

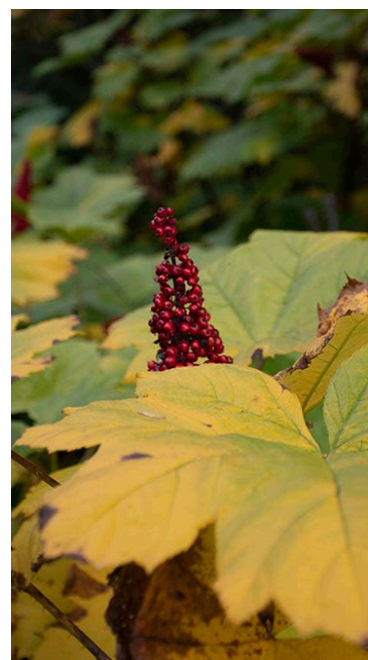
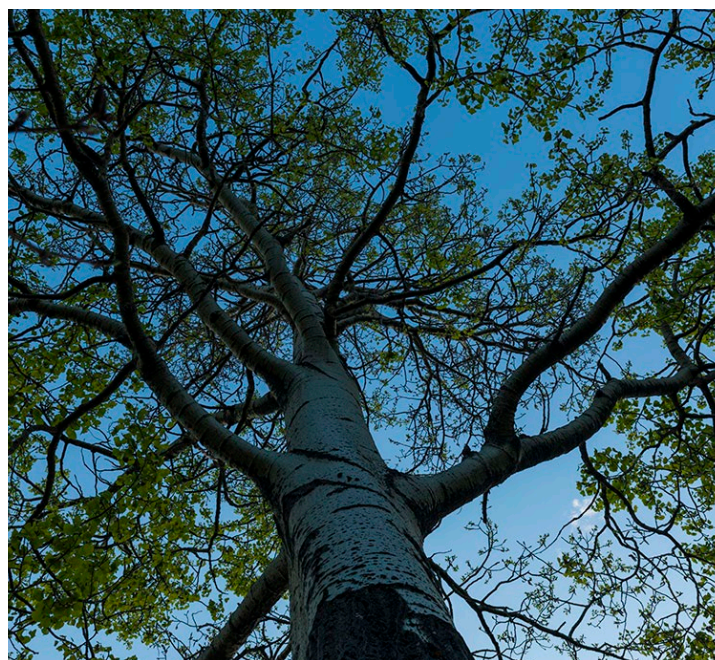
Potter Marsh Watershed Park MASTER PLAN



GREAT LAND TRUST
SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA



Draft Review – May 8, 2026



Front page photos by Carl Johnson and Great Land Trust

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation, Great Land Trust, and the planning team would like to recognize and thank all of the individuals and organizations who have worked to create the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan. A special thanks to members of the Community Advisory Group for their dedication, insight, and assistance.

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ADOPTION

This master plan was adopted by the Anchorage Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission on Month Date, 2026 (see Resolution No. 2026-XXX on page XX).

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Photo by Great Land Trust

Introduction

OVERVIEW

Potter Marsh Watershed Park is a productive and valuable habitat, consisting of coastal forest with meadows, streams, springs, and wetlands, and is part of a watershed that feeds the south end of Potter Marsh. This large, intact natural area, located directly above the iconic Potter Marsh in south Anchorage, helps protect a vital connection between the State of Alaska Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge and Chugach State Park.

Potter Marsh Watershed Park was established in December 2024 through a partnership between Great Land Trust, a local nonprofit organization, and the Municipality of Anchorage. Conservation funding used to support the acquisition and creation of the park necessitates that the property's natural resources be forever protected for their ecological functions and public benefit.

This protection is accomplished through the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Conservation Easement¹ (Conservation Easement), a document that defines the allowable uses and types of development, and the designation of the entire park as Alaska's first Community Forest pursuant to a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service.

Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department (Anchorage Parks and Recreation) and Great Land Trust are working towards a more accessible park for residents and visitors to enjoy its natural setting through low-impact recreation and educational activities focused on nature observation and enjoyment.

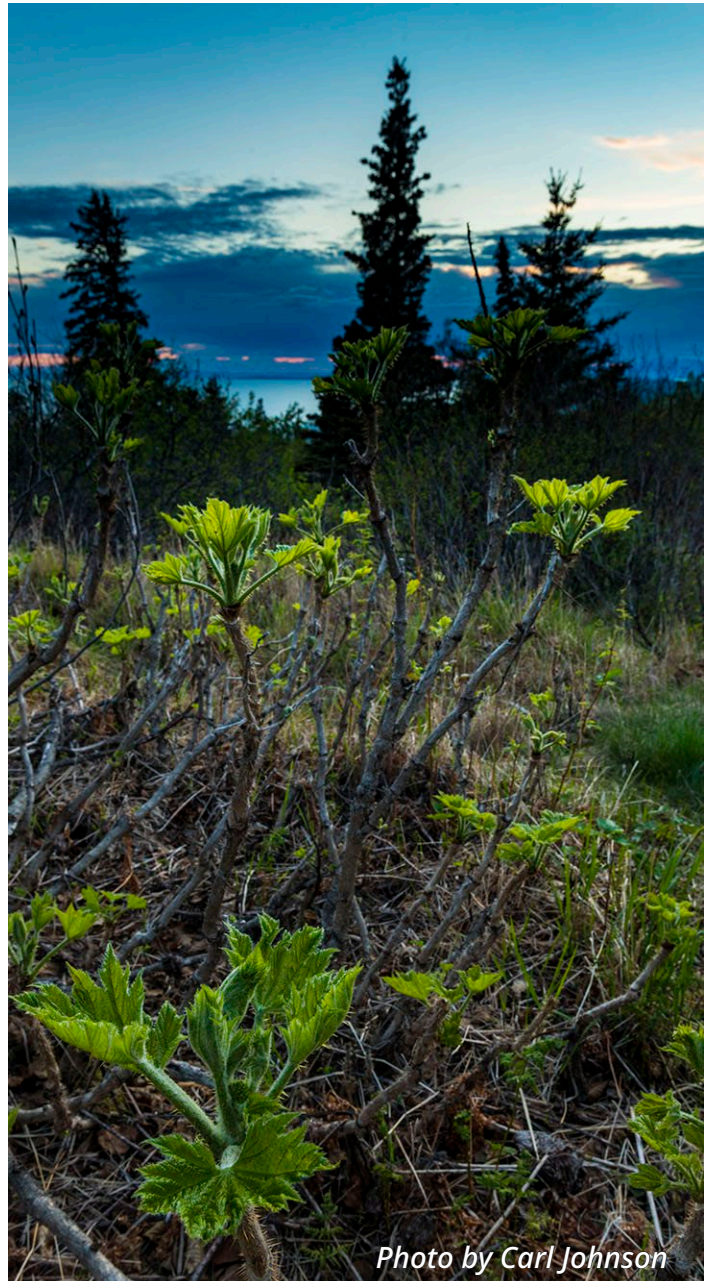


Photo by Carl Johnson

¹ Recorded December 31, 2024; recording number 2024-036534-0, Anchorage Recording District

PURPOSE & GOALS OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan serves as a guiding vision for the next 20 years, aiming to balance low-impact recreational uses with the preservation of critical natural resources. The master plan provides an overview of the Conservation Easement and identifies current and future needs, addresses issues and concerns, and establishes a framework for the future management, maintenance, and development of the Potter Marsh Watershed Park. The master plan provides recommendations to balance public access, education, and recreation with environmental health, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the park for future generations.

The Master Plan...

Explicitly recognizes that the park is a conservation area and a Community Forest.

The Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program is a competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to tribal entities, local governments, and qualified conservation non-profit organizations to acquire and establish community forests that provide community benefits.

A Community Forest is a forest protected for community benefits, such as clean water, wildlife habitat, and recreation, blending conservation with local stewardship and empowerment. Potter Marsh Watershed Community Forest, which coincides with the Potter Marsh Watershed Park, is Alaska's first Community Forest and was designated as a USDA Forest Service Community Forest in 2024.

The master plan serves as the community forest plan for this Community Forest as required by the program regulations 36 CFR 230.2.

Identifies and prioritizes future improvements that maintain the park's existing natural quality and are consistent with the Conservation Easement and the community vision for the park.

Outlines strategies to ensure resource protection and to address identified issues and public concerns.

Provides guidance for the future management and maintenance of the park.



Photo by Carl Johnson

BACKGROUND

HISTORIC LAND USE

The Athabascan Dena'ina people have been archaeologically identified in the area 1,500 to 1,000 years ago. The area now covered by the Alaska Railroad tracks and Potter Marsh, located adjacent to the park, was called Hkaditali, meaning "Drift Lumber," due to its original beach waterfront (a good place to collect debris), with Potter Creek being called Hkaditali Betnu - "Drift Lumber Creek." Nearby Rabbit Creek was called Ggeh Betnu, meaning "Rabbit Creek." Rabbit Creek is one of the few locations where modern naming has preserved the meaning of an Alaska Native place name.

The surrounding land eventually came under federal ownership. The property that now makes up the park was transitioned from the federal government to the State of Alaska. The State of Alaska conveyed the western portion to the Municipality of Anchorage, which placed it in the Heritage Land Bank inventory, while the remainder was transferred to private ownership.

The property has remained mostly undeveloped and vegetated. Historical development was minor, primarily associated with gas and powerline utility easements and the Moen and Feodosia/Belarde homesteader roads that traversed the property. The "Moen Trail" (road) was used by the Moen Family, one of the first homesteads in the area, for access down from their nearby property to the Alaska Railroad Potter Section House (now Chugach State Park's Headquarters).

Since 2005, multiple attempts to develop the private parcel part of the northeast side of the park spurred local conservation efforts. Neighboring landowners and the community council contacted Great Land Trust to seek assistance in conserving the property. Concurrently, they worked with the Municipality of Anchorage to ensure the Heritage Land Bank properties were officially set aside and managed for watershed protection and open space.

CREATING THE PARK AND COMMUNITY FOREST

Located directly above Potter Marsh, the 303-acre property that now makes up the park has been of interest for protection, as it provides considerable environmental functions for Potter Marsh and as open space. After more than five years of negotiations and fundraising, Potter Marsh Watershed Park was established in December 2024 through a partnership between Great Land Trust and the Municipality of Anchorage.

Just prior to the park's creation, several feasibility assessments — to create a mixed-use subdivision with conservation and open space components — were completed by the owner of the privately owned parcels and the Municipality of Anchorage in collaboration with Great Land Trust. It was discovered that the mixed-use project wasn't viable due to high development costs and the property's natural features, including a high water table, extensive wetlands and streams, and steep slopes. Great Land Trust quickly switched

gears and worked with both the Municipality of Anchorage and private landowner to permanently conserve the entire 303-acre property for conservation and public open space. Great Land Trust negotiated the purchase of the privately owned parcels while simultaneously working with the Municipality of Anchorage Real Estate Department to add the Heritage Land Bank properties to the project.

The Anchorage Assembly unanimously passed Ordinances 2024-47, 2024-48, and 2024-49 authorizing the Real Estate Department to move forward with the project. These Ordinances authorized the Municipality of Anchorage to accept title to the private parcels once acquired by Great Land Trust and to grant Great Land Trust a conservation easement over both the Heritage Land Bank properties and the private parcels at closing for the creation of a new municipal natural area park managed by Anchorage Parks and Recreation.



Photo by Kerry Tasker

To help fund the acquisition of the private parcels, Great Land Trust applied for multiple federal grants and used the value of the Heritage Land Bank properties as an in-kind match for those grants. Additionally, the private landowner, General Communications Inc. (GCI), agreed to sell their property for \$400,000 less than the appraised value, allowing that donation amount to also serve as matching funds. Funding for the acquisition and park creation was secured from a variety of sources, including:

- A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant.
- Two National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grants from the USFWS through the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.
- The first-ever Community Forest Program grant from the USDA Forest Service awarded in Alaska.
- Additional financial support came from the USFWS Coastal Program, Rasmuson Foundation, Anchorage Audubon, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund, ConocoPhillips Alaska, Alaska Conservation Foundation, and Great Land Trust, together with many other local community donors.

To meet the federal funders' grant requirements, a conservation easement and multiple grant restrictions were recorded on the property. These title documents serve to permanently protect the entire park property and its natural resources. At this time, the entire park was also designated as a USDA Forest Service Community Forest. The Community Forest Program is a competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to tribal entities, local governments, and qualified conservation non-profit organizations to acquire and establish community forests that provide community benefits.

The Potter Marsh Watershed Park Community Forest, which coincides with the park, was created to provide habitat conservation, water quality protection, and outdoor educational and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to Anchorage.

The new Potter Marsh Watershed Park will forever safeguard unfragmented forest and woodland habitat, the wetlands and waterways that support the water quality and recharge of the southern end of Potter Marsh, and public open space.

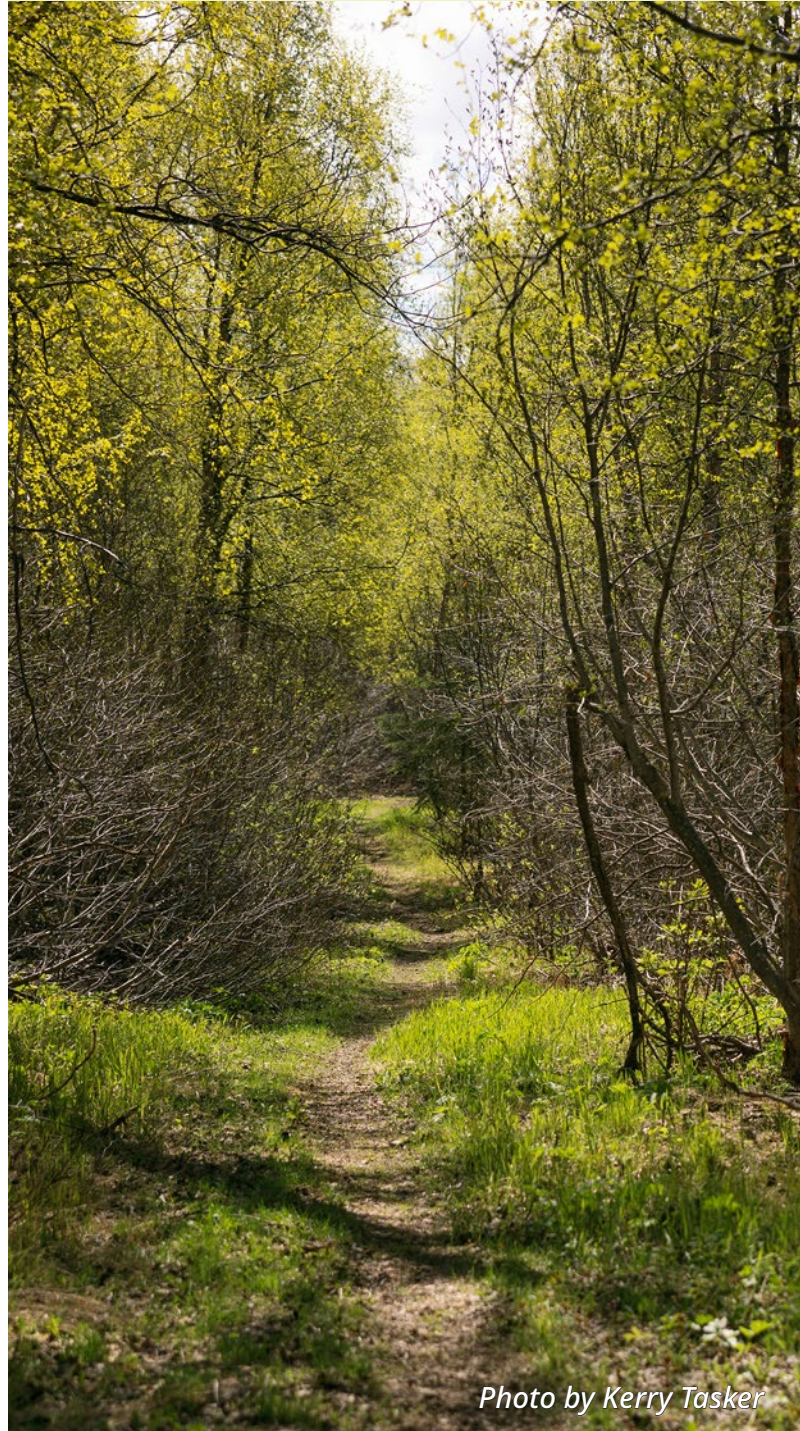


Photo by Kerry Tasker

CONSERVATION EASEMENT SUMMARY

Potter Marsh Watershed Park is owned by the Municipality of Anchorage and managed as a park by Anchorage Parks and Recreation. The park is subject to the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Conservation Easement² held by Great Land Trust, which places permanent restrictions on the types of uses and improvements permitted within the park to protect the property's natural and scenic resources and character.

The Conservation Easement identifies (and defines) these protected assets as conservation values. The following is a brief summary of the conservation values and conservation purposes (or protection objectives) from the Conservation Easement. Please refer to the Conservation Easement for detailed descriptions, as it is the primary guiding document.

CONSERVATION VALUES

*The Conservation Easement identifies the conservation values within the park, including its **relatively natural habitat, open space, and opportunities for recreation and education**. These protected assets are described in this section, along with the objectives to achieve their protection.*

RELATIVELY NATURAL HABITAT

Potter Marsh Watershed Park contains relatively natural habitat, including topographically diverse terrain consisting of upland forest, open meadows, riverine, riparian, and wetland areas that directly contribute to the health of the region's ecosystems. Protecting Potter Marsh Watershed Park contributes to the quality of the park's relatively natural habitat, including its forest and woodland resources, wildlife resources, water resources, and contribution to ecosystem health.

Forest and Woodland Resources

Potter Marsh Watershed Park is a large, intact forested area that promotes biological diversity, allowing for the growth of a healthy, contiguous resource. The park's continuous canopy and mosaic of native vegetation communities, including trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and grasses, support wildlife habitat and provide vital corridors for wildlife migration. The forested riparian buffers play an essential role in protecting the water quality that supplies the downstream ecosystems. The park provides the forested scenic backdrop to the adjacent Potter Marsh.



Photo by Great Land Trust

² Recorded December 31, 2024; recording number 2024-036534-0, Anchorage Recording District



Photo by Great Land Trust

Wildlife Resources

Potter Marsh Watershed Park provides suitable habitat for wildlife, including moose, bears, foxes, snowshoe hares, and other native species. The combination of forested uplands, meadows, riparian corridors, streams, seeps, and wetlands provides a diverse mosaic of natural habitats that support breeding, nesting, birthing, rearing, foraging, and wintering for multiple species of birds and wildlife with different habitat requirements (including resident and migratory native species such as the great horned owl, rusty blackbird, varied thrush, and black-capped chickadee).

