use Plan Map is not intended as a fixed predetermination of land use through 2029. It can be updated and amended, just like other parts of the Comprehensive Plan. As the community continues to grow and change, it is anticipated that the Land Use Plan Map will also change. Proposed Land Use Plan Map amendments may be reviewed concurrently with other development proposals. For instance, if a proposed rezoning is demonstrated to have community-wide benefits and responds to new issues, needs, or opportunities not addressed in the Hillside District Plan or other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, an amendment to the Land Use Plan Map may be appropriate. Conflicts between a development proposal and the Land Use Plan Map should be resolved using the guidance of Comprehensive Plan and Hillside District Plan policies. The implications of proposed amendments to the Land Use Plan Map that would result in significant land use changes should be considered and analyzed on a community-wide basis. Changes to the Land Use Plan Map constitute an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. A proposed amendment should be demonstrated to be consistent with the Hillside District Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and the overall Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map framework for locating future population and employment, and the community-wide allocation of sufficient lands to meet forecasted growth.

Land Use Plan Designations

The Land Use Plan Map identifies different land use designations to illustrate the location and extent of categories of land in the Hillside Area. The designations define the building intensity and density for each area. The pages that follow define the land use designations. The description of each designation includes a generalized description of predominant uses, intensity of use, and essential physical characteristics of development. The designations are consistent with those utilized for the Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map, though in some cases they have been altered specifically for the Hillside. Most designations conclude with a set of bulleted location criteria. These provide the rationale for where each use is recommended to be located. The location criteria for each designation apply in combination rather than individually. However, it is not necessary that all criteria be achieved in every location.

Residential Designations

The residential designations identify areas substantially developed for residential purposes that are expected to remain residential. They also identify vacant lands best suited for residential development. In addition to the residential characteristics described below, other uses such as schools, churches, parks, child care facilities, and other public or institutional uses may be allowed in residential areas, if determined to be compatible with and oriented toward the needs of the immediate neighborhood.

The residential density ranges are generalized descriptions of the type of development considered appropriate for a broadly defined area. The measure of housing units per gross acre is based on area-wide densities rather than specific densities for individual parcels. This allows the Land Use Plan Map to indicate the intended overall distribution of population and housing units for entire contiguous geographic areas of the Hillside community.

The measure of housing units per gross acre includes streets, open spaces, leftover or unusable lands and small nonresidential uses within a residentially designated area on the Land Use Plan Map. It is not intended to be applied directly as the measure of how many housing units may be allowed on each lot or development site. The Title 21 Land Use Regulations and Official Zoning Map will determine how many housing units may be allowed on each lot or development site.

Limited Intensity Residential 0 – 1 dwelling units/acre
Intent: The Limited Intensity Residential designation provides for large-lot, single-family residences in a rural environment, much of which is served by private wells and septic systems.

Description: The predominant land use consists of detached houses on lots one acre or larger in size. The intended overall density for new development is less than one housing unit per gross acre. This type of development results from a combination of preferred lifestyles, a lack of public infrastructure, remoteness, and environmental constraints. Lot size, setbacks, the variety of custom housing designs and the presence of natural vegetation help retain the rural and natural environment. This designation is implemented by the R-6, R-8, R-9, and R-10 zones.

Location Criteria: As with all other land use designations, these apply in combination rather than individually. However, it is not necessary that all be achievable in every location:

- Areas with an established large-lot, rural development pattern;
- Areas outside of the water/wastewater service boundaries;
- Areas furthest from employment and services, where higher density development would impact traffic congestion on local roads and generate higher vehicle mileage citywide;
- Areas constrained by limited road access; and
- Areas where environmental constraints preclude more intense site development.

Low-Intensity Residential, 1 – 3 dwelling units/acre
Intent: Low-Intensity Residential designation provides for neighborhoods with a semi-rural atmosphere and consisting generally of single-family homes on half-acre or larger sized lots with flexibility for a slightly smaller size lot when utilizing a clustered type development with applicable open space standards.

Description: This designation is generally implemented by the R-7 zoning district. The intended overall density for new development is one to two housing units per gross acre, but provides flexibility for a slightly higher density for new development using a Hillside Conservation Subdivision or Planned Unit Development (PUD). Building scale and landscaped setbacks of new development, as well as low traffic volumes on local streets, contribute to a low-intensity living environment.

Location Criteria: As with all other land use designations, these apply in combination rather than individually. However, it is not necessary that all be achievable in every location:

- Areas with established half-acre single-family, semi-rural development pattern;
- Areas within boundaries of service areas or served by public sewer and/or water;
- Areas not severely impacted by land uses of incompatible scale or intensity; and
- Areas not subjected to high volumes of through traffic.

Low-Intensity Residential, 3 – 5 dwelling units/acre

Description: The predominant land use consists of conventional single-family detached houses on individual lots generally 6,000 to 8,400 square feet or more in size. The intended density range is three and up to five housing units per gross acre. Detached houses, building scale, landscaped setbacks, and low traffic volumes on local streets contribute to a low-intensity living environment. This designation is implemented by the R-1 and R-1A zones. This designation generally reflects existing development in R-1 and R-1A zone districts.

Location Criteria: As with all other land use designations, these apply in combination rather than individually. However, it is not necessary that all be achievable in every location:

- Areas with an established single-family detached development pattern;
- Areas served by public sewer and water;
- Areas not severely impacted by land uses of incompatible scale or intensity; and
- Areas not subjected to high volumes of through traffic.

Medium-Intensity Residential, >15 – 35 dwelling units/ acre

Intent: The Medium-Intensity Residential designation provides for a compatible mix of multi-family and attached housing choices and an efficient use of residential land near community services and Commercial/Mixed-use Centers. It is also intended to provide for an attractive, high-quality living environment with design amenities for residents.

Description: Predominant land uses consist of two- to four-story multi-family complexes and townhouses at an intended overall density of greater than 15 and up to 35 housing units per gross acre. A critical mass of housing at this density threshold supports a diversity of housing choices, efficient provision of public infrastructure and more frequent transit service. New development provides design amenities such as private open space and recreation areas. It also provides transitions and buffering between lower and higher density residential areas.

This designation may accommodate additional density of up to 40 housing units per gross acre adjacent to designated Commercial/Mixed-use Centers except for those at the neighborhood scale. Qualifying projects should provide "town center" oriented urban design features as defined in the land use regulations. This designation is implemented primarily by the R-3 zone.

Location Criteria:

- Areas with an established multi-family housing development pattern;
- Areas of transition between intense uses or high traffic volumes and lower density residential designations;
- Areas accessible to arterials without the need to travel through less intensive uses;
- Areas within walking distance of parks, schools and other community facilities, transit routes, shopping, and employment;
- Areas that can provide housing density in transit-supportive development corridors or near Commercial/Mixed-use Centers;
- Areas once designated for lower density residential that are well positioned for redevelopment and designated by an adopted plan for more intensive use;
- Areas formerly designated for nonresidential use that are underutilized and well positioned for residential redevelopment.

Commercial Designations

Commercial Corridor

Intent: The Commercial Corridor designation provides for local and regional retail sales and services on major street corridors that are already developed for commercial purposes.

Description: Some Commercial Corridors are automobile dependent, characterized by individual low-rise, single-use retail buildings or strip malls with multiple tenants. Predominant land uses include a range of retail sales and service uses, as well as similar commercial uses such as fast food, vehicle services, and entertainment uses that generate customer vehicle traffic. It is important that site development be situated to have minimal impact on residential areas.

Other Commercial Corridors may be designated for transit-oriented development. These areas often feature older, smaller lot development patterns, frequent transit service, and are well positioned for intensive, pedestrian-friendly redevelopment.

This designation is implemented by the B-3 zone in automobile dependent corridors. It is implemented by the NMU and CMU zones in transit-supportive development corridors. NMU and CMU are designations used in the Title 21 Rewrite.

Locational Criteria:

- Linear street corridors with single-use retail sites or multi-tenant strip malls; and
- Existing commercial corridors designated by an adopted plan for transit-oriented (re)development.

Not intended for significant geographic expansion at the expense of areas classified as Residential or Industrial.

Limited Commercial

The Limited Commercial designation refers to the existing commercially zoned parcels at Potter Marsh.

Description: limited commercial use area utilizing the existing regulatory controls built into the existing zoning, including special limitations in AO 82-52 and AO 2003-156 on the existing commercially zoned properties, with a focus on commercial activities associated with recreational uses at Potter Marsh; however, the plan does not establish any new regulatory framework beyond the existing regulatory controls built into the zoning special limitations.*

*One parcel zoned PLI SL (AO 2003-156) requires that prior to issuance of a site grading and excavation permit for any development, a site plan be prepared that:

- meets the general standards of AMC 21.50.200;
- follows design standards from AO 82-52;
- includes neighborhood buffer landscaping and transition standards space;
- includes a Potter Marsh Natural Vegetation buffer and Trail Connection;
- prohibits outdoor storage;
- addresses trash receptacles;
- addresses signage;
- addresses parking lot illumination and compatible scale.

