



TIKISHLA PARK

MASTER PLAN

October 2018

Guiding Principles

The mission of the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department is to ensure that Anchorage parks are well maintained and safe for the public. This mission is embodied in the motto “Healthy Parks, Healthy People”. To fulfill this mission, Anchorage Parks and Recreation is guided by a set of eight strategies or core values. These strategies guide the Parks and Recreation Department in the management of Municipal parklands and were established in the *Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan* (2006).

These eight strategies serve as the basis for future action and decision-making and are the product of a comprehensive and on-going public engagement process.

Core Values & Strategic Goals

1. Improve Maintenance and Stewardship of What We Have
2. Private-Public Partnership
3. Parks as Community Building Blocks
4. Parks as Economic Engines
5. Balanced Services & Facilities for a Diverse Community
6. Access and Connections
7. Stewardship of Natural Resources
8. Creating a Strong Parks and Recreation Organization

Acknowledgments

The **Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department** would like to recognize and thank all the individuals and organizations who have participated in the creation of this master plan.

John Rodda	Director of Parks and Recreation
Josh Durand	Parks Superintendent
Steve Rafuse	Senior Planner/Project Manager

A special thanks to the members of the **Advisory Group** for their dedication, insight and assistance in developing this master plan. Additional thanks to the technical advisory and agency representatives who have shared their expertise and input along the way. And a special thanks to Sharron Harris who’s advocacy and hard work made this master plan a reality - you will be missed.

Ed Brewer	Neighbor - Trail Watch
Edith McKee	Neighbor
Sharron Harris	Airport Heights Community Council
Jonny Hayes	Neighbor
Heather Ireland	Rogers Park Community Council
Rob Gambill	City View Little League
Zach Keer	ARC of Anchorage
Carlos Gomez	Scotty Gomez Foundation
Kyle Cunningham	Neighbor/MOA Watershed Management
Brad Muir	Neighbor/MOA Natural Resource Manager
Geran Tarr	Alaska Legislature
Kalen Saxton	Neighbor
Amy Solberg	City View Little League
Barbara Karl	Airport Heights Community Council
Teri Penn	Airport Heights Community Council
Carolyn Ramsey	Airport Heights Community Council

Property Information

Parcel Information

- 004-141-20-000 (6.67 Acres) PLI
- 004-151-01-000 (50.87 Acres) PLI
- 004-154-26-000 (.19 Acres) R1
- 004-154-27-000 (.19 Acres) R1
- 004-154-28-000 (.24 Acres) R1
- 004-154-29-000 (.17 Acres) R1
- 004-154-30-000 (.17 Acres) R1
- 004-154-31-000 (.17 Acres) R1
- 004-161-04-000 (38.95 Acres) PLI
- 004-162-42-000 (1.7 Acres) R1
- 004-162-43-000 (2 Acres) R2SL

Zoning: PLI-p, R1, R2SL

Grid: SW1434, SW1534

Size: Approximately 105 acres
(101.32 acres not including ROW’s)

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INTRODUCTION



Overview

Tikishla Park is a 105 acre park located along the Chester Creek Greenbelt in the Airport Heights neighborhood of Anchorage. The park is classified as a Natural Resource Use Area in the 2006 *Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource and Recreation Facility Plan*. However, the park has several well defined use areas and functions as a neighborhood park, little league complex, major multi-use trail corridor, and natural resource area. The most recent master plan was completed in 1998 and upgrades are needed to address current issues and meet the demand for recreation facilities.

The Tikishla Park Master Plan is the product of extensive public engagement and collaboration with local stakeholders. It identifies community needs, addresses public expectations and establishes a framework for future management, maintenance, and development of the park. Further, the Tikishla Park Master Plan embodies the community's vision to provide active and healthy year-round recreational opportunities while preserving important natural resources for future generations.

1973 Article in the Anchorage Daily News

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS
Lawrence Fanning
Editor & Publisher, 1967 to 1971
Katherine Fanning, Editor & Publisher
Stan Abbott
Executive Editor
Tom Brown
Associate Editor
Tom Gibbons
Managing Editor
David L. Stein
General Manager
Noel Matteson
Circulation Manager
Paul V. Brown
Advertising Manager
Founded in 1946 by Norman C. Brown
Alaska's Only Morning and Sunday Newspaper

4—Monday, August 13, 1973

Our Views

Park power

The City Council should be congratulated for its approval last week of a six-acre park in the overcrowded City View area.

The small piece of land at 20th Avenue and Sunrise Drive is an oasis of greenery in the middle of one of Anchorage's most densely populated single-family residential areas.

It was slated to fall prey to the bulldozer this spring, since the owner hoped to build a 104-unit group housing project on the site. His hopes were dashed, however, when some 1,100 residents of the area signed a petition to form a park improvement district and agreed to pay two-thirds of the cost of acquiring the site.

There was the first citizen-initiated park district petition in City of Anchorage history, and its approval by the council ended a neighborhood battle to save the site that had been raging for months.

In approving the park district the council agreed to foot one-third of the bill for acquiring the land, which will probably cost somewhere between \$200,000 and \$250,000.

Also to be congratulated are the residents of the area themselves, who persevered through countless Borough Assembly, Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council meetings in order to protect their neighborhood from over-

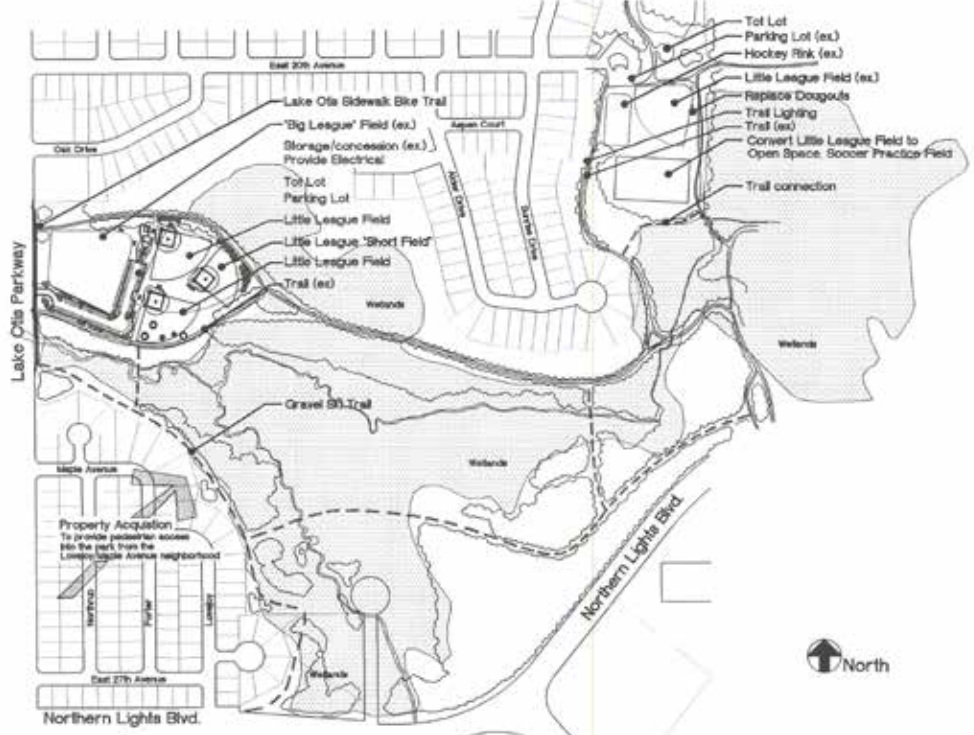
Background

Tikishla Park is located between the Airport Heights (originally City View & Saxton) and Anchor Park neighborhoods. These neighborhoods were developed in the early 1950's, and were some of the earliest neighborhoods in Anchorage to develop outside of the original downtown area.

In 1973, Airport Heights residents agreed to voluntarily assess their properties in order to purchase six acres of parkland slated for development. This was the first citizen-initiated park district petition in the history of Anchorage. Since then, neighbors have continued their advocacy for Tikishla Park as an important neighborhood park and valued natural area.

Development of Tikishla Park has historically occurred in two main areas of the park: Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave) and Davenport Fields. The footprint of these two areas has changed little since the park's early development. However, usage of these two areas have evolved over the years and facilities have seen several iterations of upgrades. Examples of the park's evolution is visible in the series of historic aerial imagery on the following pages.

In 1998, a Master Plan for Tikishla Park was completed identifying changes to some park facilities. The 1998 Master Plan identifies the



Tikishla Park Master Plan
DIVISION OF PARKS AND BEAUTIFICATION
EAST ANCHORAGE PARKS IMPROVEMENT PACKAGE
February 18, 1998

conversion of ball fields at Davenport Fields from two (2) to the current four (4). The Master Plan also identifies the conversion of a ball field at Tikishla (E 20th Ave) to a soccer field, which was not completed. The 1998 Master Plan also identifies the development of a "gravel ski trail" as well as other small trail connections which have not been completed.

More recently, a local developer has proposed the development of a large indoor/outdoor

tennis facility for Tikishla Park. As envisioned, the facility would have a large footprint occupying much of the upland forest in the area of the old campground. The location proposed would be accessible from Northern Lights Blvd near the intersection with UAA Drive. Local residents and area community councils have voiced concern to the Parks and Recreation Department questioning the need for such a facility and citing the loss of valuable greenspace as a major concern.