Water Resources

Potter Marsh Watershed Park is a complex area of uplands, wetlands, and streams that directs groundwater from the slopes of the Chugach Mountains to Potter Marsh, Little Survival Creek, Potter Creek, and then to Cook Inlet. Springs and seeps emerge throughout the park, and the wetlands and riparian areas they create provide exceptional habitat for birds and mammals.

Contribution to Ecosystem Health

The water resources in Potter Marsh Watershed Park have a critical hydrological connection to wetlands, including Potter Marsh. Three recharge sources for Potter Marsh include naturally occurring channelized flow, surface runoff and overland flow, and subsurface flow that maintains the Potter Marsh water table or erupts in springs adjacent to and within Potter Marsh. The park directly contributes to the hydrological function and health of Potter Marsh's nesting, feeding, rearing, and resting habitat for migratory and coastal-dependent birds, as well as a productive Pacific salmon spawning habitat (salmon provide a food source for the endangered Cook Inlet beluga whales). The park also provides an important natural habitat connection from Chugach State Park in the Chugach Mountains to the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge on the shores of the Cook Inlet.

Summary of Relatively Natural Habitat Protection Objectives

Perpetuate and foster growth of a healthy and unfragmented forest; maintain a continuous canopy of vegetation with a multi-tiered understory of trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and grasses; maintain watershed functions and support healthy ecosystem processes; and trap air pollution particulates for healthier air and sequester carbon in trees and soil in order to mitigate rising atmospheric carbon levels.

Maintain the quality of wildlife habitat; protect breeding sites; promote biodiversity and native species; preserve large, intact areas of wildlife habitat; and maintain connectivity of wildlife habitats and migration corridors.

Maintain and improve the quality of riparian, wetland, and other water resources within, around, and downstream of the park.

OPEN SPACE

Potter Marsh Watershed Park is a large tract of undeveloped land containing a scenic viewshed of contiguous naturally forested uplands. The park is visible to the public from all directions and provides a unique scenic backdrop of high importance for the adjacent Potter Marsh in the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, the Seward Highway (designated as a USDA Forest Service Scenic Byway, Alaska Scenic Byway, and All-American Road), and the Alaska Railroad. The park is part of a significant regional landscape that attracts tourism to Anchorage, and views from the park encompass the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, Turnagain Arm, and the northern portion of the volcanic Aleutian arc.

Summary of Open Space Protection Objectives

Retain the park forever in a predominantly open space condition for the scenic enjoyment of the public and to yield a significant public benefit. Protect open space resources on the property, including scenic resources, by preserving the relationship of scenic resources within the park to natural and scenic resources in its surroundings. Protect scenic vistas visible from the public rights-of-way and other public properties in the vicinity of the park.



Photo by Great Land Trust



Photo by Great Land Trust

RECREATION AND EDUCATION

Potter Marsh Watershed Park provides outdoor recreational and educational opportunities for the public. The forested uplands offer excellent opportunities for passive recreation, with trails for traversing the park to appreciate the natural environment and scenic views. The expansive views to and from the park, the topography, and the diversity of ecosystems support passive recreation year-round. The park’s unique geological formations, multiple habitat types, and views of the surrounding area provide excellent opportunities for educational activities. The park is located directly adjacent to Potter Marsh, one of Anchorage’s most popular destinations for

wildlife viewing and passive recreation, and to Chugach State Park, another popular recreation destination. The park’s location, adjacencies, and undeveloped status provide opportunities for future connections to local and regional trail networks.

Summary of Recreation and Education Protection Objective
Preserve the park for outdoor passive recreation by, and the education of, the general public. Facilitate outdoor recreation and education by providing for public access onto and within the park.

ROLE OF THE CONSERVATION EASEMENT

The Conservation Easement legally establishes the possibility of future development and activities based on the conservation values of the existing resources. To achieve the protection objectives of preserving or minimally impacting these valued assets, the Conservation Easement divides the park into two areas – the Resource Protection Area and the Limited Development Area(s).

RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA

The majority of the park is designated as a Resource Protection Area, intended to protect the natural resources and scenic views by locating and limiting development and uses to promote and maintain a mostly undisturbed state.

LIMITED DEVELOPMENT AREA

Four areas are designated as Limited Development Areas, where compatible land use and development necessary to support passive recreation may occur, subject to limitations and restrictions to achieve conservation purposes.



POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS PER THE CONSERVATION EASEMENT

ZONE	DESCRIPTION	PERMITTED	SUBJECT TO REVIEW
Resource Protection Area	In this most sensitive habitat zone, the Conservation Easement allows minimal improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory and educational signs. Habitat enhancement devices such as bird houses or bat houses. Benches. Park-style trash receptacles meant for trash disposal that are wildlife-proof. Structures used to control access. Porous trails, designed and constructed for passive recreation and non-motorized use. Trails limited in density to avoid impacts to the conservation values, avoid habitat fragmentation, and protect the site's natural quality. Trail tread not to exceed 36", with total cleared width not to exceed 72". Moen, Belarde, and Gasline trails not to exceed 96" tread, with total cleared width not to exceed 132". No embankments, jumps, ramps, or other trail features not required for accessibility or conservation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footbridge, boardwalk, or other appropriate improvement where trails must cross streams, springs, seeps, wetlands, and areas within 25 feet of their edge. One connector trail, ≤96" tread and ≤132" cleared width, between Golden View Drive Limited Development Area and Moen Homestead Trail. One connector trail, ≤96" tread and ≤132" cleared width, between Bettijeau Street Limited Development Area and Belarde Trail. One bluff trail, or Turnagain Arm Trail connection, or Coastal Trail connection with additional elements permitted, if approved by Great Land Trust. Fences, walls, gates, or similar barrier structures. Viewing overlooks or other associated improvements.
Limited Development Area	These zones provide space for vehicular entry and a formal educational gathering point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everything permitted in the Resource Protection Area. Paved parking lots or access drives. Restrooms or similar facilities. Kiosks, picnic tables, pavilions, or other similar structures. Viewing overlooks. Park host camping or caretaker cabin and accessory improvements. Trails with additional elements for non-motorized use. Dark Sky compliant lighting. 	

Note:

For convenience, the information on this sheet is a summary and should not be considered a legal interpretation or used in place of the recorded Conservation Easement. The Conservation Easement is the legal basis for all uses and development on this property and is the primary guiding document.

A permitted use does not imply that the use will occur, but that it may be considered where conditions allow.

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING PLANS

PARK-SPECIFIC PLANS

POTTER MARSH WATERSHED PARK CONSERVATION EASEMENT BASELINE DOCUMENT

The purpose of the Baseline Document was to record a detailed description of the Potter Marsh Watershed Park property, using words, pictures, and maps, as of the date the Conservation Easement was granted. This comprehensive document guides compliance monitoring and assesses the ongoing condition of protected conservation values, such as relatively natural habitat, open space, and water resources. This document is housed at the Great Land Trust and with the Municipality of Anchorage.



Photo by Great Land Trust

COMMUNITY-WIDE PLANS

ANCHORAGE BOWL PARK, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND RECREATION FACILITY PLAN, 2006

The Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan provides a systematic, measurable framework for planning, acquiring, developing, and managing parks, recreation, and natural-use areas within the Anchorage Bowl. The plan focuses on addressing the community's needs for leisure activities while preserving the natural environment as part of the overall community design. It serves as a 20-year roadmap, offering broad policies and development options to guide community leaders on where to develop new facilities and how to maintain the existing park system. While the plan predates this park and thus does not have explicit guidance, as a large parcel dedicated to conservation and open space uses, the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan contributes significantly to the plan's related goals.

ANCHORAGE BOWL 2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 2001

The Anchorage Assembly adopted the Anchorage Bowl 2020 Comprehensive Plan in 2001, which provides a 20+ year development guide for Anchorage. As a large parcel dedicated to conservation and open space uses, the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan explicitly supports relevant goals and strategies from within the 2020 plan. These relate mainly to the sections: Assess and Mitigate Adverse Air Quality Impacts of Major Public Land Use and Transportation Decisions, and Public Facilities & Services Policies and Strategies. The focus areas within these sections include: Design & Environmental Policies and Strategies, Open Space, Habitat, Water Resources, Level of Service, Utilities, and Parks, Trails, and Recreation.

ANCHORAGE 2040 LAND USE PLAN, 2018

This plan serves as a blueprint for the actions and policies needed to achieve community goals. As a large parcel dedicated to conservation and open space uses, the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan explicitly supports:

- Goal 5: Coordinated and targeted infrastructure investments catalyze new growth, provide an acceptable return on investment, and equitably improve safety and quality of life.
- Goal 8: Anchorage maintains, improves, and strategically expands parks, greenbelts, riparian corridors, and trail corridors to enhance land values, public access, neighborhoods, and mixed-use centers.

AMATS NON-MOTORIZED PLAN, 2021

The Non-Motorized Plan provides the vision for a network of facilities for non-motorized travel (walking, biking, rolling, and gliding) within the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS). When implemented, the outcomes of this plan will help residents travel more safely and efficiently without the need for a motor vehicle in all seasons. The Non-Motorized Plan merges planning efforts for on-street bicycle facilities, pedestrian sidewalks, and shared-use pathways. The plan provides a comprehensive framework and 10-year guiding vision for active transportation in the planning area.

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN, 2025

The Municipality of Anchorage Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is a community-driven strategic document designed to reduce wildfire risk and increase resilience, especially in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) where development meets wildlands. The plan identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction, recommends mitigation measures to lessen the ignitability of structures, and improves fire response capabilities through collaboration among residents, fire departments, and land managers. It also serves as a critical document for Anchorage to secure federal grants for wildfire mitigation projects.

ANCHORAGE WETLANDS MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1996 (10-YEAR UPDATE)

This plan identifies actions to protect classified wetlands and minimize water quality degradation. It seeks to balance natural resource protection with appropriate development. As a large parcel containing significant wetlands and springs, and dedicated to conservation and open space uses, the Potter Marsh Watershed Park contributes significantly to the plan's goals.

AMATS RECREATIONAL TRAILS PLAN (DRAFT, 2026)

The Recreational Trails Plan is an update to the 1997 Areawide Trails Plan, which guides local and state agencies, organizations, and private citizens in establishing trail facilities throughout the Municipality of Anchorage as part of the overall transportation system. The plan predates this park and lacks explicit guidance; however, its intent supports trails, educational opportunities, habitat preservation, and increased winter recreation.

The Recreational Trails Plan is expected to be incorporated as the superseding document guiding the development, management, and maintenance of trails in the Anchorage Bowl, Chugiak, and Eagle River, based on a modern public engagement process. The Recreational Trails Plan does not make specific recommendations for the park, but ultimately recommends that the master plan be developed in order to guide trail improvements here.

ANCHORAGE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN, 2019

The Climate Action Plan prepares Anchorage for the impacts of climate change. Urban Forests and Watersheds are one of the seven sectors highlighted in the plan. The Climate Action Plan discusses objectives related to forest management, invasive species outbreak response, maintaining and improving urban forest and watershed resiliency, and prioritizing low-impact development. As a large parcel dedicated to conservation and open space uses, the Potter Marsh Watershed Park contributes significantly to the plan's related goals.

STATE PLANS

POTTER MARSH MASTER INTERPRETIVE PLAN, 2007

The Potter Marsh Interpretive Plan provides a vision for interpretive opportunities at Potter Marsh and recommends actions to be taken over the next 10 years. It defines interpretive management goals and objectives, identifies interpretive themes, and describes visitor experience goals. The plan also suggests implementing three programs to enhance the visitor experience and provide opportunities to learn about Potter Marsh's natural, scenic, historical, cultural, and recreational qualities.

ANCHORAGE COASTAL WILDLIFE REFUGE MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1991

The Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge Management Plan provides consistent long-range guidance to the Alaska Departments of Fish and Game and Natural Resources, and other agencies involved in managing the refuge. The plan presents management goals for the refuge and its resources, and identifies policies to determine whether proposed activities within the refuge are compatible with the protection of fish and wildlife, their habitats, and public use of the refuge.

CHUGACH STATE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN, 2016

The Chugach State Park Management Plan is the basis for the management and development of the state-owned land and water within the park, as well as for areas managed by the park under special agreement. The Chugach State Park Management Plan states the objective/ purpose to encourage cooperation in planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operation of facilities along transportation right-of-way (ROW) between agencies for the Potter Marsh to Girdwood area and to establish access points that complement the Potter to Indian Trail extension once it is built.

DISTRICT PLANS

HILLSIDE DISTRICT PLAN, 2010

The Hillside District Plan is a comprehensive policy document that guides land use, development, and resource management within the Hillside District of Anchorage. Its primary purpose is to balance the need for low-density residential development with the protection of the area's significant natural resources, scenic views, and semi-rural character. The plan establishes policies for various elements, including trails, transportation, housing, and wildfire mitigation, to ensure long-term, responsible growth consistent with the community's values. As a large parcel dedicated to conservation and open space uses, the Potter Marsh Watershed Park contributes significantly to the plan's related goals.

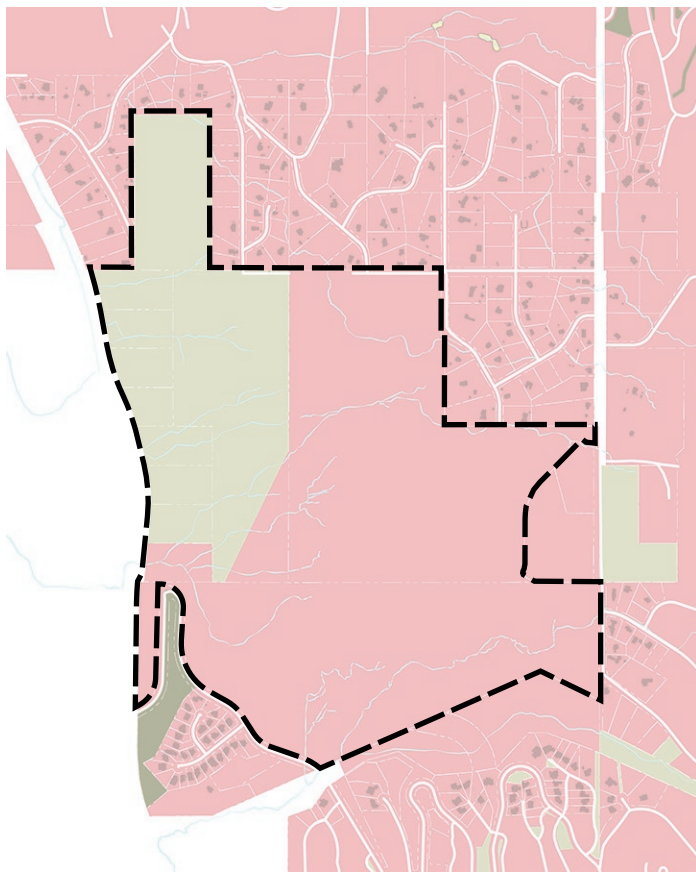


Photo by Great Land Trust

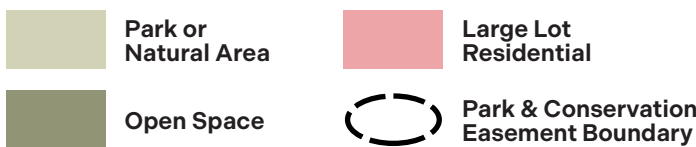
EXISTING CONDITIONS

LAND USE AND ZONING

Potter Marsh Watershed Park is an open space surrounded by residential areas zoned for mixed, single-family, and low-density residential use. The land use plan shows the area as partly park use, surrounded by large lot residential. The parcel is currently being rezoned to Parks and Recreation (Planning and Zoning Commission Resolution No. 2025-34 and No. 2025-0131) to match the new property boundary and better reflect its status as a dedicated park.

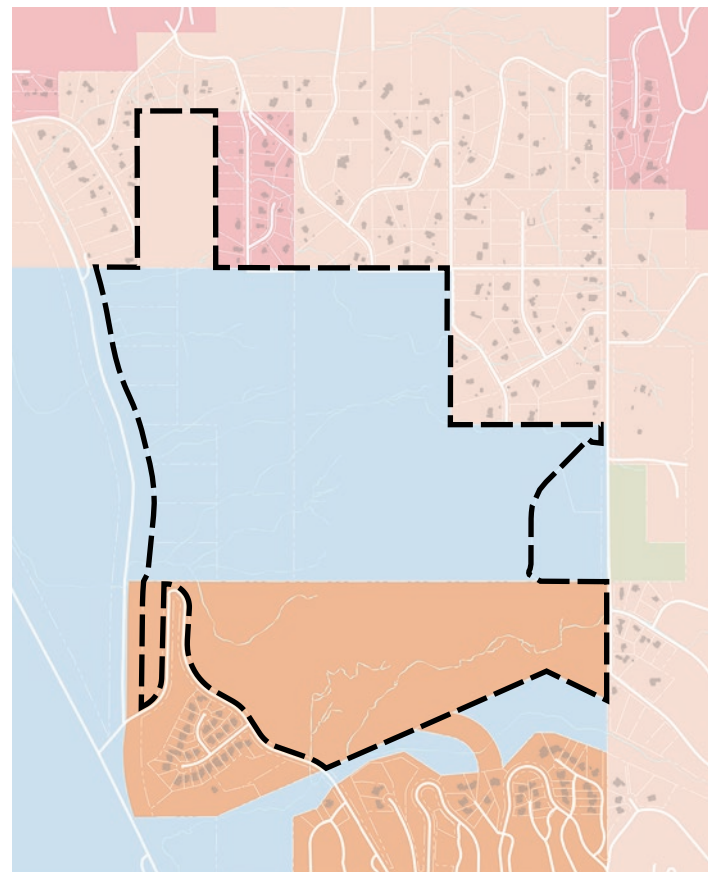


LAND USE LEGEND

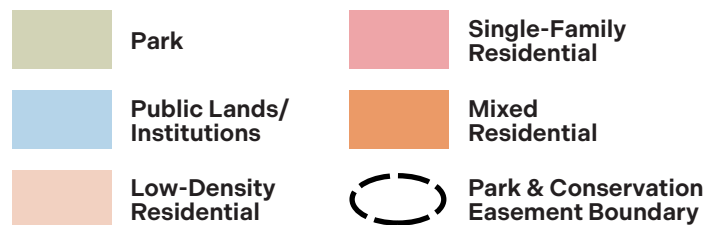


PARK CLASSIFICATION

Anchorage parks are classified by size, function, service area, and development. Although the 2006 Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resources, and Recreation Facility Plan predates the acquisition of the park, the Potter Marsh Watershed Park is consistent with the Natural Resource Area classification and will be included for official designation by the future update of the 2006 plan. Natural Resource Areas are set aside for the preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics, or for buffering.