The B-1A special limitations also have regulatory controls limiting uses and structure sizes, requirement for a site plan review, which addresses design standards, access, circulation, buffering and landscaping, tree retention, site obscuring fence, drainage, and limits hours of operation.

Location Criteria:

- Existing B-1A commercially zoned lots and PLI-zoned lot at Potter Marsh.

One parcel zoned PLI SL (AO 2003-156) requires that prior to the issuance of a site grading and excavation permit for any development that a site plan meeting the general standards of AMC 21.50.200; design standards from AO 82-52; neighborhood buffer landscaping and transition standards space; Potter Marsh Natural Vegetation buffer and Trail Connection; prohibits outdoor storage; addresses trash receptacles; signage; parking lot illumination and compatible scale. The B-1A special limitations also have regulatory controls limiting uses and structures sizes, requirement for a site plan review, which addresses design standards, access, circulation, buffering and landscaping, tree retention; site obscuring fence, drainage, and limits hours of operation.

Park and Natural Resource Designations

Park and natural resource use areas designated on the Land Use Plan Map are generally either existing or known planned areas. The Land Use Plan Map is intended to be updated as new park lands are acquired or other changes occur.

Park and Natural Resource

Intent: Park and Natural Resource designation provides for active and passive outdoor recreation, conservation of natural areas, and trail corridors connecting neighborhoods.

Description: Uses include neighborhood, community, and natural resource use area parks, special use parks, golf courses, greenbelts, and other municipal open spaces that are dedicated or designated by an adopted plan for parkland or natural conservation. Other municipal lands of high natural value that are environmentally unsuitable for development are also included.

Special purpose facilities such as sports complexes or interpretive centers that support park, recreation and natural resource functions may be allowed subject to special reviews defined in the Title 21 Land Use Regulations. This designation is implemented by the PR and PLI zones. Most other zones may also be compatible implementation zones for non-dedicated park and recreation lands.

Other Areas that Function as Park or Natural Resource

Intent: This designation applies to non-municipal lands that, by adopted plan, formal agreement, subdivision or easement, function as part of the community system of parks, outdoor recreational facilities, or natural preservation areas.

Description: This designation comprises several kinds of non-municipal lands. It includes state or federal lands designated by an adopted plan as park or natural resource use, or lands that are environmentally unsuitable for development.

This designation also includes private lands that, by easement, subdivision, agreement, commercial activity, or severe environmental constraints function as park, outdoor recreation, or natural resource areas.

Some natural open spaces or buffer areas in this designation are not intended to provide public recreation access. This designation is implemented by the PLI or other zones or subdivisions depending on the location.

Community Facility Designations

Designated public facilities and institutions are generally existing or known planned facilities. The Land Use Plan Map is intended to be updated as new facilities are planned and public facility site selections made.

School and Community Institutional

Intent: The School and Community Institutional designation provides for small- to medium-scale institutions that can integrate into the scale of the local neighborhood and provide a community service or focus for the surrounding area.

Description: The most common use consists of public and large private schools with outdoor campus recreation facilities, including primary and secondary schools. Religious campuses ten acres or larger in size and/or containing large school functions also fall within this designation. Other community institutions include such uses as community centers, museums, cemeteries, and public libraries that serve the immediate area or that are similar to neighborhood-serving institutions in terms of physical scale and external impacts. This designation also allows for not-for-profit administrative office use. This designation is implemented by the PLI zone.

Public Utility / Facility

Intent: The Public Utility/Facility designation provides for public facilities and infrastructure that are industrial in character.

Description: Predominant land uses consist of public utilities: sewer and water treatment plants, power generation plants, industrial yards, water tank reservoirs, pump stations, and facilities for maintenance or fleet services. The designation also applies to facilities such as fire stations not oriented to on-site customer service. This designation is implemented by the PLI zones. Some utility facilities may be appropriate in residential areas with adequate review, taking into consideration surrounding development.

Residential / Access Reserve

Intent: The Residential Access Reserve designation is for land set aside that could be made available for roadway access or disposed of in the future.

Description: An area that follows the contour of a steeper slope section of the south end of HLB Parcel 2-136. This status places an approximately eight-acre triangular section in a reserve that could be made available or disposed of in the future for residential development and/or for utility and roadway access to future up-slope residential development to the east. Reserving this land as a combination residential/access tract might facilitate future residential expansion and associated infrastructure in an area with otherwise considerable physical constraints**.** The southern portion of HLB Parcel 2-135 is reserved for future right-of-way expansion, as is appropriate and required, for redesign of the adjacent switchback in the Potter Valley Road as described in the Potter Valley Land Use Analysis.

The Municipality's Land Use Regulations (Title 21 of the municipal code) is the primary tool for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Title 21 establishes rules regarding the use of property and site development standards, providing detailed guidance for development based on the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Table 2.4 Land Use / Zoning Consistency Table[1]

Generalized Land Use Plan Map Designations	Specific Land Use Designations (residential density in housing units per gross acre)	Corresponding Implementation Zoning[1]
Residential	Limited Intensity (0-1) Low Intensity, Detached Housing (1-3) and (3-5) Medium Intensity (15.1-35)	R-6, R-8, R-9, R-10 R-1, R-1A, R-2A, R-7 R-3
Commercial	Commercial Corridor	B-3, NMU, CMU
Commercial	Limited Commercial	B-1A and PLI currently existing in Potter Marsh area
Park and Natural Resource	Park and Natural Resource Other Areas that Function as Park or Natural Resource	PR, PLI, PLI-p, and most other zones PLI and most other zones
Community Facility	School and Community Institutional Public Utility/Facility	PLI PLI, AF[2]

1. In addition to the zoning districts that appear in the table, the PR, PLI, and PCD zones may be used to implement some Land Use Designations.

2. Community facilities may be appropriate in residential areas with adequate review.

Note: The table refers to the zoning districts in Title 21 Rewrite Public Hearing Draft.

The Land Use Plan Map use designations do not affect current zoning boundaries on the Zoning Map. Only future changes to zoning and other land use decisions will conform to the Land Use Plan Map. The Land Use Plan Map is, in conjunction with Comprehensive Plan policies, the official guide for future development decisions, and is implemented through zoning and development review.

Commercial and Other Nonresidential Uses

The HDP planning process included extensive discussion of commercial and other nonresidential uses, ultimately concluding that, at least until this Hillside District Plan is updated, there will be only very limited expansion of neighborhood commercial in the area.

The Hillside has a significant collection of nonresidential uses including numerous churches, public and private schools, greenhouses, equestrian facilities, the Alaska Zoo, a golf course, and miscellaneous other nonresidential uses. Approximately 20 parcels are used for these nonresidential purposes, totaling approximately 271 acres. Only one of these parcels is zoned for nonresidential use; the majority is zoned residential or public lands and institutions. An additional 25 parcels are used for industrial purposes, totaling approximately 52 acres. Only seven of these industrial parcels are zoned for nonresidential uses, totaling approximately twelve acres. Map 2.5 shows the location and extent of these existing uses in the district. Not shown are the many small home-based businesses in the area. There are almost no retail stores on the Hillside, although the Carrs Huffman shopping center and the rapidly expanding Dimond/Abbott commercial area are located just west of the District's western boundary.

The Land Use Policy Map that accompanies the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan legend includes a note (page 50): "Potential sites for Neighborhood Commercial Centers on the Hillside will be determined through the Hillside District Plan." Anchorage 2020 defines Neighborhood Commercial Centers as "neighborhood-level commercial/retail facilities that serve smaller clusters of residential neighborhoods than town centers. This designation allows neighborhood-oriented commercial uses in and adjacent to residential areas. It has been created in response to increased urbanization, the need to reduce the number and length of auto trips, and a desire to improve quality of life in all neighborhoods. These commercial areas are intended to provide small-scale, attractive, and convenient services for residential areas..." "The approved uses, site design, and building design should produce attractive, friendly, quiet, non-obtrusive, neighborhood-compatible developments. The actual locations of neighborhood commercial centers are to be determined through a neighborhood or district planning process." (Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan, page 54.)

Based on the direction of Anchorage 2020, the HDP Framework Alternatives document evaluated several alternatives for commercial uses on the Hillside. One alternative that was considered but not selected was the option for the development of a "rural country store" in the vicinity of the Rabbit Creek Fire Station (Fire Station #10) and the Bear Valley Elementary School. This use would have been required to comply with

Schools on the Hillside serve the area's large student population and generate substantial traffic.

Located along the Seward Highway, one of the few retail commercial areas on the Hillside includes an indoor water park and a sporting goods store. The business pictured above moved to a new location off of Dimond Boulevard, and this site will be used for a school.

Hillside has a significant number of churches, including a number of large facilities with programs that run throughout the week.

