

Friday March 8, 2024

To The Girdwood Board of Supervisors and Girdwood Land Use Committee

The **Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission** held a meeting on **Thursday February 22, 2024** There were two **action items**.

A resolution was passed recommending withdrawal of 10 parcels from HLB inventory and transfer to the Parks and recreation department near Potter Marsh.

A second resolution was passed recommending the Anchorage Assembly approval of the 2024 HLB annual Work Program and 2025-2029 Five Year Management plan. As part of the discussion an amendment to the plan was approved that any potential disposal of parcel 6-011, a.k.a. the Pomeroy Glacier View development project, would be consistent with the Girdwood Comprehensive Plan and Girdwood trails plan.

Members of the public raised concern about the condition of the levy in old Girdwood. This item was not captured in the work plan but HLB staff will research jurisdiction and land rights associated with the levy.

The next **Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission** meeting will be on **Thursday March 21, 2024**. At this time there is one action item on the agenda and that is to renew a lease in midtown Anchorage to Chugach Electric.

Respectfully,  
Tim Charnon, HLB Commissioner

March 4, 2024

Dear ASD Staff and Families,

As we approach the April 2024 Anchorage municipal election, I want to take a moment to share important information regarding the ASD case school bond that will appear on your ballot as Proposition 1.

It starts with safety.

Voters will decide on whether to approve a school bond to fund important building safety projects and repairs. This bond will directly impact more than 10,000 Anchorage students, which accounts for approximately 25% of all Anchorage students.

So what's on the bond?

- \* Prioritized security vestibule and security upgrades
- \* Academic area safety upgrades
- \* Roof replacement and roof upgrades
- \* Renovation, replacement, and repair projects

The schools on the bond are Kasuun, Lake Hood, Klatt, Alpenglow, and Inlet View elementary schools, plus Central and Romig middle schools, and finally, Chugiak High School.

A school's functional life, without major renewals, ranges from 30 to 50 years. However, for many of ASD's schools-built in the 1960s and 1970s, additional funds beyond the routine maintenance budget are occasionally needed; these repairs are funded by municipal bonds.

The total amount of the bond proposition is \$62,370,000, with property taxes per \$100,000 amounting to \$12.69. Proposition 1 will not fund general school operations but rather, specific safety upgrades and repairs.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the voters for their past support of school bonds, and thank you for making time to learn about how this year's Proposition 1 supports the safety and well-being of our students and staff.

For more information, please visit our hot topics page: <https://www.asdk12.org/bond>.

ASD is committed to providing the best educational opportunities for our children, and with Prop 1, we are building a brighter and safer tomorrow, one school at a time.

Sincerely,

Jharrett Bryantt, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Anchorage School District

#### Updates based on community feedback

- Applicable commercial zones: gC-2, gC-3, gC-5, gC-6, gC-8, gC-10, GRST-2
  - Excludes gC-4 - these are isolated lots along Alyeska Hwy, surrounded by residential uses
  - Added GRST-2 (resort area)
- Simplify expiration to a date certain (30-Oct-2027)
  - originally required "X units of workforce housing", but that made it harder to define risk/benefit for owners of commercial land
- No specific employment requirements
  - *Workforce Housing* is Federally defined as housing "affordable" for household income of 60%-120% of Area Median Income (this income range is too high for Section 8 vouchers or Low Income Housing Tax Credit financing)
  - *Affordable* is Federally defined as expenditure on rent + essential utilities of no more than 30% of gross income
  - Land owner can add specific additional requirements if they are consistent with Federal and State laws and Municipal anti-discrimination code
- Add density/size limit: limit of 20 du with a maximum of 12 units per parcel;
- Application paperwork & process:
  - sworn affidavit from land owner / manager
  - safety inspection from Fire Dept
  - administrative site plan review (provides formal notice to GBOS/LUC and formal action by Planning Dept)

#### Justification for temporary vs permanent changes:

- This is a temporary reprieve while permanent workforce housing is developed and constructed.
- The Girdwood Comprehensive Plan is anticipated to be adopted in Fall 2024, which will lead to an overhaul of zoning within 2-3 years. The public review draft allows housing (mixed use) within commercial districts. Approaches for temporary housing which are successful can be incorporated into new zoning.

