



# East Anchorage District Plan

December 2014







# East Anchorage District Plan

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# Introduction

## *A Vibrant Future for East Anchorage*

East Anchorage is known for its extensive park system, eclectic neighborhoods, regional shopping center, medical facilities, two universities and the joint army and air force installation. These assets, along with the people, the area's striking natural views, and its proximity to jobs, schools and regional destinations make it a desirable place to live. It is vital that East Anchorage retain these important qualities, long into the future, so that future generations can also thrive in this special place. Throughout its development, the East Anchorage District Plan was designed to reflect the desires and vision of the area's residents and business owners. In this way, the Plan provides a meaningful and relevant foundation for the District's future.

## *The Role and Purpose of the Plan*

The overarching goal of the Plan is to enhance the quality of life for existing and future East Anchorage citizens by planning smartly for future population growth and other changes in the District. To accomplish this goal, the Plan first captures the community's vision of the future, and then provides tools and priority strategies to achieve it. The Plan addresses specific topics including transportation, housing and economic development, and describes existing conditions and areas that need improvement. Collectively, the tools and strategies included in the Plan are meant to guide future development and investment decisions and take the best advantage of new opportunities so that the Municipality is prepared to deal with future growth, in a way that aligns with the community's vision.



East Anchorage is well positioned to capitalize on its many strengths and opportunities. By doing so, the district will move towards its shared vision of sustained economic growth, expanded education and job training opportunities, and well connected destinations in and around the district. The Plan provides specific recommendations to enable residents to take advantage of these opportunities as they arise.

## *Document Overview*

1. Existing Conditions in the District
2. Planning Foundations - Building the Plan
3. East Anchorage Vision
4. Priority Actions
5. Testing the Vision
6. Implementation Strategies and Policy Guide



# Chapter 1: *Existing Conditions*

In order to advance the vision for the District, it is important to understand current conditions and build on the momentum of existing municipal goals and plans. This chapter identifies existing planning documents, highlights key assets and opportunities, and describes current social and economic conditions.

## *Framework for Positive Change*

Several other planning documents already in place provide an existing framework for East Anchorage to move toward positive change in the future. Along with the East Anchorage District Plan, they support the transformation of East Anchorage. The East Anchorage District Plan aligns with existing document goals and details specific recommendations to further advance positive change in the area.

## **ANCHORAGE 2020 PLAN**

Anchorage 2020, adopted in February 2001 guides land use policy within the Anchorage Bowl. The Land Use Policy Map from the Anchorage 2020 Plan identified one town center, three neighborhood commercial centers, and two transit-supportive corridors within the East Anchorage study area.

## **ANCHORAGE HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS**

In March 2012, the Municipality developed a comprehensive housing study. It evaluated projected housing demand between 2010 and 2030 and analyzed financial feasibility of different housing types, especially compact housing.

### *Study Area Location and Boundary*

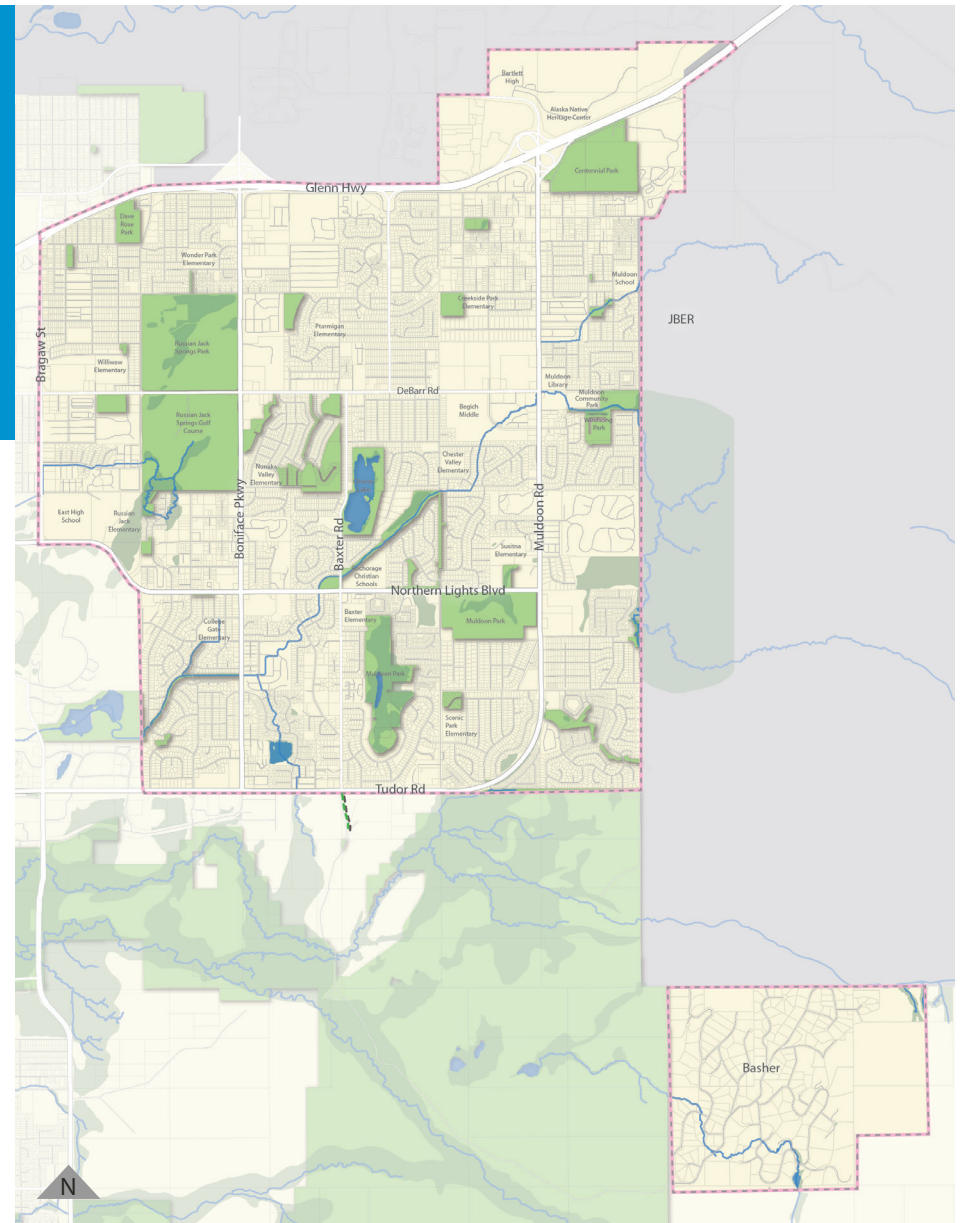
The East Anchorage District planning area includes the northeast corner of the Anchorage Bowl, bounded by the Glenn Highway to the north, JBER to the east, Tudor Road to the south, and Bragaw Street to the west. In addition, the Stuckagain Heights (Basher) area – southeast of Tudor Road at the southeast end of the Campbell Airstrip Road – is also included in the study area, although it is not depicted in every map throughout the Plan.

### TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan was approved in May 2012 and provides direction for the allocation of almost \$4 billion in transportation infrastructure improvements over the next 20 years. It includes the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, comprised of pedestrian, bicycle and trails plans. The Plan focuses on eight broad-level goals, covering a wide range of themes, such as safety, efficiency, mode choice, and environmental impacts. Recommendations include specific infrastructure improvements, such as signal timing, bus system expansion, and roadway reconstruction. Improvements include those that will affect the District, such as Muldoon Road.

### TITLE 21 REWRITE PROJECT

The previous version of Title 21 (Anchorage's main zoning code document) was adopted in the 1960s, with amendments being made in a piecemeal fashion over



the past 50 years. The Rewrite Project focused on bringing code into alignment with existing plans, especially the Anchorage 2020. Adopted in February 2013, the new Title 21 encourages infill and redevelopment, protection of existing neighborhood character, and expanded transportation options. It also establishes a standardized review process.

### **BICYCLE PLAN**

Adopted in March 2010, the *Anchorage Bicycle Plan* is one of three components of the Comprehensive Plan's Non-motorized Vehicle Plan. Its purpose is to increase bicycle infrastructure and mode share by identifying a network of commuter routes along collector and arterial streets that will have signs and striping. Plan goals center on improved better connectivity, maintenance of bicycle infrastructure, and making it safe for cyclists to share the road with motor vehicles.

### **PEDESTRIAN PLAN**

The *Anchorage Pedestrian Plan* was adopted by the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) in October 2007. It is also a sub-component

of the Non-Motorized Vehicle Plan. It aims to double pedestrian trips and reduce pedestrian injuries from vehicle crashes over the next twenty years by increasing pedestrian infrastructure and improving the year-round pedestrian environment. Strategies to achieve this goal include implementing pedestrian-friendly street design and development patterns, and raising public awareness of health benefits related to walking.

### **TRAILS PLAN**

The Anchorage Trails Plan, currently under development, will replace the *1997 Areawide Trails Plan*. It is the final component of the Comprehensive Plan's Non-Motorized Vehicle Plan. The Plan focuses on enhancing and expanding the existing recreational trail system in Anchorage. It will focus on general recreational trails as well as specialized trails for cross-country skiing, horseback riding, dog mushing, skijoring, and snowmobiling, as well as recreational bicycling.





## Key Assets

The following key assets should be leveraged in future redevelopment of the area. These were informed by community stakeholder interviews and their experience, perspective and knowledge of East Anchorage.

- Schools
- JBER
- Proximity to U-Med District
- Cultural Centers & Social Services
- Access to Recreation & Entertainment
- Access to Nature, Open Space & Trails
- Employment & Commercial Centers
- Diverse Communities
- Strong Regional Connections

## SCHOOLS



East Anchorage is home to numerous schools that range from early childhood to higher education. There are 17 public and private schools in the East District serving pre-kindergarten through 12th grades. Additionally, the U-Med district, adjacent to the East Anchorage planning area, is home to two universities.

## JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON (JBER)



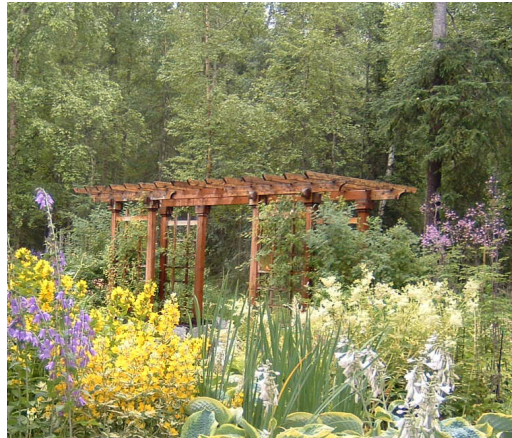
JBER serves as an important source of military and civilian employment for East Anchorage and attracts relocating families to the nearby neighborhoods. The base population including family members, civilians and retirees is near 37,000. The base's active duty population is just over 16,000 (as of 2011). With only 3,200 housing units on the base, many families live in nearby neighborhoods. There are five elementary schools, all run by the Anchorage School District, and two youth centers and a hospital on the base.

## PROXIMITY TO U-MED DISTRICT



The U-Med district, on the southwestern edge of the East Anchorage study area, is home to the Alaska Native Medical Center campus, which comprises the Alaska Native Medical Center Hospital, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, the Anchorage Native Primary Care Center, and the Southcentral Foundation. Alaska Pacific University, the University of Alaska, Anchorage, and Providence Hospital provide employment and educational opportunities.

## CULTURAL CENTERS & SOCIAL SERVICES



East Anchorage is home to a rich concentration of community facilities and social services collaborating to meet the needs of the diverse local population. These include youth development programs (the Northeast Muldoon Boys and Girls Club, Cook Inlet Tribal Council youth offerings) and several important cultural learning centers (the Muldoon Library, Alaska Botanical Gardens, Alaska Museum of Natural History, and the Alaska Native Heritage Center) and diverse places of worship. Social services in the area include outpatient rehabilitation centers, senior housing, and the Alaska Job Center Network. The Cook Inlet Tribal Council also contributes social support services and community programming to East Anchorage neighborhoods.

## ACCESS TO RECREATION FACILITIES & ENTERTAINMENT



A roller skating rink, movie theater, sports fields, dojo academy, and golf course can all be found in East Anchorage. The Tikahtnu Commons complex has become a major regional shopping destination for local residents.

## ACCESS TO NATURE, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS



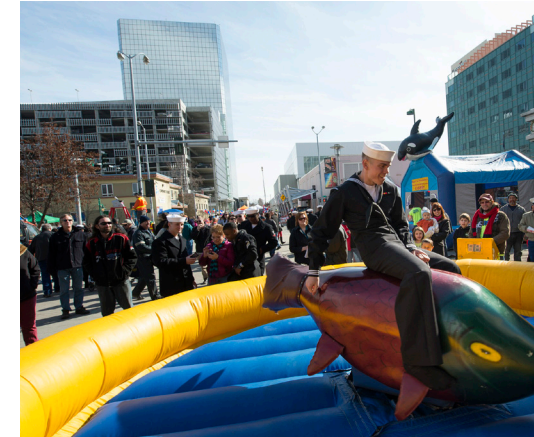
The 11,000 acres of parkland and 250 miles of trails and greenbelts in Anchorage are a few of its most prized assets. East Anchorage benefits from proximity to many small and large parks and adjoining trails. Additionally, to the east, the District abuts the edge of the majestic Chugach Mountains and Chugach State Park.

There are at least 18 parks within or nearby East Anchorage. The two largest in the area are Russian Jack Springs Park, a 600-acre park featuring a 9-hole golf course, and the Far North Bicentennial Park with numerous trails and other recreational facilities.



Trails in the area provide recreational access to small lakes and creeks; South Fork Chester Creek, Cheney Lake and Reflection Lake are all within or very close to East Anchorage. There are also nature trails in Baxter Bog Park and Arnold L. Muldoon Park.

## EMPLOYMENT & COMMERCIAL CENTERS



While there are few large employment centers within the East Anchorage study area, several are adjacent or nearby. JBER, the U-Med district, Downtown, and Midtown are the most notable. Smaller commercial centers are located throughout the area at the intersections of most major arterials. The largest is Tikahtnu Commons.

## DIVERSE COMMUNITIES



Nearby Mountain View neighborhood is recognized as one of the most diverse in Anchorage, with a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual population, representing many of the over 100 languages spoken in Anchorage Public Schools. East Anchorage is also home to diverse community groups, including four community councils, the American Legion (providing resource for veterans), Anchorage Crime Stoppers, numerous places of worship, and Native Alaskan healthcare systems.

## STRONG REGIONAL CONNECTIONS



East Anchorage is connected to the surrounding region by proximity to major transportation corridors such as Glenn Highway to the north and Muldoon Road on its eastern boundary. Glenn Highway is the primary travel corridor to Downtown and Midtown Anchorage from the northern communities of Chugiak-Eagle River, as well as the eastern portion of JBER. Major employment and commercial centers are within a 10-15 minute drive of East Anchorage, but too far to walk. Additionally, the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport is within a 20-minute drive, at the western end of the city. The Transit Center at Muldoon and DeBarr provides a central location for access to public transit, including the six Anchorage People Mover bus lines serving the area, each with hourly or half-hourly service during the weekdays.

## *Challenges and Opportunities*

Despite East Anchorage's many assets, there are a few critical challenges to be addressed in order to spur transformation. There are also significant opportunities to leverage existing investment, improve connections, and develop or redevelop a variety of uses.

### LOCAL CONNECTIVITY

Although major arterials connect the District with downtown and other neighborhoods, there is a lack of local connections between the strip commercial development on these busy arterials and the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Inter-neighborhood travel frequently requires using the major arterials because local neighborhood connections do not currently exist.

### AGING BUILDING STOCK

Aging commercial strips in East Anchorage – for example, the stretch of Muldoon Road between DeBarr and Northern Lights – is prime for redevelopment. Existing one-story commercial buildings previously used for light industrial uses can be adapted to become more advantageous locations for new and growing local businesses providing goods and services desired by the community. Refreshing the

facades and architectural details of these buildings also provides an opportunity to create an enhanced community aesthetic to complement the beautiful vistas.

Increased services and pedestrian activity along the road will also attract more business customers, and make nearby residential options more attractive to renters and home buyers.

### CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The District is characterized by residential neighborhoods and shallow lot strip commercial on major arterials. Much of the strip commercial is aging and has seen few updates in recent decades. The disjointed strip commercial development, residential land uses and the busy arterial roadways contribute to that sense of disconnection.

### MOBILE HOME PARKS

While *Anchorage 2020* and other Municipal plans and policies identify the ongoing need to retain mobile home parks and other non-traditional home ownership and support affordable housing, the reality is that mobile home parks are privately owned parcels subject to market changes and owner interests. The historical trend often moves these parks into new ownership, which can lead to eventual redevelopment at these sites to other residential units. The District includes approximately 13

mobile home parks distributed across the planning area. Most of these are older parks and some of the owners have discussed considerations for future uses that change the housing type and/or the land use at the site. The potential residential density upgrades when these parks are redeveloped cannot be overlooked and has been factored into the housing capacity analysis (see Chapter 4).

### MULDOON ROAD CORRIDOR

Another challenge centers on the Muldoon Road corridor, characterized by the aging commercial structures fronting Muldoon. Many older units are vacant or less able to hold long-term tenants or land uses. Many of these structures will likely need significant renovation or additions over the next decade. The Plan highlights this corridor as an area primed for major redevelopment, evolving into a diversity of community serving retail, office, and services with a mix of higher density residential. This new vibrant corridor could serve as a focus of community activity for the northeast corner of the District and contribute to higher property values, sustainable buildings, walkability, and better access to adjacent neighborhoods to reduce automobile trips.