Map 2.5

Exisiting Nonresidential Uses

Hillside District Plan

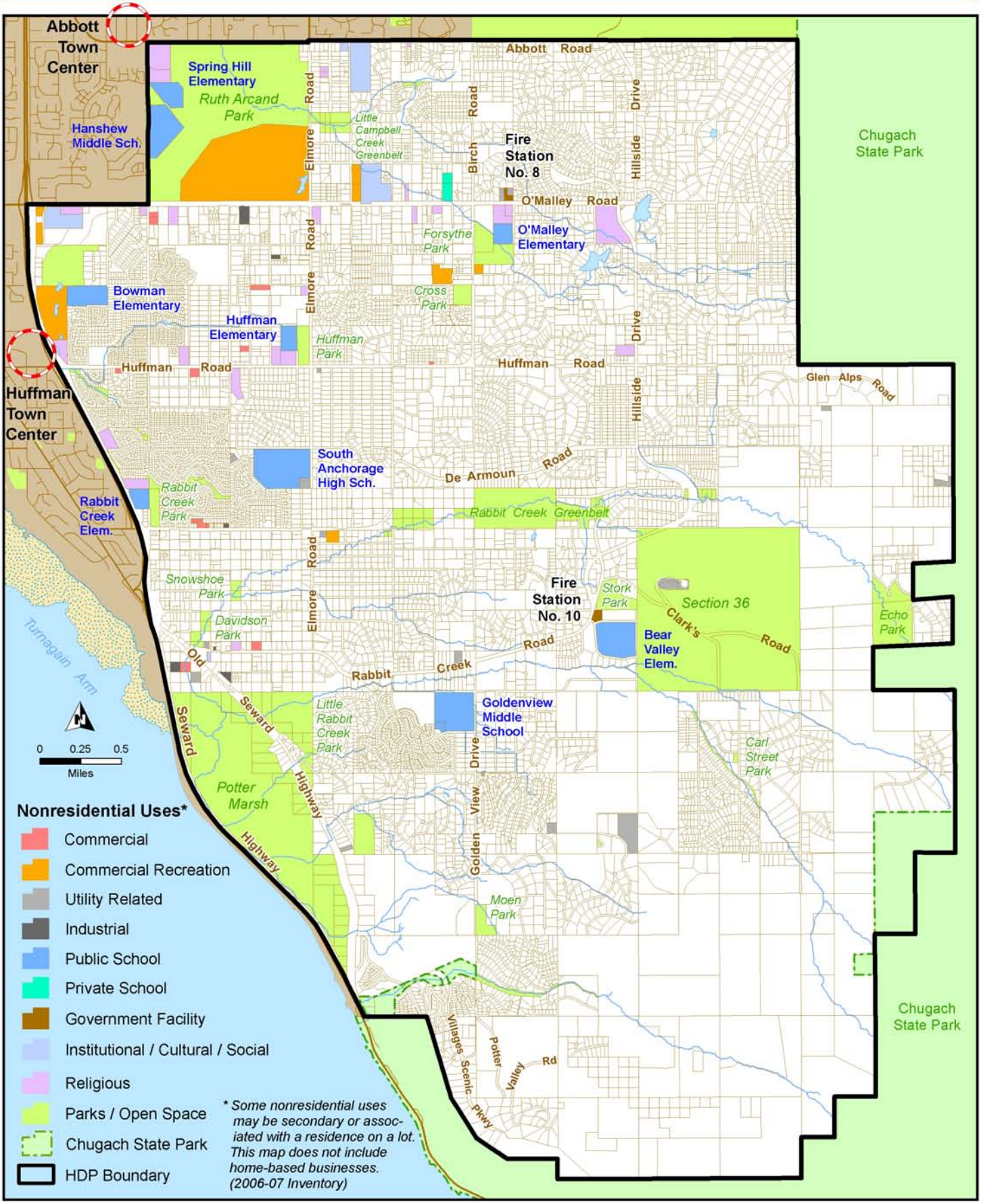
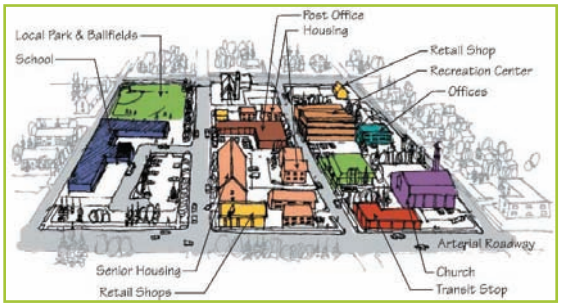


Figure 2.6
Overview of Anchorage 2020: Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan Commercial Policy

TOWN CENTERS

Town Centers are intended to include a concentrated mix of retail shopping and services, public facilities and medium- to high-density residential. Though located outside the Hillside District, the Abbott and Huffman Town Centers serve Hillside residents.



NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTERS

Neighborhood Commercial Centers are less intense, neighborhood-oriented commercial nodes, designed to fill the gaps between the town centers.

A small commercial district could serve residents and visitors to recreational areas. Businesses might include small grocery, restaurant, small office, bicycle rental.

OTHER HILLSIDE COMMERCIAL AND NONRESIDENTIAL USES

A variety of other types of commercial and nonresidential uses exist in the Hillside District, along with institutional and civic uses that are compatible with neighborhood and town centers.

Greenhouses

Home-based services

Equestrian operations

Commercial Recreation

Highway commercial development

Bed and breakfasts

Religious institutional

Map 2.5 (opposite page) shows that a variety of nonresidential uses currently exist on the Hillside, ranging from large, established businesses on commercially zoned parcels to home-based commercial operations (not shown on map) allowed under residential zoning. Anchorage 2020 (Figure 2.6) specifies two Town Center commercial nodes on the periphery of the Hillside District (Abbott Town Center and Huffman Town Center) and charged the Hillside District Plan to investigate potential sites for Neighborhood Commercial Centers within the Hillside District.

design standards controlling building appearance, site design, parking, landscaping, screening of dumpsters and other service or mechanical equipment, and trail and road connections. Objectives for this "country store" included providing a place to buy convenience goods, providing a community gathering place, improving access to commercial services for youth and others who don't drive, and finally, reducing the use of vehicles and related congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

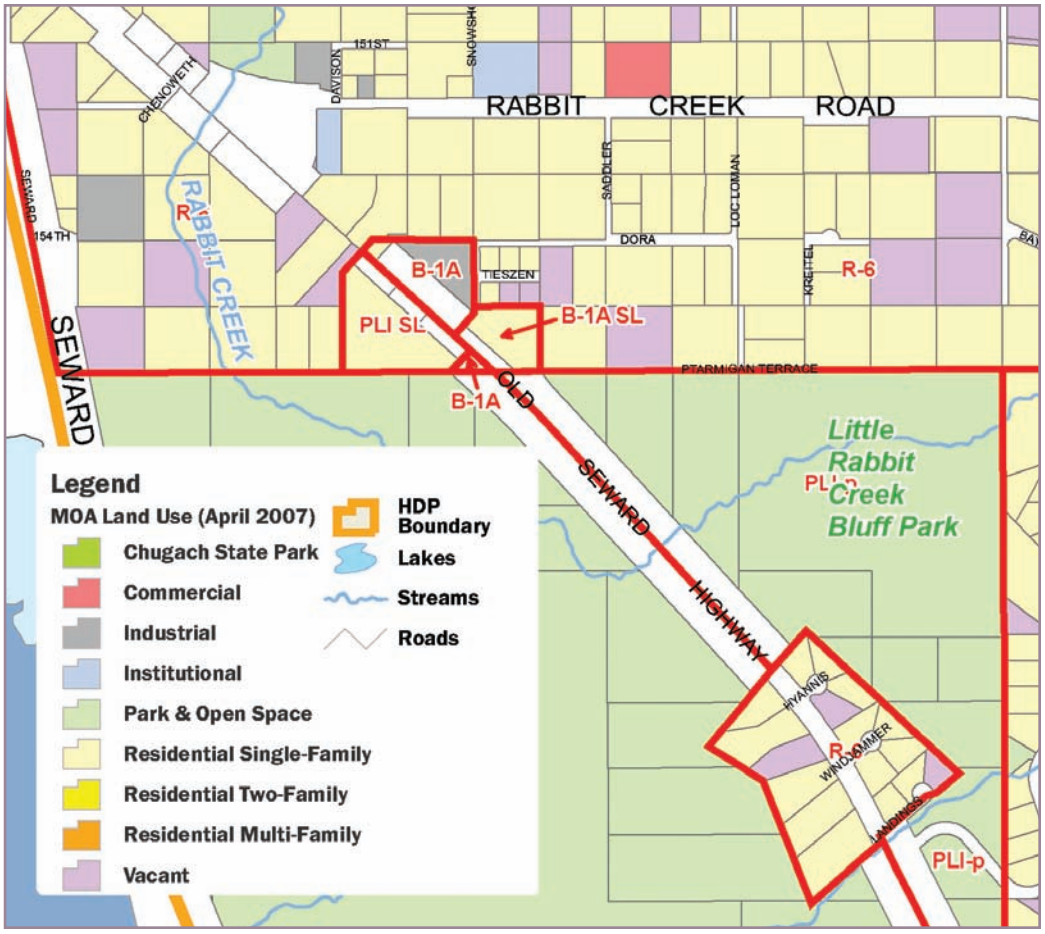
Responses from the Hillside resident survey and much of the public comment during this planning process revealed strong opposition to new commercial development on the Hillside. While a few spoke in favor of neighborhood commercial, the large majority opposed this idea. In light of these strong public views, the plan does not call for any new areas to be designated for commercial use. The plan notes that one small area adjoining Potter Marsh currently has several parcels zoned for commercial use.