Development History



In the 1960's, the north ball field and hockey rink was developed at Tikishla Park, the west ball field was developed at Davenport Fields, the campground was developed off of Northern Lights Blvd.



In the 1970's, the south ball field at Tikishla Park was developed, a second large ball field was developed at Davenport Fields, the Chester Creek Trail was constructed, campground closes



In 1984-85, the playground and parking lot were installed at Tikishla Park along with the paved spur trails to Nichols Park and along the east side of the ball fields



In 1993, the hockey rink was re-surfaced and playground expanded



In the early 2000's, the east field at Davenport Fields is converted to three little league fields, parking lot is expanded and a tot lot is developed



In 2014: the Scotty Gomez hockey rink was upgraded with new boards and lighting



Project Purpose

This document provides a long range vision for Tikishla Park over the next 20 years. The Master Plan seeks to address issues and concerns, and provides recommendations to balance public access and recreation with environmental health to ensure the long-term sustainability of the park. More specifically, the purpose of the master plan is to:

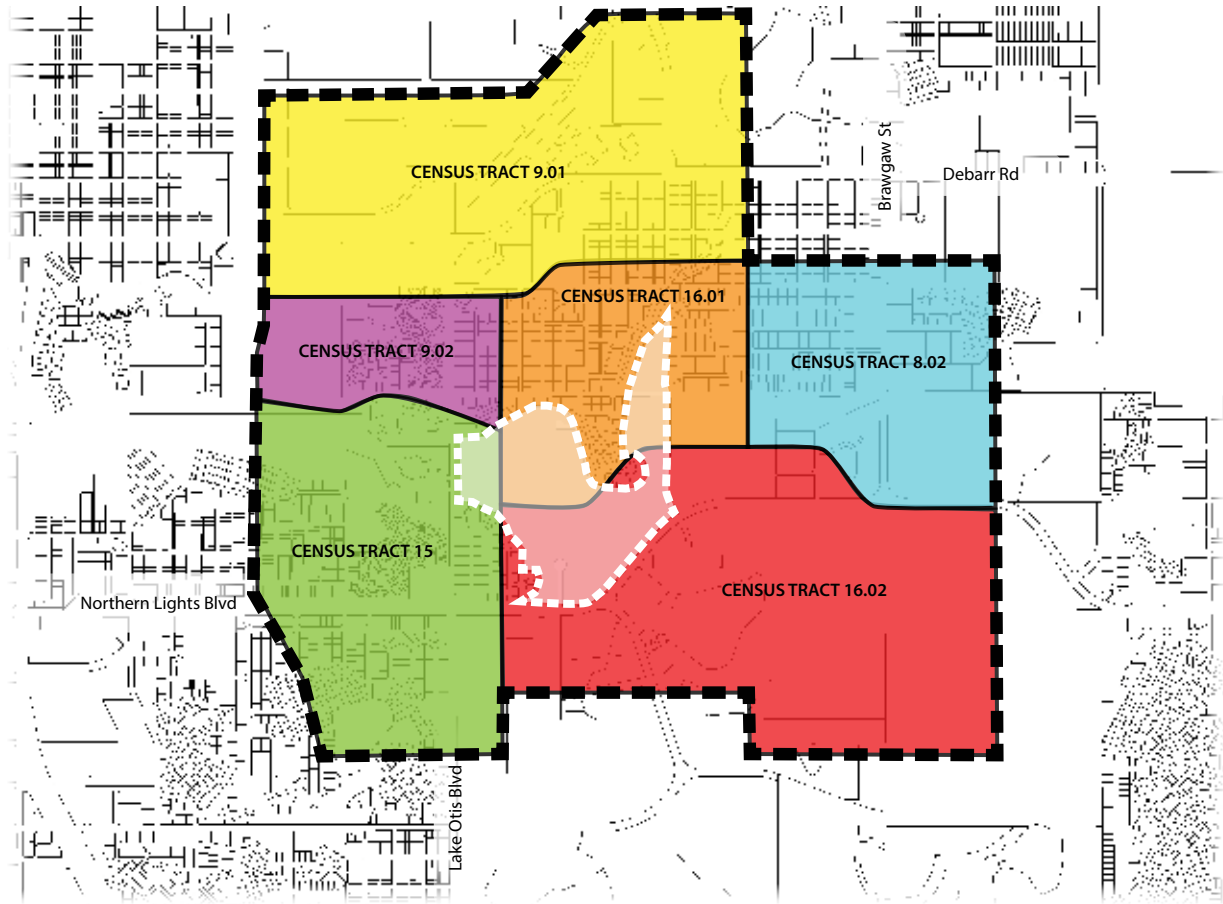
- Understand the wants and needs of the local community as it relates to facilities at Tikishla Park
- Identify and prioritize future improvements at Tikishla Park
- Understand the level of community support for a large indoor tennis facility proposed for Tikishla Park off of Northern Lights Blvd.
- Develop solutions to address community concerns regarding safety
- Balances the development of new facilities with the existing natural areas
- Create a tool for future fundraising

Community Profile

Nine percent (26,591) of Anchorage’s total population (298,178) lives in a census tract within one mile of Tikishla Park. There are six census tracts with 30% or more of their total area within a one mile buffer of Tikishla Park. This sub-area includes census tracts: 8.02, 9.01, 9.02, 15, 16.01, 16.02.

Income and population vary by census tract within the sub-area. For example, census tract 9.01 is considerably more diverse than other census tracts in the sub-area, with only 27% of residents identifying as white compared to 69% in census tract 15. Census tract 9.01 also has a significantly lower median household income (\$40,337) compared to \$88,081 in tract 15. Collectively, the median household income of the sub-area is \$62,755.

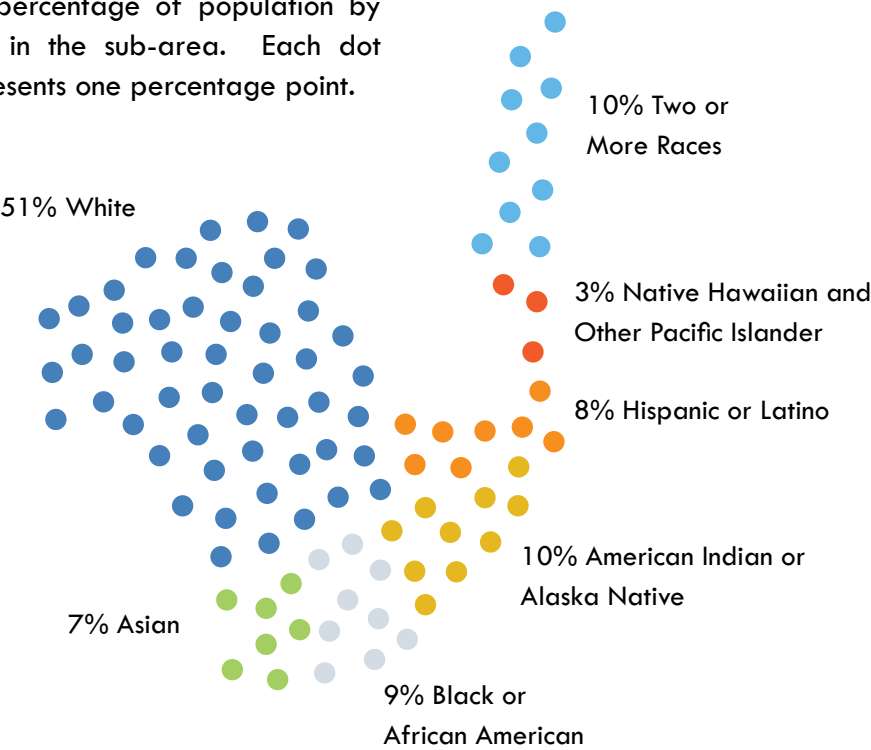
To summarize, the sub-area is more culturally and economically diverse than Anchorage as a whole. (U.S. Census Bureau 2017)



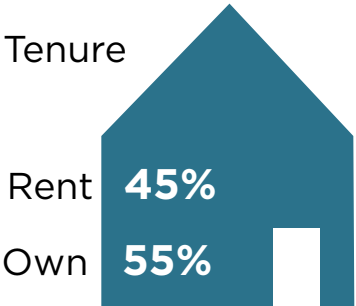
Census Tracts forming the sub-area surrounding Tikishla Park

Demographics

The percentage of population by race in the sub-area. Each dot represents one percentage point.



Housing Tenure



The percentage of owner occupied properties varies greatly within the sub-area from 31% in tract 9.01 to 77% in tract 16.01. The sub-area has a slightly lower rate of owner occupied homes (55%) than the city as a whole (60%).

Population



Sub-Area: 26,591
Anchorage: 298,178

The population of the sub-area is 26,591 or 9% of the total population of Anchorage. The sub-area is also more diverse and less white than the city as a whole.