ZONING LEGEND

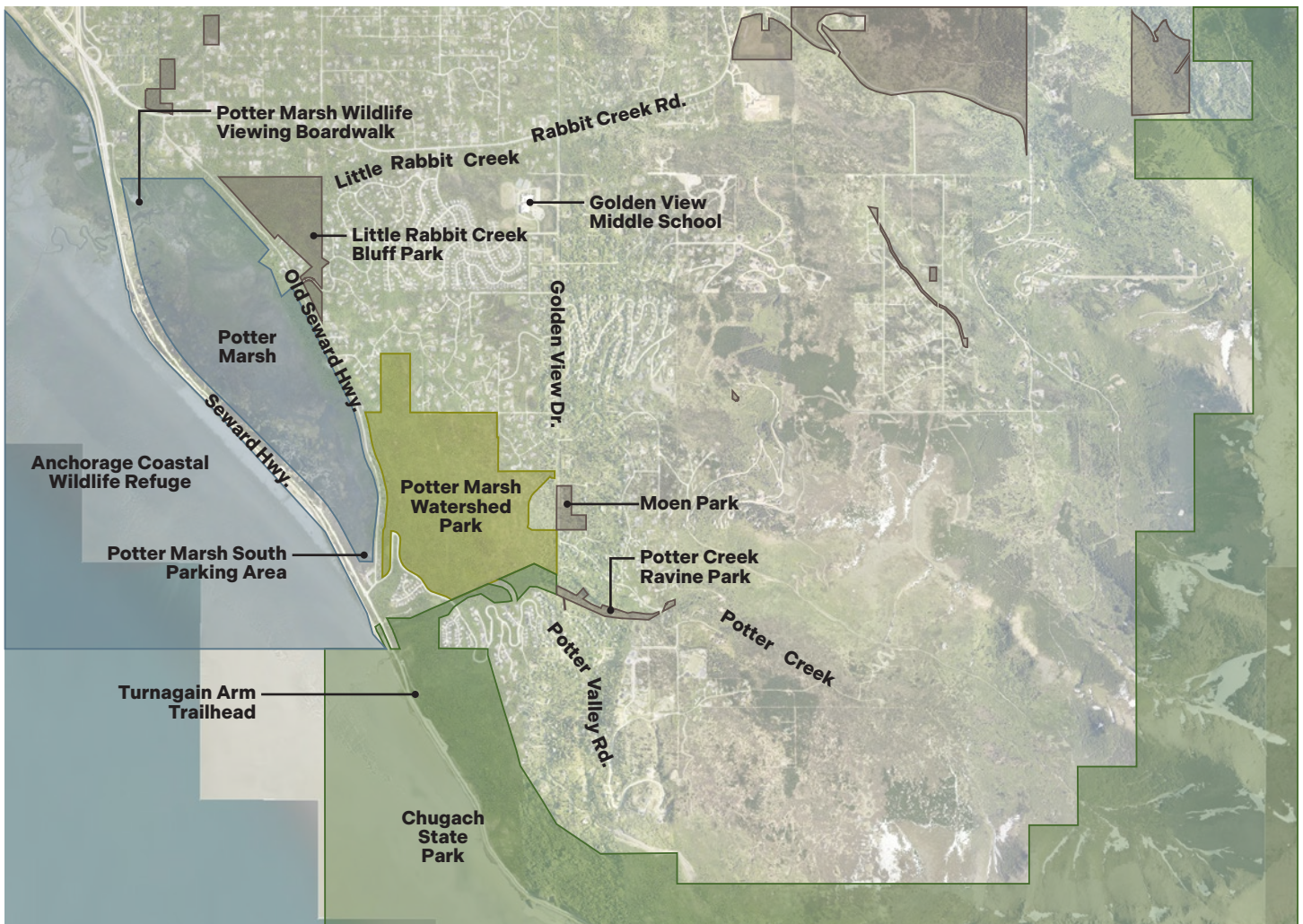


ADJACENT LAND USE AND NEARBY CONSERVATION AREAS

Much of the surrounding area is developed as low-density suburbs with scattered private residences. The Potter Marsh Watershed Park is bounded by Old Seward Highway to the west, Potter Valley Road and Chugach State Park to the south, Golden View Drive and Municipality of Anchorage-owned land to the east, and a combination of private land, Bettijeau Street, and East 172nd Avenue to the north.

The State of Alaska Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, specifically the Potter Marsh portion of the Refuge, is located immediately adjacent to the park, to the west, across Old Seward Highway. The Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge is managed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G).

A portion of Chugach State Park is located adjacent to the southern boundary along Potter Creek and is managed by the State of Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Potter Creek Ravine Park, a Municipality of Anchorage park, abuts this portion of Chugach State Park, but doesn't directly border the park. Moen Park, located just to the east of the park across Golden View Drive, is another Municipality of Anchorage park that doesn't directly border the park. The Municipality of Anchorage's Little Rabbit Creek Bluff Park is located less than a half-mile down Old Seward Highway from the park.



LEGEND

- Potter Marsh Watershed Park
- Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge
- Chugach State Park
- Municipality of Anchorage Parks

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

ECOLOGICAL REGION AND CLIMATE

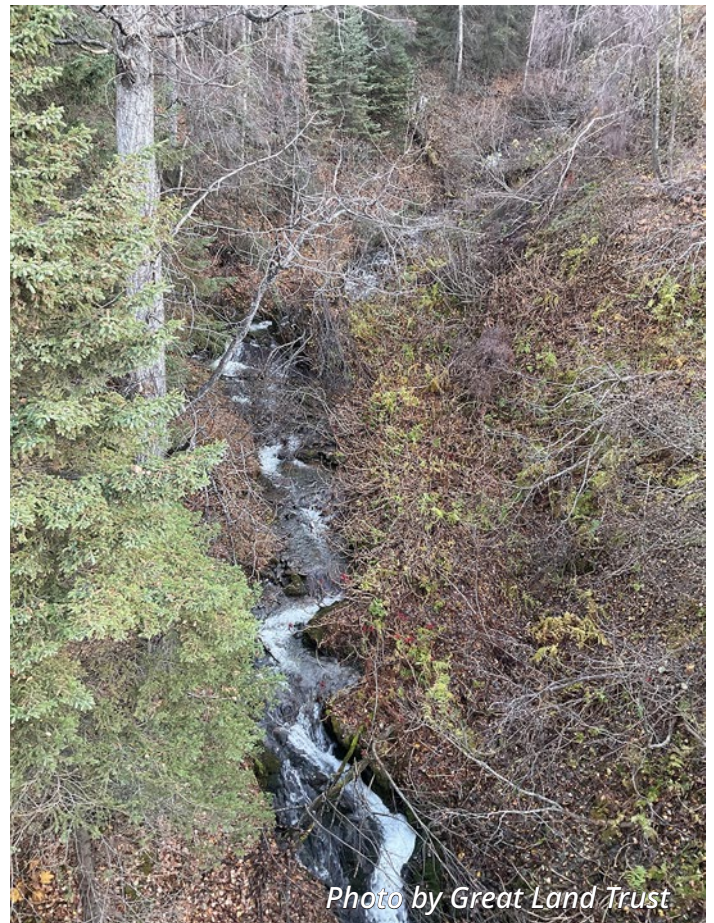
The Potter Marsh Watershed Park natural conditions are defined by its position in the Cook Inlet Ecoregion with transitional characteristics from the Chugach-St. Elias Mountains Ecoregion. The area has a mild maritime and continental climate, rolling topography, spruce and birch forests intermixed with wetlands, is generally free from permafrost, and experiences average temperatures from 14°F in winter to 54°F in summer. The average annual precipitation ranges from 15 inches to 27 inches across the region. Annual snowfall averages around 79 inches.



TOPOGRAPHY

The park features sloping terrain, with terraced sections, stream gullies, and small wetlands. From its lowest point on the west edge adjacent to Potter Marsh to its highest point near Moen Park, the terrain climbs almost exactly 800 feet over 0.74 miles (3,900 feet). The overall average slope is approximately 20%, but this is achieved through a series of terraced sections with flatter areas separated by long ridges, mostly aligned north-south, that exceed 110% slope at their most extreme.

The steepest ridges are along the west edge, adjacent to Potter Marsh, with the gentlest near the top at Golden View Drive. The north-south terraced slopes are intermittently cut by northeast-southwesterly-oriented stream gullies, most of which are limited in depth to 10 or 30 feet, except for Potter Creek Canyon at the south edge, which drops approximately 100 feet to Potter Creek in its steeper sections.



GEOLOGY

The bedrock of the local area is the McHugh Complex, a tectonic mélange along the Border Ranges fault composed of metamorphic, volcanic, and sedimentary rocks of Permian to Cretaceous age. The metasedimentary rocks of this area primarily consist of sandstone, shale, chert, and limestone of oceanic origin. Overlying the bedrock is glacial till, composed of unconsolidated sand, gravel, boulders, and clay. Exposures along the Old Seward Highway and the park's western boundary are rocks of the McHugh Complex, with small exposures of marble and metasedimentary and metavolcanic rocks present.

HYDROLOGY, SOILS, AND WETLANDS

A wetlands delineation report is included in the Baseline Document and findings found that Potter Marsh Watershed Park has a reported 16 wetland units totaling 9.7 acres. Streams are prevalent throughout the park, totaling over 4.9 miles, with most wetland areas associated with them. Of the sixteen wetland areas identified in the park, only two are not found near streams. These two wetlands are situated on noticeable breaks in the slope and include springs that emerge downslope of dry, upland habitats, indicating groundwater discharge as the source of water for these wetlands. The stream-associated wetlands are also affected by groundwater discharge, which occurs below slope breaks that occur naturally or were created by prior disturbances.

The southern portion of Potter Marsh is fed by the park's numerous freshwater resources, including a fork of Little Survival Creek, which provides wetland recharge through naturally occurring channelized flow, surface runoff and overland flow, and subsurface flow that maintains the water table or erupts in springs adjacent to and within the marsh. The ponded habitat below the park is sustained by this important watershed.

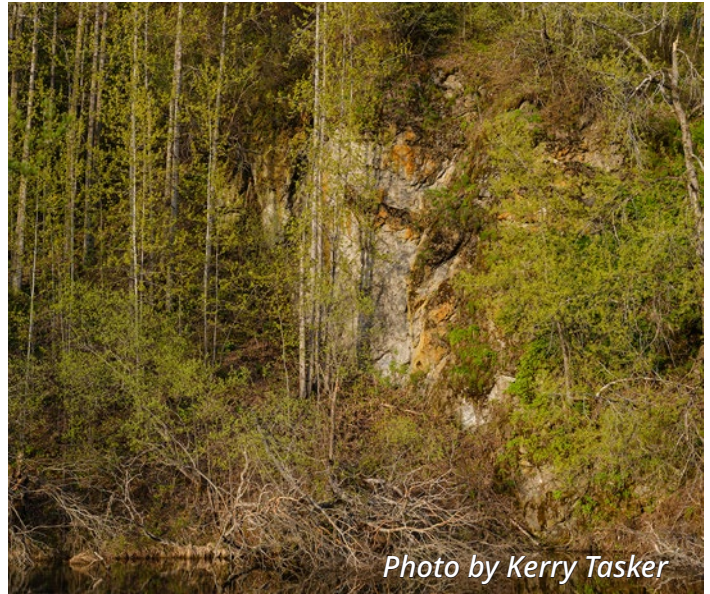


Photo by Kerry Tasker



Photo by Kerry Tasker



Photo by Great Land Trust

PLANT COMMUNITIES

The park contains a large forest with mature, undisturbed cover indicative of well-drained vegetation. The forest is dominated by deciduous trees, mainly black cottonwood, balsam poplar, and paper birch, with smaller percentages of quaking aspen groves, tall willows, and alder pockets with white spruce stands scattered throughout the park. This is a unique, far northern location for the forest type, which is more commonly found directly south of the park in the coastal Turnagain Arm environment. The forest type is made possible by south and west-facing aspects, which descend from the nearby peaks of the Chugach Mountains to the coast of Cook Inlet.

Other typical vegetation found in shallow sections of the park includes bluejoint grass meadows with scattered, open canopy birch. Understory and ground cover are a mixture of highbush cranberry, cow parsnip, bluejoint grass, and other forbs. There are some instances of invasive plants observed on the park property.



VEGETATION COVER LEGEND







 Conifer	 Hardwood	 Herbaceous
 Conifer/ Hardwood Mix	 Shrub	 Sparse



Photo by Great Land Trust

WILDLIFE

Numerous migratory and resident bird species are found in the park, including species listed by the State of Alaska as Species of Greatest Conservation Need. The streams, seeps, springs, and wetlands in the park provide unique nesting and foraging areas for birds. The wet areas provide habitat for insects and other invertebrates that many migrant and resident birds feed on. The narrow, steep streams and their buffers offer cover for birds and a high density of nesting sites.

The park provides a watershed and supporting habitat for Potter Marsh, a subunit of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge. Around 220 bird species have been recorded on the refuge, with approximately 160 occurring annually as migrants or breeders. Potter Marsh supports the highest density of breeding waterfowl in Anchorage. During spring and fall migration, waterfowl present are in the thousands. Land adjacent to and supported by the park was identified by the National Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area and is regularly used for bird counts and educational programming.

The park is home to large mammals like moose and black and brown bears, and smaller species such as lynx, wolves, porcupine and squirrels. Wildlife benefits from the habitat connectivity provided by the park, linking the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge at sea level with Chugach State Park on the slopes of the Chugach Mountains.

OPEN SPACE AND SCENIC VALUE

The Potter Marsh Watershed Park Conservation Easement seeks to extend the protection of open space and habitat connectivity associated with the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, Chugach State Park, and multiple Municipality of Anchorage parks. The scenic resources protected by this Conservation Easement are visible by the public from Potter Marsh and the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, Chugach State Park, Moen Park, the Alaska Railroad, the Seward Highway, the Old Seward Highway, Potter Valley Road, Golden View Drive, Bettijean Street, and East 172nd Avenue, and adjacent private land and will remain largely unchanged in perpetuity.



EXISTING IMPROVEMENTS AND ENCUMBRANCES

The Potter Marsh Watershed Park is a largely undeveloped, natural area. There are some instances of minor development or land alterations throughout the park, and several utility easements are located in the park.














Four noticeable cleared paths that crisscross the park include: the north-south clearing associated with the buried natural gas pipeline and Gasline Trail; the north-south clearing associated with the main overhead powerline; the curved clearing associated with the old abandoned Feodosia/Belarde homesteader roadbed; and the east-

west clearing associated with the historic Moen homesteader roadbed. There are also numerous unimproved trails that crisscross the park, most of which are narrow soft-surface 'social' trails.

Encroachments within the park are currently being addressed as of the writing of the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan. Other minor existing improvements observed throughout the park include old park boundary signs/posts, survey markers and corner monuments, gates and fencing, and culverts.

SITE INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

LEGEND

-  Aspen Grove
-  Overgrown & Wet Area
-  Wetland, Stream, or Wet Area
-  Adjacent Parks
-  Existing Trail
-  Social Trail
-  Easement
-  Park & Conservation Easement Boundary
-  Resource Protection Area
-  Limited Development Area
-  Views
-  Generalized Bear Travel Corridor
-  Steep Slopes

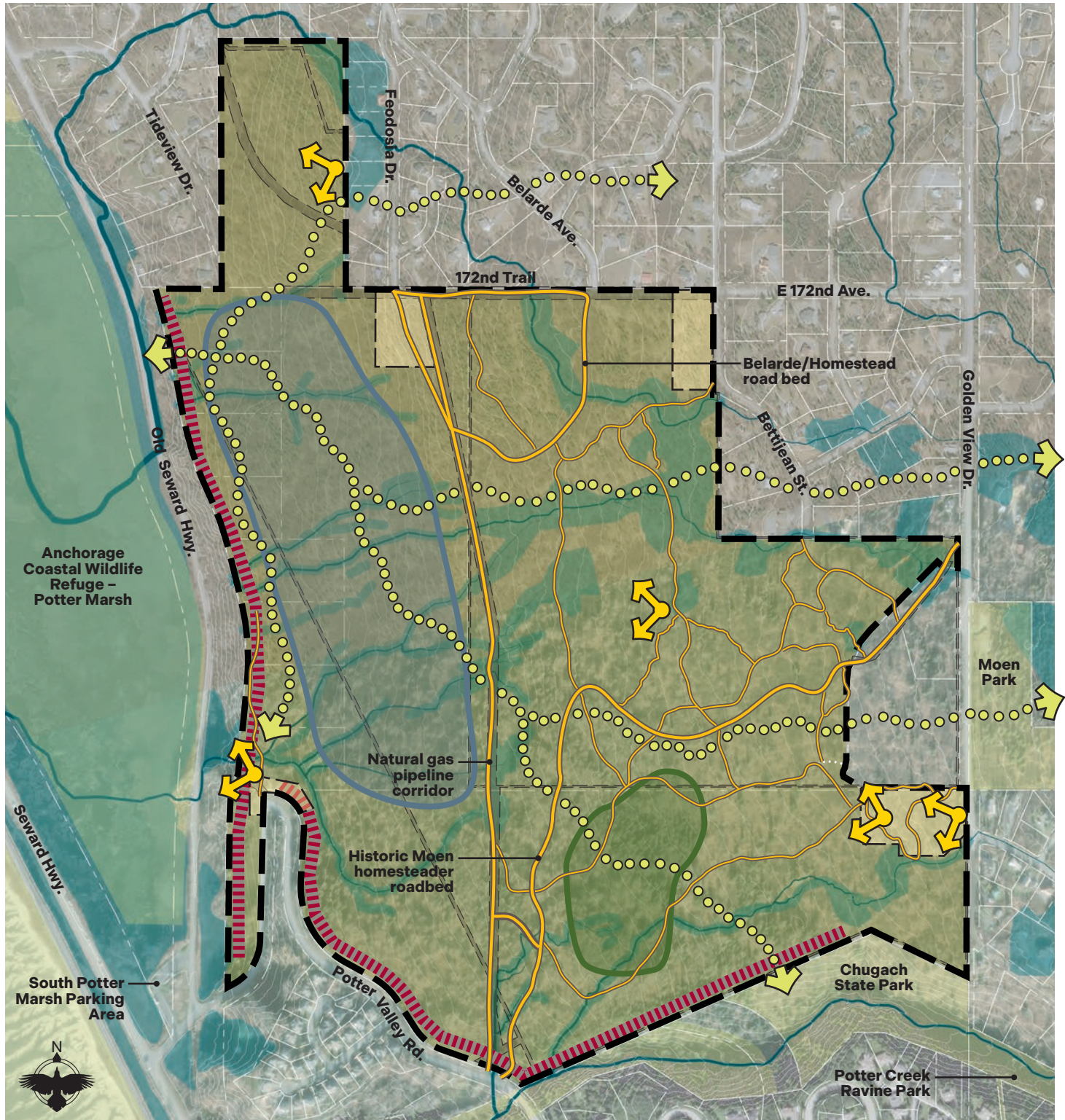




Photo by Corvus Design.