The area along the Old Seward Highway near its junction with Rabbit Creek Road has a history of commercial use. Past uses include a gas station and the Rabbit Hutch restaurant. Currently, there are four small parcels zoned B-1A and PLI in the area along the Old Seward Highway near the junction of Rabbit Creek Road (shown on Map 2.7). There is an additional set of other nonresidential uses along this stretch of road, including a church and several grandfathered commercial uses.

Over the course of the HDP planning process, a number of individuals and a local non-profit organization (Friends of Potter Marsh) have expressed support for limited commercial uses on the existing commercially-zoned properties, with a focus on commercial activities associated with recreational uses at Potter Marsh. This plan supports this concept, but does not establish any new regulatory framework for the existing commercial land, as there are already regulatory controls built into the zoning special limitations for two of the three parcels in this area.

One parcel zoned PLI SL (AO 2003-156) requires that prior to the issuance of a site grading and excavation permit for any development that a site plan be prepared that: meets the general standards of AMC 21.50.200; follows design standards from AO 82-52; includes neighborhood buffer landscaping and transition standards space; includes a Potter Marsh Natural Vegetation buffer and Trail Connection; prohibits outdoor storage; addresses trash receptacles, signage, parking lot illumination, and compatible scale. The B-1A special limitations also have regulatory controls limiting uses and structure sizes, requirement for a site plan review, which addresses design standards, access, circulation, buffering and landscaping, tree retention; site-obscuring fence, drainage, and limits hours of operation.

Map 2.7
Potter Marsh Commercial Zoning



Revisions to Title 21

Independent of the Hillside District Plan, the Municipality is completing a multi-year revision of Title 21, the city's existing land use code. The standards required under the revised Title 21 regulations are stringent and represent a major step forward from the early days of Hillside development, when, as one landowner explained: "You could bury an old Volkswagen and use it for your septic system." The process of adding development standards to respond to the unique conditions on the Hillside will be coordinated with the ongoing revisions to Title 21. Options to codify these standards include adding standards to existing (or new) Title 21 code, or creating a new overlay district specifically for the Hillside District.

GOAL 2. Character of Development

Guide the character of development of individual properties, homesites, and subdivisions to help maintain assets such as quiet, trees and other natural vegetation, natural drainage systems, wildlife habitat, good views, access to open space, access to clean water, and dark night skies.

Policy 2-A

Establish new standards for development, addressing drainage, grading, and retention of vegetation, to apply in the upper elevation and steeply sloping areas of the Hillside.

Background

Goal A focused on the location and intensity of residential development. To ensure that future development is well-suited to Hillside conditions, HDP Policy 2-A sets objectives for new development standards and processes controlling the character of development. New standards are primarily focused on areas with slopes greater than 20 percent or over 1,000 feet in elevation, where potential impacts of development tend to be greatest. The objectives for these new standards are described below; the specific standards are presented in Chapter 6. Implementation.

- Vegetation: Retain natural vegetation to reduce drainage problems, maintain visual quality, and protect environmental quality. Balance the benefits of retaining vegetation with the need to reduce wildfire risks.
- Runoff: Reduce runoff from individual lots, for example, through reducing impervious surfaces and infiltrating water on site.
- Development Costs: Establish standards, considering their impact on development costs; where possible establish standards that help to reduce these costs.

Policy 2-B

Revise the current subdivision approval process to require submittal and approval of site environmental information at the pre-application meeting.

Background

In addition to standards that directly address the character of development, new standards are needed regarding the development review, approval and enforcement process. The goal is a development process that has less uncertainty and more frequently results in a satisfied public and a satisfied developer. The Municipality's development review process has been substantially improved in recent years to include new procedures encoded in Chapter 3 of the revised Title 21. Other improvements (in Title 21, Chapter 8) include new requirements for developer performance guarantees and requirements for the identification of stream channels prior to the submittal of preliminary plats. The MOA Development Services Department also has new procedures. Additional objectives for changes in the development review and approval process are listed below (Chapter 6. Implementation presents specific standards on these topics):

- Require improved up-front information as a starting point for the approval of subdivisions, including information on environmental characteristics and the connectivity of roads, trails, and open space with surrounding parcels. These requirements are facilitated by highlighting these features on the Hillside Built/Green Infrastructure Map.
- Standards: Establish standards, largely related to drainage, that reduce the impacts of development.
- Built/green infrastructure: Establish procedures to implement the Hillside built/green infrastructure system.
- Coordination and Enforcement: Revisit and, where possible, further improve the development review and enforcement process with a focus on coordination among different municipal departments responsible for the review and issuance of development approvals.

Terracing yards and building foundations reduces the disruption of natural drainage patterns, which reduces the need for off-site drainage infrastructure. These examples (the yard above and the terraced foundation below) are from an extensive hillside residential development in Silverton, Oregon. See the Development Standards section of Implementation Chapter for details on land use, drainage and transportation standards.

Policy 2-C

Establish a new "Hillside Conservation Subdivision" ordinance allowing flexibility in subdivision layout to better protect environmental and neighborhood character.

Background

Conservation subdivisions can help preserve natural features by allowing flexibility in lot sizes in response to the character of individual tracts of land. This allows better protection of streams,

Figure 2.8
Examples of Conservation Subdivisions

This example of conservation subdivision is reprinted from the National Lands Trust. It is called Plumsock at Williston in Pennsylvania. It features an average lot size of 0.5 acres. Seventy percent of the subdivision (50 acres) consists of wooded open space with ponds and streams.

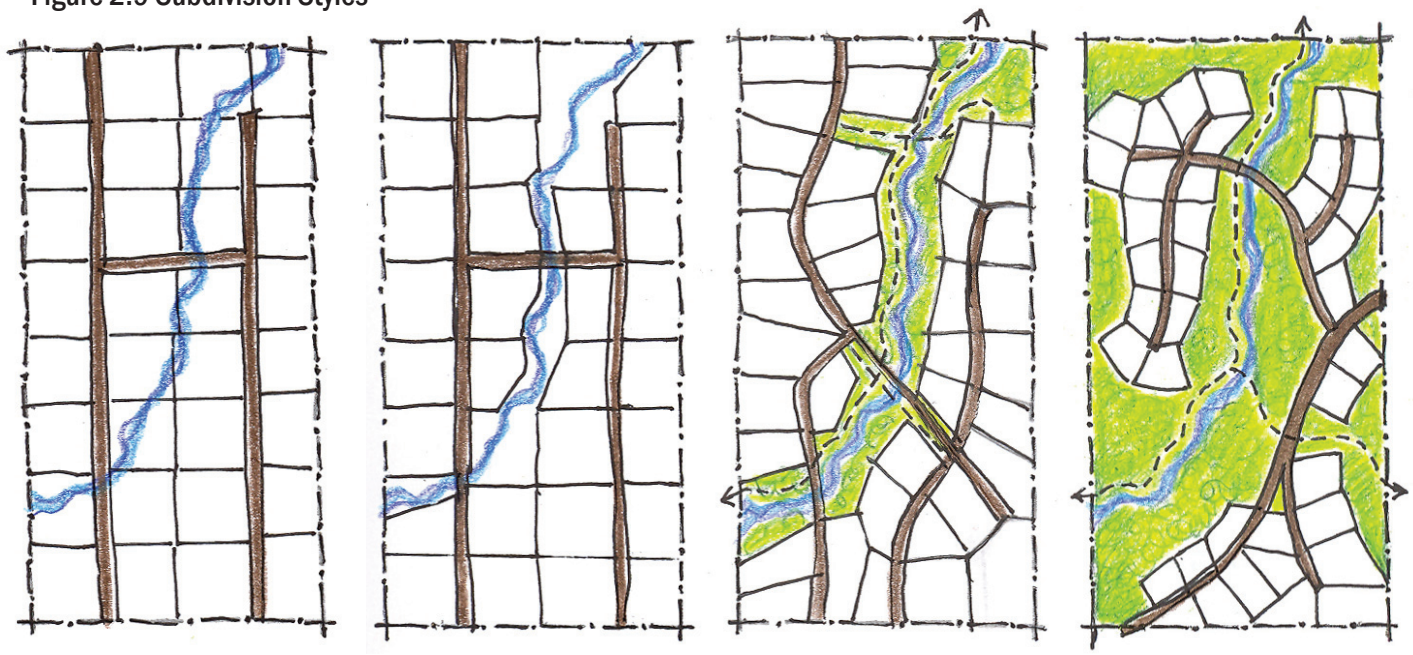
Plumstock at Willsonville, PA

Furrow Creek Subdivision,

Anchorage Hillside, AK

A local example of a conservation subdivision, Furrow Creek, located in the Hillside District. The original subdivision plat contained a greenbelt along the creek. It is an excellent example of the benefits of the conservation subdivision approach: The greenbelt and creek increased the property values of the houses adjacent to it, contained the flood zone, protected the creek, improved the creek's water quality, provided public access, and retained wildlife areas. The Furrow Creek subdivision is also an example of a less-than-perfect application of the green infrastructure approach. In this particular subdivision, the original creek followed a somewhat different route.