## *Social and Economic Conditions in the District*

East Anchorage is home to approximately a fifth of Anchorage's population, 56,300 residents in 2010. There are 21,000 housing units within the study area. The median household income of \$66,989 in East Anchorage is slightly lower than Anchorage as a whole, \$73,000 (Census 2010). There are more people renting their home in East Anchorage than the City as a whole; 68% compared to 58%.

Income in Anchorage is higher than state or national averages. The median income in Anchorage in 2009 was \$72,832, compared to a state median of \$66,953 or a national median of \$50,221. Income is not projected to grow substantially over the 20-year period. University of Alaska Anchorage's Institute for Social and Economic Research projects that per capita personal income will remain relatively flat over the 20-year period, increasing from about \$40,196 per person in 2010 to \$40,832 in 2030 (adjusted to 2009 dollars).

The segments of the population in Anchorage expected to increase over the next 20 years are the age groups between 20-40 years old and 60 and older.



## Chapter 2: *Building the Plan*

The East Anchorage District Plan is rooted in the wisdom of the District’s stakeholders and citizenry. This chapter describes the Plan’s public engagement efforts to involve a broad group of citizens from across the District in a combination of stakeholder interviews, district-focused public workshops, as well as through the use of a frequently updated project website and an online survey. These efforts offered residents and stakeholders an opportunity to learn about the planning process and to share their opinions, ideas and future visions for the District.

### *A Plan Built on Community Input*

Early in the Plan’s development, an advisory committee was formed to offer guidance and feedback at key decision-making points throughout the process and to ensure the Plan’s alignment with community goals. The committee was comprised of representatives from the community council, school district, local churches, JBER, local businesses, as well as East Anchorage residents. Key tasks involved providing contacts for local stakeholders and developers, assisting with community outreach, and reviewing the Plan’s goals, priorities and proposed strategies.

#### **ENGAGING RESIDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with a variety of public and private entities including developers, community leaders,



social service agencies, local, state and federal government agency officials, economic development groups, business and property owners, schools, non-profits, housing, and transportation and recreation organizations. Interviewees were asked to share their perspectives on the opportunities and challenges in East Anchorage, its positive attributes, their overall views on living in the District, and their hopes for the future.

In addition to targeted interviews, the city hosted a district-wide workshop and four open houses. At the workshop, citizens were asked where new growth should and should not occur within the District, the general look and feel the new growth should take, and the type of transportation,

park and trail improvements needed. Open houses were conducted to obtain feedback on initial workshop results, emerging concepts and proposed strategies.

### KEY THEMES FROM THE COMMUNITY'S PERSPECTIVE

Overwhelmingly, interviewees and workshop participants desired to retain the residential character and diversity of the District and expressed a strong interest to offer jobs, attract employers, and develop mixed-use centers that allowed people to live in the vicinity of jobs and shopping. Although in support of new residential uses and infill, residents often expressed their concern that East Anchorage was the recipient of more

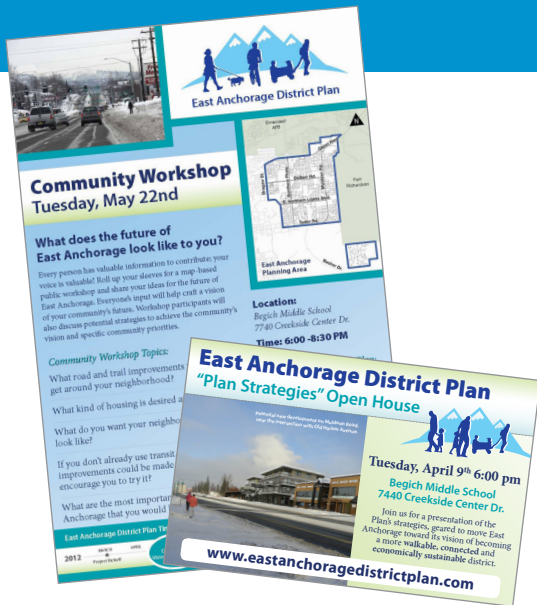
density than other parts of the city, and that undesirable uses are often placed in the District when not wanted elsewhere. People expressed a need for enhanced workforce training, consolidated social services, better jobs, and improved and varied housing opportunities.

#### Other key themes that emerged from the interviews, workshops and survey included:

- Revitalizing and beautifying Muldoon from DeBarr to Glenn Highway is a high priority.
- Support for the Anchorage 2020 Centers, and a desire to see mixed-use development in these areas.
- A desire to focus on the town center at Muldoon and DeBarr.
- An interest in retaining open space on the recently acquired property on the east side of Muldoon at DeBarr.
- A need for year-round recreation options in and around the District.
- A desire for more housing options.
- A plan to convert aging mobile home parks over time – with a sensitivity to replacing affordable housing for residents and retaining residents in the District.
- Prioritize safety improvements and maintenance on arterials, including

## East Anchorage District Plan Outreach

Throughout the planning process, different outreach methods such as e-mail blasts, posters, flyers and postcards were used to communicate to a wide spectrum of audiences. This outreach was used to announce the workshop and open house dates, and drive people to the project website to learn more and provide feedback. The project website was a key element of the public engagement and included project news, events, documents, and presentations. In addition, citizens and stakeholders were invited to participate through an online survey, posted on the website.



Muldoon, Boniface, DeBarr, Northern Lights, and Tudor.

- A desire for more trails, increased biking and walking options, and improved transit options.

## Guiding Principles for the East Anchorage District Plan

Guiding principles are a set of accepted guidelines that capture the values and priorities of East Anchorage and ultimately help us answer the question: “How do we define success in the East Anchorage District Plan project?” They are used to develop the goals, objectives, and strategies for the Plan, and also set the standards for evaluating strategies and the Plan’s recommendations.

Guiding principles are based on what we have learned from Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan, stakeholder interviews and input from the advisory committee, and finalized after further evaluation and prioritization with the advisory committee.

The East Anchorage guiding principles are grouped in six topic areas:

- Economy
- Community and Housing
- Equity and Opportunity

- Environment
- Transportation
- Process and Implementation

## ECONOMY (E)

1. Cultivate a quality of life and a financial climate that encourage businesses to start up or expand in East Anchorage.
2. Foster cooperation among civic, business, and government stakeholders for continued economic success.
3. Recognize quality of life, natural beauty, and diversity of East Anchorage as important elements to attract and keep businesses and residents.
4. Enhance employee training opportunities through cooperation with education institutions and employers.

## COMMUNITY AND HOUSING (CH)

1. Reuse vacant or under utilized sites to accommodate growth while maintaining livability by promoting new housing types to accommodate future needs.
2. Through planning and zoning, provide a wide range of housing types and densities in safe, attractive neighborhoods. These neighborhoods should offer a choice of lifestyles that are in harmony with



our natural setting, and designed to accommodate our weather conditions.

3. Help communities create and celebrate their identity by developing neighborhood gateway sites.

### EQUITY AND OPPORTUNITY (EO)

1. Ensure all residents have equal access to quality housing, jobs, education and health care.
2. Develop ways of minimizing the displacement of low-income households as neighborhood values appreciate.
3. Celebrate East Anchorage's many cultures, lifestyles and ethnicities and work for inclusiveness.

### ENVIRONMENT (EN)

1. Ensure that there are parks, trails and open spaces that are easily accessible to residents throughout the community.
2. Maintain and enhance a network of natural open spaces throughout the community that preserves and enhances East Anchorage's scenic vistas, fish, wildlife, and plant habitats, and protects their ecological functions and values.

3. Consider open space as essential infrastructure just like sewer, water and roadways.

### TRANSPORTATION (T)

1. Create and maintain safe, attractive pedestrian and bicycle connections between neighborhoods, schools, commercial areas and neighborhood centers.
2. Identify new or enhanced local roads to better connect existing arterials and state roads.
3. Ensure new and existing commercial corridors offer a range of transportation options to support businesses and nearby residents.
4. Improve snow removal practices, especially on sidewalks for safe conditions all year.

### PROCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION (PI)

1. Foster a civic community that encourages public involvement in decision making.
2. Ensure transparent and inclusive planning efforts.
3. Coordinate with other agencies and plans to ensure that large projects support livability goals.





# Chapter 3:

## *East Anchorage Vision*

This chapter presents the East Anchorage Vision. It includes the Vision Concept Map, a description of the Concept Map categories and a summary of how the District might look in the future.

### *The East Anchorage Vision*

The East Anchorage Vision outlines the future that residents and stakeholders desire. The Vision, along with the guiding principles, provide direction on developing the Plans' goals, strategies and actions. Chapter 3 represents this collective, ideal future vision of the District from the public process of this Plan and previous Comprehensive Plan elements. It will take years to achieve the conditions presented here as the East Anchorage Vision.

#### ***The East Anchorage Vision states:***

*East Anchorage is a culturally diverse community where all residents have safe and affordable access to quality housing, jobs, education, recreation and health care. Residents are engaged in their neighborhoods and schools and are able to find well-paying jobs in nearby town centers and neighborhood commercial and mixed use areas. East Anchorage residents have a variety of options to move through the District – safe, well-connected streets, a trail system that connects to areas within the District as well as to other parts of the Municipality, and a defined pedestrian network. Residents enjoy a neighborhood and regional park, open space and trail system that allows them to take advantage of the area's superb natural amenities year round. New and long-time residents benefit from a well-coordinated service system that supports job training and the provision of other needed social services.*

## Vision Concept Map

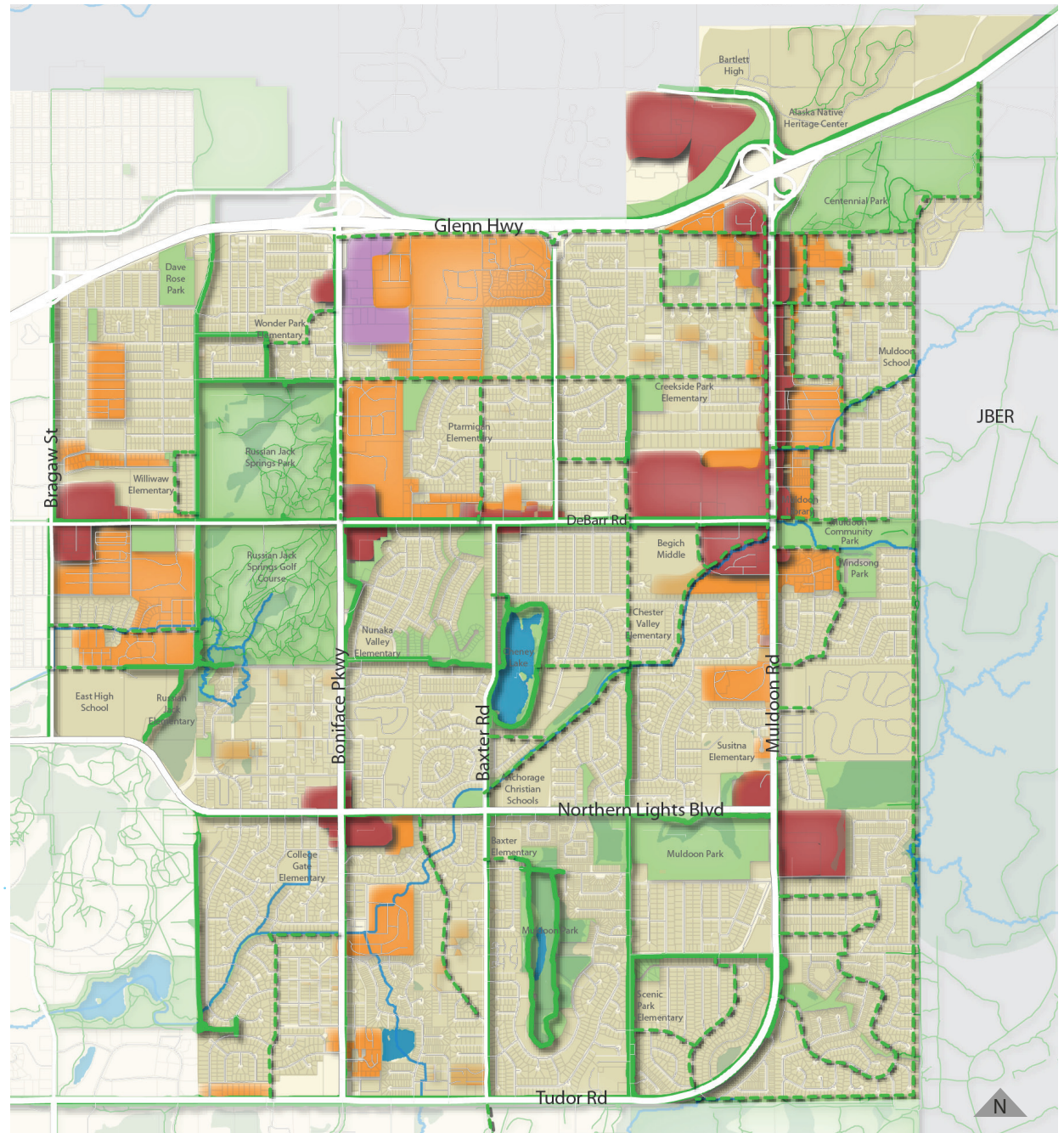
The Vision Concept Map shows the desired land use patterns of the East Anchorage Vision. This map, based on input from the public workshops, open houses and advisory committee, builds on the Anchorage 2020 Plan and supports the goals and desires expressed by residents and stakeholders throughout the planning process. **This map should guide future policy, investment and development decisions in the District.**

*Note: The Basher section of the planning area is not anticipated to change.*

*Note: The southwest corner of the planning area is also encompassed in the U-Med District.*

### Vision Concept Map Categories

- Activity centers
- Industry and employment
- Urban neighborhoods
- Areas of low change
- Parks and open space
- Existing trails and paths
- Proposed trails and paths



## CONCEPT MAP CATEGORIES

**Activity Centers** are areas where retail, commercial, community commercial recreation and employment uses are clustered. They may or may not include mixed-use, but do allow for it. These areas are convenient for auto travel and walkable depending on the specific street and setting.

**Industry and Employment Areas** consist of light industrial, manufacturing, and flex office space uses. This employment-rich area is adjacent to residential neighborhoods and therefore the uses will tend towards light industrial rather than heavy industry.

**Urban Neighborhood** provides a range of housing including multi-family, townhomes, and small-lot, single-family options.

**Areas of Stability** are established residential neighborhoods unlikely to change in the short-term future.

**Parks and Open Space** include active and natural green spaces currently in the District as well as potential new parks.

**Existing Trail and Paths** include the pedestrian and bicycle network on the ground today.

**Proposed Trails and Paths** would provide for additional safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

## *What Does the Future of East Anchorage Look Like?*

### A DIVERSITY OF HOUSING STYLES

East Anchorage residents enjoy living in many established neighborhoods where they value their lifestyle and want to protect or improve their quality of life in those neighborhoods. With changing demographics and a trend of smaller household sizes, new residents seek diverse types of housing opportunities – from mixed-use centers to housing in new subdivisions or infill in existing neighborhoods – to meet Anchorage’s future needs.

A well-planned approach to provide appropriate housing means that East Anchorage residents have homes that they can afford and are able to choose from a variety of housing styles, sizes and neighborhoods. New housing options will be designed to provide housing to existing residents living in areas that may be redeveloped, such as aging mobile home parks. Creating housing options that answer the needs of East Anchorage’s diverse population, while sustaining and supporting existing neighborhoods, result in a more prosperous, vibrant and inviting district.

## DEVELOPING THE VISION

The Vision Concept Map and the narrative description of the Vision are both a visionary depiction of the future as imagined by the residents of East Anchorage, as well as the culmination of detailed research and analysis over the course of the planning process. **Chapter 4** provides a summary of how this analysis led to the community vision and the Vision Map.



*East Anchorage District Plan*



Mixed-use building



Townhome



Small, single-family home

### *The Future of East Anchorage Housing*

#### **Apartments and Condos**

Future multi-family housing will be designed to fit the scale of the existing neighborhoods. Mid-rise structures would be reserved for town centers or other higher density neighborhoods. While most multi-family units in East Anchorage today are renter-occupied, changes in future demographics point to demand in the future for both high-quality rental units and owner-occupied condos.

In addition to single-use buildings, mixed-use buildings that include retail or office space on the ground floor and condominiums and apartments above, are often developed on main streets or commercial corridors. They often provide internal access for residents in order to reserve street frontage for storefronts. Mixed-use buildings provide housing options for a variety of income levels.

#### **Townhomes and Live-Work Units**

Townhomes are generally two- to three-stories and are designed to fit in many types of residential neighborhoods, including new units providing neighborhood infill housing. Townhomes can vary considerably in design and architectural style, and may be either owner or renter occupied.

Live-work units are similar to townhomes but are designed to combine residential and small business space. The “work” area is typically on the ground floor and features large windows and flexible spaces for offices, retail or services. The “live” area is typically on the upper floors. Live-work units are well suited for the needs of neighborhood and personal services such as salons and travel agencies or professional offices for architects, accountants or attorneys.

#### **Single-Family Cottage Housing**

East Anchorage has an opportunity to develop new single-family homes on lots under 5,000 square feet in size. Some small-lot, single-family designs include homes oriented around a communal courtyard or cottage-style homes. Others are designed in more traditional patterns. These homes would be primarily owner occupied.

#### **Mobile Home Parks**

Mobile homes and manufactured homes provide an affordable, single-family housing product throughout East Anchorage. These are typically arranged in developments on large parcels. Ownership structure, management and age of these developments vary.