Median Household Income

Sub-Area: \$62,755
Anchorage: \$78,121

Median Household Income for the sub-area is \$62,755 compared to \$78,121 for the city as a whole. Household income within the study area varies considerably by census tract. For example, median household income for census tract 9.01 is \$40,337 compared to \$88,081 in census tract 15.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Context

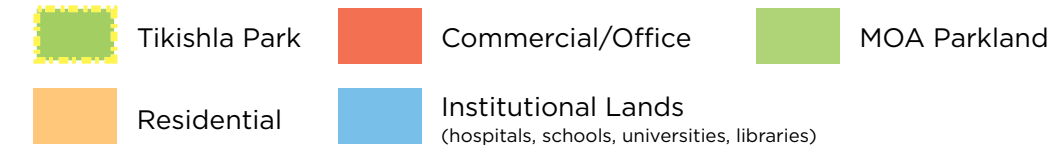
Tikishla Park is a 105 acre park and natural area located along the Chester Creek Greenbelt in mid-town Anchorage. The park is most popular among residents of Airport Heights and Anchor Park, but includes facilities that attract the larger population such as the Chester Creek Trail and Davenport Fields.

Tikishla Park is part of a larger system of protected greenspace forming the Chester Creek Greenbelt. The park is defined by residential housing to the north, northeast and southwest with Lake Otis Blvd. forming the western-most boundary of the park. To the south, Northern Lights Blvd. separates Tikishla Park from the UMED District. To the east of the park is a mix of institutional properties and undeveloped wetlands.

Tikishla Park is classified as a “Natural Resource Use Area” in the *Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resources, and Recreation Facility Plan*. Within the plan, 85 acres are designated as “Natural Resource Acres” and 21 acres as “Specialty Use Acres”.

Specialty Use Acres typically refers to “athletic facilities” or sports complexes. In the case of Tikishla Park, Davenport Fields and Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave) are both identified as Specialty Use Areas for their historic use as ball fields. Today, Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave) is

Illustration of land uses in the Tikishla Park area



no longer used for baseball and functions as a neighborhood park.

Natural Resource Areas are “lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open spaces, visual aesthetics or buffering”. Most of Tikishla Park’s Natural Resource Areas are categorized as “Natural Resource Preservation” lands. These are lands that provide important

environmental functions and should be protected. In the case of Tikishla Park, these are designated Class “A” wetlands. “Natural Resource Conservation” lands are areas that also perform important environmental functions in which “development is undesirable due to the cost or other mitigating impacts”. In the case of Tikishla Park, this is the upland forest area on the periphery of classified wetlands. (MOA 2006)



Illustration of Use Areas in Tikishla Park

Use Areas

Tikishla Park consists of four use areas or activity nodes each serving a different function and/or user group. Below is an overview of Use Areas. Further description is provided on the following pages.

1) Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave)
Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave) functions as a neighborhood park and community hub for residents of Airport Heights.

2) Davenport Fields
Davenport Fields is a ball field complex located off of Lake Otis Blvd. and is home to the City View Little League.

3) Chester Creek Trail
The Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Trail is a popular multi-use trail traversing Tikishla Park. The trail connects the park to the neighborhood and destinations throughout the city.

4) Natural Resource Areas
Natural Resource Areas make up the bulk of Tikishla Park’s total land area and include important wetland, stream, and forest habitat.

Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave)

Located on East 20th Ave, this area functions as a neighborhood park and community hub for residents of Airport Heights.

Developed facilities in this area include three play areas (2-5, 5-12, and swing set), a hockey rink with 2 basketball courts, 2 little league ball fields, a parking lot, open space, and access to natural areas and the Chester Creek Trail via several well developed spur trails.

Ball fields: Once a popular use at Tikishla Park, the two fenced ball fields are no longer used by City View Little League. The ball fields are in fair condition. The south ball field has a concessions building. Dugouts were previously removed because of vandalism and misuse.

Hockey Rink: The hockey rink is well used and in good condition. It includes lights and ice is maintained regularly during the winter months. The rink converts to two basketball courts in summer.

Play Areas: Three play areas are located directly east of the parking lot and north of the ball fields. The play equipment was installed at different dates and is in generally fair condition. The location of play equipment in proximity to multi-use trails and dense forest create concerns over safety.



Trails: Paved trailis connect the area to the neighborhood to the north and east as well as two trails connecting south to the Chester Creek Trail. Trails do not have lighting.

Parking Lot: A parking lot with 29 spaces is accessible from E. 20th Ave. The current configuration of the parking lot provides limited visibility and has been prone to suspicious/illegal activity.

Utilities: An irrigation system provides water to the ball fields. Additionally, the small building next to the parking lot provides water for maintaining the rink and has restrooms which are no longer in use. There is lighting in the parking lot and hockey rink.

Davenport Fields

Located off of Lake Otis Blvd, Davenport Fields is home to the City View Little League. Davenport fields includes 4 little league fields, a small play structure, a snack shack, parking lot, and access to the Chester Creek Trail. The ball fields are used intensively for a short season in the summer.

Ball fields: The four ball fields at Davenport Fields are heavily used from May through July. Ball fields include one “junior/senior” field, two “little league” fields, and a “short” field for girls softball and T-ball.

City View Little League maintains the fields through a Co-operative Use Agreement with the Parks and Recreation Department. The fields are well maintained and in good condition. However, use of the ball fields as an unofficial dog park has caused damage to the fields creating added maintenance costs and health concerns.

Parking Lot: Vehicle access and parking is available off of Lake Otis Blvd. The parking lot surface is gravel and can accommodate approximately 120 vehicles. The large size and “L” shaped orientation of the parking lot creates hiding places and concerns about undesirable activity. Further, the parking lot does not have lighting or a gate to control access.



Play Area: A small tot lot is located north of the parking lot. Although somewhat dated, the play structure is in good condition.

Chester Creek Trail: The Chester Creek Trail is directly north of the ballfields and is easily accessible from a number of locations.

Snack Shack: A small snack shack is located between the ball fields and parking lot.

Utilities: An irrigation system provides water to the ball fields.

Chester Creek Trail

The Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Trail is one of Anchorage’s most popular multi-use trails. The Chester Creek Trail travels through the heart of Tikishla Park connecting the park to important destinations beyond, such as downtown and Westchester Lagoon to the west and the UMED District and Russian Jack Springs Park to the east. A well developed system of spur trails connect the neighborhood to the park and Chester Creek Trail.

Chester Creek Trail: The primary trail corridor of the Chester Creek Trail was repaved in the summer of 2015 and is currently in excellent condition. The trail is 8-10 feet wide with 2 foot gravel shoulders. The trail connects to several paved spur trails within Tikishla Park.

Spur Trails: Several paved spur trails connect areas within the park to the neighborhood and the Chester Creek Trail. Because of funding constraints at the time, most spur trails were not resurfaced in 2015. Trail segments in need of resurfacing include the Tikishla Park Trail west of the hockey rink, the North Spur Trail to Nichols Park, the East Tikishla Spur Trail to the bridge connecting to the ARC of Anchorage Trail and the East 20th Ave. Trail east of the park.



Bridges: There are two bridges along the multi-use trails in Tikishla Park. Both bridges are wooden and slippery when wet.

Trail Lighting: The main portion of the Chester Creek Trail is the only trail with lighting in Tikishla Park. No spur trails have lighting at this time.

Natural Resource Areas

Most of Tikishla Park’s 105 acres are undeveloped natural areas. These natural areas include the Middle and South Forks of Chester Creek, Class A wetlands, riparian habitat, and upland forests.

Habitat and Environment: Tikishla Park’s natural areas provide important habitat and environmental functions. For example, wetlands adjacent to Chester Creek provide flood attenuation reducing peak run off from storm events and minimizing flood damage in developed areas downstream. In the context of an urbanizing Anchorage, these natural areas also provide critical habitat for birds and other wildlife. In addition to habitat and environmental benefits, these natural areas provide important recreational benefits.

Recreation: Tikishla Park has an expansive network of unimproved soft surface trails located throughout natural areas within the park. These trails provide opportunities for wildlife viewing, hiking, winter biking, and cross country skiing. Many of the trails are likely game trails that have become more established over time. However, none of the trails have been formally designated and are not currently maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department. Because of the wetlands south of the Chester Creek Trail, some trails are only accessible during winter months.



Access and Connections Trails

Tikishla Park features a mix of trails used for recreation and non-motorized transportation. This includes both paved multi-use trails and soft surface trails.

The Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Trail travels east to west through Tikishla Park. This trail connects the park to Downtown and Midtown to the west and the UMED District to the east. Several paved spur trails provide connections to the Chester Creek Trail, connecting the neighborhood to the park and points beyond.

Tikishla Park also has a series of soft-surface trails providing opportunities for recreation in a more quiet and intimate location. Because of the wetlands south of the Chester Creek Trail, some trails are only accessible during winter months.

Vehicle Access and Parking

Tikishla Park is accessible by vehicle from two locations with parking lots located at the east end of 20th Ave and at Davenport Fields located directly off of Lake Otis Blvd.