Figure 2.9 Subdivision Styles



A. Old-style "aliquot part" subdivision (all land is evenly subdivided, regardless of topographic features)

B. Traditional subdivision (excludes land that is difficult to develop)

C. Conservation subdivision #1 (creates access to usable open space)

D. Conservation subdivision #2 (smaller lots, more open space)

Illustrated above are four different approaches to subdivision design, all with approximately the same number of lots. The "aliquot part" subdivision is the lowest-cost approach to dividing land. This method was used to create the "BLM lots" between lower Rabbit Creek Road and lower DeArmoun Road. The other three options show a spectrum of approaches, each stepping toward a retention of a higher percentage of undeveloped land. Reserving more undeveloped land in the platting phase (see options C or D) creates smaller lot sizes while providing greater protection of waterways and natural systems. Conservation subdivisions can also increase the value of back lots by providing access to amenities such as stream corridors or open space. The development approval process for conservation subdivisions are more complex than for simple subdivisions. Consequently, a financial incentive (such as reduced infrastructure costs, a modest increase in number of lots, or increased lot values) can help entice developers create conservation subdivisions, rather than traditional or aliquot part subdivisions.

Definition of Terms: Conservation Subdivisions

Conservation subdivisions are possible in several slightly different forms in the Hillside District. As used here, a conservation subdivision refers to the general approach of allowing flexibility in subdivision layout. There are two specific variations of conservation subdivisions which apply to the Hillside District.

1. Title 21 Conservation Subdivisions: Chapter 8 of Title 21 allows for one form of conservation subdivision approach that permits lot sizes to be reduced but does not allow the number of lots to increase beyond what otherwise would be permitted. Title 21 conservation subdivisions are allowed anywhere in Anchorage.
2. Hillside Conservation Subdivision: This conservation subdivision allows developers a small increase in the number of lots (e.g., 15 percent more) provided they exceed otherwise applicable open space standards. Hillside Conservation Subdivisions are addressed in HDP Policy 14-L (described in Chapter 6. Implementation).

wetlands, trails or other natural features. Flexibility in the layout of subdivisions is a key part of the strategy to protect the continuity of corridors across multiple subdivisions. A "Hillside Conservation Subdivision" ordinance will allow for reduced lot sizes and a modest density bonus (e.g., 15 percent) in exchange for the permanent conservation of open space, protection of key environmental features or establishment of expanded recreational access, any of which must secure permanent substantial public benefits. General policy direction is established in HDP Policy 14-L (Chapter 6. Implementation); implementation requires an ordinance amending Title 21 following HDP adoption.

Commercial Uses on the Hillside

Home-based Businesses: There are many home-based businesses on the Hillside. Home occupations are allowed on residential lots with restrictions. The existing rules under Title 21 are generally acceptable on the Hillside and are summarized as follows.

- The size of the enterprise is limited to 500 square feet or 25 percent of the dwelling, or 200 square feet of an accessory building.
- No more than one non-resident employee is allowed.
- Only one unlit wall sign no bigger than one square foot in area is allowed.
- Traffic and delivery vehicles may not be more "than would normally be expected in a residential neighborhood."
- Equipment may not produce noise, vibration, glare, fumes, odors, power fluctuations, or radio frequency interference.
- Hours of operation are prohibited between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.
- The new large animal ordinance also allows the boarding of horses for a fee.

Standards for Current and Future Nonresidential Uses: As part of this process, a number of public comments were voiced regarding the need for new, more stringent standards for existing nonresidential uses, including churches and domestic animals, to ensure that these uses do not damage the natural environment or detract from the area's predominantly residential character. Existing code regulations and the revisions to Title 21 now underway will address the majority of these issues. Improved regulations may be needed for specific nonresidential uses allowed under current zoning.

GOAL 3. Infrastructure and Efficient Growth Patterns

Plan land use, transportation infrastructure, and other infrastructure to serve anticipated growth to be efficient in terms of public expense, energy use, and other resources.

Background (No Policies Specific to this Goal)

The location and density of land uses can greatly affect the cost and efficiency of providing public services such as schools, roads, or police and fire services. Likewise, the pattern of development effects energy use, primarily due to variations in vehicular activity as a function of density. This plan addresses the two components of this goal as outlined below:

- Plans for infrastructure to serve anticipated growth (addressed in Chapter 3. Drainage; Chapter 4. Transportation; Chapter 5. Water and Wastewater).
- Guide land use to be efficient in public expense, energy use and other resources. Encouraging a greater proportion of future Hillside growth in areas that are comparatively close to established services results in relatively less demand for energy tied to vehicular use and more efficient use of existing public infrastructure (HDP Policy 1-A).

GOAL 4. Public Facilities

Retain land to serve anticipated needs for public facilities and public use areas, such as schools, drainage-related facilities, fire stations, parks, greenbelts, or other natural resource conservation areas.

Background

One function of a district plan can be to identify current and future needs for public facilities and public use areas such as schools, drainage-related facilities, fire stations, parks, and greenbelts or other natural resource conservation areas.

Schools

Policy 4-A

The Municipality of Anchorage and the Anchorage School District will continue a joint effort to identify school sites on the Hillside to accommodate future growth.

Background

The School District and Municipality have identified need for additional Hillside school sites since at least 2002, have carried out site investigations, and have been considering options for adjusting school site selection criteria to fit Hillside conditions. The 2003-2009 Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan identified site selections for a Golden View Elementary School and a South Anchorage Middle School. In October 2005, the School District issued a Request for Proposals to perform a "Southeast Hillside Elementary School Site Evaluation. The selected consultant, R&M Consultants, performed preliminary site investigations on three Southeast Hillside Elementary School sites. No suitable sites were found. In 2007, Planning staff concluded that "a thorough review of the site options, based on school site criteria, finds that none of the sites are environmentally ideal and are too expensive to develop." Planning staff discussed possible alternative options to consider:

- Revise the standard 15-, 30-, and 50-acre site criteria for elementary, middle and high schools to expand site options;
- Reduce minimum acreage requirements for schools;
- Review parking requirements and parking lot locations;
- Review standard site plan elements that may increase the amount of space needed, such as retention basins, open space, non-useable areas;
- Review the potential for combining outdoor athletic facilities;
- Use an alternate site search process (e.g., turnkey);
- Consider renovation or expansion of existing sites;
- Require that schools be located in areas designated for growth that already have sufficient existing infrastructure to support school facilities;
- Increase busing to better utilize existing school facilities;
- Adjust school boundaries; and
- Include vegetative buffers, setbacks and other constraints required under Title 21.

Fire Stations

Policy 4-B

Carry out site selection study to identify needed sites.

Background

The Anchorage Fire Department has identified a long-term need for future, smaller residential stations (housing a single-engine company or ambulance) on the Hillside. Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) station locations are determined by response modeling based on national fire and EMS standards. Some areas of the Hillside do not meet these response standards. While no specific sites were identified for this plan, the plan's implementation summary (Appendix B) documents the need for a process to identify and reserve land for this purpose, including a site selection and public review process.

Other Public Facilities

Drainage

HDP Policy 5-B uses a built/green infrastructure approach to identify areas to be used for community drainage functions. Other drainage considerations are addressed in Chapter 3. Drainage and in Chapter 6. Implementation.

Parks, Greenbelts, and Natural Resource Conservation Areas

The need to acquire and enhance the system of parks and natural open space and to conserve wildlife habitat areas on the Hillside is recognized in the Anchorage 2020 Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan and the 2006 Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource and Recreation Facility Plan. The Parks Plan notes that "planning and securing specific critical elements" in a physical framework of parks, open spaces, and greenbelts "should be a key priority before growth limits the options."

Park, greenbelt, and other natural resource conservation areas are addressed in HDP Policies 2-C, 5-A, 5-B, 5-C, 6-A, 6-B, 10-A, 10-B, 10-C, 12-A, 12-B, 12-C, 12-D, 14-A, 14-B, 14-C, and 14-L.

Goal 5. Environmental Quality

Protect environmental quality on the Hillside, including: providing corridors for drainage, protecting natural systems such as aquifer recharge areas and stream corridors, protecting wildlife travel corridors and habitat, and providing open space for views and recreation.

Policy 5-A

Maintain and protect environmental quality at three scales: 1) individual lots, using new development standards; 2) subdivisions, using a combination of new development standards and the conservation subdivision approach; and 3) watershed, using the built/green infrastructure approach and other plan strategies.