## GROWING AND STABLE EMPLOYMENT

East Anchorage is known for its quality of life, natural beauty, and diverse workforce, which attracts entrepreneurs and new business to the area. With a strong business and civic presence, stakeholders work together to grow the local economy. New opportunities to live close to job opportunities and walk, bike or ski to work makes East Anchorage attractive to employers and employees. The University of Alaska in Anchorage provides outreach for community and technical courses, ensuring that the East Anchorage population is well trained and ready to support business development.

## PRESERVATION AND ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE

All East Anchorage neighborhoods have access to open space and recreational amenities consistent with other areas of the city. The trail system is expanded to connect neighborhoods, town centers and commercial areas with west Anchorage and the Mat-Su area. A new trail system to Basher allows residents to commute to work along Tudor Road, and also allows East Anchorage residents access to open space and the trail system. New parks and trails are developed as new development and redevelopment occurs – with parks, open space and trails and integral part of development plans. The new park at Muldoon and DeBarr provides a central activity area along Muldoon and active fields and park facilities to the east.

## SAFE AND CONNECTED TRANSPORTATION

As redevelopment occurs, access management practices are implemented to further improve vehicular and pedestrian safety, similar to recent improvements made along Muldoon

and Tudor. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are improved and as development and redevelopment occurs, care is taken to connect neighborhoods, schools, commercial areas and neighborhood centers. Residents have a range of transportation options to access businesses, services, and recreation areas. With the population increase and job growth, a Bus Rapid Transit system or Express Bus system is studied for future implementation.

## SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY SERVICES

East Anchorage continues to welcome an immigrant population, which adds to the richness of the District and also provides a demand for coordinated social services, especially for youth. Residents have access to quality housing, jobs, education, and health care through well-coordinated agencies and organizations. Area youth have an expanded community center which supports after-school programs, indoor and outdoor sports, recreation, and job training.







# Chapter 4:

## Priority Actions

This chapter outlines a short-term framework for the Municipality, detailing specific priority actions – identified by stakeholders as those action items most desired to be accomplished in the District in the near-term – that should be undertaken immediately or completed in a short period of time. They address the most high-priority issues in the District and are the first steps that the City should take to move toward the community’s vision.

Chapter 5 (starting on page 46) includes a complete list of recommended strategies and actions to implement the Plan.

### *Priority Actions:*

1. Adopt and implement the East Anchorage District Plan
2. Initiate a small area planning process for the old greenhouse site at Muldoon and DeBarr
3. Make East Anchorage safe for walking and biking year-round
4. Create a catalyst development program
5. Implement existing plan recommendations





## *1. Adopt and implement the East Anchorage District Plan.*

### **DESIRED OUTCOME**

**The East Anchorage District Plan is adopted and serves as a guide for future land use and development decisions.** The East Anchorage District Plan includes a land use map and policies that will provide guidance for future development decisions by East Anchorage neighborhoods, developers, the Planning and Zoning Commission, Platting Board and the Assembly. Implementation policies and strategies are outlined in **Chapter 5**. The land use map (described below) is the Comprehensive Plan Map for the East Anchorage District.

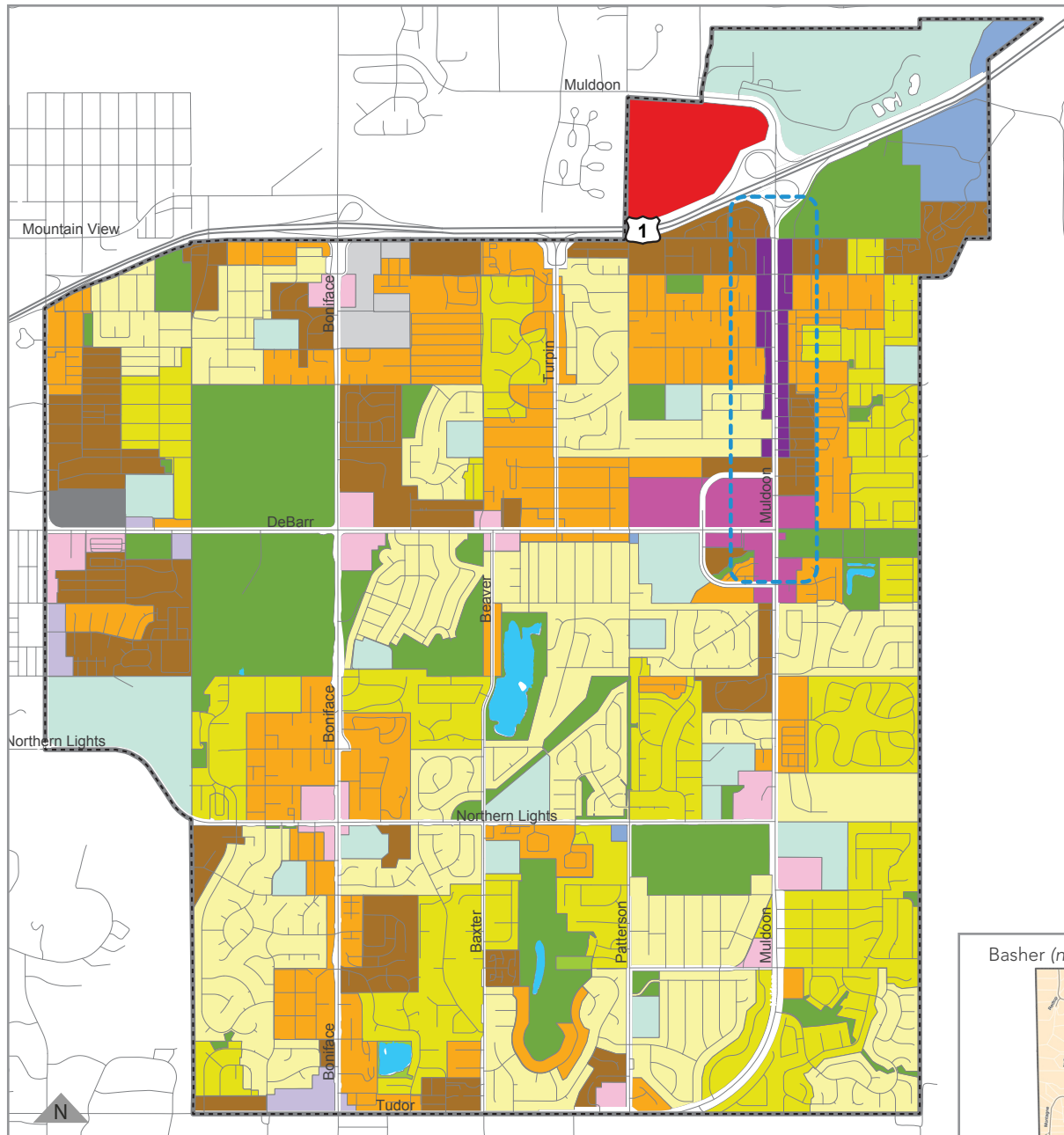
### **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?**

**East Anchorage District Plan Land Use Map.** Staff, engineers, developers, Planning and Zoning Commission, Platting Board and the Assembly should use the East Anchorage Land Use Map

and associated policies as a guide when making land use and infrastructure decisions in the East Anchorage area. The land use map will serve as the basis for rezoning actions that are to be consistent with the map and the intent of each designation.

### **EAST ANCHORAGE DISTRICT LAND USE MAP**

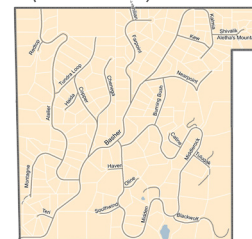
The District Land Use Map is based on the East Anchorage District Vision Map, which reflects the goals and desires of district residents and stakeholders. The land use designations are based on the Comprehensive Plan Policy Map, and include similar terminology used in the West Anchorage District Plan, such as Town Center and Muldoon Corridor District. The District Land Use Map is a visual guide that directs future growth and development, aligned with policies from *Anchorage 2020: Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan*, and serves as a basis for future zoning and other discretionary actions in the District. Highest and best use determinations were used in land use designation decisions to some degree in order to balance commercial growth versus loss of residential acreage.



### East Anchorage District Land Use Map

- Study Area
- Lakes
- Limited Intensity Residential
- Low-Intensity Residential (detached single family)
- Low-Intensity Residential (attached and detached single family)
- Low- to Medium-Intensity Residential
- Medium-Intensity Residential
- Town Center
- Neighborhood Center
- Muldoon Corridor District
- Office Low Intensity
- Industrial
- Regional Commercial Center
- General Commercial
- Parks and Natural Resources
- Other areas that functions as Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources
- Public Utility/Facility
- School and Community Institutional
- Muldoon Corridor Special Study Area

Basher (not to scale)





### Limited Intensity Residential

**Intent:** The Limited Intensity Residential designation provides for large-lot, semi-rural residential neighborhoods in areas where natural conditions and distance to services preclude more intensive development.

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



### Low Intensity Residential (Attached and Detached)

**Intent:** The low intensity residential attached and detached residential designation provides for a variety of single-family attached, and two-family residential neighborhoods.

**Description:** The predominant land use consists of conventional single-family detached and attached houses on lots generally between 2,000 and 20,000 square feet or more in size. The building scale, landscaped setbacks and low traffic volumes on local streets contribute to a low intensity living environment. This designation is implemented by the R-1, R-1A and, R-7 and R-2A and R-2D zones.



### Low / Medium Intensity Residential

**Intent:** The Low / Medium Intensity Residential designation provides for a range of single- and multi-family housing in neighborhoods that offer a compatible diversity of housing choices.

**Description:** Residential uses include standard detached houses and small-lot, single-family homes, attached single-family homes, duplexes, cottage housing, townhouses and low-density, multi-family units. The intended overall density range is eight to fifteen housing units per gross acre. New single family development is intended to be relatively compact and mixed with other housing types to enable the efficient use of land and public infrastructure. This designation is implemented by the R-2 districts.



### Medium Intensity Residential

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

**Description:** Predominant land uses consist of 2- to 4-story multi-family complexes and townhouses at an intended overall density of 15 to 35 housing units per gross acre. A critical mass of housing at this density threshold supports a diversity of housing choices, efficient provision of public infrastructure and more frequent transit service. New, higher density development should allow for amenities such as public or private open space, snow storage and recreation areas. This



designation may accommodate additional density of up to 40 housing units per gross acre adjacent to designated Town Centers except for those at the neighborhood scale. Qualifying projects should provide “town center” oriented urban design features as defined in the land use regulations. This designation is implemented primarily by the R-3 zone, although the R-2M zone may be appropriate in transition areas. B-1A may also serve this land use at certain locations. Existing R-4 zoned areas (on sites greater than 5 acres with direct access to collectors and higher road classification) could be developed to the maximum R-4 densities.



### Town Center

**Intent:** The Town Center designation provides for areas that serve as a focus of community activity. They are intended to include a mix of retail shopping and services, public facilities, and medium to high-density residential uses.

**Description:** Predominant land use consists of a core that is a mix of community-serving retail, mixed use commercial, office and residential, public services, and public/civic facilities, surrounded by medium-high-density residential development. Necessary to their design is an efficient pedestrian-access network connecting the core uses, residential neighborhoods, and transit facilities. Town Centers lend themselves to being located at major intersections, with high visibility, and access to major roadways and transit lines. This designation is implemented by the B-1A, B-3, and R-3 zones.



### Neighborhood Center

**Intent:** The Neighborhood Center designation provides for small to medium size commercial convenience centers that serve the surrounding neighborhood or cluster of neighborhoods.

**Description:** Predominant land uses consist of small scale, non-obtrusive convenience retail and personal services, such as food markets, drug stores, restaurants, and professional services oriented to the needs of the surrounding residential population. The largest centers may be anchored by a full-sized grocery store. It is important that the scale, appearance and function of new development be compatible with adjacent residential uses, and designed with a goal of reducing vehicle trips and driving distances, and minimizing traffic impacts. This designation is implemented by the B-1A and B-1B zones.



### Muldoon Corridor District

**Intent:** The Muldoon Corridor District designation provides for a mixed use corridor distinct to the East Anchorage District planning area that covers the Muldoon Transit Corridor from Glenn Highway to Creekside Center Drive. It is intended to include a mix of community serving retail and services, public facilities, and medium to high density residential that creates a destination corridor, which serves as a focus of community activity for the east side of the District. The goal of this designation is to provide a redevelopment environment that supports new commercial, housing, and mixed use development other than the traditional strip commercial.

**Description:** Predominant land use consists of single-story retail, 2-4 story mixed-use retail, office and residential along the Muldoon Road corridor, surrounded by medium- to high-density residential neighborhoods. Necessary to the design is an efficient pedestrian-access network connecting the corridor uses, residential neighborhoods, and transit facilities. The corridor is a major arterial and transportation route for automobile traffic, transit, and pedestrians. As such, there



is high visibility, and access to major roadways and transit routes. This form of development takes advantage of Muldoon's north-south orientation to capture upper-floor mountain views and southern exposure.

The corridor coincides with the Transit Corridor outlined in Anchorage 2020 with the general principal of achieving a residential density of at least eight dwelling units per acre within a quarter mile of the road. The essential implementation tool for this corridor designation is a Muldoon Corridor Area Plan project. The project area for this Area Plan is depicted as a Special Study along north Muldoon on the Land Use Plan Map. Existing small-lot configurations on the Muldoon frontage and Title 21 regulations preclude or limit activities and pedestrian enhancements on Muldoon. The Area Plan will account for code requirements and viability of redevelopment uses when it assigns the final area for land use designations. The Area Plan should consider expanding the Muldoon Corridor designation at strategic locations to increase lot depths in order to facilitate viable commercial/mixed use redevelopments. Following the completion of the Corridor Plan, the land use designation is to be implemented by the B1-A, B1-B and B-3 zones, and possibly a Muldoon Corridor overlay district.



### General Commercial

**Intent:** The General Commercial designation provides for a range of commercial uses and employment and economic development opportunities in larger-scale commercial settings. This is a catch-all category for general medium-to-larger-scale commercial uses not otherwise included in the Town Center, Regional Commercial Centers, or Neighborhood Centers. Further expansion of this designation other than shown on this map is discouraged.

**Description:** This use allows for a variety of larger commercial uses. Single commodity bulk and warehouse retail services and building supplies and services are permitted. Development is compatible with and supports adjacent residential areas in terms of physical scale, intensity of activities, and through buffering and transitioning. This designation is implemented by the B-3 and possibly the B-1A districts.



### Office – Low Intensity

**Intent:** This designation provides for situations where a range of office uses may be appropriate, but not a broad spectrum of commercial retail uses.

**Description:** Predominant uses consist of small- to medium-sized office buildings with business, professional and medical services. Low Intensity means 3- to 4-story maximum building heights, landscaped setbacks and an employment density generally less than 15 employees per gross acre. This designation is implemented primarily by the RO zone.



### Industrial/Commercial

**Intent:** The Industrial / Commercial designation provides for a variety of employment and economic development opportunities in an industrial-type setting.

**Description:** This allows a variety of industrial and industrial-related commercial uses, including office industrial parks. Single commodity bulk retail sales and building supplies and services are allowed. Other commercial uses that are supportive to industrial functions and character may occur, but are limited in intensity to maintain adequate industrial development opportunities. Development is compatible with adjacent residential areas in terms of physical scale, intensity of activities, and through buffering and transitions. This designation is implemented by the I-1 zone.



### Regional Commercial Center

**Intent:** The Regional Commercial Center designation provides for conglomerations of large-scale commercial uses that serve the wider community, function as focus centers of commercial activity, and are allowed and encouraged to evolve as mixed-use centers.

**Description:** Major malls with clusters of large, retail establishments anchor Regional Commercial Centers, serving an area up to an hour travel distance and significant out-of-town traffic. Supporting uses include low- to medium-rise offices, hotels, transit hubs, entertainment uses and housing. Overall gross employment density is lower than that of Major City Center designations. This is a hybrid designation that allows some land-intensive and/or auto-oriented uses that may not be appropriate for more compact Town Centers. This designation is implemented with the B-3 and applies primarily to Tikahtnu Commons.



### Parks and Natural Resource

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

**Description:** Uses include neighborhood and community parks, natural resource use parks, special use parks, golf courses, greenbelts, and other municipal open spaces that are dedicated or designated by an adopted plan for parkland or natural conservation. Other municipal lands with high natural value that are environmentally unsuitable for development are also included. Special purpose facilities such as sports complexes or interpretive centers that support park, recreation and natural resource functions may be allowed subject to special reviews defined in the Title 21 Land Use Regulations. This designation is implemented by the PR and PLI zones. Most other zones may also be compatible implementation zones for non-dedicated park and recreation lands.



### Public Utility / Facility

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

**Description:** Predominant land uses consist of public utilities including sewer and water treatment plants, power generation plants, industrial yards, water tank reservoirs, pump stations and facilities for maintenance or fleet services. The designation also applies to facilities such as fire stations not oriented to on-site customer service. This designation is implemented by the PLI, I-1 and I-2 zones.



### School and Community Institutional

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

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

## *2. Initiate a small area planning process for developing a park at the former greenhouse site at Muldoon and DeBarr and complete a development plan for appropriate uses of this park. Secure a formal park dedication.*

### DESIRED OUTCOME:

**A new park at Muldoon and DeBarr provides an activity and open space amenity to residents within the East Anchorage District and nearby neighborhoods.** Input regarding the importance of parks and open space in East Anchorage is clear – these are assets worth protecting and enhancing. The vacant parcel situated on the southeast corner of the intersection of Muldoon and DeBarr, adjacent to the Town Center, presents an important opportunity to create an activity and open space amenity. The site was purchased by the Municipality and remains in their ownership, with the exception of one small private lot on the northwest corner. Muldoon Park is located on the eastern portion of the site, providing passive recreation opportunities and natural vegetation along Chester Creek. The Municipality acquired this parcel, in part,

as a means of restoring the main branch of Chester Creek for fish passage and to reduce flood hazards in the process. Prior to being acquired by the Municipality, this land was used as a private park and is a well-known Muldoon landmark, and Muldoon residents have expressed a strong desire that this land be used to create a park that would be a focal point for the Muldoon community. While this land remains underdeveloped, local residents currently use this property for outdoor recreation activities including jogging, dog walking, and cross country skiing.