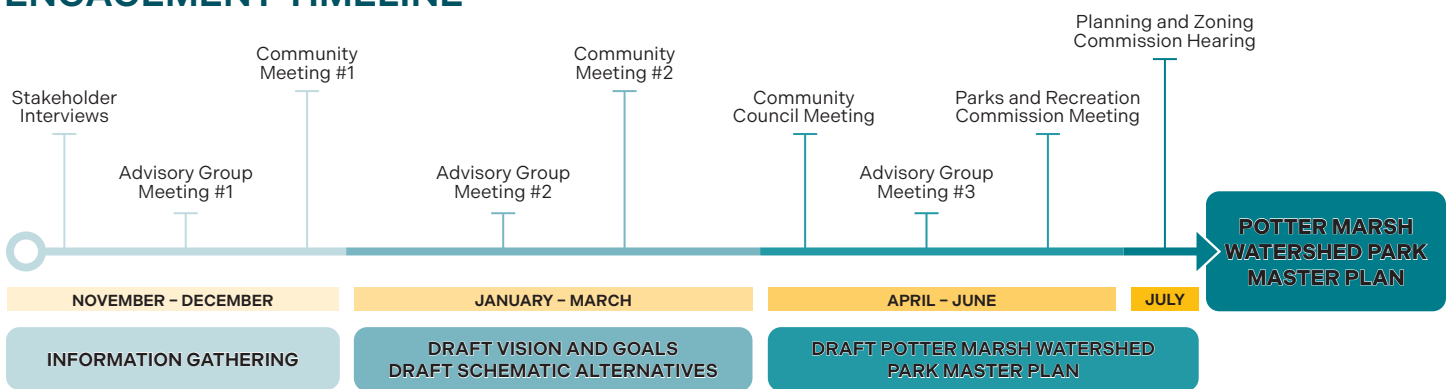
Public Involvement

PLANNING & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The inclusion of meaningful public involvement ensures the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan is consistent with community needs. The plan is the result of an open, collaborative public engagement process. Creation of this master plan included three advisory group meetings, two community meetings, various stakeholder interviews, and receipt of comments in person and through digital channels.

Open public processes, supported by advisory group meetings and the Municipality of Anchorage’s review and approval processes, led to the development of the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan.

ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE



COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

The Potter Marsh Watershed Park Community Advisory Group (CAG) was established to provide local expertise, stakeholder perspectives, and strategic guidance through plan development. The group acted as a bridge between the project team and the community, ensuring the plan remained aligned with ecological goals, public needs, and long-term sustainability.

Meeting 1: Site Inventory and Foundation Setting

The initial meeting focused on establishing a baseline understanding of the project area and the goals and implications of the Conservation Easement. Members reviewed the site inventory, identified opportunities and constraints, discussed preliminary trail and destination improvements, and confirmed existing site conditions.

Meeting 2: Visioning and Schematic Alternatives

The second meeting transitioned from ‘what is’ to ‘what could be’, focusing on the conceptual direction of the park. The group reviewed and refined the draft vision and goals and evaluated various schematic alternatives, providing feedback on different layout options and proposed improvements. A key outcome was the consolidation of a preferred direction for the park’s layout and alignment with the project’s core objectives.

Meeting 3: Draft Master Plan Review

The final meeting reviewed the full draft master plan, and members identified any missing elements or necessary revisions to the final schematic plan. The discussion also focused on stewardship opportunities and long-term management as the park moves from the planning phase to development.

STAKEHOLDERS

Entities and individuals within the community were identified for their expertise related to specific knowledge of the site, their interest in the site due to their organizational mission, or their status as a key partner for potential improvements, funding, or for their ecological connectivity to the ocean and the mountains. These stakeholders were engaged directly for their input.

Participating Stakeholder Groups

- Alaska Trails
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Alaska Natural Burial
- Heritage Land Bank
- Anchorage Fire Department Wildfire Division
- Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District
- ConocoPhillips Alaska
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
- Enstar Natural Gas
- Singletrack Advocates
- Chugach Electric
- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan process included two community meetings to inform the public about the Conservation Easement and the master plan process, gather public input, and meet municipal requirements.

Meeting 1: Introduction and Site Review

The first community meeting was held as an open house on November 20, 2025. This initial session focused on site inventory and visioning, presenting exhibits outlining the Conservation Easement and inviting attendees to identify specific opportunities or constraints on site maps. Community members engaged directly with staff from Great Land Trust, Anchorage Parks and Recreation, and Corvus Design, contributing their perspectives through conversational feedback, written comments, and interactive map refinements to help shape the project's foundational goals.

Meeting 2: Draft Vision and Goals and Short- and Long-Term Development Review

The second community meeting was held on March 5, 2026, with the focus shifting to the review of draft vision statements and preferred development plans. Participants evaluated both the short- and long-term park development plans, discussing them with the project team to ensure they aligned with local needs. This meeting also served to fulfill the need for a Community Meeting to support the Municipality of Anchorage review and approval processes, including formal outreach via mailers to all property owners within 500 feet of the park boundaries to support the official approval process.



Second Community Meeting hosted at Spenard Community Recreation Center. Photo by Corvus Design

COMMUNITY COUNCILS

The Rabbit Creek Community Council is an essential participant in the process. The process has been proactively engaged with the community council, including providing briefings at their meetings and coordinating with them for a Community Meeting (and a resolution supporting adoption of the master plan) that would not only meet the Municipality of Anchorage's needs but also provide genuine community interaction.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

The Parks and Recreation Commission is an essential participant in the process. The process has been and will be proactively engaged with the commission, including briefings at their meetings before official attendance, seeking a resolution of support for the adoption of the master plan. An introduction presentation to the project was delivered by lead planner Ellen Devine on December 11, 2025.

MOA PLANNING PROCESS

The project is subject to Planning and Zoning Commission review and approval, including a public hearing. This process will include posting the site for a public hearing, mailing notification of a community meeting to adjacent property owners, holding a community meeting, and attending a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, inclusive of a public hearing.

The plan is in progress and communication with the Rabbit Creek Community Council, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Planning and Zoning Commission is ongoing.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

This section outlines key challenges and opportunities identified during the project's first public open house and community advisory group meeting, highlighting the primary themes captured and establishing a collaborative foundation for the development of the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan.

KEY CHALLENGES

Park Access

Community concerns and preferences regarding parking and access center on three main categories: opposition to specific neighborhood locations; safety, infrastructure, and social concerns; and the implementation of a preferred access and development strategy.

Opposition to Specific Neighborhood Locations:

This includes parking in specific Limited Development Areas, such as off of Feodosia Drive, Bettijean Street, and Potter Valley Road, due to safety concerns, traffic issues, and road standards.

Safety, Infrastructure, and Social Concerns:

General concerns about the type of activity that new parking and access could attract and the impact on the local community. The community is uncertain about enforcement and how to manage illegal parking, camping, and park use.

Preferred Access and Development Strategy:

Developing a preferred access strategy, concentrating development at established, high-capacity locations, and maintaining a light footprint elsewhere. Preferred access is the Limited Development Area off Golden View Drive and the development of a connection to the existing South Potter Marsh parking area.

Funding and Maintenance

Acquiring long-term funding to sustain ongoing maintenance, operations, and enforcement of a newly developed park. Discussions during the first public open house and community advisory group meeting centered around the need for partnerships to provide additional efforts for long-term management of the park.

Long-Term Financial Sustainability: Ensuring the park is supported by funding that lasts beyond the initial construction phase. Starting small and building up in logical steps, ensuring that development is limited until funding is acquired to sustain the park's long-term maintenance.

Partnerships and Resource Integration:

Working with other entities to provide resource management and maintenance support. Partnerships could be developed with State Parks, ADF&G, Anchorage Fire Department Wildfire Division, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), community associations, or other user groups.

Design Integrity

The Potter Marsh Watershed Park presents a unique challenge: maintaining its primitive character, watershed quality, and wildlife conservation goals while supporting passive recreation.

Maintaining Wildness: Prioritizing the integrity of the ecosystems and avoiding over-development.

Balancing Accessibility with Primitive Trails:

Improving accessibility while maintaining the majority of the park in a primitive condition to support low-impact use and protect ecological integrity.

Protecting Ecological Function and Habitat:

Actively mitigate impacts on wildlife movement and the watershed itself. The park is a principal stepping stone for wildlife moving from saltwater environments to the mountain alpine. Preserving the watershed and water drainage adds cost and complexity to developing the trail network.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Conservation and Education Leadership

The park's specific ecological role provides a unique foundation for science, education, and interpretation.

Establishing a Citizen Science Hub: This is an opportunity to develop a citizen-based science program centered on the watershed. Partnerships could be developed with institutions such as the University of Alaska, Alaska Center for Conservation Science, ADF&G, Audubon, and Ducks Unlimited.

Partnerships Promoting Conservation

Management: Partnerships developed through a citizen-based science program could facilitate continuous monitoring of water quality, water quantity, and wildlife populations; undergraduate and graduate research opportunities; and engaging the public in meaningful watershed stewardship.

Creating a Premier Outdoor Classroom: Potter Marsh Watershed Park and Potter Marsh are considered high-quality areas for outdoor classrooms. In coordination with the Anchorage School District, the plan can include opportunities to establish regular, non-motorized field trips for science and ecology education including programs focused on teaching 'Leave No Trace' principles to the next generation.

Integrated Access and Unique Design

Opportunities exist to create a distinctive user experience that sets the park apart from conventional facilities.

Developing a Signature 'Wild Lite' Experience:

Focusing investment on short, high-quality loop trails in the Golden View Drive Limited Development Area can offer an accessible, engaging introduction to visitors and concentrate human impact to protect the surrounding wilderness, and create a signature destination point.

Collaborative Management

The broad interest from various government agencies and non-profits offers a sustainable pathway for operations and maintenance.

Building Community Stewardship: Formalizing partnerships with local groups creates a mechanism for securing volunteer support for park maintenance, building neighborhood connection with the park to ensure local eyes and pride actively aid in enforcement and monitoring, and securing private/individual donations or sponsorships to supplement annual park budgets.

Establishing Integrated Management: Leveraging connectivity with adjacent parks and conservation areas creates opportunities for collaboration and potentially allows the park to draw on funding and expertise beyond Anchorage Parks and Recreation's resources.

Educational Funding: Partnerships with schools and other groups or organizations to help fund value-added educational and citizen science programs, leveraging external resources for conservation and monitoring.





Photo by Kerry Tasker

Master Plan

VISION

To protect and perpetually preserve Potter Marsh Watershed Park's important ecological value as an intact Community Forest and critical wildlife corridor and a vital water contributor to Potter Marsh, while strategically offering low-impact recreational use and educational experiences that foster community stewardship and appreciation for the natural area's undeveloped character and resources.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Potter Marsh Watershed Park is protected as a natural area. Its primary purpose is to permanently protect its conservation values, including relatively natural habitat (forest and woodland resources, wildlife resources, water resources and ecosystem services, and contributions to the health of surrounding ecosystems) and open space characteristics. Secondary to protecting the natural area and its natural resources in their existing conditions is human use of the property. Recreation and educational activities focus on passive experiences, offering opportunities dedicated to wildlife and nature observation and learning.

The development of Potter Marsh Watershed Park will look different from other municipally managed parks in Anchorage. The park will be developed in limited ways to support passive recreation – in other words, nature observation and education. The Conservation Easement encourages low-impact modes of transportation to support access across the property for nature observation and educational use. Access will be managed to maintain an environment that supports these purposes.

All recreation and active transportation methods will be carefully aligned with and supportive of the property's conservation goals, ensuring the long-term protection and enhancement of its conservation values.

PASSIVE RECREATION

*For the purposes of this master plan, within the boundaries of the Potter Marsh Watershed Park, **passive recreation** will be defined as low-intensity, non-motorized outdoor activities that have minimal disturbance or impact on the natural environment, wildlife, or the park's character.*

Passive recreation relies on the natural setting or very basic developed infrastructure necessary for accessibility and resource protection. It focuses on nature observation, study, and appreciation; relaxation and rejuvenation; and the promotion of preservation and calm enjoyment of nature.



Photo by Great Land Trust

GOALS

Establishing clear goals will ensure that the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan serves the community without violating the environmental protections set forth in the Conservation Easement. The goals provide a framework for the development of the park to protect ecological health and wildlife habitat, critical to the park's natural integrity, and to promote nature-based, low-impact recreation opportunities to learn about and experience the park's serene, natural environment.



GOAL 1

Protect the park's and downstream Potter Marsh's ecological health through conservation and stewardship efforts.

- Maintain the watershed integrity and minimize impacts on streams, springs, seeps, wetlands, and natural drainage patterns.
- Maintain the park's intact forest and woodlands to provide wildlife habitat and an unfragmented migration corridor, aesthetic scenery, clean air and water, and a rich native plant community.
- Maintain the park's existing, undisturbed natural quality.
- Uphold the Conservation Easement and ensure all future park developments are in adherence to the Conservation Easement, protecting the land, habitats, ecological systems, and wildlife in perpetuity.

GOAL 2

Support access for nature-based recreation and education by providing a high-quality, low-impact experience that builds stewardship.

- Establish a network of low-density, non-motorized trails designed for low-impact, passive recreation.
- Establish clearly marked and appropriately sized trailheads, parking areas, and visitor amenities.
- Create safe and formalized trail connections to the surrounding neighborhoods, adjacent parks, and the South Potter Marsh parking area.
- Promote the park as an outdoor classroom to teach about the many benefits and ecological functions the park provides using interpretation to deliver conservation messages and develop stewardship through recreation and education.
- Strategically place viewpoints and overlooks that provide opportunities to observe and appreciate the surrounding natural landscape.

GOAL 3

Build lasting partnerships with a community of dedicated users and user groups committed to stewarding the property.

- Leverage relationships with adjacent land owners and managers to promote collaboration and draw on funding and resources that exceed Anchorage Parks and Recreation's abilities alone.
- Formalize partnerships with local groups to promote volunteer support, assist with trail maintenance, habitat monitoring, and public stewardship of the park.
- Work with entities with a mission-related interest in this land to help fund improvements relevant to the land, such as interpretive signage, educational programs, and citizen science initiatives.

DESIGN AND CHARACTER

The following section lists and describes development recommendations for specific features, design elements, and management strategies for the property. These suggestions evolved from public input to ensure the community's desires are balanced with the property's conservation goals.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

In keeping with community preferences and the intent of the Conservation Easement, improvements to the park will enhance and complement the natural quality of the park.

Trails in the park will primarily be soft-surface and, where surfacing is needed, will typically use wood chips, gravel, or other highly porous natural materials. Trails will be designed and constructed to avoid wet areas (any water, wetlands, and areas within 25 feet of their edges). Security features and circulation controls will rely largely on native vegetation, boulders, rustic fencing, signage, and other context-sensitive elements that blend with the natural setting. Any fencing, walls, gates, or similar structures will be designed for wildlife passage and view preservation in mind.

Where a trail must cross a wet area, a constructed element will be used to maintain the watershed's quality. Constructed elements such as footbridges, boardwalks, steps, stream crossings, and access points will reflect the park's natural character and align with the design and intent of the connecting trail. Site furnishings, such as benches, picnic tables, and kiosks, should prioritize the use of wood or other natural-appearing materials. It is recommended that trash receptacles be surface-mounted bear-proof containers, with a mutt mitt station nearby.

Viewing platforms or structures will be located to protect sensitive habitat and to capitalize on scenic views of the park, will be limited in size, and will be constructed in a manner that blends with the natural setting. Educational and regulatory signage is encouraged in these areas.

Consistent with community priorities and the Conservation Easement, any lighting within the park will be limited and carefully considered. If installed, lighting will generally be confined to primary parking areas and selected to meet DarkSky standards. DarkSky-approved lighting aims to reduce upward-directed light, glare, and over-lighting. DarkSky-approved lighting also incorporates dimming or other appropriate controls and minimizes short-wavelength (bluish) light in the nighttime environment.

SIGNAGE

Signage throughout the park will follow the Municipality of Anchorage's Trails and Wayfinding Standards and reflect the park's natural setting while remaining clear and accessible to visitors. A visually oriented entry sign or kiosk at the main trailhead provides park users with an opportunity to orient themselves. Where possible, signage should rely on high-contrast icons or pictograms to enhance readability and accessibility. It is recommended that materials and finishes be selected to reduce glare and signs be thoughtfully placed to support wayfinding without detracting from the landscape.

SIGNAGE TYPES

Educational Signage

The park's unique geologic formations, multiple habitat types, views, and proximity to Potter Marsh and the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge provide excellent educational opportunities. As one of the park's conservation values, educational opportunities are critical. Signs and accompanying improvements should, where practicable, reflect the park's landscape and other natural features.

Regulatory Signage

Install regulatory signage at all park access points and at locations where unwanted behavior should be deterred. Regulatory signs can help to protect delicate ecosystems, enforce rules, and ensure visitor safety. In some areas, it may be necessary to use regulatory signage with physical barriers.

Wayfinding Signage

Wayfinding is a critical component of any park and directs users to viewpoints, areas of interest, trails, and park entry points. Conduct wayfinding in the park through maps and directional marker posts at park entrances and on the trail system.

MESSAGING

Protecting Sensitive Habitats

Off-trail movement in the watershed can compact hydric soils, destroy nesting sites for ground-nesting birds, and introduce pollutants into waterways. Signage can clearly define the boundaries between human and wildlife spaces. Regulatory signage can explain why certain areas might be closed or protected, increasing compliance through understanding.

Mitigating Human-Wildlife Conflict

Potter Marsh Watershed Park is home to moose, bears, and various birds. Signs provide critical instructions on how to behave during a moose or bear encounter, reinforce the ban on feeding wildlife, and remind visitors of leash laws to prevent domestic dogs from harassing wildlife. Signage will be developed in conjunction with ADF&G wildlife experts to maintain consistent and authoritative messaging to the public.

Fostering Environmental Stewardship

Educational signage transforms a simple walk into an immersive learning experience. Many visitors see water, but they don't see a watershed. Signs can explain how the water flows from the Chugach Mountains through the park, into Potter Marsh, and eventually into Turnagain Arm, highlighting the park's role as a watershed. Identifying specific birds or plants creates a sense of ownership and value among visitors, making them more likely to follow the rules and support conservation efforts.

Legal and Liability Framework

From a management perspective, regulatory signage provides the legal basis for enforcement. Outlining clear rules for park hours, waste disposal, and trail usage sets expectations for park use and provides a basis for enforcing and managing the site, ensuring the safety of all users.

Park Use and Etiquette

Managing park users and setting expectations are critical to mitigating user conflicts. Using a hierarchy of yield combined with reasoned rules, where you don't just tell people what to do, but explain why you do it, is the best way to outline park etiquette.