Davenport Fields

Davenport Fields is accessible by vehicle from Lake Otis Blvd and provides parking for approximately 120 vehicles. Lake Otis Blvd. at Davenport Fields is a Class III Major Arterial (20,000+ ADT). (MOA 2005)

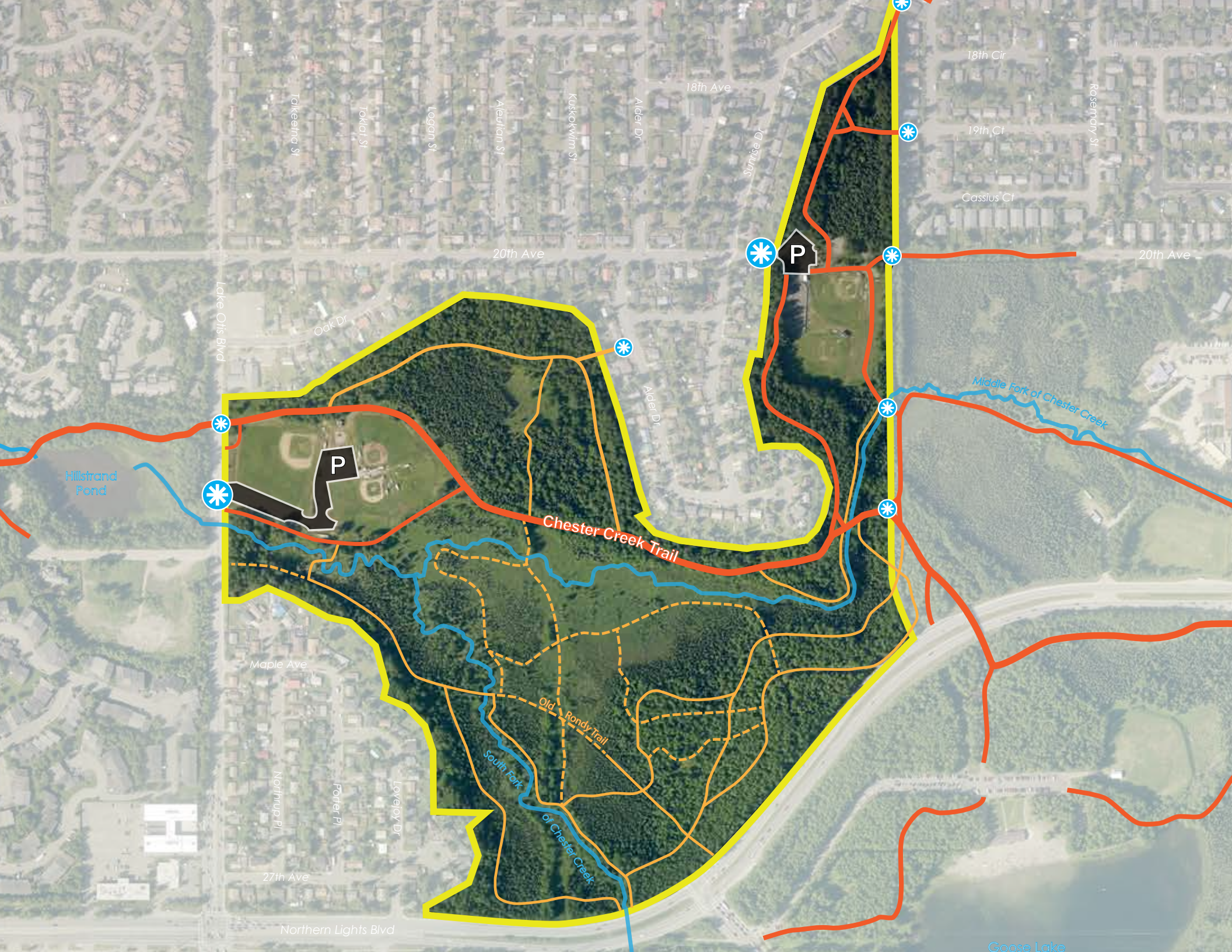
The parking lot surface is gravel and does not have lighting. The “L” shape orientation of the parking lot combined with limited seasonal use and lack of positive control measures such as a gate, creates hiding spaces making passive police monitoring difficult.

Tikishla Park

Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave) is accessible from East 20th Ave directly east of the intersection at Sunrise Drive. The parking lot is paved, includes lighting and provides space for 29 vehicles. The orientation and landscaping of the parking lot limits visibility into the parking lot creating hiding places in which the community has expressed concerns about safety and illicit activities.

Illustration of Access Points, Trails, and
Parking Lots at Tikishla Park

-  Access Points
-  Parking Lot
-  Paved Multi-Use Trail
-  Soft Surface Trail (Year Round)
-  Soft Surface Trail (Winter Only)



Natural Environment

Chester Creek

Chester Creek is one of Anchorage’s major waterways, with two branches - the Middle and South Fork, converging in Tikishla Park.

The Middle Fork of Chester Creek originates one mile east of the park from a natural spring in Russian Jack Springs Park. The South Fork of Chester Creek originates in the Chugach Mountains forming the main tributary of Chester Creek.

The Middle and South Forks of Chester Creek converge in a wetland area just east of Davenport Fields. Both branches support anadromous fish such as salmon.

Wetlands

Approximately half of Tikishla Park’s total area is designated Class “A” wetlands. Wetland areas parallel the Middle and South Fork of Chester Creek with a large wetland meadow east of where the two streams meet. Wetland areas within Tikishla Park are part of a larger system of (73.67 acres) classified wetlands which include wetlands east of the park and adjacent to Goose Lake. According to the *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan*, these wetlands function to improve “water quality, flood and stormwater attenuation, open space and habitat”. (MOA 2014)

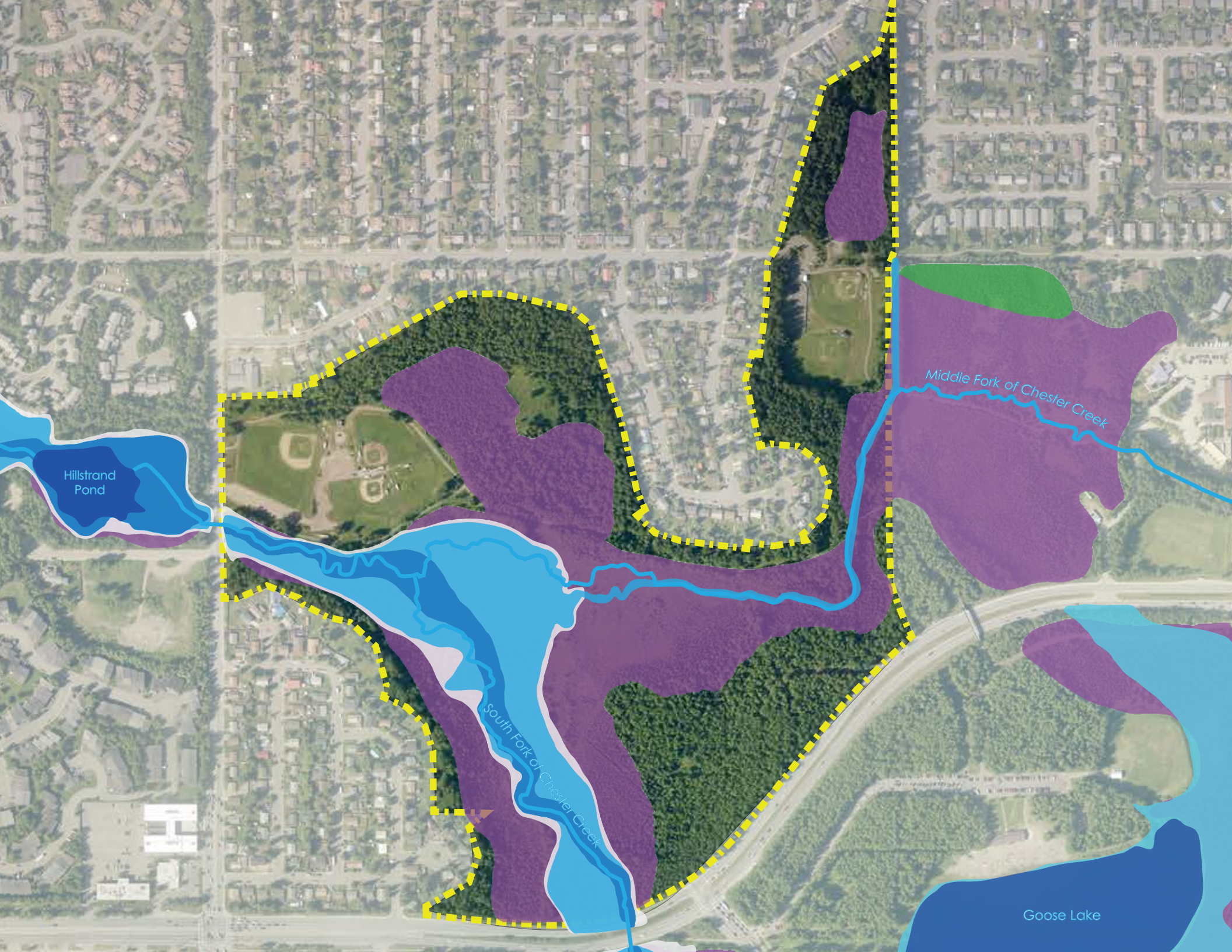
Class “A” wetlands are considered most valuable in an undisturbed state. While not proposed in this master plan, any future development requiring the placement of fill in a Class “A” wetlands requires a Section 404 Permit from the Army Corps of Engineers. Additionally, both stream branches of Chester Creek in Tikishla Park are protected through a 100-foot setback to protect anadromous fish resources.