Background

The natural and recreational qualities of the Hillside, its wildlife, large areas of undeveloped lands, close contact with nature, dark night skies, parks, and wilderness trails are treasured by both Hillside residents and visitors. The public expressed strong support for protecting these qualities, maintaining the integrity of the area's natural environment and rural character, and improving recreational opportunities. Maintaining water quality is a priority, particularly protecting well water and Potter Marsh. At the same time, there is recognition that the vast majority of land on the Hillside is private property already developed or destined for residential development, and that any actions to protect open space must respect the rights and expectations of landowners and residents.

Environmental and recreational quality on the Hillside will be protected through a combination of existing plans and policies, planning processes now underway, and new policies established in this plan.

Environmental and recreational goals are important components of the Anchorage Comprehensive Plan and other studies, including Anchorage 2020, the Anchorage Parks Plan, the Anchorage Trails Plan, the Living with Wildlife Plan, the Anchorage Coastal Management Plan, and the Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan. State and federal agencies also have existing regulatory authority over specific environmental issues, including wastewater systems and wetlands.

The Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan is the planning document that identifies wetlands and their relative functional values (including habitat values) and provides site-specific management strategies for each wetland. Management strategies are implemented via environmental permitting and relevant Title 21 regulations (e.g., platting).

The Anchorage Coastal Management Plan is a policy document that defines issues of local concern and guides the development needs of residents, businesses, and landowners within the Anchorage coastal zone boundary. It includes a description of Anchorage's coastal resources and an analysis of the impacts from uses and activities. It describes the enforceable policies that are to be used to implement the goals and objectives and provides standards for uses and activities within the designated area.

Anchorage 2020 sets Bowl-wide policies related to a broad range of park, open space, and natural resource planning. Policies include the identification and conservation of open spaces, enhanced access to these areas, and the protection and restoration of Anchorage aquatic resources. Anchorage 2020 promotes a number of implementation strategies for these policies, including an update to the Parks Plan and development of programs like the Greenbelt Acquisition Program and Natural Open Space Acquisition. Parks, trails, open space, and habitat policies will be addressed in more detail in on-going and/or upcoming plans, including the Section 36 Master Plan by the MOA Parks and Recreation Department, and the Chugach Access Plan by the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

The 2006 Parks Plan supports acquisition and development of greenbelts along all major Hillside creeks, as well as two additional community-scale parks and recreation access to Chugach State Park and Potter Marsh. Consistent with Anchorage 2020, the Parks Plan and HDP objectives, future parks planning on the Hillside should include consideration of the need for and best way to create greenbelts, new parks, improvements to existing parks, improved parks management, provisions for habitat and water resources protection, and improved access and trail connections from Hillside neighborhoods. Improvements to the system of parks and open spaces can happen in a variety of ways including land trades, acquisition, and dedication of property through the subdivision process. The HDP endorses the extension and protection of greenbelts along major Hillside

Why Is Open Space Important?

" ... Why should we be concerned about protecting open space? In a nutshell, by preserving open space we protect streams and water quality, provide habitat for plants and animals, preserve rural character, provide recreational areas, protect home values, and reduce costs of municipal services. In short, land conservation makes our communities better places to live...The conservation subdivision approach involves small but significant changes to the subdivision design and review process. When integrated with comprehensive planning and zoning provisions which encourage the preservation of open space, a community can – over a period of years – protect an interconnected network of conservation lands. Developers can easily become the community's leading conservationists, as each new subdivision adds another link to an area-wide open space system."

Excerpted from Growing Greener: Conservation Subdivision Design, by Randall Arendt, Planning Commissioners Journal #33 Winter 1999.

streams. Implementing this broad objective requires detailed assessment of land ownership, physical characteristics, and other details of these corridors beyond the scope of this plan.

Hillside District Plan environmental protection strategies are woven into different parts of the plan, including policies in every chapter. These strategies, which work at three scales, are summarized below and in Figure 2.10.

1. Policies and Development Standards for Individual Parcels
The plan supports the standards proposed in the Public Hearing Draft of Title 21, to respond to the special characteristics of the Hillside, namely steep slopes and upper elevation conditions. General objectives for these new standards are introduced under HDP Goal 2 (Chapter 2. Land Use), and expanded in Chapter 6. Implementation. Topics addressed include retention of natural vegetation, setbacks from waterbodies, and improved runoff controls. There is a measure of public support for Hillside-wide standards to protect visual and environmental quality, particularly regarding impervious surface and retention of natural vegetation.

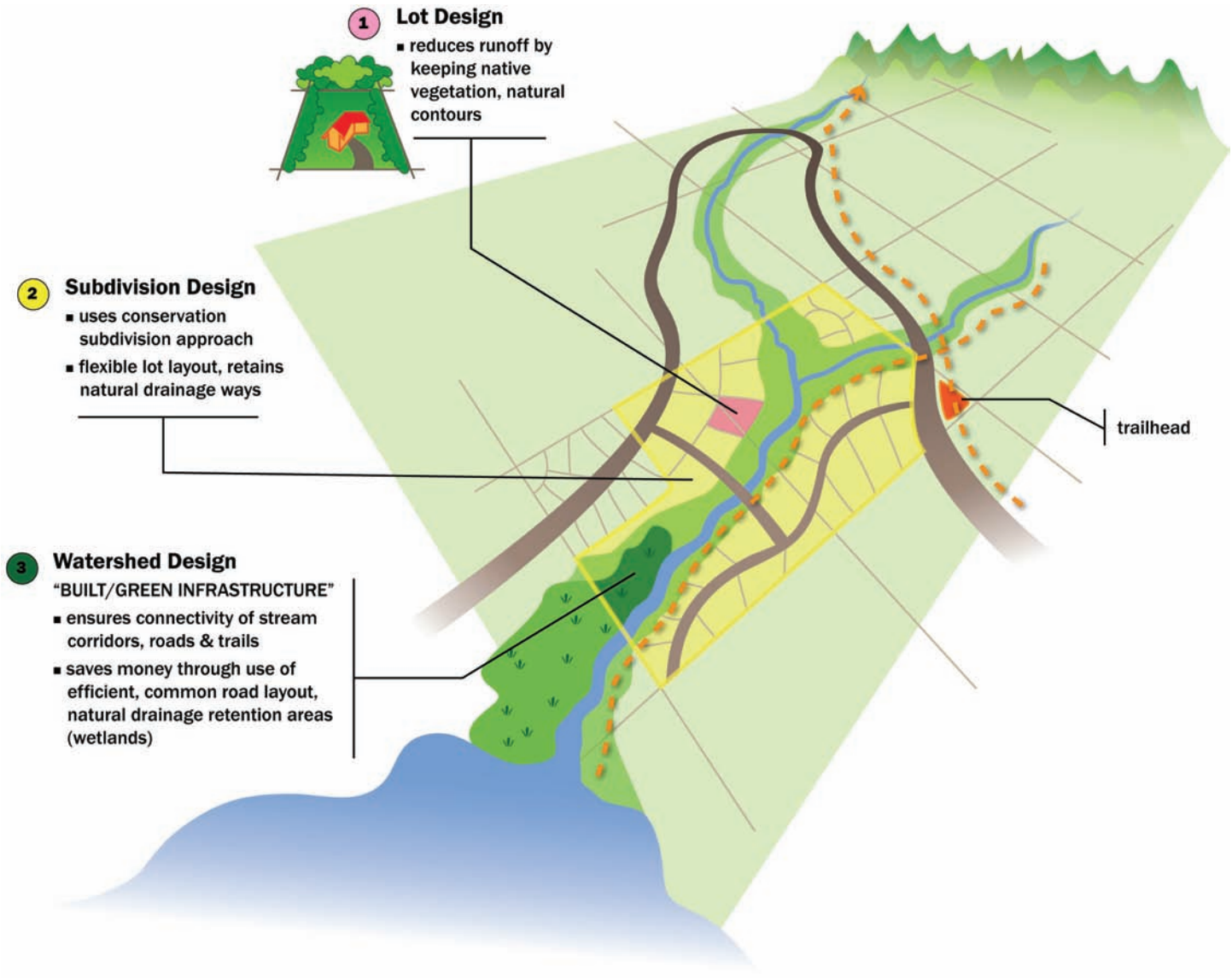
2. Policies and Development Standards for Subdivisions
To address the unique conditions on the Hillside, the plan develops Hillside-specific standards concerning subdivision layout options and submittal requirements. Objectives for these new standards are introduced in Goal 2 and HDP Policy 2-C of this chapter and listed in Chapter 3. Drainage and Chapter 6. Implementation. Topics addressed include changes in the subdivision submittal requirements and policies for Hillside-specific conservation subdivisions to provide greater flexibility and incentives for developers to protect open space, habitat, and recreational values within subdivisions. Habitat fragmentation is to be avoided, since it decreases wildlife movement and important supporting ranges.

3. Hillside-wide/Watershed-Scale Policies
In addition to actions at the level of individual lots and individual subdivisions, the plan also works at the Hillside-wide and watershed scale to better protect environmental and recreational values. The material below summarizes these policies:

Hillside Built/Green Infrastructure (HDP Policy 5-B):

- Recommends reserving open space corridors within and between subdivisions.
- Recommends trail corridors within and between subdivisions.