**Participants in the Plan’s development process voiced strong opinions regarding the potential for this recently acquired land with Muldoon frontage to become part of the existing park.** Specifically, people were concerned that the site might host auto-oriented strip-commercial if the property were to be sold and that such a commercial landscape would be detrimental to the District. Other participants indicated that neighborhood- and park-serving retail concessions, such as coffee and equipment rental shops, could be appropriate in this park. For example, one feature that local residents have expressed a strong desire for is a sledding hill and a concession stand that rented sleds for children and sold hot chocolate to parents might be appropriate.



Driving east on DeBarr offers a tree-lined view of the property frontage and the foothills behind. Many participants want to protect this site view; therefore, designs for the site should consider the aesthetic nature of the location. Creating compatible and complimentary activities within the Muldoon road frontage portion of this park would likely elevate the value of the park for its users and should be considered. Areas within the parcel's south western quarter should also be reserved for a restored section of Chester Creek and an associated greenbelt tract.

### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

**Secure a formal park designation.** Under municipal law, Assembly action is required to formally designate this land as a park. Promptly designating this site as a park will allow the Parks and Recreation Department the option to begin providing basic services at this site while the planning process is completed.

**Develop a small area plan.** Given the strong and diverse opinions expressed about the park, additional study through a small area planning process is necessary to determine appropriate uses and design of the park. Small area planning is a partnership between the City and its residents, businesses, builders and

developers, institutions and other government entities. While Anchorage 2020 and this Plan articulate overarching ideas and strategies, this site requires specific strategies tailored to address many of its individual characteristics. Therefore, a small area planning process is recommended to take the broad ideas from this Plan down to the appropriate site-specific strategies and actions.

Further community-level studies can assist in determining how it develops, the types of uses included on the site, funding opportunities, and how to best integrate the new park into the community. A public engagement process is a critical component in small area planning and is a valuable tool for gathering input when identifying and refining the programming, design and financing for the future park site.

The process should include:

- **A stakeholder advisory group** that represents community interests. Representation should include a range of stakeholders within the area, including community councils, nearby residents and business owners, and advocates representing interests such as housing, recreation and the natural environment.
- **A technical advisory group** made up of representatives from public agencies

that have an interest in the park area or will be called upon to implement the outcomes of the small area plan.

- **A public outreach program** to bring greater numbers of people into the decision making. A public workshop or design charrette is recommended along with one or two open houses. A design competition should be considered as well.

The advisory group, along with the public, should advise municipal staff at key intervals throughout the project. As part of this process, discussions should include the benefits of a full park parcel without any commercial concessions versus a park-oriented commercial, retail or service concessions.

Given the site's location on the Muldoon corridor, there are potential development opportunities at the road frontage. Depending on how these are developed and designed, such uses should benefit and support the park site as well as the commercial corridor and the Town Center to the west. It is clear, and the Plan acknowledges that traditional strip commercial land use is not an option at this location. (See illustration on next page.)

## Potential Site Uses

Examples of potential uses for the site that were shared with the community during the Plan's development process.



**Concept A:**  
Entire site is a park, without any commercial concessions



**Concept B:**  
Corner area is used for small-scale retail, café, or recreation-oriented amenity.



**Concept C:**  
A larger portion of the corner area is used for small scale retail, café, or recreation-oriented amenity

### 3. Make East Anchorage safe for walking and biking.

#### DESIRED OUTCOME

Continue implementing transportation safety enhancements

**along Muldoon, Tudor and other major thoroughfares.** Safety measures may include improving access management and making pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular conflict areas safer through signage, roadway and sidewalk enhancements, maintenance and other traffic control mechanisms.

Roads with multiple wide lanes, large intersections, and relatively few pedestrian amenities are not conducive to walking, biking, or access to transit. These facilities continue to foster a land development pattern that is completely dependent on automobile access. Efforts to improve the existing streetscape along Muldoon and Tudor should balance the roadway's function as a thoroughfare with the development of a pedestrian friendly environment. Improvements should maintain the existing travel capacity, but increase the livability and safety by calling attention to special intersections through wider sidewalks, improved crosswalks and signals, fewer curb cuts, and more curb extensions to reduce overall crossing distances for pedestrians. Safety enhancements for pedestrians and cyclists also result in creating a more attractive area for residents and a stable environment for businesses.

#### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- **Continue maintenance and upgrade of current roadways** with a combination of light fixtures, signs, sidewalks, and multi-use trails to make the Municipality's roads unique, and to help residents and visitors navigate the District on foot and by bike.
- **Implement the Anchorage Pedestrian Plan** to create continuous, safe, ADA-accessible sidewalks along major thoroughfares.
- **Enhance major crosswalks**, especially in town centers and commercial areas, to improve the

pedestrian environment. Ensure that signals are timed for the pedestrian to allow safe crossings.

- **Inventory distances between marked crossings on Muldoon between the Glenn Highway and DeBarr Road, and the entirety of DeBarr Road.** Consider mid-block crossing improvements where signalized crossings are spaced more than 300 feet apart and make recommendations for additional crossing locations.
- **Implement Anchorage Bicycle Plan improvements** and include bike route signage that will not be obstructed by snow and ice.
- **Continue coordination with Municipal staff, AMATS and Alaska Department of Transportation (ADOT/PF) to prioritize sidewalk, curb ramp and crosswalk rehabilitation** when implementing road improvements.
- **Coordinate with ADOT/PF and Street Maintenance groups to ensure maintenance includes removing snow from sidewalks, shoulders and bike lanes** on a timely and consistent basis.
- **Implement the short-term projects** found in the Municipality's 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- **Coordinate with MOA, ADOT/PF and Town Center developers to create new sidewalk and pedestrian use area designs** that maximize separation between pedestrians and travel lanes.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEDESTRIANS IN THE DISTRICT

Muldoon Road at DeBarr Road has the highest incidences of pedestrian and bicycle crashes within the East Anchorage District, followed by three other intersections along Muldoon Road - at 6th Avenue, Duben Avenue and 12th Court. (The traffic signal at the 12th Court intersection has been relocated one block north to 11th

### Metropolitan Transportation Plan Short-Term Projects (2011-2023)

#	Project Name/ <i>Type of Improvement</i>
507	DeBarr Road - Orca to Turpin/ <i>Separated path, north side</i>
511	Muldoon Road - Northern Lights Blvd to Glenn Hwy/ <i>Reconnaissance study, bicycle facilities</i>
512	DeBarr Road - Boniface to Muldoon/ <i>Sidewalk upgrade</i>
525	Duben Street - to Muldoon Elementary/ <i>Sidewalk, crossing</i>
529	Muldoon Road - Boundary to Bartlett High School/ <i>Sidewalk</i>
530	East High School - Bragaw @ 20th/ <i>Connecting walkway, stairway</i>
573	Boniface Parkway - Glenn Hwy to Northern Lights Blvd/ <i>West side sidewalk</i>
574	Northern Lights Blvd - Wesleyan to Muldoon/ <i>Separated path</i>






Avenue to facilitate and enhance access to neighborhoods and new business development in the area.) Although recent projects within the Plan’s study area boundary were conceived, in part, to address pedestrian and bicycle safety, more improvements should be made. Recent projects include the medians installed on DeBarr Road between Boniface Parkway and Beaver Place and between Bragaw Street and Hoyt Street and the Muldoon Road safety project south of DeBarr Road, which removed the center two-way left turn lane and replaced it with raised medians, additional signalized crossings of Muldoon Road and defined turning lanes. However, safety concerns remain along Muldoon Road north of DeBarr Road to the Glenn Highway. Along this stretch of road there is still a daunting, center two-way left turn lane, and the Muldoon Transit center – located on both sides of Muldoon Road – encourages unsafe pedestrian crossings across the wide street to access northbound and southbound buses. Pedestrians along Tudor also face a wide street with limited places for safe crossing. *Anchorage 2020* designates the north section of Muldoon Road to the DeBarr Road intersection as a Transit-Supportive Development Corridor. Existing conditions on the Muldoon corridor here do not support or enhance the *Anchorage 2020* goals for the pedestrian environment along such corridors.

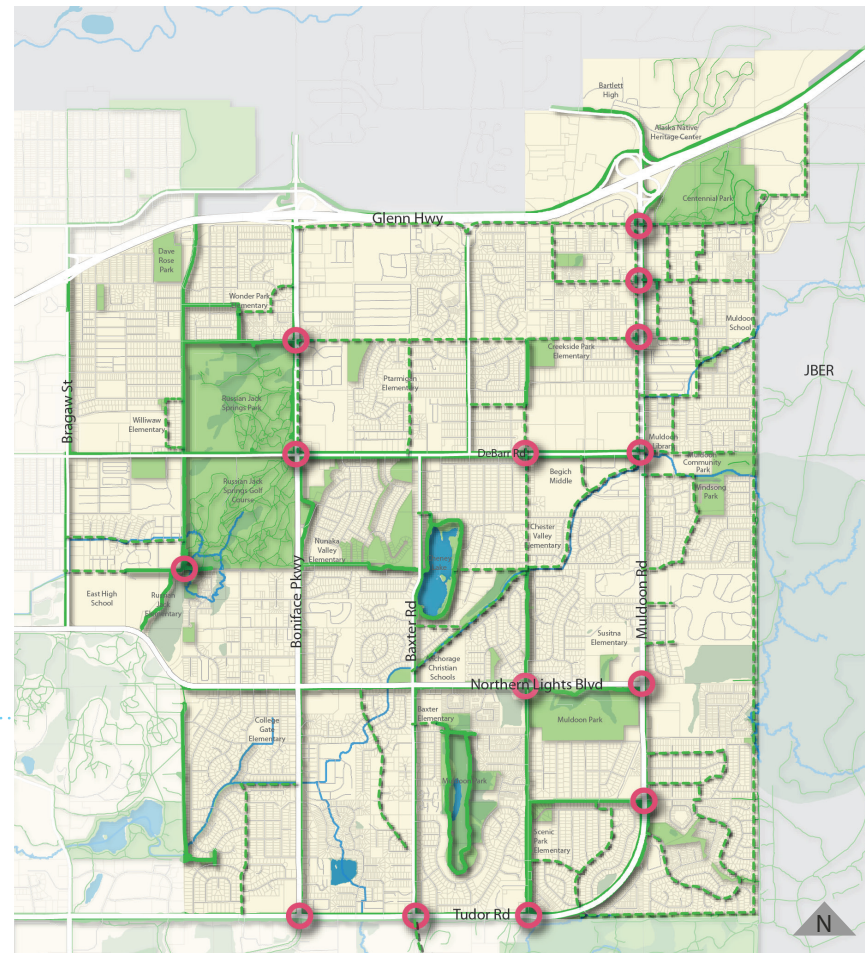
Providing mid-block crossing improvements as well as implementing enhancements at existing signalized intersections will increase the safety of pedestrians and promote more walking within the District. Generally, if a pedestrian is forced to go more than 150 feet out of their way to access a safe street crossing, they will choose to cross the road at their own convenience, increasing their risk for accidents with motorized vehicles.

It is important to note that improvements involving the major routes in the District require concurrence from ADOT/PF. **Partnering with the State is recommended to develop any safe crossing strategies.**

The Municipal Public Transportation Department continues to plan for and explore options for a new location for a Muldoon Corridor Transit Hub. Ideal locations are not established but the Muldoon Center provides a reasonable location for this new facility.

*Recommended Pedestrian Improvements*

-  Proposed intersection improvements
-  Proposed trails
-  Existing trails



The following crosswalk enhancement options for pedestrians crossing multiple lanes of traffic would provide safer pedestrian crossing facilities along wide, high-traffic corridors.



### Curb Extensions and Colored or Textured Crosswalks

Curb extensions narrow the road, reducing the distance pedestrians must cross, therefore reducing exposure to moving motor vehicles. Textured surfaces or painted crosswalks are treatments used to make the crosswalk surface more visually attractive, and to enhance their visibility to motorists. These are more likely on smaller adjacent streets rather than major arterials.



### Pedestrian Refuges

A pedestrian refuge is a raised island at the center of the roadway where pedestrians can pause or rest before finishing crossing the road. In instances of a wide street with several lanes of traffic, the pedestrian refuge allows a safe harbor after crossing one direction of traffic while waiting for a gap in traffic from the other direction. The pedestrian only needs to look for traffic travelling in one direction, which reduces exposure and risk of injury. It is important to ensure that trees, bushes or snow do not obstruct visibility for pedestrians or motorists.



### Signals

Warning signs and flashing yellow lights can alert motorists to the presence of pedestrians crossing the street in areas with fewer driver distractions. Mid-block pedestrian signals that are used in conjunction with a marked crosswalk prove effective in increasing pedestrian visibility to motorists. Signals may include signage with flashing lighting at crosswalks or overhead flashing lights that are activated by a pedestrian push button. For cyclists, it is possible to increase the sensitivity of detectors to change traffic signals, by placing push-buttons that activate crosswalk signals close enough to the roadway for bicyclists to reach without dismounting.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BICYCLISTS IN THE DISTRICT

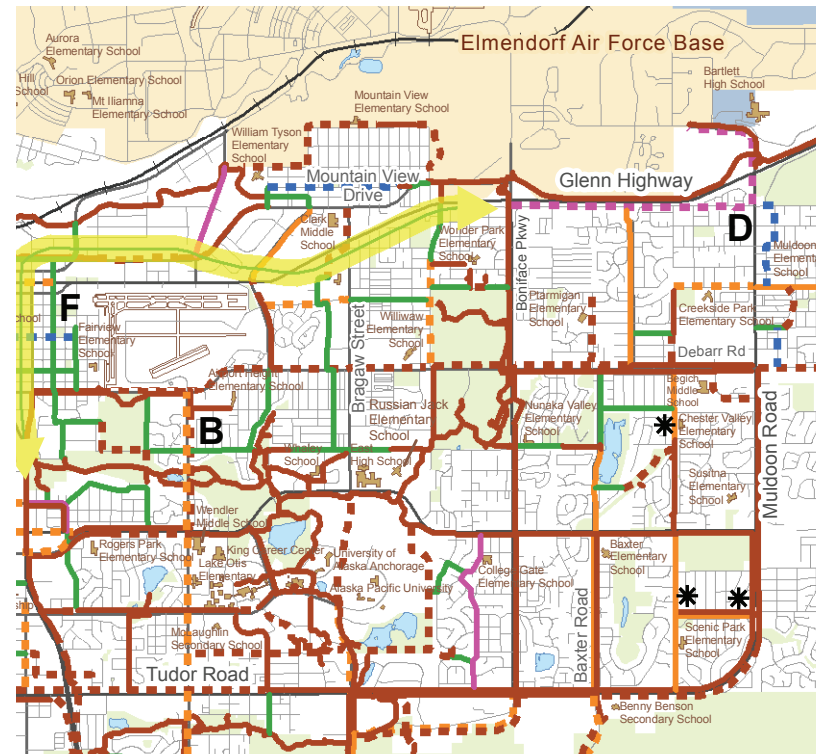
Bike riders in East Anchorage face many of the same challenges described for pedestrians above, including long distances between safe crossings, long signal phases at intersections and a lack of wayfinding signage. Additionally, bicyclists also face separated pathways, disconnected street grids and gaps in the bike network which force riders onto inconvenient, unfamiliar or unsafe roads for bike travel. Wintertime snow storage along bike lanes and road shoulders is another major issue facing bicyclists. This means cyclists cannot rely on the limited bike lanes or large shoulders to be available year round for safe cycling and are forced to share a travel lane with automobiles.

According to the Anchorage Bicycle Plan, bicycle lanes, more than any other on-street bicycle facility, have the potential to increase bicycling in Anchorage. Another proposed in-street facility are bike boulevards, a shared roadway for which design has been optimized for through-going bicycle traffic and are typically local streets with low traffic volumes that could be used as parallel, alternative routes to arterials. Grand Larry Street, running parallel to Muldoon, is identified in the Bicycle Plan as a potential bike boulevard. The Proposed Bicycle Network from the Anchorage Bicycle Plan below outlines the potential changes within the District.

Consideration should be given to the following priority bicycle network improvements included in the Anchorage Bicycle Plan.

- **DeBarr Road** – Orca Street to Turpin Street: *separated pathway*
- **DeBarr Road** – Muldoon Road to Cross Pointe Loop: *separated pathway*

Anchorage Bicycle Plan's Proposed Bicycle Network Map - Inset



### Proposed Bicycle Network

Anchorage Bowl

#### On Street Facilities

- Bicycle Lane
- - - Proposed Bicycle Lane
- Paved Shoulder Bikeway
- - - Proposed Paved Shoulder Bikeway
- Shared Use Roadway
- - - Proposed Bicycle Boulevard

#### Off Street Facilities

- Existing Separated Multi-Use Pathway
- - - Proposed Separated Multi-Use Pathway
- \* Facility eligible to be signed and striped
- Alaska Railroad
- Conceptual Highway to Highway Corridor (to be Proposed Separated Multi-Use Pathway)

#### Special Study Areas

- A** Government Hill
- B** Lake Otis Parkway
- C** Midtown
- D** Muldoon Road
- E** Dowling Roundabouts
- F** Ingra/Gambell
- G** Diamond & Victor

Note: The bicycle lane is the preferred facility. Use of bicycle lanes is contingent on identifying a plan for funding and maintenance.