Right-of-Way Hierarchy Graphic

Include a graphic or bold text explaining the 'Right of Way' hierarchy. All users yield to hikers; bikes yield to horses; and everyone yields to wildlife.

Trail Code of Conduct

Break the rules into digestible categories so users can quickly find the information relevant to them.

For everyone: Stay on the trail and walk in single file when others are passing to prevent trail widening. Keep voices low to improve bird-watching opportunities for everyone.

For the bicyclist: Maintain a social pace; this park is meant for viewing and appreciating nature. If safe to pass, use a bell or friendly verbal cue to alert others to your presence. Dismount your bike and walk where there is not enough room to pass. Stay on the path; soft-surface trails are easily damaged by braiding or riding off the edge.

For the pet owner: Keep dogs on a leash at all times to prevent conflicts with wildlife and damaging or threatening nesting birds. Pack out your dog waste; it can impact the watershed and natural environment and pose a risk to wildlife.












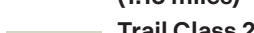
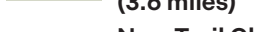
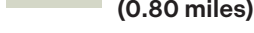


Emergency and Contact Information

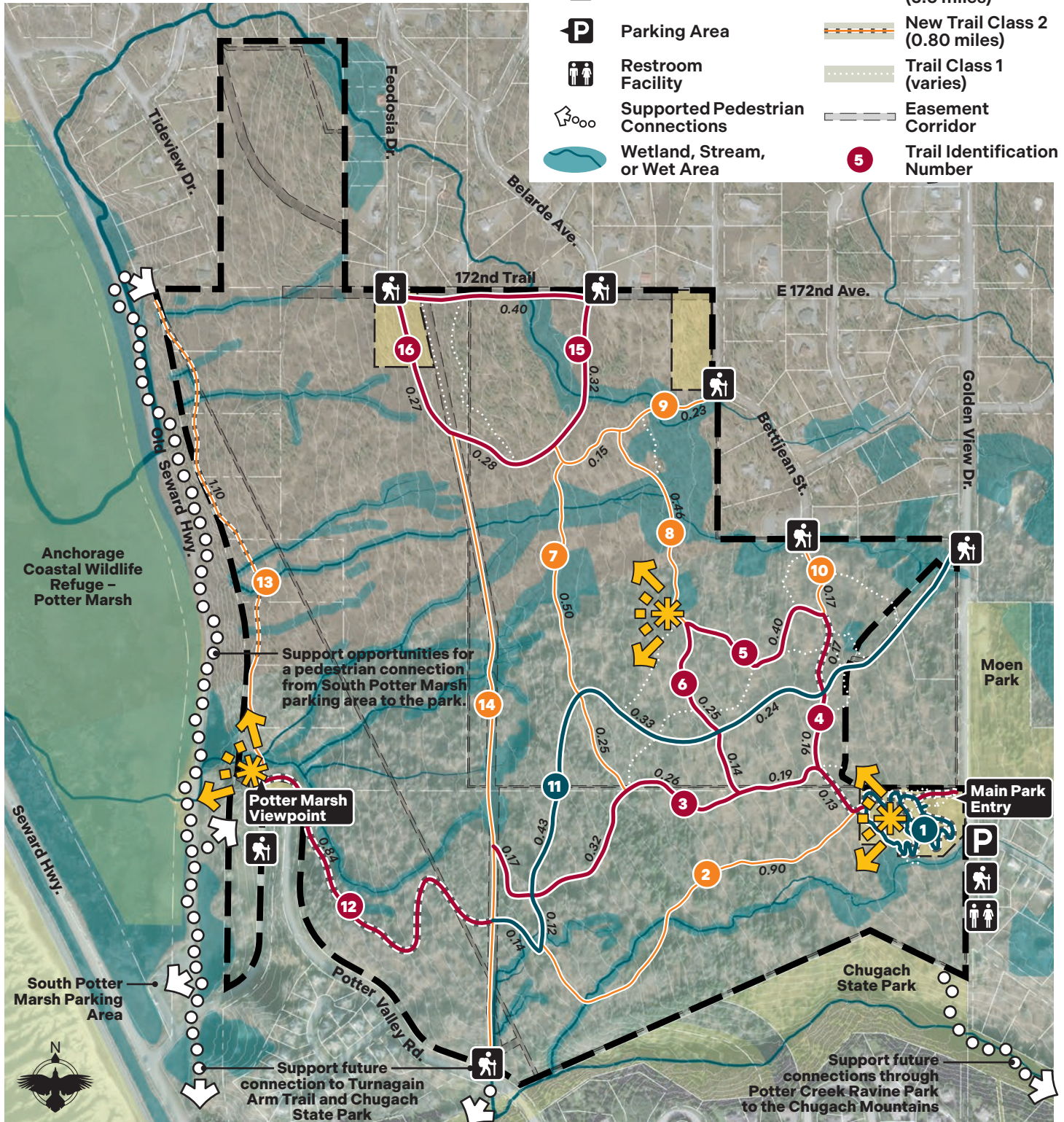
It is recommended that a "see something, say something" section and related contact information for park maintenance, wildlife harassment reporting, and emergencies be included.

SHORT-TERM DEVELOPMENT

This plan illustrates a short-term level of development that would initially support the level of recreational use as expressed through community engagement. Ongoing needs assessment and public use patterns will guide long-term development options.

MAP LEGEND

-  Park & Conservation Easement Boundary
-  Limited Development Area Boundary
-  Destination/Viewpoint
-  Trailhead
-  Parking Area
-  Restroom Facility
-  Supported Pedestrian Connections
-  Wetland, Stream, or Wet Area
-  Trail Class 4 (2.5 miles)
-  Trail Class 3 (3.15 miles)
-  New Trail Class 3 (1.15 miles)
-  Trail Class 2 (3.6 miles)
-  New Trail Class 2 (0.80 miles)
-  Trail Class 1 (varies)
-  Easement Corridor
-  Trail Identification Number



MAIN PARK ENTRY

The recommended primary entrance for the park is located on Golden View Drive across the street from the south end of Moen Park. Golden View Drive is a main access road to the community and already serves as an entry point for visitors to the park. Users typically park at Moen Park or at the pull-out where the existing mailboxes are located just north of the Golden View Limited Development Area. Through the community engagement process, this location was consistently identified as the most feasible for a main entrance that provides sweeping views of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, Turnagain Arm, and the northern portion of the volcanic Aleutian arc. A small viewpoint area is proposed off the parking area, with another viewpoint/destination area proposed off the Short Loop Trail.

PARKING LOT

The parking area should provide sufficient parking with the least amount of construction alteration and meet municipal standards. The concept provided includes 25 regular-sized vehicle spaces, including 2 accessible spaces, a school bus drop-off, and a park host spot. Recommended amenities include a restroom facility, bear-proof trash receptacle, and an entry sign with boulders or other access control structures placed at the edges for security and to delineate the parking from the walking areas.

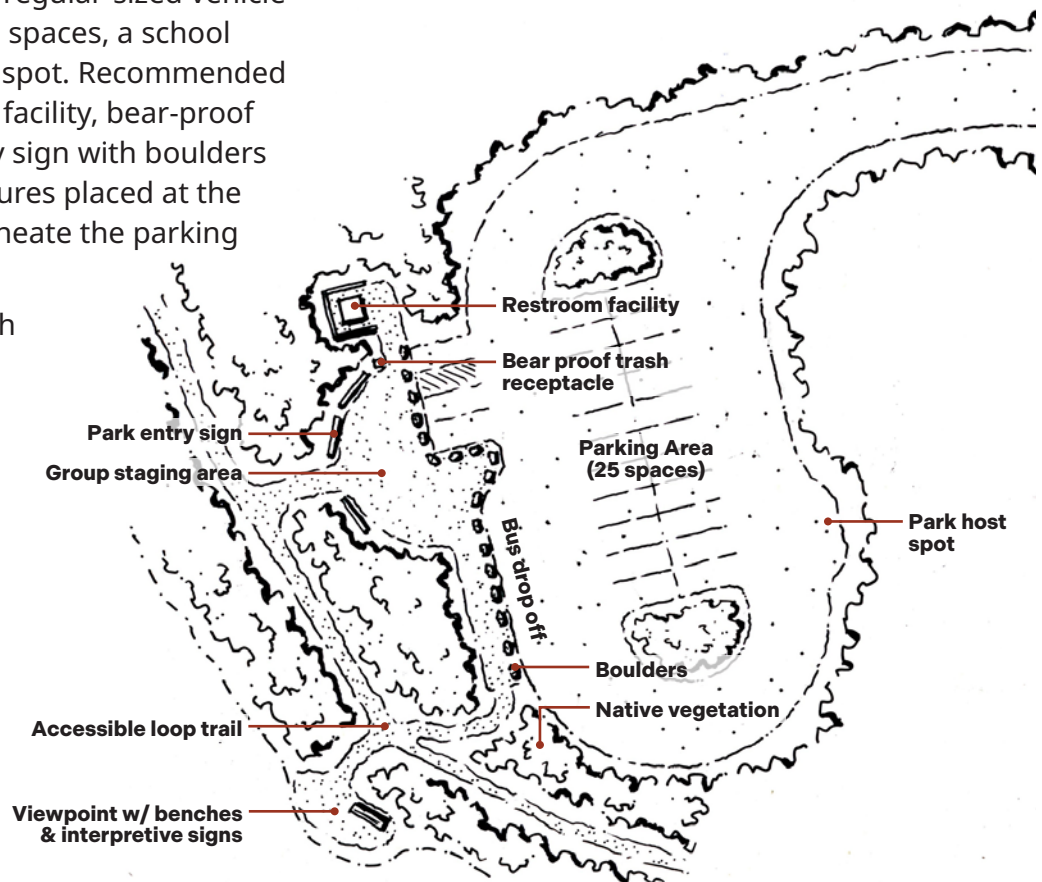
Parking is located to align with areas of lower grade. During design development, if an alternative parking location is feasible, such as along Golden View Drive, it should be considered. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principals should be used when developing the parking area. Screening of the parking area should reduce visual impact while maintaining visibility for safety.

TRAILHEAD

The trailhead is located adjacent to the parking area. It is recommended that a park entry sign be placed here to include rules, a map, educational information, information about prohibited uses, resource protection information, and a list of funding sources and volunteers. A wide enough space should be provided to accommodate a class-sized group.



Example of Campbell Creek Estuary Natural Area entry signs. Photo by Corvus Design.



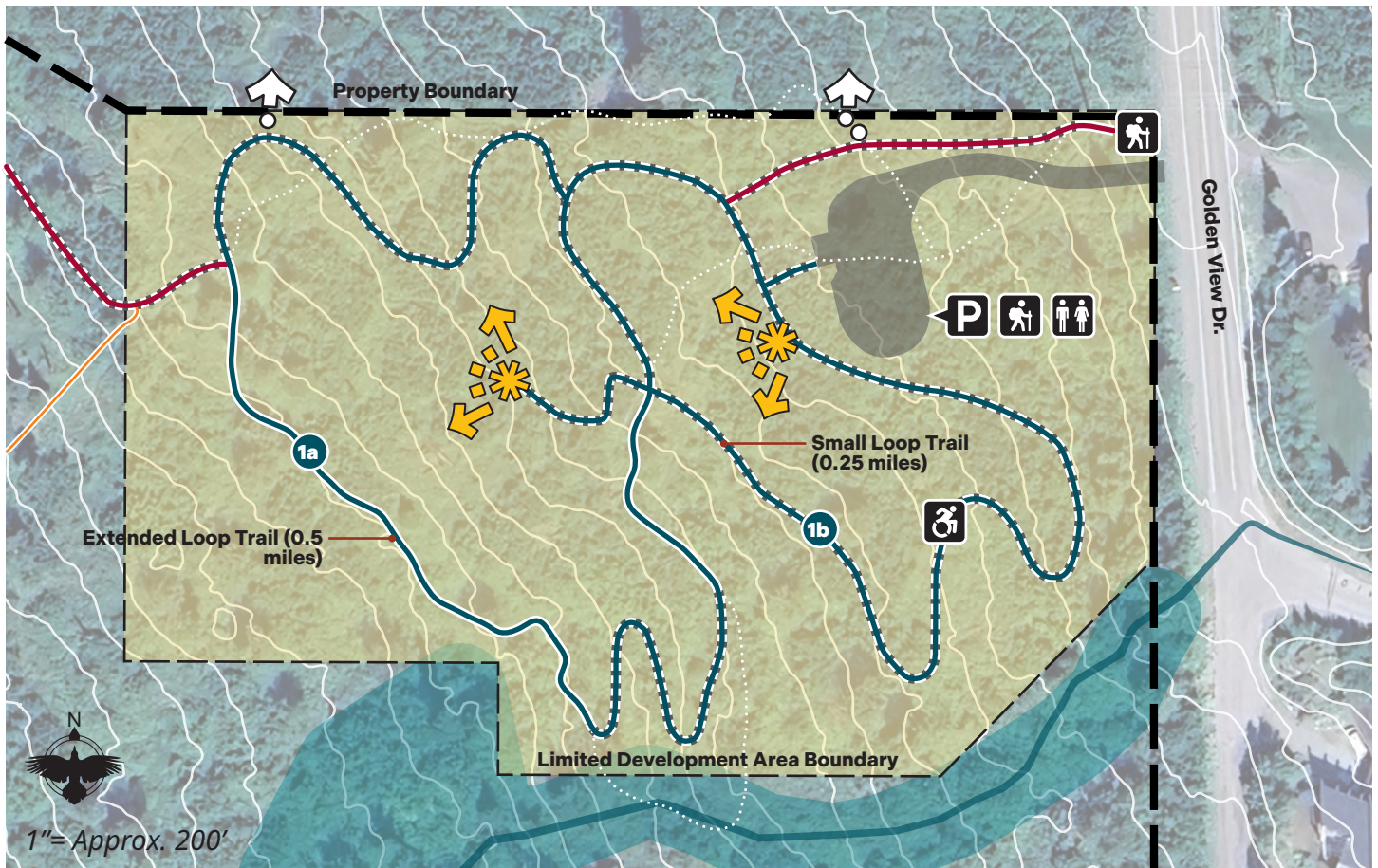
Main Park Entry parking and trailhead concept
Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan - 35 -

SMALL LOOP TRAIL

This quarter-mile class 4 trail accessible loop originates at the main park entry and leads to a scenic overlook. Preferred materials are compacted gravel over dry soils and boardwalks in wet areas or formal rest areas. The trail features a maximum width of 60" and, in compliance with ADA standards, a maximum cross slope of 2% and a maximum running grade of 5%.

EXTENDED LOOP TRAIL

An additional half-mile class 4 loop extension follows Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines. Mirroring the material and 60" maximum width of the Small Loop Trail, this section allows for a maximum 5% cross slope. Running grades are capped at 8.33% for 200 ft., 10% for 30 ft., and 12% for 10 ft., with rest areas required every 900 ft. wherever the grade exceeds 8.33%.



Golden View Drive Limited Development Area enlargement

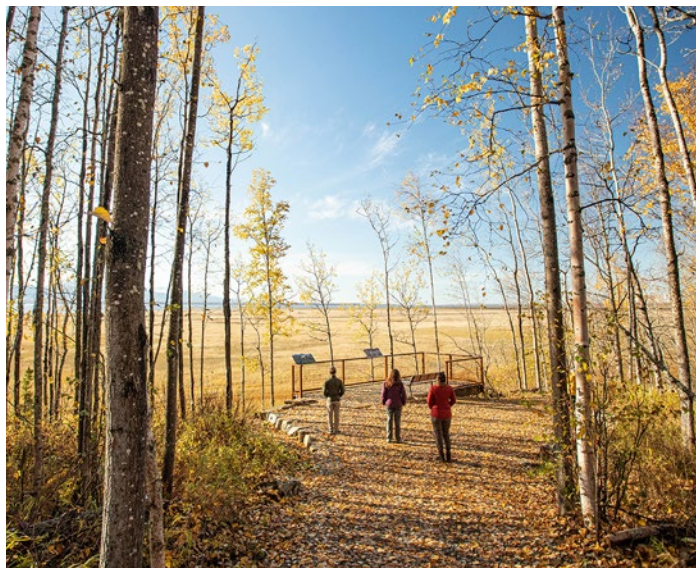
MAP LEGEND

	Park & Conservation Easement Boundary		Parking Area		Trail Class 4		New Trail Class 3
	Limited Development Area Boundary		Restroom Facility		New Trail Class 4		Trail Class 2
	Destination/Viewpoint		Supported Pedestrian Connections		Trail Class 3		Trail Class 1
	Trailhead		Wetland, Stream, or Wet Area				

POTTER MARSH VIEWPOINT

The Limited Development Area located off Potter Valley Road in the park's southwest, offers an opportunity for a large viewpoint feature. While the adjacent Potter Marsh boardwalk offers an immersive experience within the marsh, a viewpoint from the upland watershed provides a broader, strategic perspective of the entire ecosystem. A viewpoint here can help visitors understand the hydrological connection between the Chugach Mountains and the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge with interpretive panels to highlight how water flows through the forested hillside and into the marsh.

It is recommended that a pedestrian connection be developed from this Limited Development Area and viewpoint to the South Potter Marsh parking area on the west side of the Old Seward Highway. It is proposed that the west side of the park be left relatively undeveloped and natural, maintaining a large section of the park as a wildlife area; however, it is recommended that a new class 3 trail connection be developed from this viewpoint to the trail network located in the eastern portion of the park, establishing a connection from the Main Park Entry to the Potter Marsh viewpoint. A natural bluff that runs directly north of this site offers filtered views of Potter Marsh. It is proposed that a class 2 interpretive bluff trail be developed from the viewpoint if feasible.



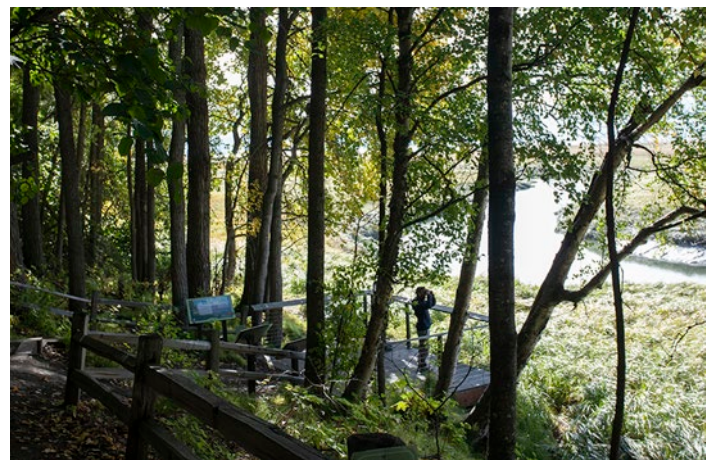
Settlers Bay Coastal Park viewpoint and educational signs. Photo by Great Land Trust.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS ENTRY POINTS/TRAILHEADS

It is recommended that trailhead signage be placed at these access points to outline park rules, a map, and information about prohibited uses. Necessary safety features or access control structures should be installed as needed at all trailheads that are used for pedestrian entry into the park. Assess these access points for the need for boulders or other access control structures.