## **Amend AMC 21.09 to allow Temporary Workforce Housing on Commercial Land Until Permanent Workforce Housing is Constructed in Girdwood**

*Briana Sullivan, Co-Chair, GBOS*

*Mike Edgington, Housing and Economic Development Supervisor, GBOS*

### **Context**

- There is an increasing unhoused population in Girdwood, most of whom are employed locally and/or have established connections to the community. Some unhoused residents are tent camping, but many are in vehicles and RVs.
- While shelter options in Anchorage can provide an emergency stop-gap, they are not compatible with employment in Girdwood.
- The number of long-term rentals (LTRs) has decreased over the last several years as many have been converted to Short-Term Rentals (STR). According to commercially available data, almost 20% of Girdwood's housing stock was involved in the STR market over the past 12 months compared to a rate of under 1.5% in the rest of the MOA.
- While permanent housing is the long-term solution, Girdwood, unlike Anchorage, does not have a reservoir of underutilized buildings that can be converted quickly to lower-cost housing.
- Constructing new workforce housing is a 2-3 year project even if funding was available.

### **Goals**

- Establish policy(s) to bridge the current situation until lower-cost housing can come on line (~3 years).
- Encourage employers to be part of the solution, as the lack of housing affects them directly by limiting the employee pool.
- Build upon unofficial approaches already underway.
- Include a sunset trigger mechanism, since temporary housing is not the long-term solution.
- Limit allowable use to the provision of workforce housing, not for additional visitor accommodation.

### **Proposal**

Key features:

- Amend AMC 21.09 to allow temporary housing units and/or RV use on existing commercially zoned land, if they are used for primary residential occupation.
- Sunset provisions in ~~October 2026~~, October 2027 ~~or later when a specific number of new workforce housing units become available.~~
- Prohibit use as STR and require primary occupation, but also allow tenants to move into permanent housing without penalty.
- Required to be "affordable" based on Federal definition

### **Implementation details**

AMC 21.05.080 already allows “temporary structures” to be occupied when they are on the same parcel as a residential building under construction, so code already allows temporary structures for residents with enough capital resources to own land and fund construction. Conceptually, this policy does the same thing at a community level.

Add a definition for *Temporary Workforce Housing* as a new section in 21.09.050 B.4 (Commercial Uses) to include RVs, cabins without permanent foundations and similar temporary structures, to be used as residential housing.

- Prohibit use as short-term rentals or other visitor accommodations.
- Define “affordable” as no more than 30% of gross income for rent+utilities at 80% of AMI, using individual AMI for studio sized units, and household AMI for larger units.
- If the structure/RV is owned by the resident, then limit ground rent to half the above amounts.
- An affidavit from the land owner, and property manager if applicable, is required

Amend the Use Table (Table 21.09-2) by adding a row for Workforce Housing as a new Use Category and Temporary Workforce Housing as a Use Type under the Commercial section. Enter an “S” for Administrative Site Plan review for the following zones:

- GC-2 (Old Girdwood by Mall)
- GC-3 (Old Girdwood)
- ~~GC-4 (Alyeska Highway)~~
- GC-5 (South Townsite)
- GC-6 (Lower Crow Creek Rd)
- GC-8 (Behind Post Office)
- GC-10 (near Brewery)
- GRST-2 (resort)

### **Expiration**

Add clause into 21.09.050 B.4.f that the allowed use will expire on Nov-1 2027.

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### **Draft code amendment**

21.09.050 - Use regulations.

*B. Use-specific definitions and standards.* The following use-specific standards apply regardless of whether the use type is permitted as a matter of right, subject to an administrative or major site plan review process, or subject to the conditional use process.