Floodplain

Federal floodplain mapping identifies large areas adjacent to the South Fork of Chester Creek as occupying the 100-year Floodplain. These areas are also protected class “A” wetlands making any form of future development difficult. Base flood elevation varies from 107 feet at Northern Lights Blvd. to 93 feet at Lake Otis Blvd.

Illustration of Waterways, Wetlands and Important Natural Resources in Tikishla Park

-  Lake
-  Chester Creek
-  Floodway
-  100 Year Floodplain
-  500 Year Floodplain
-  Class A wetlands
-  Class B Wetlands



Natural Environment

Topography

Tikishla Park’s topography is defined by the wetlands and waterways which traverse the park. The Middle and South Forks of Chester Creek flow east to west through the park forming a low valley ranging in elevation between 95-105 feet above sea level. The valley is defined at the periphery of the park by elevated bluffs ranging 20-40 feet in height.

The high point, at 141 feet elevation, is located in an upland forest directly west of Northern Lights Blvd in the site formerly used as a campground.

Developed areas such as Davenport Fields and Tikishla Park (E 20th) have imported fill and are higher than surrounding wetland areas.

Vegetation

Vegetation in Tikishla Park varies by location and is heavily influenced by surface and sub-surface conditions such as drainage, water table, soils, elevation, and orientation.

Upland forest are a mix of birch and spruce with an understory of dwarf dogwood, willow and alder. Wetland areas are characterized by bog shrubs, sedges, and grasses with concentrated areas of dense black spruce. Vegetation in riparian areas vary by location but tend to be a healthy mix of cottonwood, birch, spruce, alder, willow and native grasses.

The introduction of non-native European Bird Cherry has impacted forest and riparian areas crowding out native vegetation and altering the landscape.

Fish and Wildlife

Tikishla Park and the Chester Creek Greenbelt provide important habitat for birds, fish and wildlife.

Anadromous fish are found in both the Middle and South Fork of Chester Creek. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game - Coho, Pink, and Dolly Varden have been documented in Chester Creek. (ADF&G 2013)

Large mammals, such as bears and moose can be found in and around Tikishla Park. The Park’s undeveloped natural areas provide important habitat and foraging opportunities for large mammals.

Birds are also common throughout areas of the park.

Infrastructure

Water

Water is available for irrigation at both Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave) and Davenport Fields. Both areas have irrigation systems with standpipes to support maintenance and upkeep of the existing ball fields.

Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave) and Davenport Fields also have restroom/storage buildings with access to water. However, these buildings have not been used as restrooms for many years and are in need of repair. The building (20’x12’) at Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave) has a storage room with a hot water heater and is currently used to maintain the Scotty Gomez ice rink.

Sewer

Several sewer mains traverse Tikishla Park providing service to surrounding neighborhoods. A sewer main runs north to south along the western park boundary from Nichols Park to the Chester Creek Trail, continuing west along the trail to Lake Otis Blvd.

A second sewer line runs along the Mushroom Trail directly west of Alder Drive and connects to the sewer line running parallel to the Chester Creek Trail.

Two sewer lines connect to the Chester Creek Trail sewer line from the south. One sewer line runs directly north from the undeveloped Right-of-Way (ROW) 300 feet east of Darby Circle. A second sewer line travels northwest from the eastern edge of the Goose Lake Parking lot north of Northern Lights Blvd.

Drainageways

Nine sub-basins covering approximately 700 acres channel stormwater into area drainageways.

Several drainageways channel stormwater runoff from streets outside the park to the Middle and South Forks of Chester Creek and wetland areas within Tikishla Park. Drainageways are a combination of constructed pipes and open ditches.

...add a sticky note with your input on what you would like to see in this area.

PLANNING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public Involvement Process

Public involvement in the planning process is essential to the long term success of the park. To ensure that the master plan aligns with the desires and expectations of the community, Anchorage Parks and Recreation led an extensive public involvement process. This process included outreach and social media updates, three advisory group meetings, two open house events, two online surveys, a student workshop at Airport Heights Elementary School, and presentations at local community councils.

Outreach

Anchorage Parks and Recreation reached out to stakeholders early in the planning process to ensure that all affected parties had an opportunity to participate in the planning process. Outreach targeted local community councils, residents, and user groups.

Social media was used throughout the planning process to provide project updates and promote public events, meetings, and online surveys.

Advisory Group Meetings

Anchorage Parks and Recreation worked with a community advisory group throughout the planning process to ensure that recommendations identified in the master plan align with the desires of the community. Advisory group members represent a variety of interests and included neighbors, user groups, natural resource managers, community councils representatives, and non-profit organizations. These key stakeholders provided a range of perspectives and first-hand knowledge that informed the process and ensured that future upgrades meet the needs and expectations of the community.

Open House Events

Two open house events were held at the “visioning” and “concept development” phases of the project to allow members of the public an opportunity to provide input. Comments provided at the open house were used to identify priorities and inform the development of the master plan.

Student Workshop

Parks and Recreation staff met with 6th grade students at Airport Heights Elementary to find out “what young people want in their parks”. Approximately, 30 students provided input on what activities they like to do in parks and what they would like to see developed at Tikishla Park.

Online Surveys

Two online surveys were administered at key project milestones to allow members of the community to provide input into the planning process. The first survey was administered at the “visioning” phase to better understand the wants and needs of the community. 215 people completed the first survey. The second survey was administered at the “concept development” phase to help identify a preferred alternative for future development at Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave). 156 people completed the second survey.

Approval Process

- 1) Community Council Resolution
- 2) Parks and Recreation Commission Hearing
- 3) Planning and Zoning Commission Hearing

Once approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, Parks and Recreation will seek funding to implement the plan.



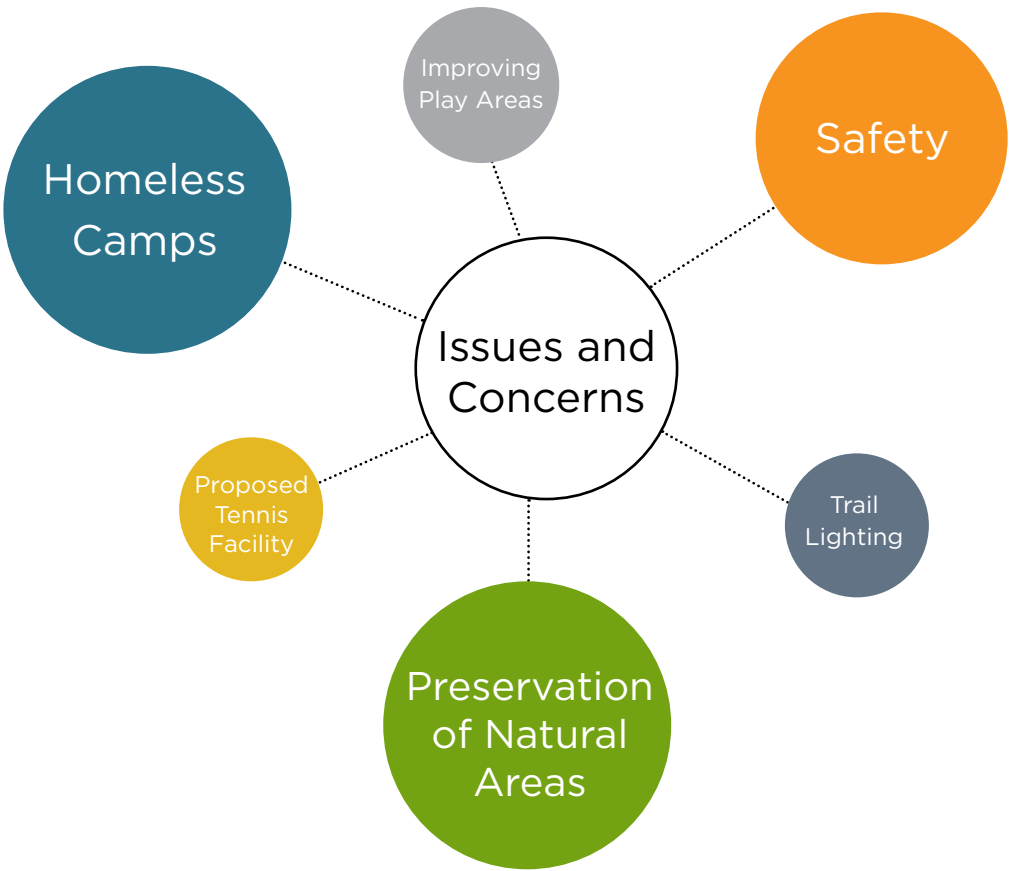
Public Input: Visioning

Public input was used throughout the planning process to inform the development of the master plan. Through a variety of methods, such as online surveys and open house events, members of the community identified issues and concerns and described their preferences for the future management and development of the park.