Figure 2.10
Integrated Development: Responding to Hillside Environmental Conditions at Three Scales



This graphic illustrates the integration of all the elements discussed on the previous pages: standards are developed to guide use of individual lots; the conservation subdivision process creates incentives and provides flexibility to allow for development while protecting streams and other natural features; and the overall built/green infrastructure approach ensures connectivity between subdivisions.

To reduce runoff and maintain visual quality, the plan establishes new, more restrictive development standards regarding retention of natural vegetation and the allowable extent of cut-and-fill.

- Encourages development to keep natural wildlife corridors and drainage systems intact and functional. Habitat fragmentation is to be avoided, since it decreases wildlife movement and important supporting ranges.

Other sections of the plan also establish policies important for environmental protection. These include:

- Visual Quality (HDP Goal 7).
- Hillside Drainage, Roads and Trails Service District (Chapters 3. Drainage, 4. Transportation, and 6. Implementation).
- Well Water Protection Plan (Chapters 5. Water and Wastewater and 6. Implementation).
- Trails and Chugach Access Policies (Chapters 4. Transportation and 6. Implementation).

Policy 5-B

Working at the watershed scale, implement a mapped overlay of built/green infrastructure and use this information to guide the layout of future subdivisions.

Background

In addition to policies for individual lots and subdivisions, the Hillside District Plan works at the watershed scale to create an integrated, connected system of open spaces, to provide for drainage, wildlife corridors and other open space uses, and to create a backbone road and trail system. Under this approach (referred to as "built/green infrastructure"), important features that cross multiple subdivisions, such as trails or stream corridors, are defined upfront so that future subdivisions can be designed in response to this integrated system. With this approach, the roads, trails, and open space within any single new subdivision become part of a larger system. This reduces both the costs and the impacts of new development.

While the term infrastructure typically connotes utilities like storm drains, the "green" infrastructure approach emphasizes the functional value of natural systems (for example, natural features such as stream corridors, wetlands and other aquifer recharge areas, and wildlife habitat). With a green infrastructure approach, instead of managing runoff primarily using costly storm water pipes, runoff can be directed to a system of streams and wetlands, as long as these are integrated so that the corridor

in one subdivision connects to a continuation of that corridor on an adjoining tract.

The "built" component of this approach refers to a system of primary roads and trails and some parts of the drainage system that serve multiple subdivisions and that can be identified prior to the development of any single subdivision. The value of this approach is in creating and integrating a connected system of roads and trails so that, for example, the trail that ends at one tract continues across the adjoining tract. This approach increases property values by creating an interconnected rather than a fragmented trail system, and reduces development costs and impacts by reserving the most efficient road route for a group of subdivisions, rather than requiring each subdivision to work out its own access plans.

Creating and Improving the Hillside Built/Green Infrastructure Map

Figure 2.12 gives the background to the creation of the Hillside Built/Green Infrastructure Map (Map 2.11). The map is based around three primary considerations: streams and related drainage features, roads, and trails. An important consideration in this process was the need to limit identified areas to those of highest value or greatest constraint. For example, the map is intended to identify the most important streams and wetlands, and the most important road and trails routes.

Once this plan is adopted, future subdivisions will be required to incorporate these built/green infrastructure elements into their designs. The map may be amended in the future, as more information becomes available on specific environmental features. Likewise, flexibility is needed in the application of the map to specific locations. For example, as long as the continuity of the road and trail system is preserved, a road or trail shown on the infrastructure map may be shifted to a slightly different location in response to future, more detailed site information. Likewise, while a dedicated public corridor is generally the preferred means to protect a stream, this could also be done in part through a simple development setback. More detail on the specific locations of proposed drainage and transportation elements can be found in the Drainage and Transportation Chapters of this plan. HDP Policies 14-G through 14-L (Chapter 6. Implementation) outline the specific process for incorporating this map into the subdivision development and approval process.

As the photos show, the Hillside includes a diverse section of Anchorage, from suburban to rural to wilderness. The Plan takes a three-part approach to protecting the Hillside's natural environment and recreation resources:

1. Establish development standards for individual parcels.
2. Create development standards for subdivisions.
3. Establish Hillside-wide and watershed-scale development policies.

To reserve elements such as roads, trails or stream corridors tht cross multiple properties, the plan identifies a system of "built/ green infrastructure." Map 2.11 identifies the most important drainageways, streams and wetlands, as well as known or likely future important trail and road corridors.

The Hillside Built/Green Infrastructure map data layers are updated on an ongoing basis. The Municipality of Anchorage Departments of Planning, Project Management and Engineering (PM&E), and Transportation Planning will need a memorandum of understanding to establish how and when the various layers are updated. At a minimum, the Hillside Built/Green Infrastructure Map should be updated annually. For example, it has been suggested that additional open space and wildlife corridors be shown on the map. Once identified, they could be included. Ongoing refinements to the map can be carried out administratively; for example, as drainage master plans or wetland boundaries are updated. Addition of entire new layers to the map, such as a major open space or habitat area, would require separate approvals and an HDP amendment.

Policy 5-C

Create a Riparian Greenbelt Acquisition Program.

Background

The acquisition of greenbelts on major streams in the Municipality has been a long-standing priority goal, but implementation has stalled in the Hillside area. The benefits of greenbelts on major streams extend to all residents of the Bowl and include water resources protection, connectivity of habitats, connectivity of neighborhoods, and recreation. This policy should be implemented pro-actively, drawing on diverse resources such as wetlands mitigation funds, private land trust efforts, and HLB-initiated land trades. It should not be left to the plat approval stage or to the local resources of a future Hillside infrastructure authority.

"Green infrastructure" refers to an integrated system of open spaces that serve as drainageways, wildlife corridors, floodwater storage, and recreational areas. Pictured above: lower Rabbit Creek canyon.

GOAL 6. Parks and Open Spaces

Maintain, supplement, and enhance a system of parks, trails, open spaces and other active and passive recreation areas.

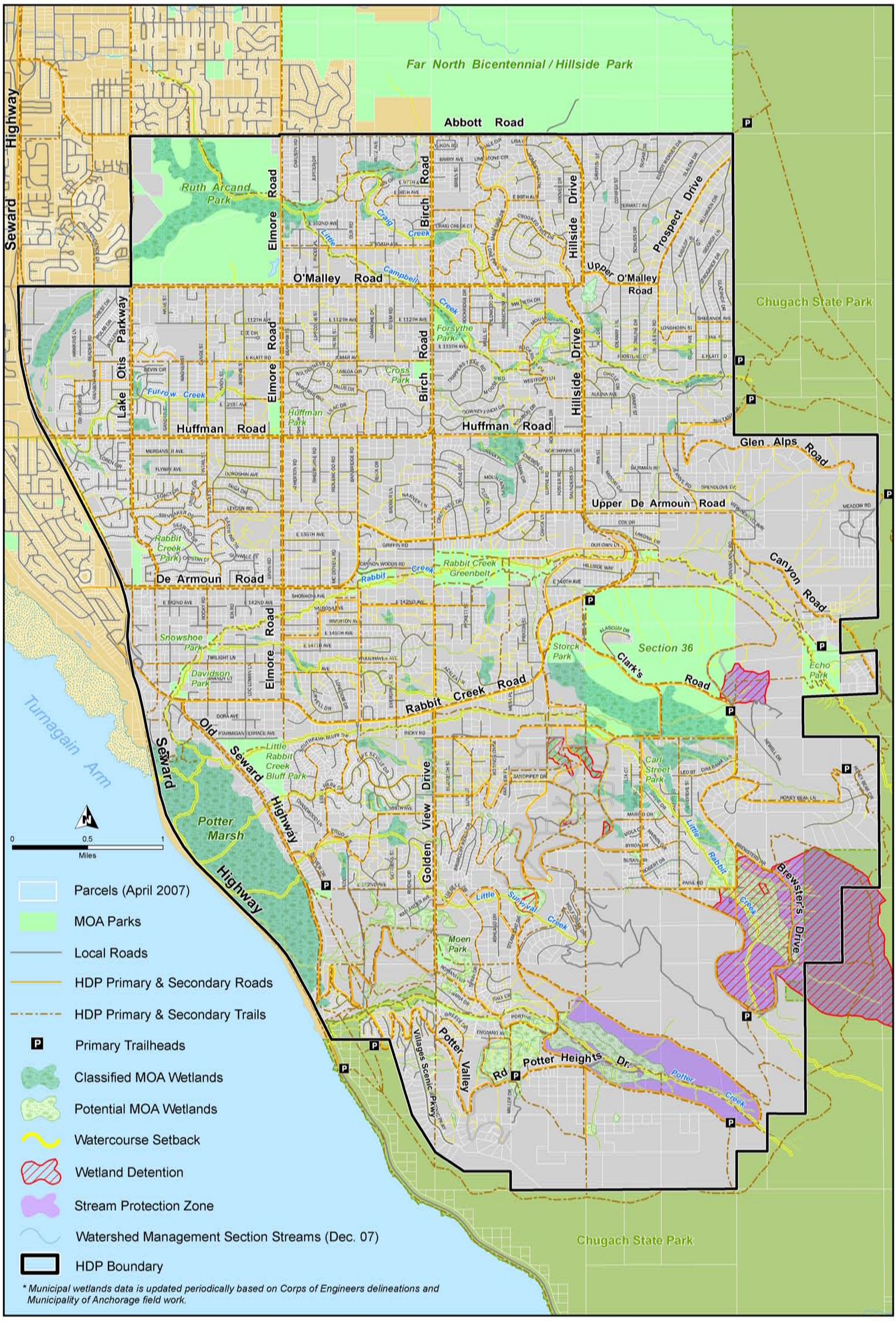
Policy 6-A

Establish priorities and implementation methods to meet deficiencies in neighborhood and community parks, develop natural resource and greenbelt acquisition programs and funding, conduct additional greenbelt and natural resource inventory planning, and enhance the Hillside built/green infrastructure system.