4. *Commercial uses.*

**f. Temporary Workforce Housing**

**i. Definition.**

**ii. Use specific standards**

**iii. Expiration**

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Add a new row to Table 21.09-2

		Residential						Commercial									Ind.		Resort		Other								
Use Category	Use Type	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	G	G	G	Definitions and Use Specific Standards	
		R	R	R	R	R	R	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	I	I	R	R	A	O	W		
		1	2	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	1	2			S	S			S			
				A																									
COMMERCIAL																													
<u>Workforce Housing</u>	<u>Temporary Workforce Housing</u>							<u>S</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>S</u>			<u>S</u>		<u>S</u>		<u>S</u>									<u>21.09.050</u> <u>B.4.f.</u>	

## Concerns / comments heard so far

- Concerns about RV parks along Alyeska Highway
- Commercial land owners might abuse this flexibility
- Could the sunset clause create an incentive for those investing in temporary housing to oppose permanent housing?
- Many businesses with employees don't have commercial land in the identified zones and vice versa
- Should the resort zones be included?
  - GRST1 - Daylodge & Olympic Mountain Loop
  - GRST2 - Hotel area
- How do we ensure that the temporary housing is safe?



### Updates based on community feedback

- Applicable commercial zones: gC-2, gC-3, gC-5, gC-6, gC-8, gC-10, GRST-2
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January 17, 2024

A resolution of Girdwood Housing and Economic Committee to provide Long Term Rental (LTR) units in the Girdwood area by restricting the rental of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) to 30 days or longer.

Whereas:

- There is a lack of Long Term Rentals (LTR) available in Girdwood for workforce housing and seasonal employees
- There is an immediate need to make available additional LTR units
- Girdwood Housing and Economic Committee is looking for solutions that result in mitigation of the impact that Short Term Rentals (STR) activity has on available workforce housing
- There are no revenue sources immediately available to fund other incentive programs to increase the supply of LTR
- The intent and purpose of Accessory Dwelling Units is stated in 21.09.050B:
  - Increase the supply of supplemental housing through flexible use of existing housing stock, land supply, and infrastructure;
  - Respond to the local needs for seasonal housing
- There are no restrictions on the use of ADU for STR, which defeats the stated intent and purpose of these size limited properties

Therefore let it be resolved that GHEC advises GBOS to pursue a change in Title 21, Chapter 9, that defines the allowed use of ADUs to only permit rentals for 30 days or longer.