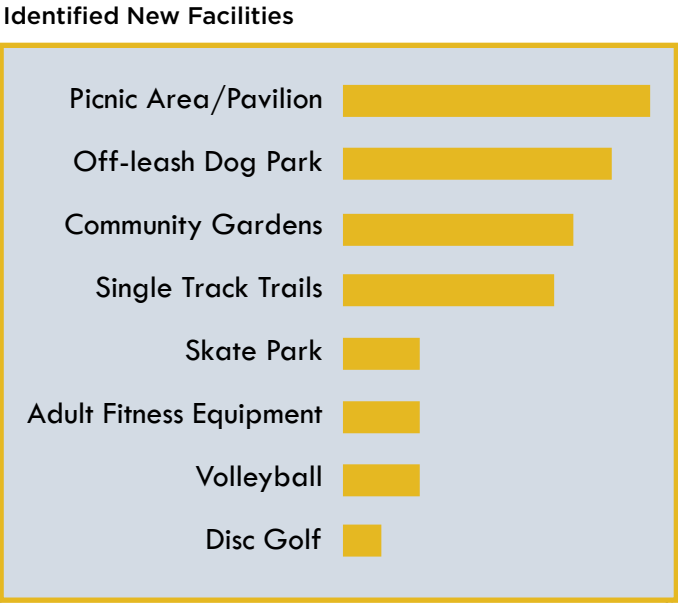
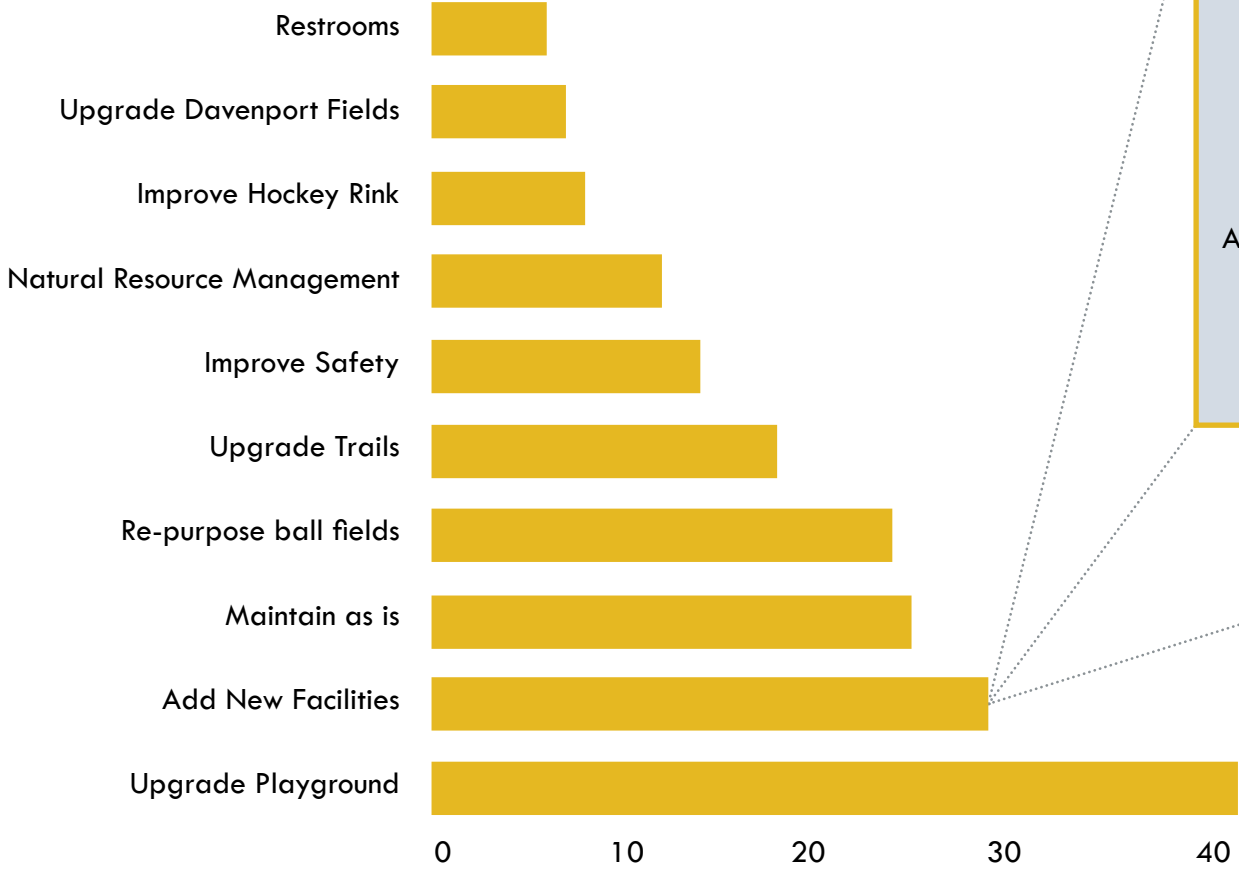
Participants identified safety, homeless camps, and the preservation of natural areas as the top issues they would most like to see addressed in the master plan.

When asked “what types of improvements or new facilities would you like to see at Tikishla Park” - upgrading the playground was the top response. Participants also expressed interest new facilities; however, many respondents indicated that they like the park as-is. The key take away is that new facilities and upgrades are welcome but should not take away from the character of the park.

What issues or concerns would you like to see addressed through this planning effort?



What types of improvements or new facilities would you like to see at Tikishla Park in the future?



Survey Stats

Online Survey #1: A total of 215 survey responses were collected and close to 1000 individual comments were received.

Public Input: Community Values

In addition to asking the public about issues and concerns and potential new improvements, it is important to understand what the community values about Tikishla Park. To better understand what the community values about Tikishla Park, members of the public were asked to describe what they feel is special about Tikishla Park and to describe their ideal Tikishla Park.

Through this process, several common themes were identified. Collectively, these themes form the core values by which this master plan's vision and recommendations are formed.

What is special about Tikishla Park?

- The park is a neighborhood hub and community gathering place
- Tikishla Park has the right balance of developed facilities and natural areas
- The park has something for everyone
- Tikishla Park is valued for its trail access, neighborhood connections and year-round recreation
- Wilderness in the city... Tikishla Park's natural areas are highly valued
- The history of community involvement in the creation of a park

Describe your ideal Tikishla Park?

- A park that is safe, clean, and well maintained
- A balance of developed facilities and natural areas that are preserved
- A hub for neighborhood activities
- A place where families, friends, and neighbors can meet and enjoy activities together
- A multi-generational park with something for all ages and abilities
- A park where natural areas are preserved and protected
- A park for all season



Concept A



Concept B



Concept C



Concept D



Public Input: Concept Alternatives

Community interest in upgrading facilities at Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave) was a common theme throughout the planning process. A second survey was administered at the concept alternatives phase to determine “what level of development” and “what type of new facilities” the public most supports.

Survey results show an interest in upgrading facilities and providing some new amenities that support the neighborhood and community character of the park. Many respondents wished to remove the ball fields in favor of more flexible open space. Respondents also favored the preservation of forested areas over new activities such as bike trails, community gardens or edible landscapes, and disc golf.

Input from the concept alternatives survey was reviewed with the advisory group and refined into a preferred alternative site plan.

Survey Stats

Online Survey #2: A total of 156 survey responses were collected. 140 of those responses were submitted online and 16 responses were submitted at the second open house event.

Respondent	Concept A: 25
Preferences:	Concept B: 27
	Concept C: 53
	Concept D: 52



THE MASTER PLAN

Master Plan

The Tikishla Park Master Plan provides a 20-year vision for the management, maintenance and development of the park. The plan is the product of extensive public engagement and collaboration with local stakeholders. It embodies the community’s vision to provide active and healthy year-round recreational opportunities while preserving important natural resources for future generations.

The development of the Master Plan is guided by a number of factors including existing conditions, public preferences for management and development, and best practices in natural resource and public lands management.

This Master Plan provides recommendations for the future management and development of the park and utilizes best practices to resolve issues and address concerns.



Vision

“Tikishla Park is a neighborhood hub and community gathering space offering families, friends, and neighbors of all age's access to year-round recreation in a clean and safe environment, preserving undeveloped natural areas for future generations, and celebrating trails that connect the city”

Core Values

The planning process revealed a number of themes in which there was general agreement among members of the public regarding the qualities that make Tikishla Park special. These qualities or core values guide the development of this master plan, providing a foundation by which recommendations are formulated.

A Neighborhood Hub

Tikishla Park is a neighborhood hub and community gathering space, a place where friends and neighbors meet and where people of all ages can come together to recreate and celebrate in a safe and comfortable environment

A Balance of Developed Facilities and Natural Areas

Tikishla Park has the right balance of developed facilities and natural areas interconnected by a system of paved and soft-surface trails

Safe, Clean, and Well Maintained

Addressing safety by eliminating drug activity and homeless camps would improve park users perception of safety and would lead to a cleaner healthier park environment

Natural Areas are Protected

Tikishla Park’s natural areas serve important ecosystem functions and are highly valued as undeveloped wild spaces in a city that is becoming increasingly more urban

Year-round Recreation

Tikishla Park offers a wide variety of recreational activities in all seasons

Access and Location

Tikishla Park has many neighborhood connections and easy access to the greenbelt system and destinations beyond



Recommendations



Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave)

A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK AND COMMUNITY HUB

The master plan provides for a more active year-round park space that functions as a neighborhood hub and gathering space. Residents showed a strong desire to upgrade facilities and address safety concerns in the park while retaining the overall neighborhood character of the park and protecting the surrounding natural areas.