Map 2.11

Hillside Built/Green Infrastructure: a System of Stream Corridors, Major Roads, Trails, Wetlands, and Open Spaces

Hillside District Plan



** Municipal wetlands data is updated periodically based on Corps of Engineers delineations and Municipality of Anchorage field work.*

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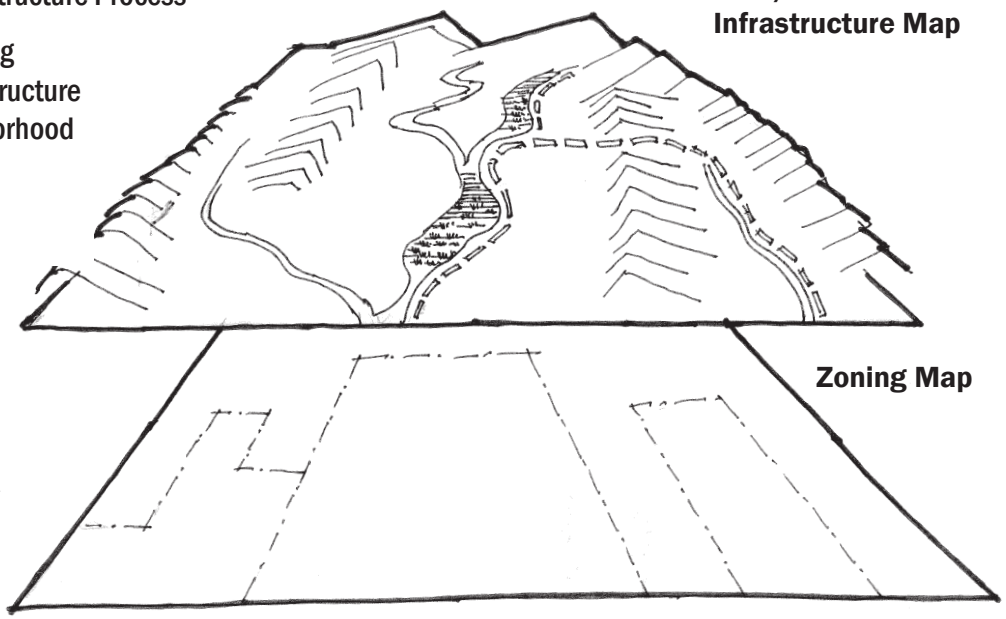
Figure 2.12 Built/Green Infrastructure Process

An Approach to Accommodating Development, Reducing Infrastructure Costs and Maintaining Neighborhood Character



PROCESS:

1. Map Functional and Environmental Values. Identify environmental features and processes (stream corridors, wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, etc.).

2. Map Recreation Areas. Identify recreation areas (trails, parks and other open space recreation use areas) that are best protected by allowing the land to remain largely undeveloped.

3. Map "Backbone Circulation." Identify a system of primary and secondary roads and trails (roads and trails that serve multiple subdivisions).

4. Layer maps of environmental features, open space and recreation, and roads and trails to create an integrated built/green infrastructure network map of particular features that cross multiple properties, such as stream corridors and trails. The layers that comprise the Hillside Built/Green Infrastructure Map (see Map 2.11) specifically include:

- Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Parks
- Primary/Secondary Roads (described in Chapter 4)
- Primary/Secondary Trails (described in Chapter 4)
- Primary Trailheads (described in Chapter 4)
- "Classified MOA Wetlands" (The Municipality of Anchorage Physical Planning Division maps and maintains a database of wetlands based on fieldwork, photo interpretation, soils information, and delineations conducted by themselves and others. Classified MOA wetlands are included in the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan*.)
- "Potential Wetlands - require field delineation" (Potential wetlands are those not yet included in the *Wetlands Management Plan* and that require further field verification. Wetlands shown on Map 2.11 are current as of December 2007.)
- "Wetland Detention" areas and "Stream Protection Zones" (These areas are described on page 3-12. They will generally be designated based on watershed drainage plans. The areas shown on Map 2.11 are derived from the Pilot Watershed Drainage Plan for Little Rabbit Creek and Little Survival Creek Watersheds and Potter Creek Watershed Drainage Plan.)
- Watercourse Setback
  - "Streams (Dec. 07)" (The Municipality of Anchorage Watershed Management Services field maps and maintains a database of streams as defined in municipal code. The database is continuously updated based on new information. Streams shown on Map 2.11 are current as of December 2007, with 50-foot setbacks, described on page 6-30.)
  - "Drainageways" as defined on page 3.14. (Like streams, these are continuously updated based on new information. Drainageways are not able to be mapped at the scale of Map 2.11, but are formal layers of the built/green infrastructure. Drainwageways are current as of December 2007, with 10-foot setbacks, described on page 6-30.

5. Formally adopt the map, recognizing that site-specific developments may lead to changes in the features that need protection for particular development projects.

6. Overlay the green infrastructure map on the zoning map to define areas where natural resource functions and open space values should be maintained as land is developed. Require future developments to identify these features prior to submitting a preliminary plat. Use this approach to maintain the integrity of the system of environmental features shown on the green infrastructure map (for example, a drainage corridor crossing multiple parcels).

Policy 6-B

Parks development should be phased and scaled to fit the level of road service, the limitations of on-site water and septic systems, and the rural character of the neighborhood. The design shall consider user and neighborhood safety and security and minimize overall impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.

Background

Previous planning efforts have identified a number of specific areas for the acquisition of land or easements for public recreation or natural resource conservation. Advancement of these projects will occur incrementally, thus it is important to not foreclose on opportunities even if full implementation is not mapped out. Subdivision approvals, road extensions, bond propositions, and other municipal and interagency actions should be monitored for opportunities related to the following:

- Access points for Chugach State Park and connections among municipal parks, trails, and greenbelts to Chugach State Park where possible.
- Greenbelts along Rabbit Creek, Potter Creek, Little Survival Creek, Little Rabbit Creek, and Little Campbell Creek.
- Completion of the Rabbit Creek Trail connecting the Seward Highway to Chugach State Park.
- Enhancement of access to the Potter Marsh watershed.
- Protection of key drainages to the Potter Marsh watershed.
- Development of new neighborhood parks to serve Potter Creek area and areas of Huffman/O'Malley, Rabbit Creek, and mid-Hillside.
- Acquisition and development of community use parks in the Lake Otis Parkway area between O'Malley Road and DeArmoun Road, as well as O'Malley Road and Elmore Road area.

GOAL 7. Visual Quality

Protect views, both looking out from the Hillside and views of the Hillside as seen from the rest of Anchorage (for example, by maintaining vegetation, limiting cut and fill, and guiding the location and character of new residential development).

Policy 7-A

Maintain and protect views by protecting natural vegetation, drainage corridors, significant natural features, and topography at the scale of watersheds, subdivisions, and individual lots.

Policy 7-B

Establish new standards to reduce the visual impact of development on select, identified prominent ridgelines (identified on HDP Map 6.9).

Background

Development in locations that offer great views also can impact the visual quality of surrounding areas. A particular concern on the Hillside is the development occurring on a few highly visible ridgelines, where the addition of new homes can noticeably impact the character of views for residents and recreational users. Many communities around the country have adopted strict guidelines limiting development in visually prominent locations, to help protect the natural and/or rural character for all the people that might see such development. The HDP puts forth a less aggressive policy, intended to not prevent development in such locations but to reduce visual impact by establishing development standards. Chapter 6. Implementation presents the specific standards, which are summarized below. These policies only apply on specific ridgelines, identified on Map 6.9.

- Avoid construction of homes, towers, or other developed features directly on the top of ridgelines.
- Houses will be no more than two stories in height.
- Maintain natural vegetation.
- Use muted colors and non-reflective materials.

The Hillside often experiences extreme winds, particularly on exposed ridges. Complying with these standards not only helps maintain visual quality; it also reduces the very real hazards of constructing large homes on the top of windswept ridges.

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