- **Muldoon Road Bypass** – Boston Street, State Street, Valley Street, Grand Larry Street, 2nd Avenue: *bicycle boulevard*
- **Muldoon Road Bypass** – 10th Avenue to 6th Avenue along Creek: *separated pathway*
- **Muldoon Road** – Boundary Avenue to JBER gate: *bicycle lane*
- **Muldoon Road** – Northern Lights Boulevard to Glenn Hwy: *reconnaissance study*

Types of bicycle enhancements include:

### Bicycle Lane

A portion on the right side of the roadway designated for one-way bike travel, with striping and pavement marking.

### Bicycle Boulevard

A low volume neighborhood street that serves as a parallel route to major corridors marked with a special bike symbol (arrow) on the pavement.

### Shared Roadway

Shared roadway is similar to a bicycle boulevard but without the pavement markings. It is a low-speed neighborhood roadway marked with bike route signs.

### Bicycle Box

Enables the cyclist to get in front of the traffic at signalized intersections so they are more visible before turning left or going straight.

### Separated Pathway

Paths or trails available for use by pedestrians and cyclists and separated from roadways.

### Bike Parking

Ensure there is adequate bike parking at destinations to encourage cycling to locations along Muldoon, Tudor and other major corridors.

### Ongoing Maintenance

Snow removal on sidewalks, bike lanes and road shoulders used for bicycle travel should be a top priority. Additionally, gravel and sand from winter months needs to be removed from bicycle lanes.

### Bike Network Signage

Signage includes network route signs, signs to mark the beginning and end of bike lanes, shared lane signs, pavement markings to indicate bike boulevards, and wayfinding signage to help riders connect to other parts of the network.



## 4. Create a catalyst development program.

### DESIRED OUTCOME

**Develop a catalyst housing project or a mixed-use building project to demonstrate that diverse housing opportunities can be economically viable opportunities.**

The Plan highlights the benefits of mixed-use buildings, housing near commercial areas and residential projects that contain a mix of housing types. Additionally, the public and District stakeholders have expressed a desire for an expanded palette of building and development types. However, for East Anchorage, many of these are new housing types without a track record, which developers, bankers or officials can examine to make a financially based decision on whether or not to pursue.

As a starting point, the planning team used prototype modeling and current market analysis to test the financial feasibility of these desired new uses and building types. The results indicate financial potential for new development at targeted sites within the District. The next step forward is the selection of potential demonstration projects (built examples) of these development types.

Demonstration projects are an excellent tool for proving financial feasibility, illustrating potential design concepts and showcasing neighborhood improvements that can be realized throughout the District with their introduction.

Since new or unfamiliar building types are often more difficult to finance and build, the first demonstration projects often need creative funding mechanisms to implement. Once a development



Example of a mixed-use development in Portland, Oregon.

type proves successful, they frequently generate momentum for similar development to follow and it becomes easier to secure private funding and development review. To catalyze this process, creating public-private partnerships for initial demonstration projects is a good way of jump-starting new development types and encouraging financiers and developers to follow through with more investment in East Anchorage.

Using incentives to encourage desirable prototype projects fosters partnerships between developers and the Municipality of Anchorage, and accomplishes a mutual objective of getting these new buildings on the ground. Chapter 5 delves into locations where there are development and redevelopment opportunities in the District.



## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

### 1. Form a demonstration project

**team** with a project manager from the Planning Department, private sector partners and foundations or non-profits.

### 2. Identify potential development

**sites** for catalyst housing and mixed-use buildings to demonstrate the economic and urban design benefits of redeveloping aging commercial strips and residential uses based on the following criteria:

- » Consistency with desirable initial development types: Adaptive reuse of existing structure(s); 3- to 5-story mixed-use residential building; small-lot, cottage home, townhome neighborhoods; 2- to 3-story main street development
- » Property owner interest
- » Coordination of location in areas with on-going/concurrent city reinvestment and revitalization.
- » Location in area where additional infill development can begin soon after demonstration project is complete.

**3. Explore public-private partnerships** to fund initial redevelopment projects.

**4. Create a public-private partnership plan** for the demonstration project that includes an agreement with the developer and a list of Municipal resources and incentives that will be committed to the project. This plan should include at a minimum:

- » Staff liaisons for each project
- » Development code review and interpretation; amendments as needed
- » Expedited permitting
- » City subsidy, if needed
- » Tax incentives and other financial incentives

**5. Work closely with the project developers** and provide coordination/liaison services.

**6. Annually evaluate** (Municipality and developers) the performance of the project. Report lessons learned, potential process improvements and recommend zoning, policy, and other changes to further streamline the development process.

**7. Adopt recommendations based on the lessons learned** from the evaluation report.

**8. Educate the business and finance communities** on the commercial values of such projects.



Examples of the kind of townhome and main street development that is desirable within the District.

**The following elements should be emphasized when designing and developing catalyst projects. Once tested, these guidelines should be considered for integration into the Title 21 design standards for mixed-use areas.**

## DESIGN ELEMENTS

The guidelines in this section provide recommendations for enhancing new development in the town centers, neighborhood centers, and Muldoon Corridor District. They offer direction for future design decisions in the neighborhood to ensure new development best matches the Vision. For instance, the creation of an active mixed-use area relies on more than simply the placement of buildings of different uses in proximity to each other. It is essential that easy access is designed between the buildings and that they relate to the surrounding streetscape. In certain locations and circumstances, commitment and partnership from the public sector via roadway upgrades is necessary to achieve street-facing orientation. Basic design elements include:

### Site Layout and Orientation

Site layout and building orientation should activate pedestrian use of the street and allow for walking between destinations.

- Locate commercial, retail, and mixed-use buildings at or near the sidewalk in pedestrian-focused areas to activate the pedestrian environment – either long the street or along small parking areas.
- Orient building entrances toward streets, plazas, small parking areas or side areas that are connected to the street with sidewalks.

- Design driveways and parking access to minimize pedestrian and bicycle conflicts.
- Connect key destinations with a clear network of streets, driveways, bicycle thoroughfares and pedestrian pathways.

### Street Edge and Building Character

The building-to-street relationship should engage the pedestrian and provide a comfortable and safe experience.

- Provide engaging, pedestrian-scaled building features and articulation along sidewalks and key pedestrian routes.
- Incorporate inviting pedestrian entrances, windows and high-quality exterior finish materials on street-facing commercial, retail, and mixed-use building frontages.
- Include attractive, functional and visible ground floor features such as awnings, signage and other pedestrian-scaled elements in mixed-use and commercial buildings.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

### *Prototype Visualization*

This example shows what possible new development could look like on Muldoon at 6th Avenue and is for visualization purposes only. The actual redevelopment sites will depend on the desire of the property owner to redevelop, the market, and the potential for developing private-public partnerships to see the first projects get off the ground. The intent of these demonstration projects is to show what can feasibly be developed to meet the desires of East Anchorage residents and stakeholders when these conditions exist.

## 5. *Implement existing plan recommendations.*

### DESIRED OUTCOME

**Recommendations in adopted plans that are relevant to the East Anchorage District are implemented to achieve improved connections and amenities.**

Previous planning efforts in Anchorage addressed similar land use, bicycle, pedestrian and transit goals as identified in the East Anchorage District Plan. Recommendations from the following adopted plans that further the goals in the East Anchorage District Plan should be implemented in the short term.

- Anchorage 2020
- 2007 Anchorage Pedestrian Plan
- 2010 Anchorage Bike Plan
- Anchorage Trails Plan

**Anchorage 2020** introduced the concept of Neighborhood and Town Centers in the Land Use Policy Map. The East Anchorage Plan details specific building types and design elements to consider when adding new development and improvements to Neighborhood and Town Centers.

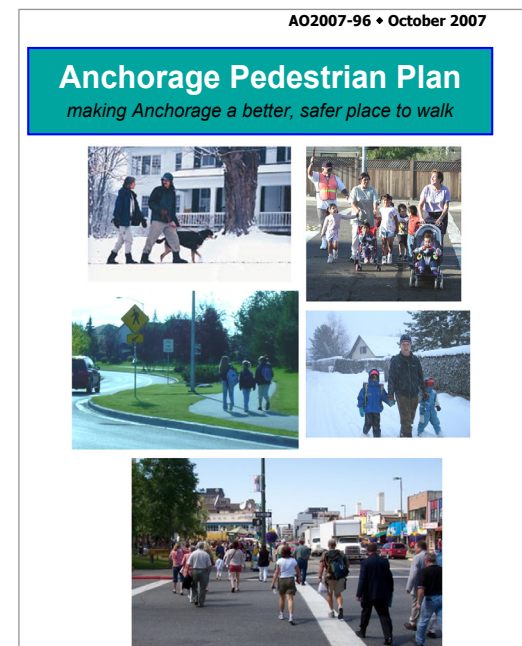
The purpose of the **Anchorage Pedestrian Plan** is to establish a 20-year framework for improvements that will enhance the pedestrian environment and increase opportunities to choose walking as a mode of transportation. Sidewalks are more likely to be discontinuous in East Anchorage than other areas of Anchorage. Despite the obstacles, walking is a significant means of transportation in Anchorage, particularly East Anchorage. According to the results of the 2002 Anchorage Household Travel Survey, conducted by the Municipality of Anchorage, walking trips represent about 5.7 percent of all trips by residents, 6.6 percent in East Anchorage.

Actions to support the following goals from the Anchorage Pedestrian Plan are recommended for short-term implementation in East Anchorage:

- **Goal 1:** Create a safer, more walkable city that will encourage winter pedestrian activity and make walking a safer and more attractive activity.
- **Goal 4:** Improve community connectivity by providing safe, convenient, year-round pedestrian routes within and between neighborhoods, commercial centers, schools, and public facilities

as well as between major employment centers and adjacent residential neighborhoods.

- **Goal 6:** Encourage development patterns that increase and enhance pedestrian use.



The intent of the **Anchorage Bicycle Plan** is to integrate bicycle travel into the overall transportation planning process and promote the use of the bicycle as a legitimate means of transportation. Overall goals in the Bicycle Plan are two-fold – to increase overall utility bicycling and to increase public awareness and safety. Four of the eight corridors with the highest number of bicycle-vehicle crashes are in East Anchorage; Northern Lights Boulevard, Tudor Road, DeBarr Road, and Muldoon Road.

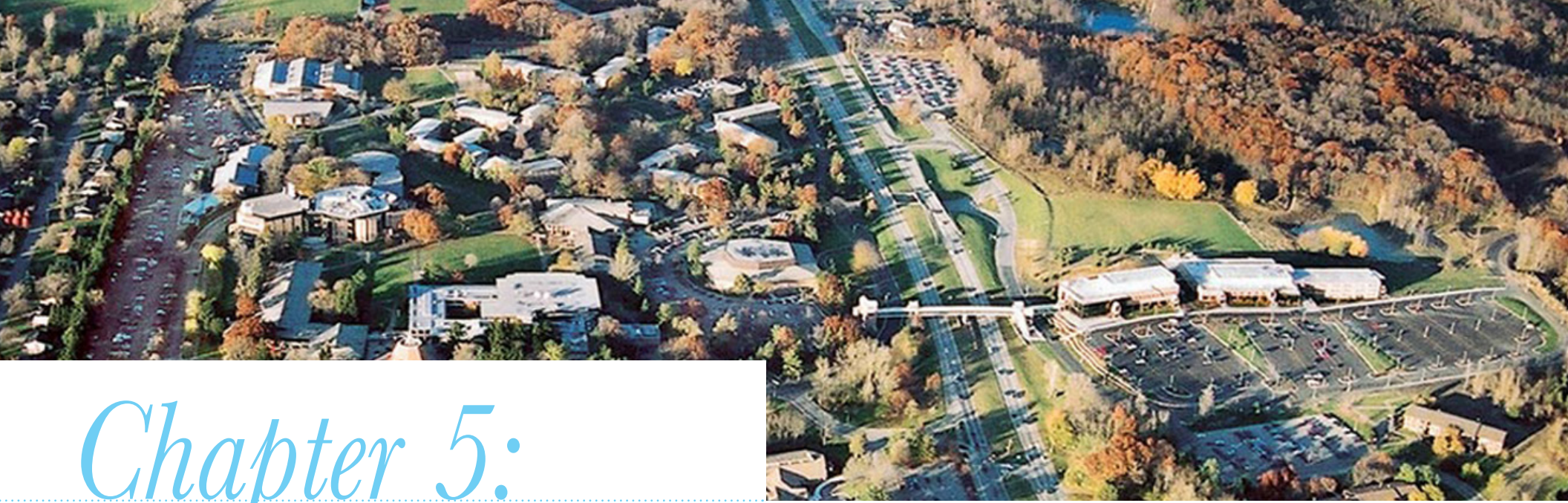
The Bicycle Plan identifies specific areas for improvements or future study that align with recommendations in the East Anchorage Plan. Consistent with the East Anchorage Plan, the segment of Muldoon Road from Northern Lights north to Bartlett High School is a corridor recommended for future study. This corridor contains a proposed neighborhood center and town center, and provides a major north south connection for anticipated continued growth in the area. As a short-term remedy before completion of the special study, a separated parallel bicycle route that uses local roads has been identified east of Muldoon Road, on Grand Larry Street.



This route will be a combination of bicycle boulevards and separated pathways. Coordination with ADOT/PF is important in this section since a new interchange is being connected at Muldoon and Glenn Highway.

The **Anchorage Trails Plan**, currently under development, is the third and final element of the Non-motorized Transportation Plan and will replace the former 1997 Areawide Trails Plan. The Anchorage Trails Plan will

primarily concentrate on recreational trails, including greenbelt trails and specialized trails used for activities such as cross-country skiing, horseback riding, dog mushing, skijoring, and snowmobiling, as well as recreational bicycling.



# Chapter 5:

## *Testing the Vision*

The East Anchorage Vision, and the subsequent strategies and actions set forth by the Plan are not merely conceptual. They are based on critical analyses that considered how and where new development and improvements might occur and how to manage growth and change in a way that benefits the community of East Anchorage. This chapter explains this analysis and highlights various approaches the District can use to guide future investments, foster development desired by the community and find room for needed housing.

### *Where is residential growth most likely to occur in the District?*

Population growth in most urban places is inevitable. Anchorage, including the District, is no exception. The greater Anchorage Bowl is expected to add roughly 18,000<sup>1</sup> new housing units by 2030. The most recent MTP analyses project that roughly 3,000<sup>2</sup> new households will be located within the District. Expenditures for delivery of services and construction and maintenance of roads and infrastructure are directly linked to the amount of people living and working there. In order to plan for these expenditures, cities must estimate likely future needs and wants – and one very important component of this estimate is the **capacity** for new growth.

1 2012 Anchorage Housing Market Analysis (2010-2030 planning horizon)

2 Projections from the TAZ transportation forecast (2007-2035 planning horizon using Anchorage 2020 policies).

## THE IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING EFFICIENCY, REDEVELOPMENT AND INFILL

In order to examine the District's capacity for new growth, the planning team started by applying recent outcomes from the *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis* (2012). The report found that if development continues to occur almost exclusively on vacant and partially vacant land, and if density remains at historic and recent levels, there is insufficient land to accommodate the municipality's forecasted growth for the District. The *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis* made recommendations to create policies that increase land use efficiency, residential densities, buildable land supply (especially through redevelopment), and to ensure housing affordability. This Plan builds on these recommendations, providing policy strategies – informed by the community's vision – to catalyze and support more efficient and diverse housing in the District.

New construction throughout Anchorage has been developing at close to the minimum densities allowed by each zoning district. For example, development proformas tested by the planning team show that despite being zoned for up to 40 units per acre, the effective density of the R-3 district (one of the zoning districts within East Anchorage) is developed closer to 20 units per acre. In order to achieve the higher densities permitted by the zoning<sup>3</sup>, a developer would likely need to provide structured parking, which is a cost typically better suited to new buildings in high density locations like town centers or downtown.

East Anchorage, similar to the rest of the Anchorage Bowl, has a limited amount of vacant or undeveloped land. Further, only some of it is located along north Muldoon or in the town and neighborhood centers where investment and change is most

desired. **By incorporating older, developed properties or underutilized existing sites which are likely to redevelop with new buildings or uses over time, the District expands its capacity for new housing and jobs, as well as its ability to attract desired investment in commercial areas.**

Land uses and buildings within cities are constantly changing. Houses may last 75 years or more, but commercial buildings are often built with an expectant life of a few decades or less. On average any large grocery store is likely to be remodeled every 20 to 30 years. Market trends also change. Commercial corridors built primarily for automobile travel are beginning to lose market share to destination shopping where people can park in one location and visit multiple stores. **Investment in aging properties – either for upkeep, rebuilding or complete repurposing – is necessary to retain an area's economic vitality.**

There are several methods employed to determine viable redevelopment sites, including examining property values, building value, age of construction, building condition, and using a return on investment model. When considering areas likely to develop in the two scenarios used to compare absolute maximum capacity versus growth as depicted in the Vision (discussed later in this chapter), lands zoned for single-family housing or duplexes are not included because these residential building types generally last longer and are assumed unlikely to redevelop.

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3 This describes zoning under Title 21, as of 2012. The forthcoming Title 21 may include lower parking requirements.

## *The Importance of Incorporating Redevelopable Land into Capacity*

Scenarios are narratives about the future. They describe what the future may hold, where people might live and work, the different types of housing and jobs, and how people will get around. The Vision Scenario depicts the development of diverse housing and job opportunities as depicted in the version of the future envisioned by the community – including mixed-use buildings, smaller-lot, single-family homes in new subdivisions and context-appropriate townhomes in existing neighborhoods. In some cases, these development types, although proven to be financially feasible when evaluated with current market conditions, are very different from current development trends. Revised land use designations on the proposed Land Use Map will help make these new housing types possible.