The master plan recommends moving the play area and adding picnic shelter south of the bike trail to provide a central gathering place with connections to open space and winter activities. Play equipment is co-located with a picnic area to support neighborhood and family gatherings - encouraging people to stay longer, mingle with neighbors, and enjoy the park. The location of these facilities in one general location also improves safety and allows for easier supervision of children. Play equipment is upgraded to provide a better play experience for children. Access and circulation are improved with the addition of trail lighting, vegetation management, wayfinding, and bridge upgrades. Ball field fences are removed to provide flexible open space. The parking lot is reconfigured to improve visibility and eliminate hiding spots.

Play Area and Picnic Shelter

- Consolidate play areas south of the bike trail to improve overall safety and supervision
- Add a picnic shelter or picnic area to support activities and neighborhood gatherings
- Add landscaping and/or edible landscaping for beautification and to help define spaces and separate uses

Parking Lot

- Reconfigure parking lot for improved safety and better visibility
 - Consider removing spruce trees on center parking island and replacing with landscaping that provides for better visibility
- Consider moving snow storage to NW corner to eliminate hiding spaces
- Add bollards and/or other traffic control measures to stop unauthorized access of park spaces

Ball Fields

- Remove one or both ball field fences and convert to open space

Hockey Rink

- The hockey rink remains as is with maintenance, repairs and updates as needed. Benches and other amenities should be added to support use

Pump Track

- Consider adding a small to medium sized pump track in the location of the current playground

Trail Lighting

- Add LED bike/pedestrian scale trail lighting along the Tikishla Park Spur Trail & Nichols Park Spur Trail

Bridges

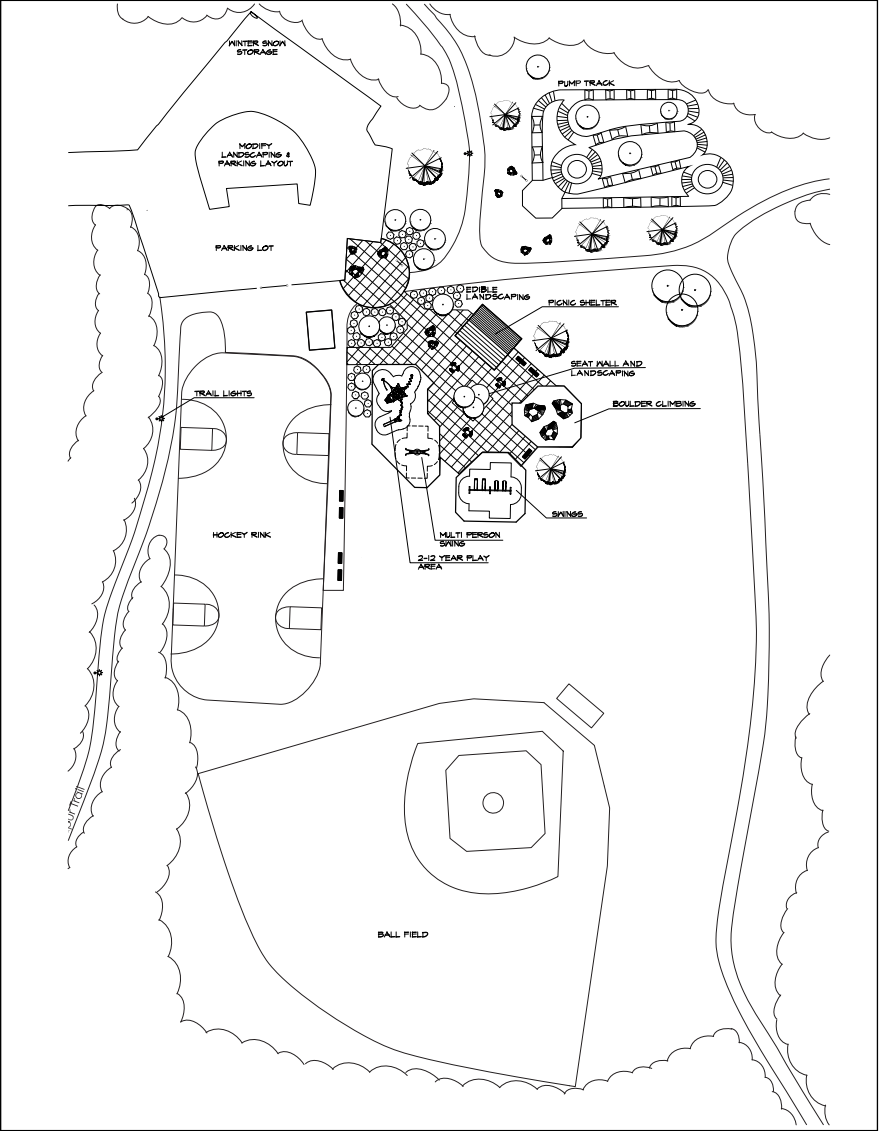
- Upgrade bridge surfacing to reduce risk of falls from slippery surface (2 locations)

Restrooms

- Add port-o-potties with decorative screening or restore the old maintenance/restroom building next to the hockey rink

Sledding Hill

- Consider development of a sledding hill to provide additional winter recreational opportunities for families



Preferred Concept for Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave)

Wayfinding

- Provide wayfinding at key intersections and trailheads to improve area wide navigation, enhance public safety, and highlight local destinations and recreation facilities

Vegetation Management

- Manage vegetation along trail corridor for improved visibility and safety



Davenport Fields

LITTLE LEAGUE BALL FIELD COMPLEX

City View Little League is the main user at Davenport Fields and are generally satisfied with the existing facilities. This master plan addresses two main issues: 1) safety and concerns about illegal activities in the parking lot; and 2) conflicts with off-leash dogs and owners using the ballfields as an off-leash dog park. In addition to the recommendations below, the Parks and Recreation Department should continue to work with City View Little League to support use and address issues and evolving needs over time.

Parking Lot

- Add a gate or other traffic control measure to limit after hours activities
- Consider re-designing the parking lot to improve visibility and eliminate hiding places
 - Major improvements to the parking lot will require paving and the addition of lighting as per Title 21
- Add bollards to prevent unauthorized vehicles from driving on trails and in active recreation areas

Ball fields

- Ball fields to remain as ball fields, people wishing to exercise dogs off-leash must use designated off-leash dog park spaces as defined by Title 17
- Outreach and Education:
 - Install signage to improve park users understanding of leash laws
 - Install signage showing the locations of designated off-leash areas

Play Area

- Update tot lot to provide additional amenities for families using ball fields

Off-Leash Dogs

During the master planning process, there was both strong support for and opposition against a designated off-leash dog park space at Tikishla Park. Given Davenports Fields historic use, spatial constraints, and proximity to sensitive natural resources an off-leash dog park space was not recommended.

There are currently four designated off-leash dog park spaces within two miles of Tikishla Park.

Chester Creek Trail and Spur Trails

POPULAR MULTI-USE TRAIL AND PARK CONNECTOR

The Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Trail connects Tikishla Park and the surrounding neighborhood to destinations throughout the city. The primary trail corridor of the Chester Creek Trail was re-paved in the summer of 2015 and is currently in excellent condition. Because of funding constraints, few spur trails in the area were resurfaced at that time. Trail segments in need of resurfacing include the Tikishla Park Trail west of the hockey rink, the North Spur Trail to Nichols Park, the East Tikishla Spur Trail to the bridge connecting to the ARC of Anchorage Trail and the East 20th Ave. Trail east of the park.

The master plan also identifies trail lighting, wayfinding, bridge upgrades and vegetation management as strategies to improve safety and user experience.

Trail Surfacing

- Continue regular maintenance and surface upgrades to multi-use trails as needed
- Re-pave the following Spur Trails:
 - Tikishla Park Trail
 - Nichols Park Spur Trail
 - East Tikishla Spur Trail
 - East 20th Ave. Trail

Wayfinding

- Provide wayfinding at key intersections and trailheads to improve area wide navigation, enhance public safety, and highlight local destinations and recreation facilities

Bridges

- Upgrade bridge surfacing to reduce risk of falls from slippery surface (2 locations)

Trail Lighting

- Tikishla Park Spur Trail: Add lighting from the Chester Creek Trail to the parking lot at East 20th via the Tikishla Park Trail
- Nichols Park Spur Trail: Add lighting from the parking lot at East 20th Ave along the trail north to Nichols Park



Vegetation Management

- Manage vegetation along multi-use trail corridor for improved visibility and safety
 - Identify and remove select cottonwood and other trees in close proximity to the multi-use trail in order to minimize root damage to the trail
- Thin out low lying leafy vegetation in close proximity to the trail to improve visibility and safety
- Remove May Day (Prunus Padus) trees and other invasive species to allow native species to thrive and support wildlife habitat



Natural Resource Areas

VALUED NATURAL AREA

Tikishla Park's large tracts of undeveloped forest and wetlands are highly valued for their quiet recreation, natural beauty and ecological functions. These natural areas provide a “wilderness in the city” experience that has become increasingly rare as Anchorage continues the trend towards urbanization. Public input favors the preservation of existing natural areas with minimal changes and no major new development. The community does not support an indoor/outdoor tennis facility at Tikishla Park.