Examples of educational and regulatory signs. Photo by Anchorage Parks and Recreation.



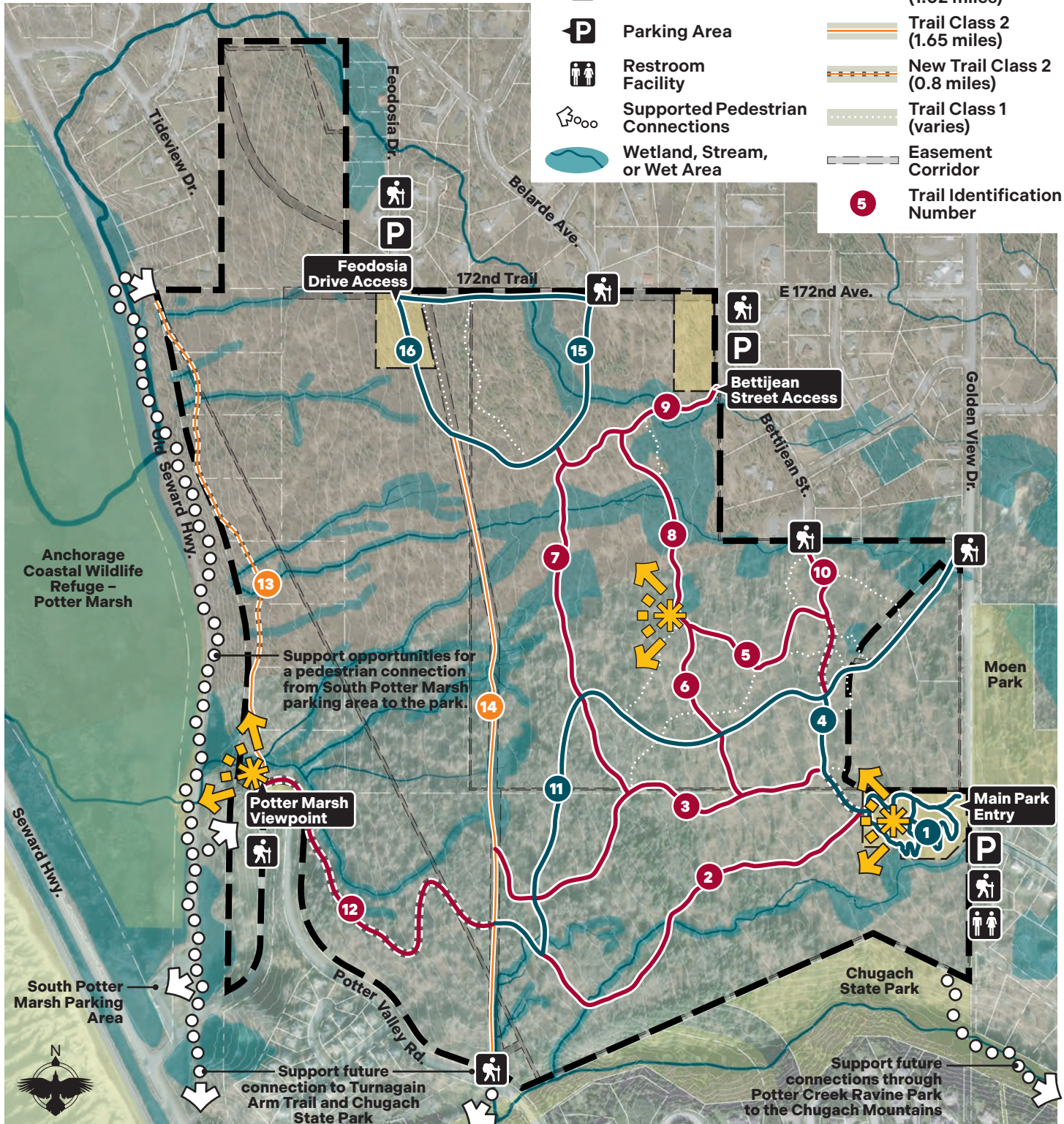
Campbell Creek Estuary viewpoint and educational sign. Photo by Great Land Trust.

LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT

This plan illustrates the long-term level of development, outlining the highest allowable Trail Class for each trail section and the maximum development for the Limited Development Areas, as determined by ongoing needs assessment and public use patterns.

MAP LEGEND

- Park & Conservation Easement Boundary
- Limited Development Area Boundary
- Destination/Viewpoint
- Trailhead
- Parking Area
- Restroom Facility
- Supported Pedestrian Connections
- Wetland, Stream, or Wet Area
- Trail Class 4 (3.78 miles)
- New Trail Class 4 (0.13 miles)
- Trail Class 3 (4.18 miles)
- New Trail Class 3 (1.02 miles)
- Trail Class 2 (1.65 miles)
- New Trail Class 2 (0.8 miles)
- Trail Class 1 (varies)
- Easement Corridor
- Trail Identification Number



BETTIJEAN STREET ACCESS

PARKING LOT

If park development increases user access at the Bettijeau Street access point, it is recommended that off-street parking be developed. Parking assessments should be conducted to confirm appropriate lot size. All parking areas should be designed and constructed in accordance with municipal standards. Boulders could be added to the edge for security and to delineate the parking from the walking areas.

TRAILHEAD

It is recommended that a trailhead be developed at the parking area and include a small trailhead sign with park rules, a map, educational information, information about prohibited uses, resource protection information, and a list of funding sources and volunteers.



*Example of a standard park name trailhead sign.
Photo by Anchorage Parks and Recreation.*



*Example of a standard trail interpretive sign.
Photo by Anchorage Parks and Recreation.*



*Example of a standard small kiosk trailhead sign.
Photo by Anchorage Parks and Recreation.*

FEODOSIA DRIVE ACCESS

PARKING LOT

If park development increases user access at the Feodosia Drive access point, it is recommended that off-street parking be developed to mitigate impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods. The parking area should be considered at the western access to the Belarde Homestead Trail. Parking assessments should be conducted to confirm appropriate lot size. All parking areas should be designed and constructed in accordance with municipal standards. Boulders and other access control structures could be added to the edge for security and to delineate the parking from the walking areas.

TRAILHEAD

It is recommended that a trailhead be developed at the parking area and include a small trailhead sign with park rules, a map, educational information, information about prohibited uses, resource protection information, and a list of funding sources and volunteers.

TRAIL NETWORK

TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS

Trail Classifications are a way to organize and describe the physical design of trails based on how they are intended to be used and the experience they provide. Each class establishes design standards that guide trail planners and builders in creating safe, consistent facilities across the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) area. Trail classifications for the Potter Marsh Watershed Park are adapted from the Municipality of Anchorage's trail classification system to align with the requirements of the Conservation Easement. Trail classifications help the Municipality of Anchorage and partners design, build, and manage trails for specific user types and desired experiences, ensuring appropriate development for recreation.

The Conservation Easement requires that trails within the park be designed and constructed for passive recreation and non-motorized use only. To protect the park's natural quality and avoid habitat fragmentation and impacts on conservation values, trails within the Resource Protection Area must be porous and have a limited density. Embankments, jumps, ramps, or other trail features not required for accessibility or conservation are not permitted within the park to ensure the site's natural character is maintained and the natural functions are not impacted.

In the Resource Protection Area, the Conservation Easement highlights that the maximum trail tread not exceed 36" (3'), with total cleared width not to exceed 72" (6'), except for the Moen, Belarde, and Gasline Trails, where the trail tread is required not to exceed 96" (8'), with total cleared width not to exceed 132" (11').

Each trail classification outlines the following:

- **Trail Width:** The width of the constructed trail tread available for use.
- **Trail Clearance:** The width of the tread and/or ground surface that has managed vegetation clearing.
- **Trail Surface:** The material the trail surface is constructed of.
- **Clearing Height:** The cleared brushing height from the surface of the tread.
- **Designed Uses:** This does not identify all uses allowed on the trails within this classification, but rather the type of use the trail is designed.
- **Maintenance:** How often and to what extent the trail will be maintained periodically throughout the year.

TRAIL MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

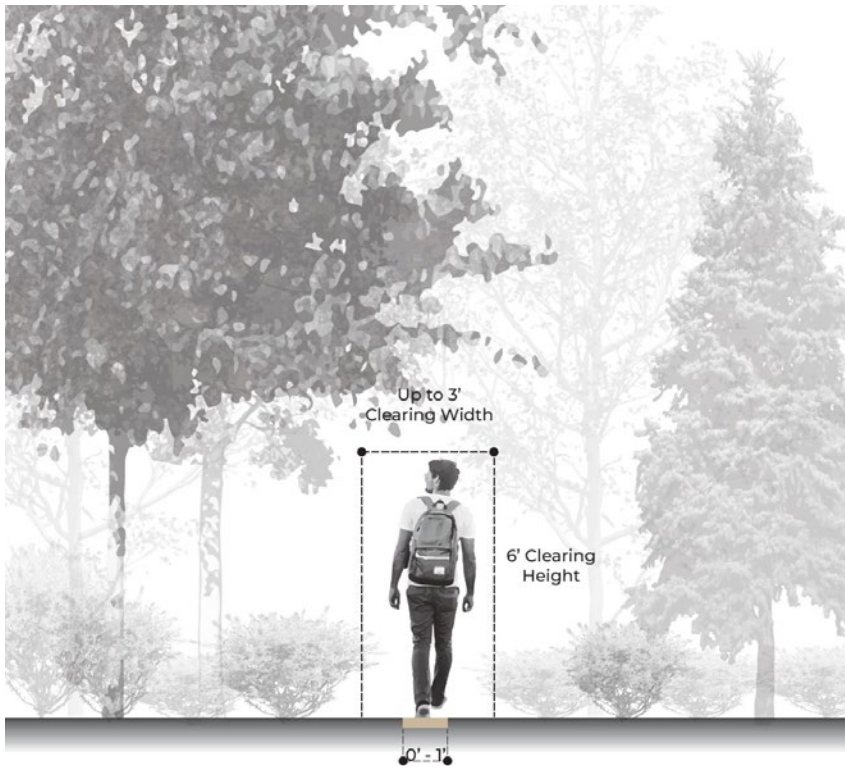
Before designing and siting the trails outlined in the master plan, a clearly articulated vision for each trail should be completed through a Trail Management Objective (TMO). A TMO describes the intended purpose, use, and level of development for each specific trail and provides the overall decision-making framework for assessment, design, management, and maintenance of the trail. It will ensure that monitoring and reporting remain consistent with the trail's original vision. Without a TMO, the original intent and purpose of the trail can be lost as new technologies arise, enthusiast pressure mounts, or visitation exceeds the desired recreation setting. The TMO provides the foundation for trail management.

TRAIL CLASS 1

A Class 1 Trail is an undesignated trail that experiences minimal use or is created by wildlife. It is not felt that decommissioning these trails is necessary or would be successful, as they are either used by wildlife or, as connectors, are minimally used by humans. These trails should be monitored to assess use and potential environmental degradation. Identifying issues early can prevent significant safety hazards, trail braiding, and erosion, and the costs of repairing damage after it occurs. If warranted, these trails may become designated to address a safety or environmental issue. These trails should be excluded from maps intended for the general public, including recreational apps.

The characteristics of a Class 1 Trail are:

- Natural to minimally modified with a primitive setting.
- Tread may be intermittent or indistinct.
- Roots, rocks, and logs and steps may be present.
- Minimal to nonexistent constructed features.
- Minimal usage.



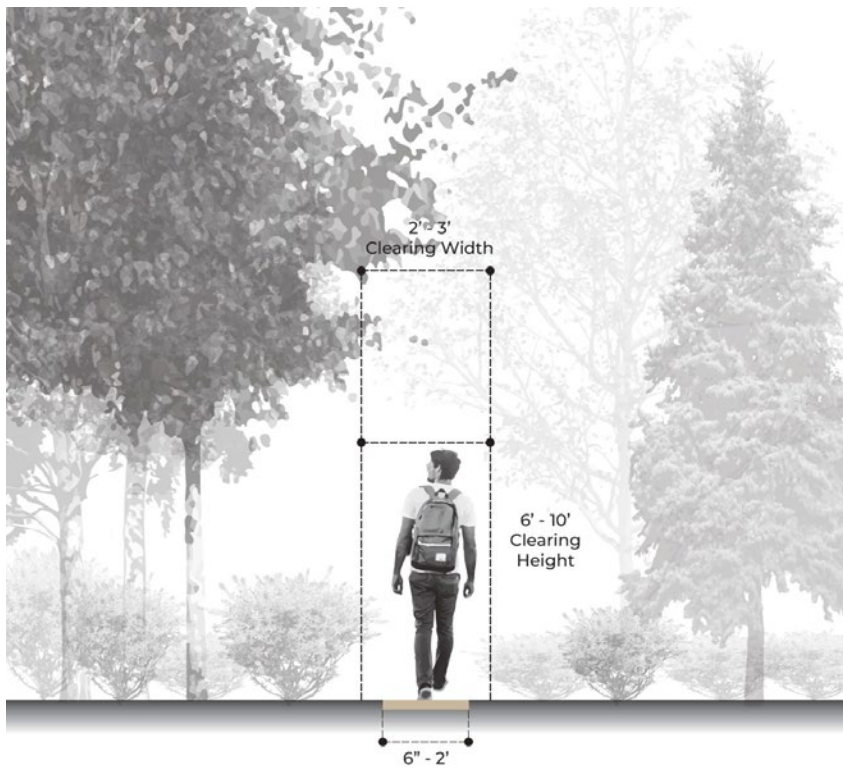
TRAIL WIDTH	TRAIL CLEARANCE	TRAIL SURFACE	CLEARING HEIGHT	DESIGNED USES	MAINTENANCE
0 - 1'	Maximum trail clearance up to 3'. Can expect encroaching vegetation.	Native, ungraded, intermittent, rough.	Maximum 6'	Hiker-Pedestrian.	Unmaintained.

TRAIL CLASS 2

A Class 2 trail is a designated trail that offers a near-natural trail experience. The trail is clearly visible but can be narrow with a rough tread. These types of trails are typically single-lane and do not accommodate side-by-side walking or two-way traffic comfortably without someone stepping aside. While the trail is considered a cleared trail, users should expect to step over or around natural features and to encounter encroaching vegetation, such as tall grass or alder branches. Constructed features are allowed but may be considered primitive and are used to protect sensitive wet areas rather than to provide a comfortable walking experience. A Class 2 Trail requires minimal excavation, and the narrow trail profile discourages high speeds and large crowds, reducing stress on wildlife. The design character is a trail visible enough to keep a user on track, but challenging enough to let the user know they are in the woods.

The characteristics of a Class 2 Trail are:

- Natural to minimally modified with a primitive setting.
- Continuous tread with roots, rocks, logs, and protrusions up to 6", steps up to 14" may be present.
- Minimal constructed features may be present.
- Moderate usage.



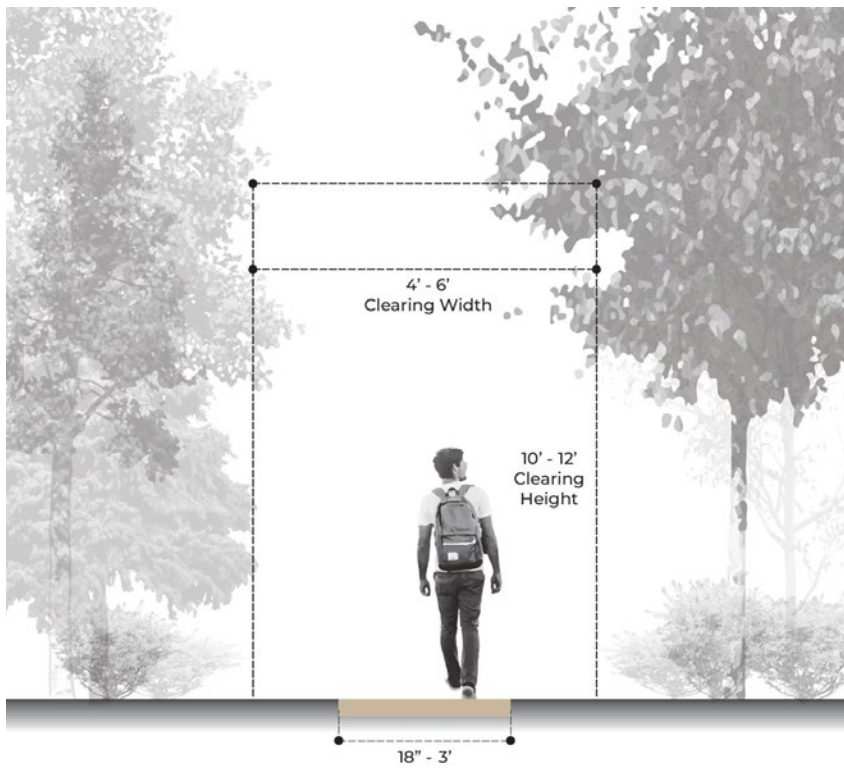
TRAIL WIDTH	TRAIL CLEARANCE	TRAIL SURFACE	CLEARING HEIGHT	DESIGNED USES	MAINTENANCE
6"-2'	Maximum trail clearance up to 2' - 3'. Can expect some vegetation encroachment.	Native, soft surface, with minimal grading to improve accessibility or support conservation purposes.	6' - 10'	Hiker-Pedestrian	Clearing blockages and periodic vegetation clearing to maintain defined route.

TRAIL CLASS 3

A Class 3 Trail is a designated trail that offers a more formal experience than a Class 2 Trail and is used as a primary access route through the park, leading visitors to an overlook or main junction point. A defining feature of a Class 3 Trail is consistency, as it is designed to be predictable and relatively smooth. The trail tread is continuous and well-defined, allowing for more comfortable passage and often accommodating two people walking side-by-side. Most obstacles, like large roots, rocks, or logs, are removed, and vegetation is cleared back. Constructed features are used to protect wet areas but are also more accessible to provide a comfortable walking experience. A Class 3 Trail is a balance between the more rugged Class 2 Trail and the more managed, urban Class 4 Trail. Its design character blends into the park while providing a clear sense of safety and direction.

The characteristics of a Class 3 Trail are:

- Modified trail with protrusions up to 3". Steps up to 10" may be present.
- Tread surface is mostly stable with some variability.
- Constructed features may include steps, footbridge, boardwalk, or other appropriate structural improvements or barrier structures. Structural elements are subject to review.
- Moderate usage.