### **LEARNING FROM SCENARIOS**

The Vision Scenario has approximately 6,500 new housing units, providing a net total of 5,208 new units approximately 3,000 new jobs. In the Vision Scenario, job opportunities are located in places where people can walk, bike or ski to work. Job numbers are based on the capacity of the building types created in the Vision Scenario. The employment split is 50% retail jobs, 43% office jobs and 7% industrial.

The comparison table on page 51 shows how considering redevelopable land and innovative programming increases housing and jobs in East Anchorage. Dark blue columns show the development capacity calculated in the *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis (2012)* using current zoning, with various densities on vacant land only. Light blue columns show

### *Incorporating Redevelopable Lands*

The Vision Scenario map to the right illustrates the lands demonstrating potential for future housing and jobs in the planning team's capacity analysis. This development capacity includes redevelopable as well as vacant and partially vacant land. The Net Supply of Buildable Residential Land map on the next page uses a similar approach, however, it does *not* include redevelopable land, only vacant and partially vacant land. The comparison table on page 51 illustrates the potential for redevelopment to contribute to the future of East Anchorage.

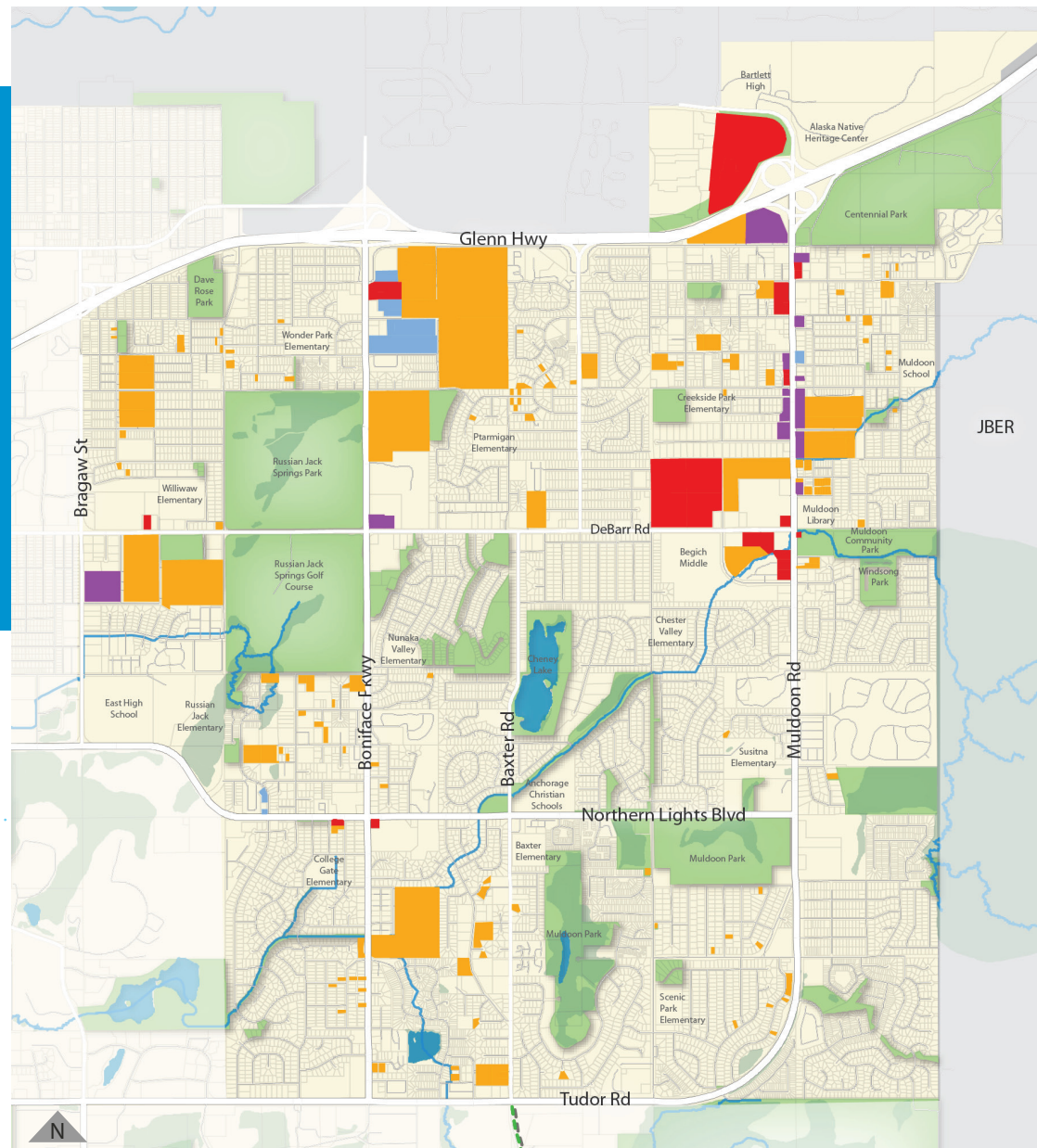
The highlighted lands on the Vision Scenario Map are considered the locations where owners may be most likely to reinvest or develop with a more intensive use over time. This potential is defined by the possible return on investment (ROI) based on the value of land compared to investment required to develop it. This is the land predicted to garner at least 12% ROI - considered acceptable in 2013 market conditions.

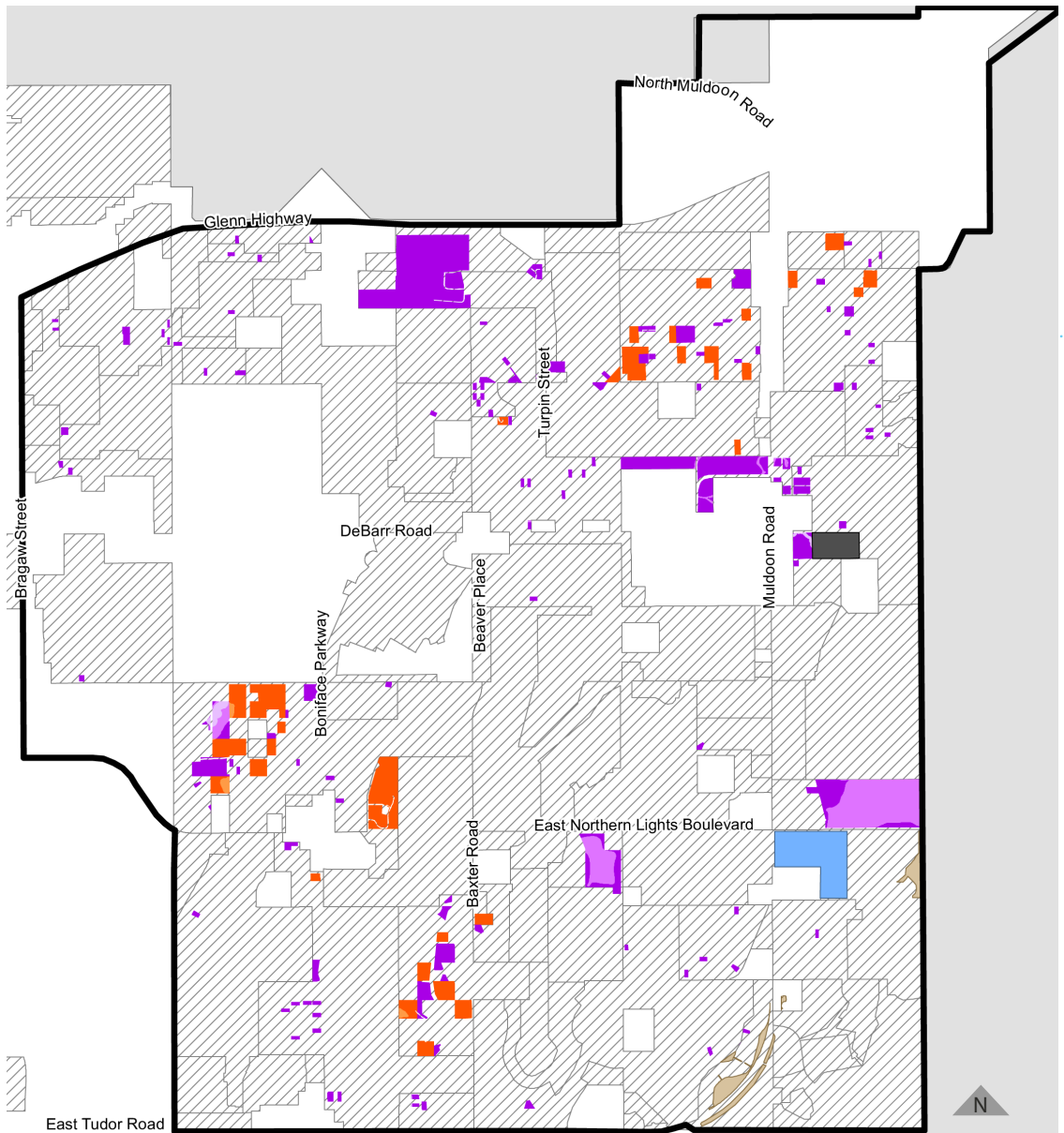


The Vision Scenario contains a diverse range of housing types that appealed to the public participants involved in the Vision and Plan. Most of these gains in diversity come from adding townhomes and small-lot, single-family houses to the overall housing mix. Although these housing types were supported by the public and proven to be financially feasible using current market conditions, they have not been proven yet by current lending trends.

*Vision Scenario Map*

- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Residential
- Areas of Employment
- Parks and Open Space

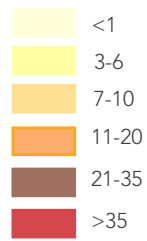




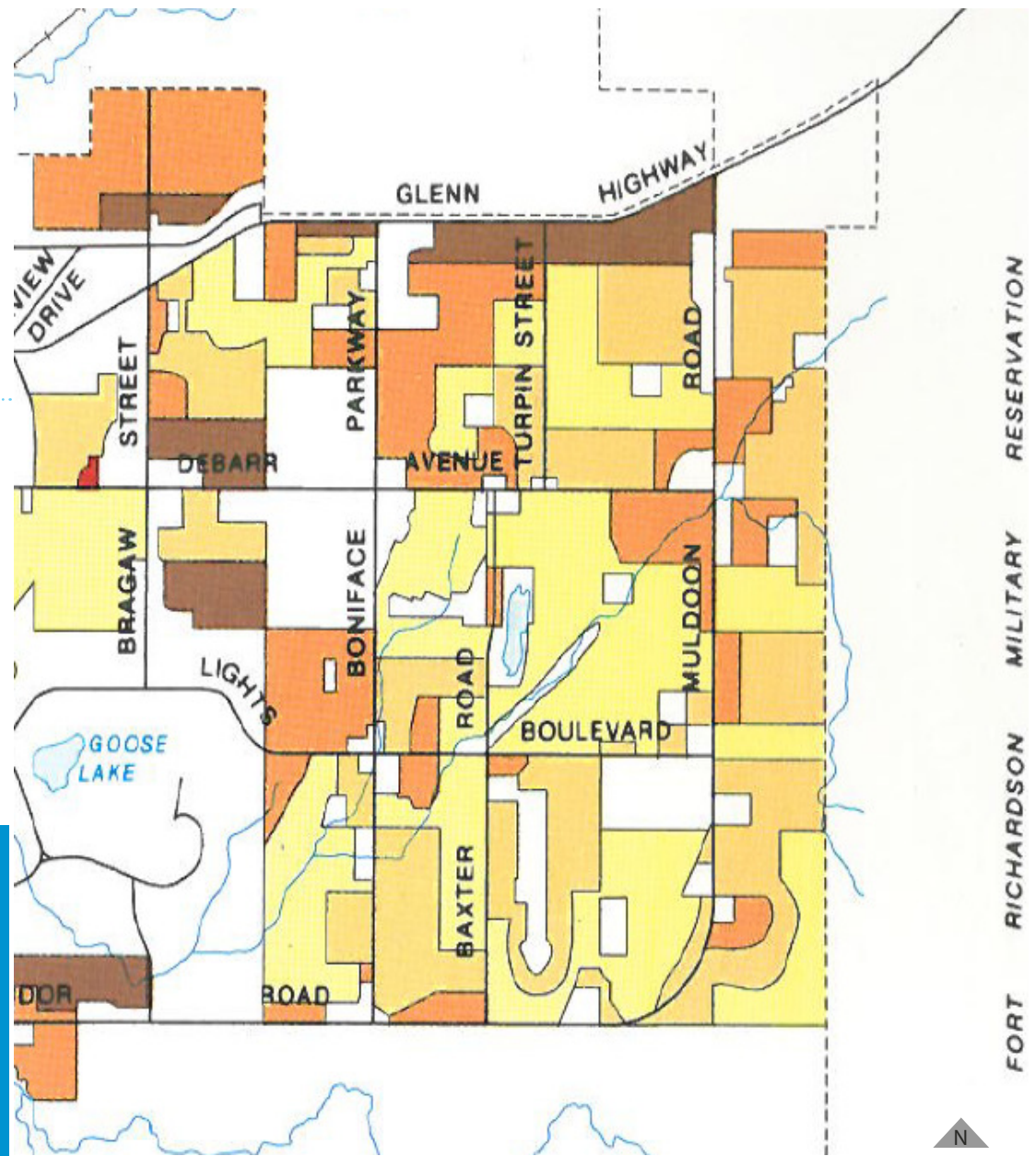
*Net Supply of Buildable Residential Land in East Anchorage*  
*from Anchorage Housing Market Analysis, 2012*

- East Anchorage District Plan study area
- Residential zoning districts
  
- Environmental Constraints on Vacant Land**
- Unconstrained
- Partially constrained
- Prohibitively constrained
  
- Environmental Constraints on Partially Vacant Land**
- Unconstrained
- Partially constrained
  
- Land Use Commitments**
- Future public facility
- Designated future parkland
- Conservation easements or other protected lands

*1982 Comprehensive Plan Residential Intensity Map*

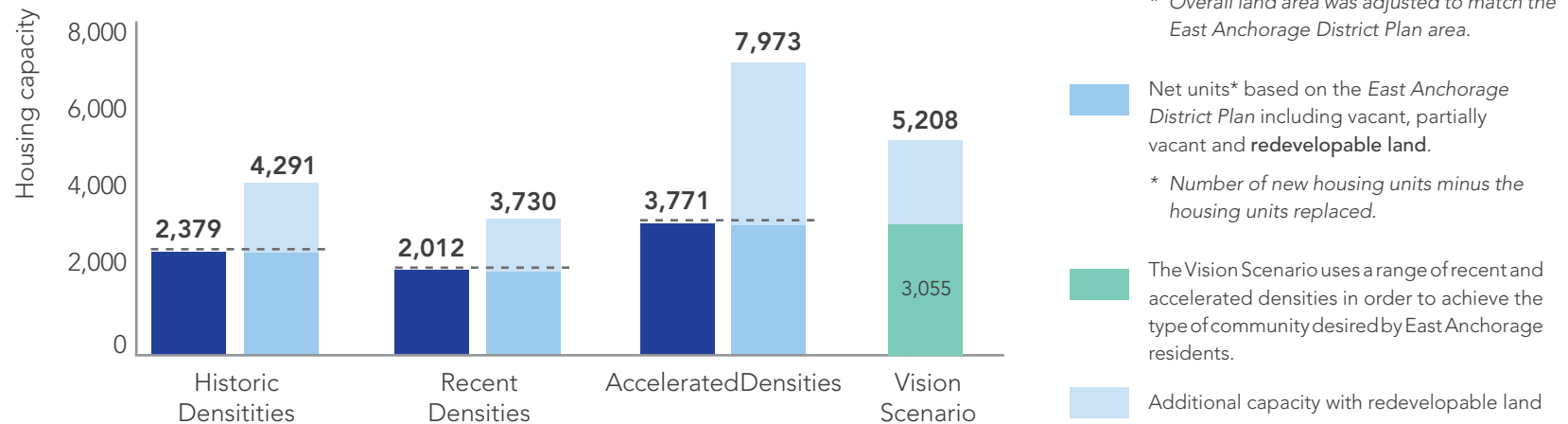


This map, along with the map on the following page, show how the 1982 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map guided residential densities and housing unit distribution in the planning area and the resulting current zoning pattern in the area.,





*Housing Capacity Comparison Between the East Anchorage District Plan (2013) and Projections from the Anchorage Housing Market Analysis (2012)*



the increased capacity achieved by incorporating redevelopable land and considering new methods of zoning, financing and urban design that are believed to be feasible in East Anchorage.

The Vision Scenario and the Plan accommodate for about 2,900 more units than the initial capacity analysis which only considered vacant land and used the density assumptions from the *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis*. **Evaluating development and redevelopment potential at a more detailed lot-by-lot level through application of the proposed Land Use map designations results in this higher capacity. The new designations include a combination of density upgrades and assumptions about growth and redevelopment on larger parcels, trailer parks and infill sites in existing neighborhoods.**

### *Replacement on Redevelopable Lands*

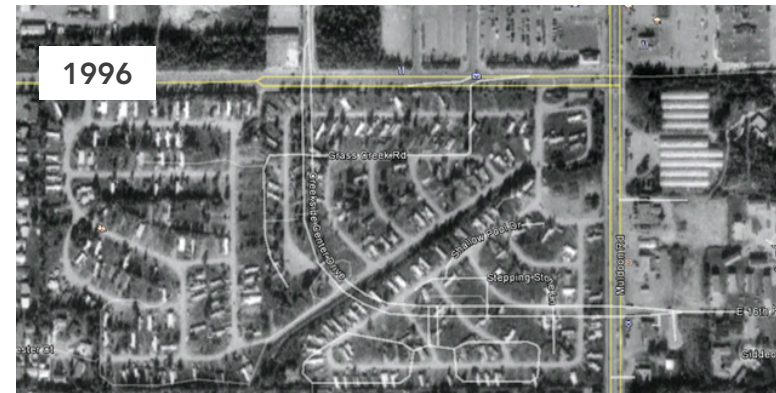
In order to consider the possible relocation of people and jobs that currently reside on redevelopable lands in growth calculations, it is important to account for those existing housing units and jobs. For instance, many of the large opportunity sites included on the Vision Scenario Map and the proposed Land Use Map are currently occupied by aging mobile home parks. If new housing, jobs, and commercial uses locate on all of the identified opportunity sites in the District, these would displace an estimated 1,338 housing units over time. (See page 61-62 of this plan for policy actions on minimizing the displacement of existing low-income households.)