Recreation

- Seek to recognize the “Old Rony Trail” through an official designation
- Identify and inventory existing social trails in Natural Areas
- Trail Management and Development: Existing primitive social trails should remain as-is, proposals to improve/upgrade/develop trails in natural areas should consider the following criteria prior to seeking approval from the Parks and Recreation Commission:
 - Upgrades to existing trails before development of new trails
 - Preservation of the natural areas and their ecological functions
 - Minimizing environmental impact to wildlife and habitat
 - Current and future demand for the type of recreation facility proposed
 - Compatibility with other uses
 - Consider adding wayfinding

Natural Resources

- Remove May Day (*Prunus Padus*) trees and other invasive species to allow native species to thrive and support wildlife habitat
- Support policies that protect and enhance natural resources
 - *Wetlands Management Plan*
 - *Chester Creek Watershed Plan*
- Monitor and manage natural areas to prevent illegal dumping and camping
- Monitor and manage natural areas to minimize the impacts from unauthorized trail development

Indoor-Outdoor Tennis Facility

- The public does not support the development of an indoor-outdoor tennis facility at Tikishla Park

References

1. Anchorage Waterways Council. 2014. *Chester Creek Watershed Plan*. September 25, 2009
2. Federal Emergency Management Agency. *National Flood Insurance Program. Flood Insurance Rate Map panel 754 Map 0200050754D*. September 25, 2009
3. Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). Johnson, J and M. Daigneault 2013. *Catalogue of Waters Important for Spawning, Rearing, or Migration of Anadromous Fishes - Southcentral Region*
4. Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). 2006. *Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan*
5. Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). 2014. *Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan*
6. Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). 2005. *Official Streets and Highways Plan*
7. United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. *DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates 2010-14 American Community Survey*.
8. United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. *S1901: Income in Past 12 Months 2010-14 American Community Survey*.
9. United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. *B25003: Tenure - Occupied Housing Units 2011-15 American Community Survey*.

Resolutions

AIRPORT HEIGHTS COMMUNITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2018-3

A RESOLUTION OF THE AIRPORT HEIGHTS COMMUNITY COUNCIL (AHCC) IN SUPPORT OF THE TIKISHLA PARK MASTER PLAN, DATED FEBRUARY 2018

WHEREAS, the AHCC provides a direct and continuing means of citizen participation in government and local affairs as designated in the Municipal Charter and by the Anchorage Assembly;

WHEREAS, the Tikishla Park Master Plan (TPMP) fulfills the requirement to develop and implement park management plans;

WHEREAS, the TPMP provides a 20-year vision that will guide future development, management, and maintenance of the park;

WHEREAS, the TPMP is the product of a public engagement process that included outreach to neighborhood residents, two public workshops, and three meetings with an advisory group;

WHEREAS, the advisory group consists of interested stakeholders including members of the Airport Heights Community Council, Rogers Park Community Council, City View Little League, ARC of Anchorage, Scotty Gomez Foundation, MOA Watershed Management, and Trail Watch;

WHEREAS, the advisory group served in an advisory role to the planning team, providing both technical expertise and ensuring that the TPMP is consistent with the vision and desires of the community;

WHEREAS, the TPMP recommends, among other things, that: Davenport Fields add a gate to limit after hours activities, upgrade tot lot and amenities, manage conflicts between dog owners and the little league; Chester Creek Trail add wayfinding at intersections and trailheads, maintain and upgrade trail surfacing as needed, upgrade bridge surfacing to reduce risk of falls, add trail lighting on select spur trails to improve safety, manage vegetation along trails to improve visibility/safety; in natural resource areas to remove May Day trees, monitor and manage trails for recreation and environment, and that there will be no indoor-outdoor tennis facility; in Tikishla Park (East 20th Avenue) consolidate and upgrade play equipment in one central location to improve safety and supervision, add a picnic shelter or picnic area to support neighborhood gatherings, add landscaping or edible landscaping, reconfigure the parking lot to improve visibility and safety, remove ball field fence, maintain and add amenities to support the hockey rink, provide appropriate restrooms or port-o-potties, a pump track for all ages, wayfinding and trail lighting, and maintain opens space;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the AHCC approves the Tikishla Park Master Plan, dated February 2018, and recommends approval of the plan by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission

THIS RESOLUTION WAS APPROVED by the Airport Heights Community Council on April 19, 2018 by a vote of: FOR 22, AGAINST 0, ABSTAIN 0.


Carolyn Ramsey
President

Airport Heights Community Council
Resolution 2018-3
April 19, 2018



Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska
Parks & Recreation Commission
632 W. 6th Avenue, Suite 630
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519
Tel 907-343-4355
URL www.muni.org/departments/parks



PRC RES NO. 2018-12 TIKISHLA PARK MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, the most recent master plan for Tikishla Park was completed in 1998 and upgrades are needed to address current issues and meet the demand for recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Tikishla Park Master Plan provides a guiding vision for the management, maintenance and development of Tikishla Park by aiming to balance recreational uses with the preservation of important natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department worked with local stakeholders throughout the planning process to identify and prioritize improvements and to develop a 20-year vision for Tikishla Park; and

WHEREAS, the Tikishla Park Master Plan embodies the community's vision to provide active and healthy year-round recreational opportunities while preserving important natural resources for future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Tikishla Park Master Plan maintains important natural areas and identifies improvements at Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave), Davenport Fields, and the Chester Creek Trail and connectors; and

WHEREAS, the Tikishla Park Master Plan is supported by the Airport Heights Community Council; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the Tikishla Park Master Plan as submitted by the Parks and Recreation Department.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 14h day of June, 2018.

ATTEST: 
John Rodda, Director
Parks & Recreation Department


Chair
Parks and Recreation Commission

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska

Parks and Recreation Commission
Resolution 2018-12
June 14, 2018

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 2018-026

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A MASTER PLAN FOR TIKISHLA PARK, GENERALLY LOCATED SOUTH OF EAST 20TH AVE, WEST OF BRAGAW STREET, NORTH OF EAST NORTHERN LIGHTS BOULEVARD, AND EAST OF LAKE OTIS PARKWAY.

(Case 2018-0086; Parcel No. 004-141-20-000, 004-151-01-000, 004-154-26-000, 004-154-27-000, 004-154-28-000, 004-154-29-000, 004-154-30-000, 004-154-31-000, 004-161-04-000, 004-162-42-000, 004-162-43-000)

WHEREAS, a request was received from the Municipality of Anchorage, Department of Parks and Recreation, for approval of a master plan for Tikishla Park, generally located south of East 20th Ave, west of Bragaw St, north of East Northern Lights Blvd, and east of Lake Otis Pkwy.

WHEREAS, public hearing notices were published, posted, and mailed, and a public hearing was held on October 1, 2018.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission that:

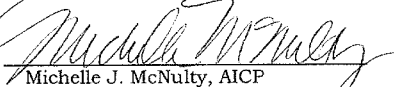
- A. The Commission makes the following findings of fact:
1. A great amount of effort was put into the development of the master plan, and the master plan incorporates Tikishla Park’s unique assets.
 2. The use of the Davenport Fields as an informal off-leash dog area, and the rationale for not considering alternative off-leash dog facilities in the park, are issues that surfaced during the public hearing and should be further discussed in this master plan at the discretion of the Parks and Recreation Department.
 3. The Parks and Recreation Department conducted a thorough and extensive public involvement process during the development of this master plan, including innovative and appreciated outreach to local youth and schools.
 4. The master plan has received substantial support from the community.
 5. The community has expressed a strong preference for maintaining natural areas of the park and avoiding the development of new tennis court facilities in the park.

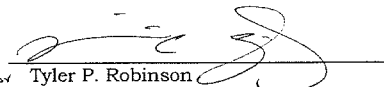
Planning and Zoning Commission
Resolution 2018-026
Page 2

- B. The Commission approves the Tikishla Park Master Plan, subject to the following conditions:
1. This approval is subject to the application and plans submitted and on file with the Planning Department.
 2. Where conditions allow, any new or relocated trails shall be constructed at least 25 feet away from a creek, especially on an outside bend or curve.
 3. On the list of *Natural Resources* recommendations on page 37 of the Tikishla Park Master Plan, the third action item shall be modified to read “Monitor and manage natural areas to prevent illegal dumping and camping.”

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission the 1st day of October 2018.

ADOPTED by the Anchorage Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission this 8th day of October, 2018. This written decision/resolution of the Planning and Zoning Commission is final and any party may appeal it within twenty (20) days to the Board of Adjustment pursuant to the Anchorage Municipal Code 21.03.050.


Michelle J. McNulty, AICP
Secretary


for Tyler P. Robinson
Chair

(Case 2018-0086; Parcel No. 004-141-20-000, 004-151-01-000, 004-154-26-000, 004-154-27-000, 004-154-28-000, 004-154-29-000, 004-154-30-000, 004-154-31-000, 004-161-04-000, 004-162-42-000, 004-162-43-000)