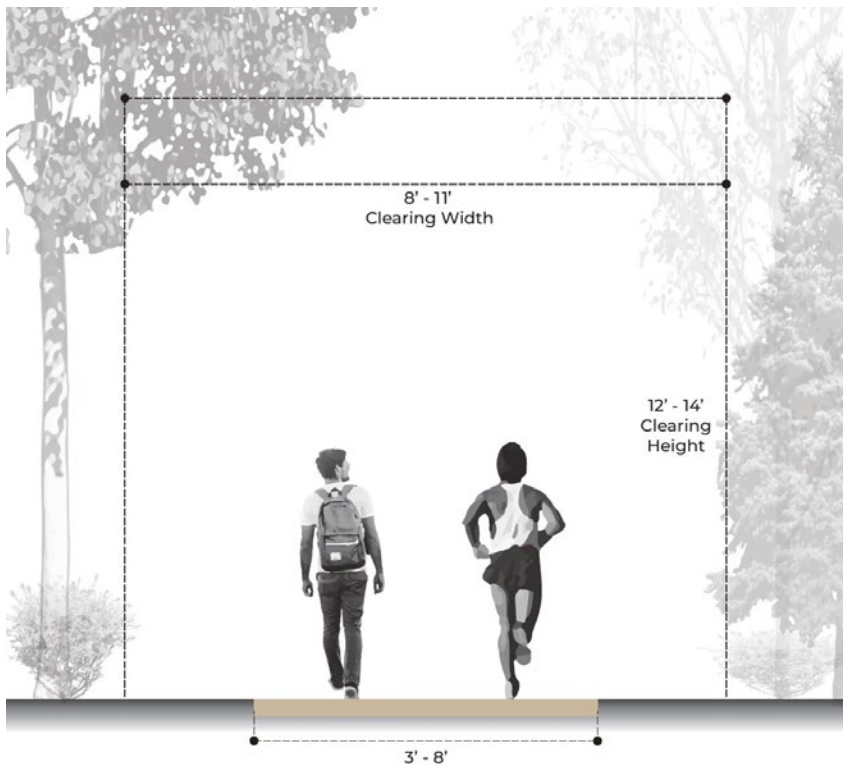
TRAIL WIDTH	TRAIL CLEARANCE	TRAIL SURFACE	CLEARING HEIGHT	DESIGNED USES	MAINTENANCE
18" - 3'	Maximum trail clearance up to 6'	Native, soft surface, covered with highly porous natural material (if needed), and with minimal grading to improve accessibility or support conservation purposes.	10' - 12'	Hiker-Pedestrian	Vegetation cleared to outside of trail width.

TRAIL CLASS 4

A Class 4 Trail is a designated wide, firm, and stable trail that is hardened with imported materials. The trail is wide, allowing easy two-way traffic and people to walk side-by-side without feeling crowded. It is intended that no obstacles be present to provide a smooth walking experience, with no vegetation encroachment, to ensure maximum visibility and create a wide, open, and safe corridor. The design character of a Class 4 Trail is more of an urban-naturalist experience that prioritizes the user’s comfort and safety. Under the Conservation Easement, Class 4 trails are only allowed on the existing Gasline Trail, Belarde Trail, and Moen Homestead Trail; One connector trail between Golden View Drive Limited Development Area and the Moen Homestead Trail; one connector trail between Bettijeau Street Limited Development Area and the Belarde Trail; and within the Limited Development Areas.

The characteristics of a Class 4 Trail are as follows:

- Wide and relatively smooth tread with few irregularities.
- Few obstacles with protrusions up to 2” or less.
- Constructed features may include steps, footbridge, boardwalk, fences, walls, or gates, or other appropriate structural improvements or barrier structures. Structural elements are subject to review.
- Moderate to heavy usage.



TRAIL WIDTH	TRAIL CLEARANCE	TRAIL SURFACE	CLEARING HEIGHT	DESIGNED USES	MAINTENANCE
3' - 8'	Maximum trail clearance up to 11'	Native, soft surface, covered with highly porous natural material (if needed), and with minimal grading to improve accessibility or support conservation purposes.	12' - 14'	Hiker-Pedestrian.	Vegetation cleared to outside of trail width; seasonal shoulder mowing; clean-up after storm events.



Photo by Great Land Trust



Photo by Great Land Trust



Photo by Great Land Trust

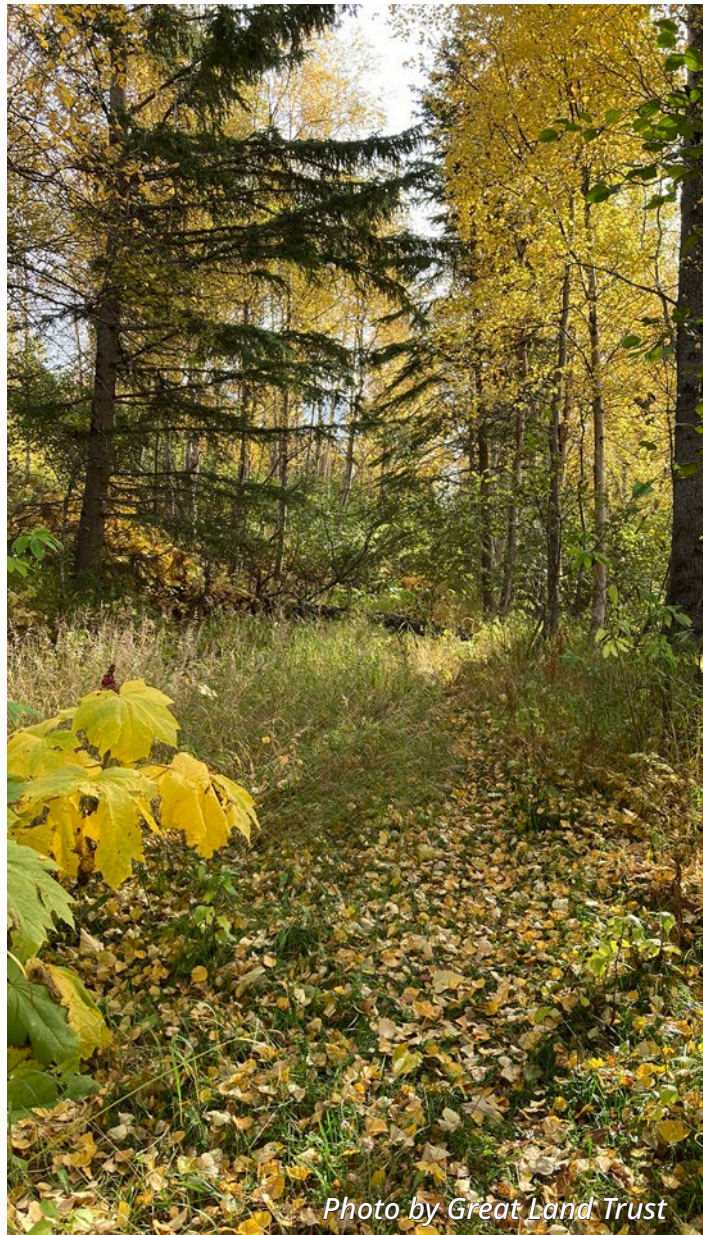


Photo by Great Land Trust



Photo by Great Land Trust

Implementation

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

This section details the implementation strategies for the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan over the next 20 years. To achieve the goals defined by the community, this plan identifies key milestones and approximate timelines. While the following timelines reflect current priorities, implementation remains flexible; schedules may be adjusted as funding opportunities arise or as Anchorage Parks and Recreation resources evolve.

PLAN APPROVAL & ADOPTION

The master plan approval is a three-step process:

- Rabbit Creek Community Council
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Planning and Zoning Commission

While Master Plans are intended to guide development over a 20-year period, updates may be necessary to respond to changing conditions or unforeseen circumstances. Any significant changes to an adopted plan must be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Implementation of the master plan will conform to zoning and land use regulations established by Anchorage Municipal Code Title 21, Lands Use Planning. As master plan improvements are implemented through site design; on-site development shall adhere to all required property setbacks, stream setbacks, landscape requirements, parking requirements, allowable uses, and dimensional standards to ensure conformance with Title 21 regulations. Some improvements may require additional review and approvals from the MOA Planning Department, Urban Design Commission, and other regulatory agencies, as determined by Title 21.

CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

Implementation will conform to specifications for construction established in the Municipality of Anchorage Standard Specifications and the Design Criteria Manual: Chapters 3 and 4. Trail construction will follow the guidelines outlined in the trail classifications within this document.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The Conservation Easement is the legal document that places permanent restrictions on the use and development that may occur within the park. In the event there is a conflict between the Municipality of Anchorage Standard Specifications, the Design Criteria Manual: Chapters 3 and 4, and the Conservation Easement, the Conservation Easement is the overriding document.

COORDINATION WITH THE CONSERVATION EASEMENT HOLDER

Certain activities and development within the park may be subject to review and approval by Great Land Trust as the holder of the Conservation Easement. This can include construction activities, the disturbance of resources, and certain other activities and uses that are subject to review. The Conservation Easement describes the notice and approval process. When review is required by the Conservation Easement, Great Land Trust must be notified in writing at least forty-five (45) days before commencement of the activity, and Great Land Trust has thirty (30) days to respond. It is encouraged and a best management practice to engage Great Land Trust early in the process for any proposed development or activity to ensure consistency with the Conservation Easement.

MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

Maintenance access points should be developed to provide safe parking for parks and recreation vehicles. As parking areas and trailheads are developed, specific site development plans should accommodate maintenance support.

COLLABORATING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

It is recommended that site improvements be coordinated with the appropriate stakeholder entities. Improving the park and creating connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods and parks or recreation areas doesn't end at the property line. Coordinating with the appropriate stakeholders at the onset of the planning process is necessary.

STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS

The following list of partners is not intended to be exhaustive, but highlights examples of key partnerships. As implementation moves forward, coordination with additional stakeholders may be appropriate, and discretion should be used to engage relevant entities based on future projects.

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) owns the adjacent right-of-way for the Old Seward Highway. A parking area exists at the intersection of Potter Valley Road, the Old Seward Highway, and the Seward Highway, and is managed by ADF&G. As opportunity allows, this master plan encourages the development of a safe pedestrian connection between this parking area and adjacent proposed park improvements.

The Rabbit Creek Community Council expressed interest in recognizing the Old Seward Highway Spur as a recreational corridor. While this is outside the scope of this master plan, it reflects the community's desire to improve non-motorized access. If future roadway improvements are pursued by DOT&PF, there may be opportunities to coordinate on pedestrian and bicycle connections to Potter Marsh Watershed Park.

Any proposed connections or crossings on the Old Seward Highway need to be conducted in coordination with DOT&PF, with the appropriate traffic safety and capacity analyses completed.

CHUGACH STATE PARK

Chugach State Park (State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Parks Division) is directly adjacent to Potter Marsh Watershed Park to the south. As opportunity allows, collaboration and partnerships should be pursued. These could include trail improvements and connections, education, or other ways to provide value to the natural systems and area residents.

ANCHORAGE COASTAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

In addition to managing the South Potter Marsh parking area, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) manages the adjacent Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge. As opportunity allows, collaboration and partnerships should be pursued. These could include trail improvements and connections, education, signage, or other ways to provide value to the natural systems and area residents and visitors.



Photo by Great Land Trust

ANCHORAGE FIRE DEPARTMENT

As the Anchorage Fire Department (AFD) implements the Community Wildfire Protection Plan to reduce wildfire risk in the surrounding area, AFD can serve as a critical partner in implementing the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan. They have the opportunity to align the implementation of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan with access and trail improvements, thereby supporting funding and improvement efforts. Prior to implementation of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Anchorage Fire Department and Anchorage Parks and Recreation will need to work with Great Land Trust to ensure consistency with the Conservation Easement.

ANCHORAGE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District can provide support with invasive species management in the park. It is particularly important to coordinate future development plans to manage invasive species to the extent possible, as soon as possible, and prior to disturbing the park, to develop an invasive species monitoring, rapid response, and ongoing management plan, and to manage them through construction and implementation.

EASEMENT CORRIDORS

There are multiple utility easements that exist within the park. Any work within these easements needs to be coordinated with the easement holder. Prior to any work, receipt of official approval of work by the easement holder (such as a Letter of Non-Objection) is required.

Review the platting information for relevant areas to identify whether an easement is present. Easements include, but are not limited to, Section Line, Stream Maintenance and Protection, Electric and Telecommunications, and Gas.

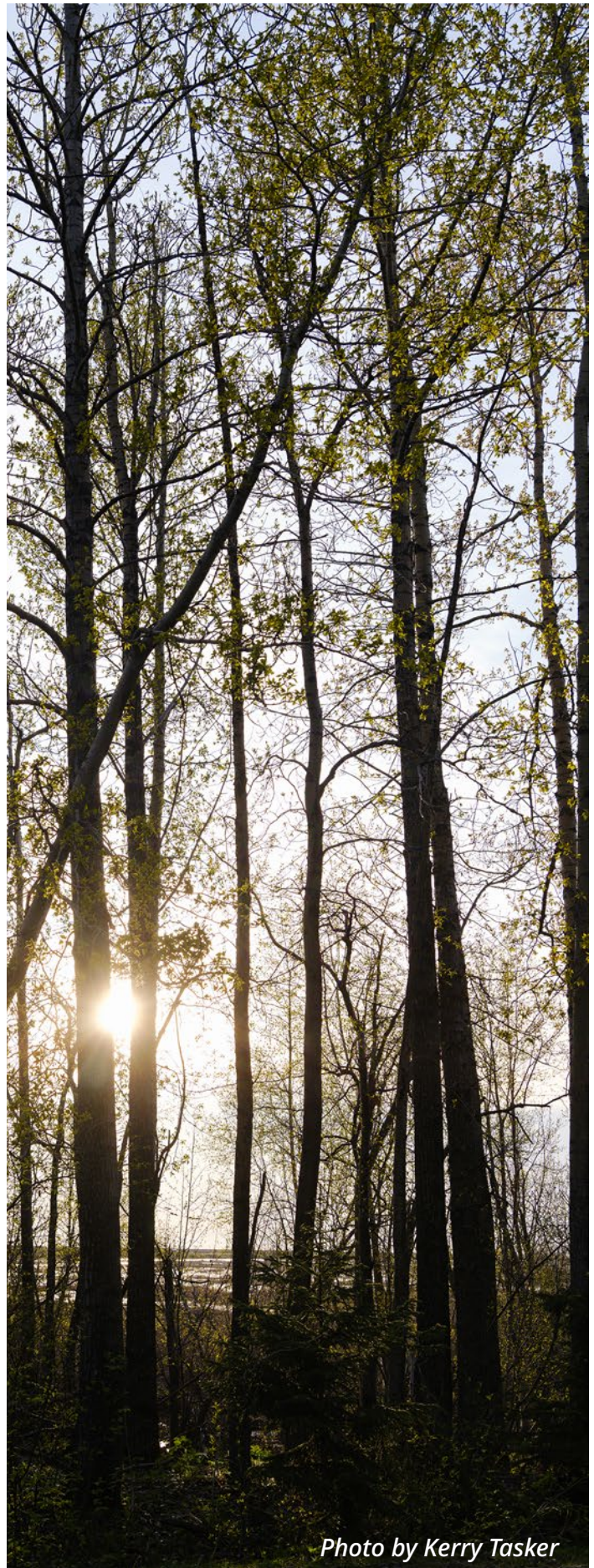


Photo by Kerry Tasker

DEVELOPMENT PHASING

The following information outlines the phased development of Potter Marsh Watershed Park. To ensure the park's longevity, development prioritizes stabilizing and protecting the natural resources. By carefully balancing habitat preservation with enhanced recreation opportunities, we can create a sustainable outdoor destination. Achieving this vision requires a collaborative approach — leveraging public-private partnerships, volunteer support, multi-agency coordination, and diverse funding streams.

STABILIZE

TODAY - YEARS 1-5

Over the next five years, we will prioritize these actions by leveraging existing budgets, community-driven efforts, and local partnerships.

Signage and Identity:

Install regulatory and donor recognition signage, temporary wayfinding, and clear markers at designated park access points.

Access Management: Establish formalized pedestrian entry points featuring access control structures and, as needed, trash receptacles and mutt mitt stations.

Improve and Connect

Existing Trails: Conduct trail assessments to identify needed improvements including: minor re-routes, trail stabilization needs, trail connectors, ongoing maintenance needs.

Proactive Maintenance: Work with staff and community groups to establish a yearly work plan for brushing and tread durability.

ENHANCE

TOMORROW - YEARS 5+

Future development will be prioritized beyond the five-year mark, using local bond funding alongside continued private-public partnerships and volunteer support.

Vehicular Infrastructure:

Develop the primary parking area on Golden View Drive and explore opportunities for an east-west connector trail to link to existing parking areas in coordination with partners. Additional parking areas will be assessed.

Build and Upgrade Trails:

Conduct trail assessments to upgrade existing trails to meet their official trail classifications, build new trail segments indicated in the master plan, and implement major structural improvements as needed.

Interpretation and

Observation: Construct designated viewpoints and install interpretive displays to educate visitors on the watershed's ecological value.

ENJOY

TOGETHER - ONGOING

The park's success is dependent on sustained, collaborative efforts that extend beyond its physical boundaries.

Regional Connectivity:

Coordinate with local and state agencies to develop pedestrian links between the park and adjacent destinations.

Community Ownership:

Partner with non-profits and volunteer groups to bridge funding gaps, execute smaller-scale projects, and foster a culture of local advocacy and added-value improvements.