## ACCOMMODATING DENSITY AND HOUSING DIVERSITY ON LARGER LOTS IN THE DISTRICT

Housing capacity can be increased by incorporating higher residential densities than is currently found within the District on strategic sites. Capacity may also be increased by transitioning trailer parks to higher density developments. Denser residential development can take a variety of shapes and sizes ranging from cottages to duplexes, as illustrated on pages 27-28 of this plan, and can be designed to fit with the surrounding context, benefit the community and resonate with the District's Vision. **A key finding of the Vision Scenario analysis is: The District's larger redevelopable sites provide most of the capacity for new housing opportunities.** These sites include vacant parcels and a mixture of existing single-family homes, apartments and mobile home parks.

Larger sites (greater than five acres) provide an economy of scale that enables efficient development of a range of housing options, efficient road and pedestrian circulation, and the ability to moderate intensity near adjacent single-family neighborhoods. Large sites in or near commercial districts also provide opportunities for including new walkable commercial land uses to support new and existing households.

This kind of transformation is not new to the District. Most recently, the area southwest of DeBarr Road and Muldoon Road transformed from a mobile home park into a new residential area, known as the Creekside Development, with townhomes, apartments, a community center, and future plans for commercial pads, seen in the aerial images to the right.



## RETAINING EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER ON SMALLER LOTS IN THE DISTRICT

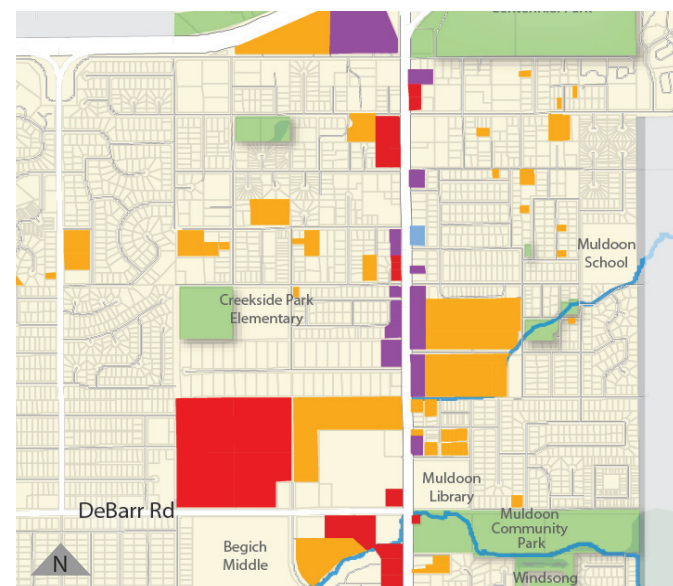
Scattered throughout the District are a number of smaller properties that are either vacant or are home to aging and worn buildings.

These smaller sites, mostly less than five acres, also provide opportunities for desired development. When located in commercial areas, such sites can provide opportunity for new jobs, shopping and even some housing. Reinvestment in these areas is vital for the rehab of places such as the north end of Muldoon – a place that residents would like to see improved and upgraded. **The District’s residential capacity is increased when housing is included in future commercial uses such as North Muldoon.**

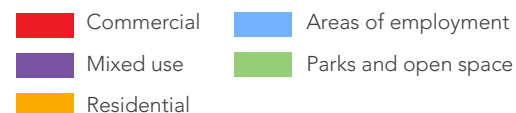
In addition to the commercial and mixed use opportunities, there are many properties nestled within single-family neighborhoods, which are zoned to match their surroundings. These properties provide options for small-lot, single-family housing, duplexes and in some cases townhomes. This type of owner-occupied housing is desired within the District. **When new development or infill redevelopment occurs in single family neighborhoods, care must be taken to minimize negative impacts and developments that are out of character with the surroundings.**



Infill development on lots such as this need to be appropriately scaled to work within the existing neighborhood and lot patterns.



An example of vacant and redevelopable properties included on the Vision Scenario map, mostly less than 5 acres in size, appear in many places near the north end of Muldoon.



An example of new, smaller lot, single-family homes.

## SCENARIO CONCLUSIONS

- Growth and meeting future needs won't happen all at once .
- Vacant land alone will not fully provide for the needed residential units to meet forecasted future growth.
- Efficient redevelopment of certain large sites will play a significant role in accommodating growth.
- With redevelopment of existing built lots and targeted density upgrades there is room to meet and even exceed forecasted housing demand.
- With the assumptions and land use recommendations listed above supply is greater than demand within the area (but not for the entire Bowl). Plans, partnerships and investments will be essential to attracting the desired types of growth. For example, new park investment, or new commercial developments to Muldoon may entice nearby redevelopment.
- Accommodating future growth will require the execution of the Plan's recommended land use policies, see Chapter 6.

## *Example Site Design and Feasibility*

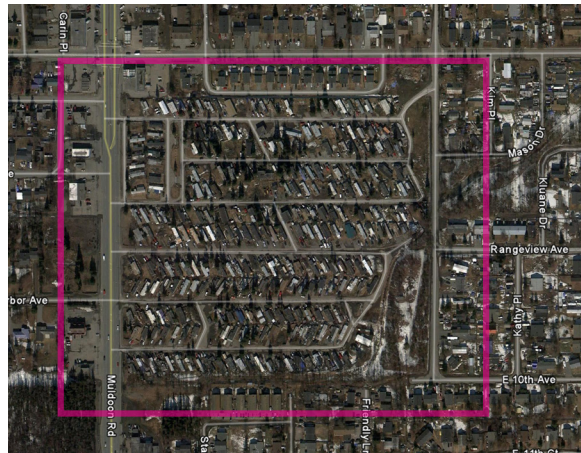
The following site design exercise showcases an example of how implementing the kinds of development types desired by residents can actually take place under current market conditions. Similar development types were tested in the Vision Scenario influenced and the Land Use Map designations.

Today, the site (pictured on the opposite page) is a mobile home park located on the east side of Muldoon, bordered by East 6th Avenue, Valley Street and Old Harbor Avenue. Although there are no current plans to redevelop this site, it is included on the Vision Scenario map on page 49, and over time, has the potential for change. This site design enhances the vision for the Muldoon Corridor as well as provides new housing options for the District. The design accounts for displaced housing units and provides additional new units and residential capacity. It shows how redevelopment contributes to higher residential capacity. Findings from this and other proformas applied in the District show that capacity considerations and assumptions can be achieved.

In order to evaluate how the new site design compares to current zoning and historic development trends, building prototypes were created for the site based on typical low-story, multi-family housing conditions (referred here as baseline development) versus the Vision site design proposed by the plan.



Current Site



Vision Site Design Example



Illustration of redeveloped site



**Current Site Conditions:**

- Existing mobile home park
- Approximately 230 Units
- R3 Zoning
- 27 acres

**Current R3 Zoning Regulations:**

- Multi-family residential district
- Densities with up to 40 DU per acre
- 40% maximum lot coverage
- 35-foot height limit
- Intended primarily for multi-family and townhouse dwellings
- Characterized by low-rise, multi-story buildings
- No commercial use allowed

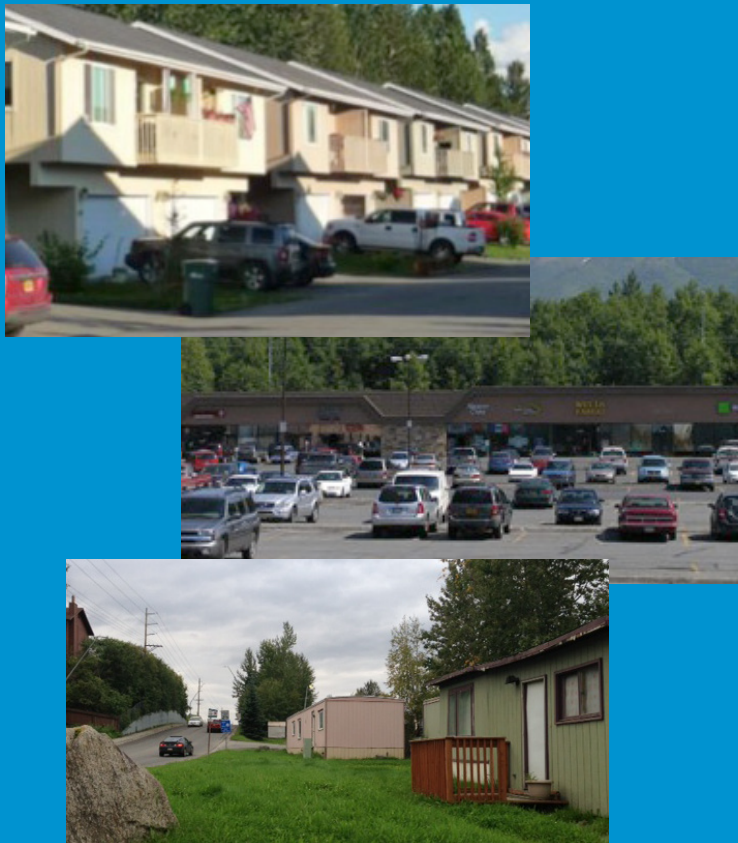
The development of this site under the Vision Scenario results in 34% more project value (total value of new development) compared to development under the baseline.

*Building Prototype Comparison*

	<b>Baseline</b> <i>2-story apartments</i>	<b>Vision</b> <i>3-story max, mixed-use</i>	<b>Change</b>
Building Footprint	400,000 Sq Ft	394,410 Sq Ft	0%
Building Area	759,882 Sq Ft	1,140,930 Sq Ft	+43%
Project Value	\$146 Million	\$196 Million	+34 %
Housing Units	633	935	+48%
Hotel Rooms	NA	115	115
Jobs	NA	278	278

### *Baseline Development Style*

Characterized by apartment buildings (630 units), single family homes and large surface parking lots.



### *Vision Development Style*

Characterized by a mix of housing (921 units), office, retail and a hotel with high-quality open space and a neighborhood park along an enhanced creek.



## *Overall Conclusions*

The forecasted growth for 2030 is not expected to arrive all at once and neither will new development or redevelopment of existing uses. Achieving the desired level of housing diversity, especially those types not typically built in the District today, may depend on the financial success of targeted test sites to encourage additional investment and development. Further, new investment in one location has a positive effect on nearby properties. For example, creating a new park, or new pedestrian amenities, or new restaurants near Muldoon and DeBarr would increase the desirability of the nearby vacant or underutilized properties.

Public investments, partnerships and policy considerations will need to be strategically aligned to facilitate reinvestment and accommodate the needed housing in the locations and diversity of building types supported by the community. While nobody can predict which sites will develop first, it is important to be ready for opportunities as they arise.



# Chapter 6:

## *Strategies and Policy Guide*

The East Anchorage District Plan identifies 10 key strategies in this chapter to achieve the District Vision. The strategies are divided into **land use and zoning, transportation, and social and economic** categories. The strategies include a range of actions, from coordinating public investments and creating strategic partnerships to revising current policies and practices. These strategies and their corresponding actions should be used when making development-related and investment decisions in the East Anchorage District.

A description of each key strategy is provided followed by the desired outcomes and related actions. A relative priority ranking (high, medium, low) and a lead agency is assigned to each Policy Action. Note that many Policy Actions herein require coordination between MOA departments and the Real Estate and Banking communities and the Anchorage School District.

## Summary of Strategies

### 1. Land Use and Zoning

- 1.1 Maintain and strengthen existing neighborhoods by creating places where existing residents want to stay and new residents are attracted to live.
- 1.2 Improve arterials with new and productive land uses.
- 1.3 Promote housing that reflects changing needs and preferences.
- 1.4 Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective.

### 2. Transportation

- 2.1 Improve local and regional connectivity within the East Anchorage District by enhancing walking, biking and ski options.
- 2.2 Support development of an improved regional bus system or transit/BRT corridor.
- 2.3 Improve the safety on major roadways.

### 3. Social and Economic

- 3.1 Encourage the growth of local and regional businesses.
- 3.2 Expand and improve access to needed social services.
- 3.3 Coordinate locally, regionally, with the state and JBER.

## Land Use and Zoning Strategies

### STRATEGY 1.1

**Maintain and strengthen existing neighborhoods by creating places where residents want to stay and new residents are attracted to live.**

East Anchorage has an eclectic mix of stable neighborhoods that should be protected as development and redevelopment occurs nearby. These neighborhoods can be strengthened by increasing connectivity, within and between neighborhoods, as well as creating new connections to nearby services and retail establishments. In some areas, existing neighborhoods need additional attention where buildings are aging or not well maintained, empty lots exist or landlords are not maintaining required safe housing standards.

#### Desired Outcome:

*Stable neighborhoods thrive and the District offers quality housing to new and existing residents.*

#### Policy Actions:

- 1.1.1 Use the policies in this Plan to guide development, rezoning, subdivision and zoning decisions to ensure that new development does not compromise the unique characteristics and stability of existing neighborhoods. *[High Priority; Planning Department, Planning and Zoning Commission and Assembly]*
- 1.1.2 As new housing development or infill housing development occurs in the established single family neighborhoods, minimize negative impacts and developments that are out of character with the vision or desired outcome of the Plan. *[High Priority, Planning Department]*
- 1.1.3 Facilitate communication between community councils, other organized groups and the Municipality to expand public involvement and provide easy access to information for all residents. *[High Priority; Assembly, Planning Department]*

**Desired Outcome:**

*New development is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.*

**Policy Actions:**

- 1.1.4** Rezoning requests and other discretionary actions for neighborhood-serving office, retail, or other non-residential uses should only be approved in neighborhood centers or town centers – primarily on significant roadways or at key intersections – as guided by the District Land Use Map. [High Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.1.5** New mixed use areas and neighborhood centers on former residential sites must include residential units in order to minimize loss of residential capacity. [High Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.1.6** Educate and inform the community councils of how to review and comment effectively on zoning and plotting actions for consistency with this plan. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

**Desired Outcome:**

*Neighborhoods that are aging, or not*

*currently well maintained, are improved and stabilized.*

**Policy Actions:**

- 1.1.7** Create, update and use an infill and revitalization toolkit to help facilitate housing development in existing residential neighborhoods. This could include preparation and maintenance of an active inventory of available lots, financing packages, and pre-approved building plans. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.1.8** Prepare and implement new small area or neighborhood target plans that implement desired zoning. In areas such as redeveloping trailer courts, a small area plan developed with property owners and adjacent land owners would show how new development could be integrated into the community, have support of adjacent home owners, and attract potential developers. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.1.9** Base new development on current market needs and desired community uses so that new

*businesses are effective, sustainable and catalyze momentum. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]*

- 1.1.10** The Planning Department should consider use of incentives, including changes in Title 21 such as PC District minimum acres, minimum densities and transition standards. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.1.11** Build public/private/nonprofit partnerships to create effective resources and identify financial packages that will incentivize desired development. [High Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.1.12** The Municipality should actively assemble land or fund such actions to support improvements and stabilization of neighborhoods. [Medium Priority; Real Estate Department]

**Desired Outcome:**

*East Anchorage continues to allow a variety of housing opportunities in well-designed neighborhoods with housing for all income levels.*

**Policy Actions:**

**1.1.13** Plan and design new development so that neighborhoods are served by, and are accessible to, local-serving commercial areas, parks, cultural areas, open space, libraries, and schools. Place local-serving retail and employment opportunities in proximity to workforce and affordable housing. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

#### Desired Outcome:

*Zoning and development decisions demonstrate consistency with the East Anchorage District Plan and Anchorage 2020 goals and policies.*

#### Policy Actions:

- 1.1.14** Review zoning requests for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and the District Land Use Map so that private development can do the following: [High Priority; Planning Department]
- » Maintain a healthy balance of jobs and households
  - » Protect and stabilize existing neighborhoods

- » Increase the density of residential areas where appropriate
- » Establish healthy neighborhoods
- » Emphasize mixed-use development that includes residential units, especially in town centers, along bus and transit routes and in redeveloping commercial areas
- » Maintain an adequate transportation and circulation system
- » Provide land use consistent with the established housing targets in the *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis*
- » Protect employment centers

**1.1.15** Evaluate how to revise Title 21 to allow for up to 40 gross dwellings per unit area in R-3 districts in and around Town Centers. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

#### STRATEGY 1.2

##### Improve arterials with new uses.

Similar to most of the Bowl and similar areas throughout the country, East Anchorage has aging strip centers, some of which struggle to remain occupied and economically viable. Some corridors, such as the stretch of Muldoon Road between DeBarr and Northern

Lights, are prime for redevelopment.

As commercial strip centers age and become vacant, owners look for viable opportunities to redevelop their property. Existing one-story buildings previously used for commercial or light industrial uses (e.g. auto repair shops) can be adapted to become more advantageous locations for new and growing local businesses, providing goods and services desired by the community. Refreshing the façades and architectural details of these buildings is another opportunity to enhance the community aesthetic. Many of these types of redevelopment sites are otherwise problematic given Title 21 requirements, which can make new uses infeasible. The land use designation and strategies for the Muldoon Corridor provide a means for supporting viable reuse.