**[NEW language]**

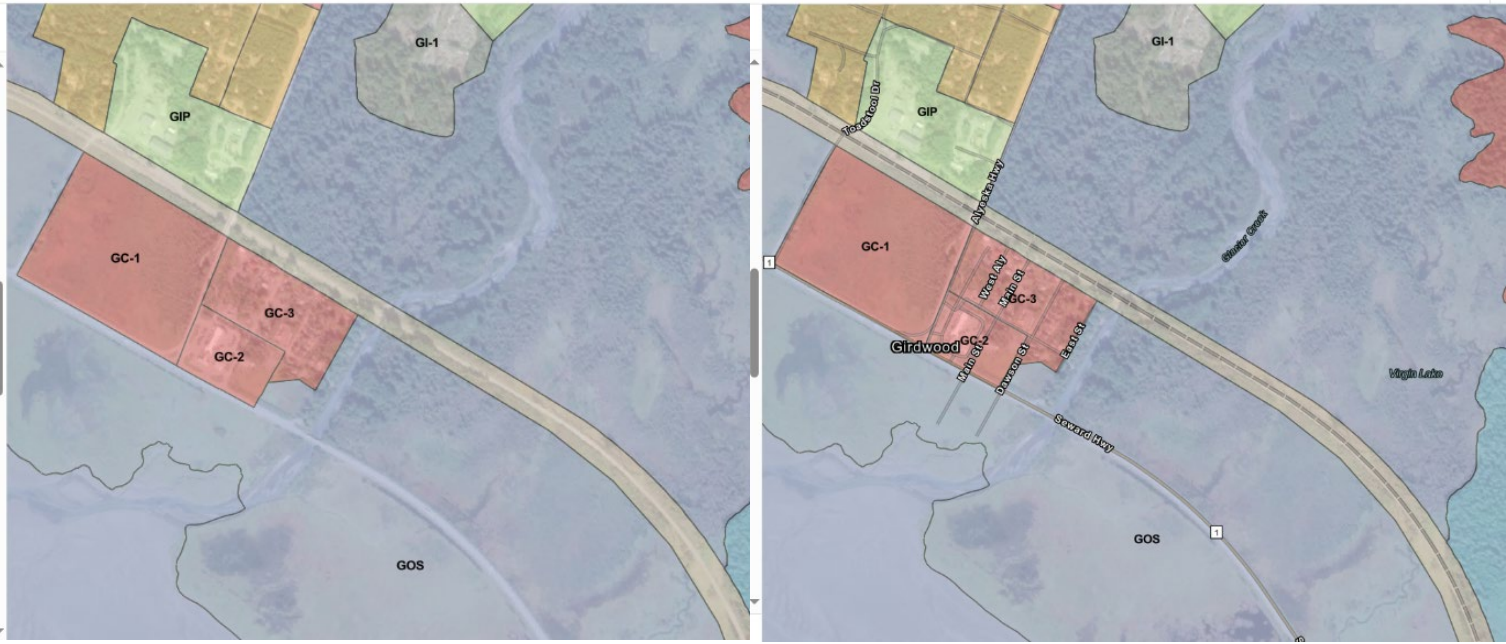
21.09.50 Use Regulations

2. Use-specific standards for accessory uses:

a. Accessory Dwelling Units

iii. Requirements

*(A)Maximum number of accessory units.* Only one accessory dwelling unit, as defined in Section 21.05.070D., shall be allowed on any single-family residential lot. The accessory dwelling unit may be a rental unit. **[If rented or leased, the accessory dwelling unit shall not be used for rental periods of less than 30 days.]**



[Chapter 21.09 - GIRDWOOD \(NEW CODE - Effective January 1, 2014\) | Code of Ordinances | Anchorage, AK | Municode Library](#)

b.  
*gC-2 (Girdwood Station/Seward Highway Commercial) district.*

i.  
*Location.* The gC-2 district is comprised of land on the east side of Alyeska Highway, west of Dawson Street, at the intersection of the Alyeska Highway with the Seward Highway. The district fronts both highways.

ii.  
*Intent.* The gC-2 district, along with the gC-1 district, constitutes the entry to Girdwood Valley and shall be developed as part of an attractive gateway to a mountain resort community. **Because of the proximity to the Seward Highway, residential uses are not appropriate in this district.** Landmark-quality elements are encouraged in any development visible from the highways, and the design of larger buildings shall make every effort to reduce the perception of building mass and make the building appear to be an aggregation of smaller, simple forms.

iii.  
*District-specific standards.* Building and landscape materials, such as natural wood, native trees and flowers, and local stone, shall be emphasized.

c.  
*gC-3 (Old Townsite Commercial/Residential) district.*

i.  
*Location.* The gC-3 district is comprised of the land north of the gC-2 district, east of the Alyeska Highway, south of the Alaska Railroad, and west of Glacier Creek at the entrance to Girdwood Valley.

ii.

*Intent.* This district reflects the development pattern of early Girdwood, with a mix of houses and small businesses on small lots creating the appearance of a small, historic town. There are still many vacant lots in this district to be developed with either residences or small commercial and craft-oriented businesses to retain the unique scale and visual quality of this district.

iii.

*District-specific standards.*

(A)

*Residential character.* To maintain overall neighborhood integrity, new nonresidential development in the old townsite shall have a residential character, even though the zoning permits commercial uses. Elements of residential character in the old townsite include predominantly pitched roofs, porches and protected entryways, rectangular and vertically oriented windows recessed into the exterior wall or window trim, no blank walls, and special attention to the detailing of windows, doors, porches and protected entries on the ground floor. Siding and trim shall be traditional residential in appearance, and avoid materials associated with industrial uses.

(B)

*Parking.* On-street parking may satisfy parking requirements; excessive on-site parking is discouraged. Up to 50 percent of the width of the front setback may be used for parking, provided parking lots allow for sidewalks so pedestrians may comfortably and safely walk by parking stalls.

(C)

*Accessory structures and outdoor storage.* Uses shall adhere to residential district standards for outdoor storage and accessory structures.