IMPLEMENTATION

YEARS 1-5	
PARK IMPROVEMENT	PRIORITY
1.0 Signage and Identity	
1.1 Regulatory Signage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.2 Donor Signage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.3 Temporary Wayfinding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.4 Park Markers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.0 Access Management	
2.1 Access Control Structures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Trash Receptacles	
2.3 Mutt Mitt Stations	
3.0 Improve and Connect Existing Trails	
3.1 Trail Assessments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.2 Trail Improvements	
4.0 Proactive Maintenance	
4.1 Invasive Weed Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.2 Trail Clearing and Brushing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.3 Drainage Maintenance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.4 Tread Work	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

YEARS 5+	
PARK IMPROVEMENT	PRIORITY
5.0 Vehicle Infrastructure	
5.1 Golden View Main Entry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2 South Potter Marsh Connector Trail	
5.3 Feodosia Street Parking Area	
5.4 Bettijeane Street Parking Area	
6.0 Build and Upgrade Trails	
6.1 Trail Assessments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.2 Upgrade Trails	
6.3 Build New Trails	
6.4 Major Structural Improvements	
7.0 Interpretation and Observation	
7.1 Construct Viewpoints	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2 Interpretive Signage	

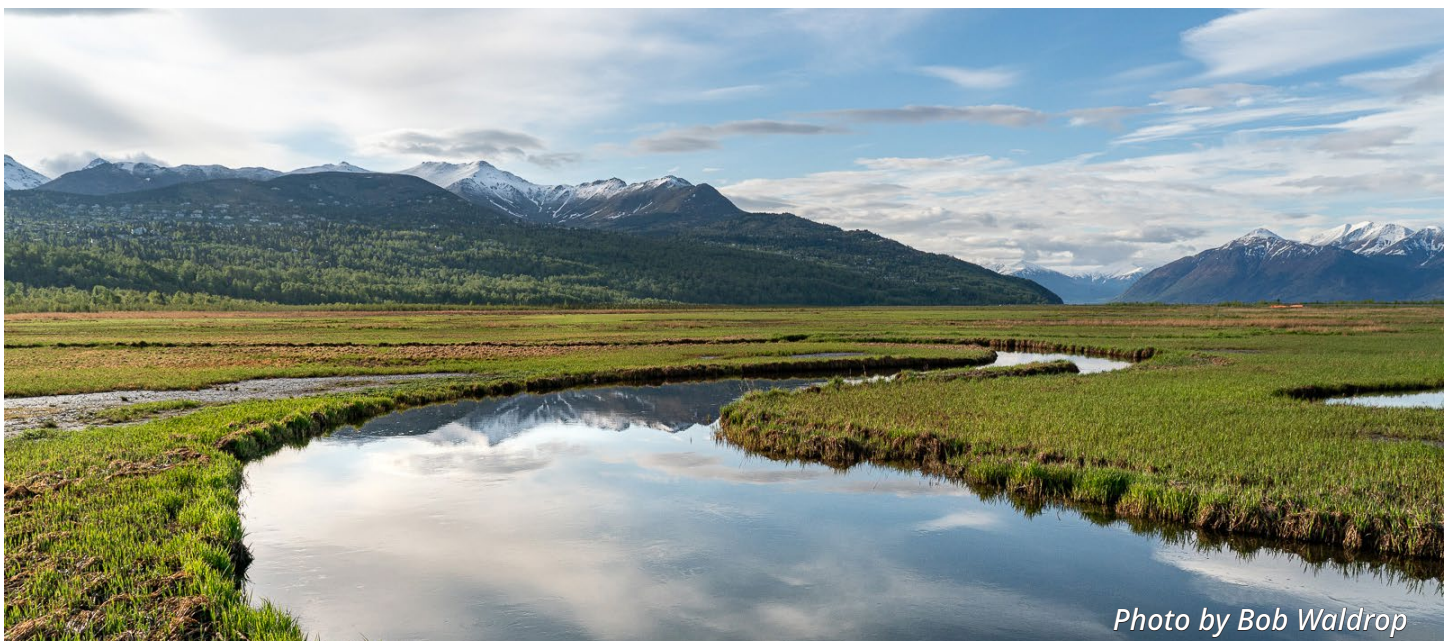
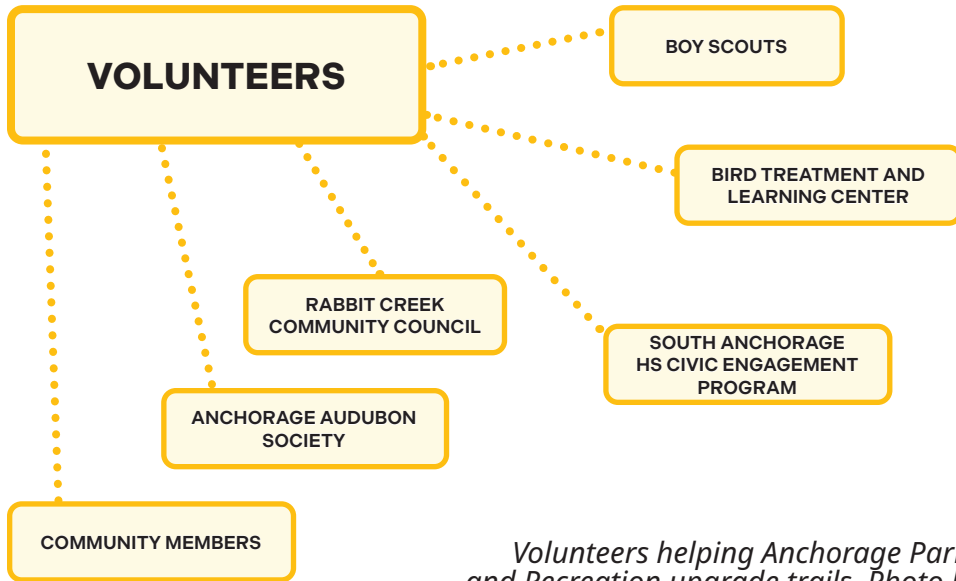


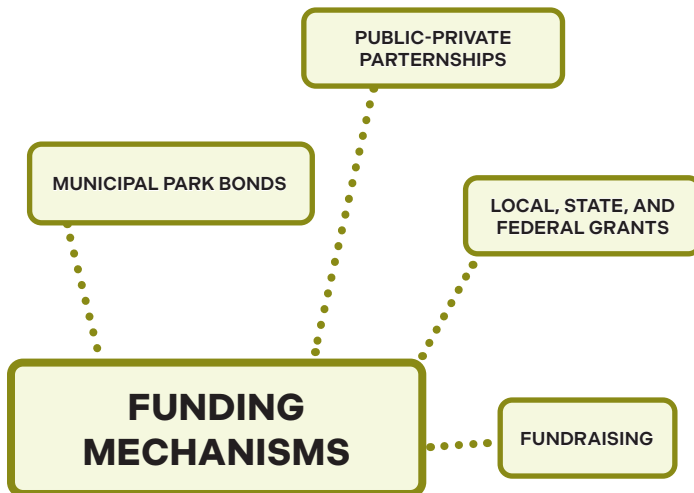
Photo by Bob Waldrop

WORKING TOGETHER

The planning team worked with the Community Advisory Group to identify potential partnerships, volunteer groups, and funding mechanisms that can support Anchorage Parks and Recreation in the implementation of the vision and goals of the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan.



Volunteers helping Anchorage Parks and Recreation upgrade trails. Photo by Anchorage Parks and Recreation.



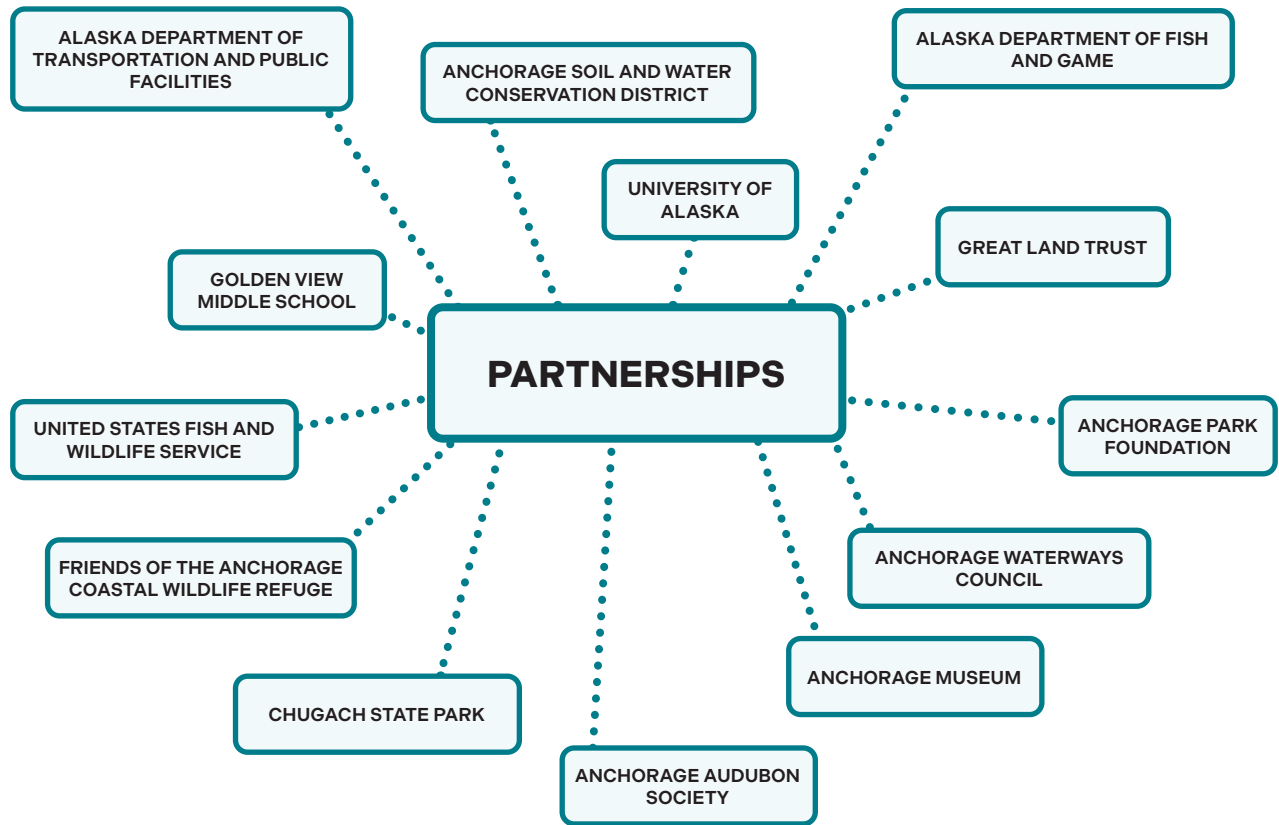




Photo by Carl Johnson

Resource Management

MANAGING PARK RESOURCES

The Resource Management Plan provides recommendations for the long-term management of natural resources in the park and complements the Conservation Easement by providing specific guidelines for Anchorage Parks and Recreation to mitigate impacts on habitat and wildlife-human interactions.

The primary reason for applying a resource management plan to a park is to provide a proactive strategy that ensures visitor activities are compatible with the long-term protection of the area's natural resources. By establishing clear, measurable indicators and standards, managers can use data-driven monitoring to intervene when necessary. This approach maximizes opportunities for high-quality visitor experiences and public benefit while protecting desirable conditions and addressing potential undesirable conditions, thereby fulfilling the park's fundamental conservation mandate.

The Conservation Easement identifies the conservation values to be protected and places permanent restrictions on uses and development within the park. Resource management under this plan will be interpreted and implemented consistent with the terms of the Conservation Easement.

Successful resource management provides the following functions:

Balances Protection & Use

The goal of resource management is to maintain a sustainable equilibrium between human activity and environmental health. The plan aims to balance low-impact recreational uses with the preservation of critical natural resources, ensuring the park's long-term sustainability for future generations.

Addresses Public & Stakeholder Concerns

Management outcomes reflect the community engagement process during master plan development and ensure the community vision for the park is reflected in its future management.

Establishes Management & Maintenance Strategies

The plan provides guidance for daily operations, such as:

- **Future Management:** Outlining how the park will be maintained over a specific period.
- **Improvements:** Prioritizing future infrastructure, such as trails or parking, that are consistent with the area's natural quality.
- **Issue Mitigation:** Outlining strategies to address specific challenges, such as wildfire risks or unauthorized social trails.

Guides Monitoring and Compliance

This plan establishes a benchmark for park monitoring based on the existing conditions documented in the Conservation Easement Baseline Document and this master plan. These benchmarks and the processes outlined in this plan allow managers to assess the ongoing health of protected values, such as natural habitat, open space, and water resources, to ensure they remain intact over time.

Provides a Living Process

The information provided in this section serves as an initial framework and process for resource protection. This will need to be updated as necessary to better respond to issues and to address unforeseen conditions.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The primary objective is to maintain a “mostly undisturbed state” in the Resource Protection Area while enabling low-impact recreation through a higher level of allowed development in the Limited Development Areas.

- **Conservation Objective:** Protect habitat quality, with an emphasis on unfragmented forest and water resources.
- **Recreation Objective:** Support passive recreation opportunities for nature observation and scenic enjoyment.



Photo by Great Land Trust

MANAGEMENT TABLE

The Resource Management Framework table outlines the resources that will be managed within the park, including items that indicate change, the undesirable changes, the metrics used to measure changes, and mitigation or management strategies to protect the resources from negative impacts. A Resource Management Plan serves as a living, evolving document for long-term management and will require an adaptive process. Additional resources, indicators, metrics, and monitoring methods may be added or modified as needed to support adaptive management of the Potter Marsh Watershed Park.

Resources that are described within this Resource Management Plan include:

- Vegetation
- Hydrology
- Soils
- Wildlife
- Trail Network
- Uses
- Adjacent Neighborhoods

Key Impact Indicators

Monitoring key indicators enables long-term assessment of site conditions and evaluation of any changes to their desired conditions. The table lists indicators for each of the resources protected in the Potter Marsh Watershed Park.

Standards for Indicators

Standards define the point at which a change in the resource becomes undesirable and requires action. These standards are provided as undesirable changes within the Resource Management Framework table.

Measuring Indicators

The Resource Management Framework table outlines metrics that can be used to measure changes or impacts to a resource and trigger the need for mitigation or management strategies.

Management Strategies & Actions

Management strategies and actions to protect park resources must be compatible with improvements and activities permitted under the Conservation Easement. The Resource Management Framework table identifies strategies or actions that may be undertaken to address undesirable changes.

In general, the preferred path for management actions emphasizes education. At all park entry points and strategic locations throughout the park, users will have access to clear signage that educates them about the park and the activities and behaviors that are and are not appropriate within the park.

Implement and Monitor

Implementation:

The level of development illustrated in the master plan represents the maximum level of development allowed on the site, without requiring a new master plan process and accompanying Municipality of Anchorage public engagement and approvals process. The intent of the plan is to develop the park based on the illustrated needs, with ongoing development as needed to uphold the park's conservation values and ecological integrity, while maintaining the park's vision and goals and meeting user needs.

Monitoring:

- Use the Conservation Easement Baseline Document (prepared at the time of the park's creation) as the permanent benchmark for assessing ongoing compliance.
- Use Trail Management Objectives as the benchmark for ongoing compliance assessment.
- Encourage coordination with Great Land Trust's ongoing stewardship and monitoring activities under the Conservation Easement.

Existing Conditions Assessment

Existing conditions include conditions that are not consistent with the proposed standards:

- **Vegetation:** Non-authorized pruning or vegetation clearance.
- **Hydrology:** Standing and flowing water within areas of disturbed soils.
- **Soils:** Exposed soils, including areas of active erosion.
- **Trail Network:** Social trails or unauthorized trail development.
- **Uses:** Unauthorized use is apparent within the park.
- **Adjacent Neighborhoods:** Parking within adjacent road rights-of-way and in the neighborhood.

Probable Causes of Existing Impacts

Vegetation:

- Without active trail management, there is no guidance or process in place for allowable vegetation maintenance as needed for trail use.

Hydrology:

- Trails that lack drainage design result in erosion and trail widening.

Soils and Trail Network:

- The lack of clear signage, formal trail network, and trailheads results in impacts to game trails or new user-created trails.

Uses

- Historical Use: Former homestead roadbeds (Moen, Belarde) and utility easements have created clearings that invite unauthorized motorized or heavy-use activities.

Adjacent Neighborhoods:

- No formalized on-site parking results in parking on adjacent streets or on small, undefined trailhead areas in the park.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

INDICATOR	UNDESIRABLE CHANGE	METRIC OR EVALUATION	MITIGATION & MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
VEGETATION			
Habitat coverage	Change in habitat coverage	Acreage of interior forest.	Assess change and develop specific response as needed.
Invasive species	Any presence.	Presence of Priority Invasive Species identified by the Anchorage Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area Priorities ³ .	Education/signage; Early Detection Rapid Response programs; requirement for weed-free certified imported materials, including fill, topsoil, erosion control materials, and mulch; installation of boot-brush stations in parking areas and at trailheads; coordinate with appropriate experts to determine and implement species-specific management plan.
Pruning/clearing	Habitat impacts.	Cut or removed vegetation.	Education/signage; address accompanying potential reason such as user created trail or unauthorized firewood collection.
HYDROLOGY			
Water quality	Decline.	Turbidity. Standing or running water on disturbed soils.	Education/signage; installation of elevated boardwalks; installation of bridges; seasonal trail closures during spring break-up to reduce damage; trail reroute to avoid wet area.
SOILS			
Soils	Exposed soils.	Soils exposed beyond allowed for trails or improved areas.	Education/signage; revegetation; see also trail network.
WILDLIFE			
Wildlife encounters	Negative impacts to wildlife.	Quantity of encounters; negative encounters.	Education/signage; seasonal trail closures; trail removal and restoration.
Wildlife corridors	Decline in wildlife movement.	Quantity of wildlife sightings; habitat fragmentation.	Habitat restoration; decommissioning of trails; restricting or limiting access to users responsible for impacts to wildlife movement.

³ <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/682fb1e34dcaf578b109a242/t/69d3fd161ad0290f564e9340/1775500566515/ANC-CISMA+Priority+Species+List.pdf>

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

INDICATOR	UNDESIRABLE CHANGE	METRIC OR EVALUATION	MITIGATION & MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
TRAIL NETWORK			
Non-planned winter or summer trails	New user created trails; unauthorized expansion of trail network.	Exposed soils; unauthorized import of materials; vegetation removal and/or damage; unplanned trail presence on social media or community mapping platforms; promotion of high impact recreation for specific user groups.	Education/signage; revegetation and treatment of unauthorized treads to encourage regrowth; placement of deadfall or rock to obscure and close unauthorized trails; assessment of use types and potential prohibition of use type not compatible with trail.
Trail Classification Deviation	Deviation from Trail Management Objective.	Exposed soils; vegetation removal and/or damage.	Education/signage; restoration of trail to proper Trail Management Objective; upgrade to new trail class if warranted and if allowed by master plan and Conservation Easement; assessment of use types and potential prohibition of use type not compatible with trail.
Trail Condition Degradation	Trail braiding; trail widening; social trails in upland areas.	Trail failure; too many people; people want better access.	Reinforce trail structure; add signage; maintain new path; add rustic fence.
USES			
Non-allowed uses	Undesirable impacts.	Evidence of prohibited activity (e.g., tire tracks, campfire).	Education/signage; obstructions at perimeter to block motorized vehicles; removal and area restoration.
ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS			
Off-site impacts of site use	Increase in community concerns; excessive street parking.	Off-site parking.	Education/signage; signage directing users to the main park entry on Golden View Drive; assess issue and consider development of additional parking as proposed in Long-Term Development.
Waste Control	Littering or dumping.	Receptacle not maintained; receptacle not convenient; litter apparent throughout park.	Increase receptacles to align with maintenance needs; education/signage; promote Adoption program or friends group to participate in monitoring.
Noise	Noise pollution from park; complaints by neighborhood (disturbing both neighbors and wildlife).	Noise (from parking lot); excessive visitors; vandalism.	Gate parking areas; education/signage; adjust parking area hours of operation.