Another issue facing the District is aging, single-family residential areas located on busy thoroughfares. Single-use, residential developments along busy thoroughfares are difficult to maintain over time because they lack the kinds of commercial-based uses that attract new investment and that provide needed services to nearby residents. However, redevelopment activity in many places around the country is working to

enliven similar thoroughfares and arterials by transitioning to well-designed mixed-use developments that include commercial, retail, restaurant and office uses, as well as new residential opportunities.

This type of development trend – that encourages a mix of residential and nonresidential uses on commercially zoned property or low-density residential property – increases and diversifies opportunities for housing, creates lively neighborhood centers and creates new destinations for existing neighborhoods. Increased services and pedestrian activity along the road will also attract more business customers and activity, increasing the attractiveness of nearby residential. In most cases this kind of redevelopment trend increases property values for both residential and commercial sites.

#### Desired Outcome:

*New development is integrated into the community with connections to transit, and pedestrian and bike facilities.*

#### Policy Actions:

**1.2.1** Create small area plans for targeted redevelopment areas so that new development includes access to

neighborhood commercial areas, parks, cultural areas, open space, libraries, and schools. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

**1.2.2** Conduct a Muldoon Corridor Area Plan, for the area depicted as Muldoon Corridor Special Study on the Land Use Plan Map. The goal of the Area Plan is to make adjustments to the Muldoon Corridor District designation on the Land Use Plan Map in order to implement the vision and goals of the East Anchorage District Plan for this corridor. Until the Area Plan is adopted, the existing zoning in the corridor will guide development; rezoning actions will be reviewed and approved based on consistency with the District Plan vision and applicable action policies. The Area Plan may expand the coverage area and lot depths of the Muldoon Corridor District designation at appropriate locations and lot depths to facilitate viable commercial uses and redevelopment activities, which do not repeat the traditional strip commercial development. [Medium Priority, Planning

Department]

**1.2.3** When reviewing zoning requests, conditional uses and plats, consider neighborhood access to retail, parks and services. An example would be a small areas plan for the North Muldoon Corridor. [Medium Priority, Planning Department]

**1.2.4** Locate new institutional uses, such as schools, libraries, parks, and open space areas within walking distance of homes. Coordinate with school district and other city services to provide safe walking to new facilities. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

**1.2.5** Provide safe, accessible and direct routes (e.g. sidewalks, pathways, adequate signage) for schoolchildren and their parents. [High Priority; Project Management and Engineering]

**1.2.6** Evaluate the potential of a new overlay district for North Muldoon Corridor to implement future mixed use character. Consideration should be given to speed limit reduction in North Muldoon and around neighborhood centers. As an alternative the new T21 commercial



center overlay district could be applied here. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

#### Desired Outcome:

*As existing commercial development ages, it is replaced with mixed-use neighborhood centers that provide housing and supportive services in proximity to one another. These areas are highlighted on the redevelopment map and the District Land Use Map.*

#### Policy Actions:

- 1.2.7** Establish a program that promotes the reuse and/or redevelopment of aging and low-density housing types, while preserving the affordability of an area, through a variety of mechanisms including site design guidelines, zoning changes where applicable and development incentives such as tax credits for affordable housing. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.2.8** As they age and/or are sold, transition mobile home housing to narrow house designs on small-lot subdivisions or other higher density housing types. This could include

both single units per lot as well as multi-family units. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

- 1.2.9** Future mixed-use zoning on sites designated by the land use map should include residential units. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.2.10** As roads are improved, leverage transportation projects to increase connectivity and accommodate density for existing and new development Adhere to or exceed minimum pedestrian facility standards. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

#### STRATEGY 1.3

##### Promote housing that reflects changing needs and preferences.

A majority of the land in the District is developed in residential uses. Although it includes a mix of housing types, the largest amount of land is devoted to single-family homes and mobile home parks on larger parcels. The majority of housing (57%) are multi-family units and most housing was built prior to 1980. New multi-family and townhome options are few.

Across the country, family household sizes are shrinking due to an aging population and fewer children per family. Since Anchorage faces similar demographic changes, the District is likely to follow this national trend of smaller household sizes.

#### Desired Outcome:

*East Anchorage has a wider selection of housing options and opportunities, with an emphasis on providing compact, single-family housing, townhomes, and mixed-use development.*

#### Policy Actions:

- 1.3.1** Respond to changing housing needs and preferences. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.3.2** Reevaluate and amend Title 21 as needed to ensure that it allows for the variety of new housing types recommended in this plan. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.3.3** Consider integrating the following guidelines into the Title 21 mixed-use design standards: [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- » Integrate open space and trail connections.

- » Provide storage space for outdoor activity equipment.
- » Incorporate products suited to northern climates into design details.
- » Allow for housing with diverse characteristics, including both urban and suburban, to accommodate all family types and ages.
- » Allow redevelopment of large-lot single-family areas to smaller lot single-family types (townhomes, cottage housing and duplexes) by rezoning vacant or underutilized properties to allow for smaller lot subdivisions.
- » Develop and provide off-the-shelf housing plans that reduce redevelopment costs and promote affordability of new development.

**Desired Outcome:**

*Healthy communities and lifestyles are promoted.*

**Policy Actions:**

- 1.3.4** Address access issues to adequate medical care by linking transit service to medical facilities. [Medium Priority; Transit]

- 1.3.5** Partner with schools and community centers to address health issues and healthy lifestyles. [Medium Priority; Department of Health and Human Services]

- 1.3.6** Create walkable communities and enhance recreational areas to encourage walking and biking via site plan reviews and small area plans. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

**STRATEGY 1.4**

**Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective.**

A primary barrier to development is often caused by processes or regulations that don't allow for the kinds of options desired by the market. This is frequently caused by development preferences and market changes outpacing policy and regulation changes. Ensuring that land use regulations are flexible enough to allow many options – traditional and emerging trends – promotes investment and growth.

Further, investors need predictability to attract sustainable development. This means they need assurance that their investment is protected and that

adjacent development will be compatible with their investment. Development standards help to create this predictability and are another way of attracting new development and redevelopment.

Another strategy to reduce barriers and attract development is through an informed and involved citizenry who supports development activity and wants predictability for their neighborhoods. To create a positive environment for change, it is important to adhere to an adopted vision for the area, as well as foster open and inclusive discussions about development decisions.

To accomplish this, areas of the District and larger parcels that are experiencing change and redevelopment should be guided by a small area plan. Small area plans foster successful implementation through their ability to garner support from adjacent neighborhoods and by working to ensure a profitable return for the developers. Establishing a small area or neighborhood planning process also creates support for a feasible development plan and establishes a clear land use program that enables implementation of build-by-right zoning standards for desired buildings and uses.

**Desired Outcome:**

*Land use and investment decisions are consistent with the District Vision and Land Use Map and development processes are streamlined so that fewer approvals are required.*

**Policy Actions:**

- 1.4.1** Incorporate the Vision Map and District Land Use Map into the Anchorage Land Use Plan Map to guide development and transportation policy decisions. [High Priority; Planning Department]

**Desired Outcome:**

*As redevelopment occurs in the District, minimize the displacement of existing low-income households.*

**Policy Actions:**

- 1.4.2** As mobile home parks and other aging residential areas are redeveloped, the Municipality should partner with housing providers, such as Cook Inlet Housing and senior housing providers to incentivize development of new and affordable housing units. [High Priority; Planning Department]

- 1.4.3** Evaluate other methods of including a broader mix of housing types, rental ranges and purchase prices for new developments. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

**Desired Outcome:**

*Decision-makers have clear and objective standards for land use planning decisions and implementation.*

**Policy Actions:**

- 1.4.4** Develop clear and objective standards for making land use planning decisions in small area plans.
- 1.4.5** Create a public involvement process that achieves long-term consensus rather than project-by-project evaluation and approval.
- 1.4.6** Develop and use a standard small area or neighborhood planning process to develop a long-range vision for new centers, neighborhoods, and areas in need of revitalization and reinvestment. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 1.4.7** Design the small area and neighborhood planning process

to maximize local public input and identify key implementation steps. The resulting plans should reflect neighborhood needs and desires, and support the East Anchorage Vision. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

- 1.4.8** When possible, utilize return-on-investment modeling for these small areas plans to further guide new development options based on current market conditions and feasibility. These models should consider the impacts on the property values of neighboring properties, impacts on quality of life, and economic opportunities or jobs created by given land use. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

## *Transportation Strategies*

Unlike land use policies that guide the development of private property, transportation policies primarily address the public infrastructure of streets, alleys, (or rights-of-way) bikeways, sidewalks, and transit services. Additionally, transportation policies influence how private development affects the transportation system both

directly, via physical improvements (e.g. management of auto access across city rights-of-way, or the construction of streets as part of new development), as well as indirectly through programs that reduce travel demand and encourage automobile alternatives.

## STRATEGY 2.1

### **Improve local and regional connectivity within the District by enhancing walking, biking and ski options.**

While East Anchorage is known for its extensive parks and trail system, there is opportunity to increase access to natural spaces by adding strategic trail connections to form a more cohesive and connected greenspace network. Residents place a lot of value on their recreation opportunities and an improved and better connected path system will support this. Additionally, when connected to the regional system, the District's trails will provide a transportation alternative to driving or transit. Priority should be placed on connecting the District to existing trails in Anchorage, including the Chester Creek Trail, Glenn Highway Trail and the Campbell Creek Trail, and ensuring that

neighborhoods are designed with internal pedestrian and bike connections in mind. Creating seamless connections would allow residents to walk, bike or ski on these trails and paths to reach schools, retail centers and other destinations from their neighborhoods.

### **Muldoon Perimeter Trail**

The concept of a perimeter, regional trail corridor at the neighborhood-JBER interface has been long held as a future asset to the District residents. Included as a planned multi-use trail in the 1998 Areawide Trails Plan, the concept is generally located at the District's east edge along the JBER boundary. It has gained interest with the bicycle commuting community as well as with participants of the East District planning process who selected it as an important feature to both the District and Bowl-wide trail users. It is also identified as a fundamental link in the Anchorage Bowl trail network.

However, the District planning process also brought forth issues raised by the trail's location and fundamental conflicts concerning its proximity to JBER. Besides concerns about general public access to military training areas, the trail may be in

direct conflict with the safety-zones used for live military training exercises. Before this perimeter trail can be considered, there will need to be resolution of its location relative to safety-zones, design, use restrictions, the need for barriers to public entry to JBER land, terms of construction access, environmental conflicts and permitting, and the need for JBER-Municipality use agreements. This trail will remain conceptual until these conflicts and issues can be addressed and resolved. The revision to the Areawide Trails Plan would be the ideal implementation avenue for this.

The public notes the significance of this perimeter trail and recommends that where feasible the trail should be aligned within JBER land between the military fence and the utility corridor.

### **Desired Outcome:**

*All neighborhoods in East Anchorage are interconnected and access the regional trail system.*

### **Policy Actions:**

- 2.1.1** Prioritize implementation projects and actions from the 2007 Anchorage Pedestrian Plan in East





Anchorage, focusing on:

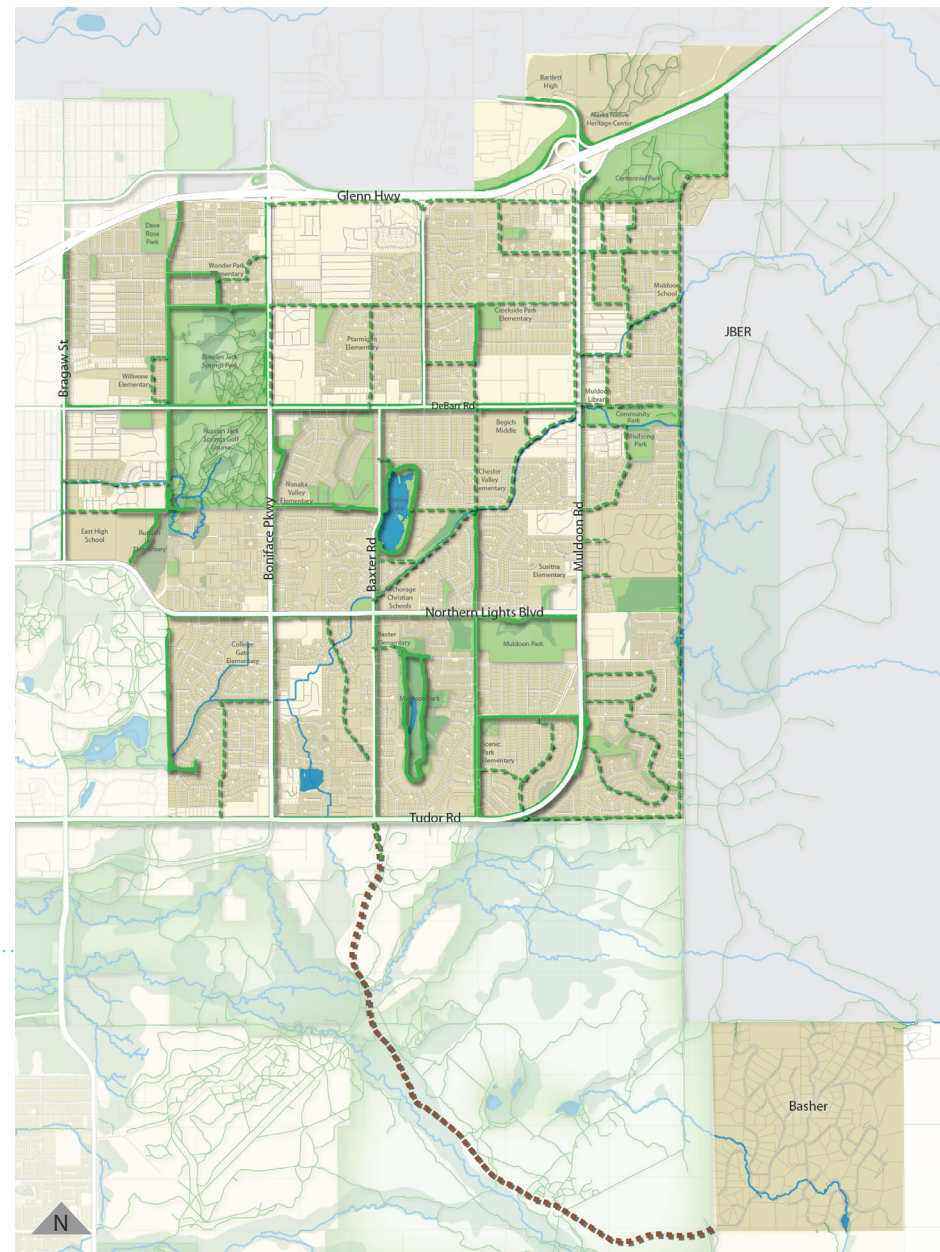
- » Filling in missing sidewalks.
- » Improving crossings and installing new lighting on roads throughout the study area. [Medium Priority; Project Management and Engineering]

**2.1.2** Prioritize implementation projects and actions from the 2010 Anchorage Bike Plan within East Anchorage including the following recommendations:

- » Review new plats to ensure that connections to adjacent residential and neighborhood services are provided.
- » Require that subdivisions provide for safe internal flow of bikes and pedestrians, in addition to auto traffic.
- » Require new subdivisions to provide connections to the trail system. [Medium Priority; Project Management and Engineering]

*Proposed Paths and Trails*

-  Parks and open space
-  Proposed trails and paths
-  Existing trails and paths
-  Proposed multi-use connection to Basher



### Desired Outcome:

Connectivity is increased throughout the District and new development is designed to increase internal connections and travel options.

### Policy Actions:

- 2.1.3** Prioritize access to off-street trails with a concentration on connecting homes and neighborhoods to schools, retail, employment, and recreation. [Medium Priority; Project Management and Engineering]
- 2.1.4** Plan for mixed-use development patterns that provide access options for daily public transit services, as well as bike and pedestrian connections, in order to minimize local auto trips and roadway congestion. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

### STRATEGY 2.2

#### Support development of an improved regional bus system or transit/BRT corridor in the District.

Increasing transportation options produces economic, social and environmental

benefits. For the transit-dependent population, improved transit efficiency and expanded options increase access to social services, educational opportunities, medical services, and jobs. As the population increases in East Anchorage, traffic congestion is also likely to increase. Appealing alternative transportation choices can relieve some of that congestion, taking cars off the road and thus providing a community-wide benefit. Such improvements may result in new bus routes including circulator routes, higher frequencies on existing routes, appropriately-sized buses for the type of service required, increasing transit access through park-n-rides, better pedestrian connections and amenities, and improved bike access and amenities.

The People Mover currently runs over 40 buses on 15 fixed routes, with one of the major transfer centers located near the intersection of Muldoon Road and DeBarr Road. The District has an annual average of approximately 14,000 passengers a day using transit, making service provision a high priority. In the future, consideration should be given to enhancing transit service between East Anchorage and downtown through

a bus rapid transit (BRT) and/or a high-frequency bus system. Ultimately, similar service to the Mat-Su Valley would provide regional connections to lessen congestion and improve the overall transportation system. Transit improvements should also be coordinated with roadway design projects and consideration given to installing intelligent transportation systems such as bus priority signalization, real-time bus route and transfer information at user-friendly kiosks, and information from variable message signs. These tools not only enhance transit by competing with the auto for convenience and travel times, but act as a solid public investment that stimulates private interest in development and redevelopment.

Several major corridors run through East Anchorage connecting to important employment centers such as downtown, midtown, and the University and Medical Districts. The existing road network provides the framework for an improved bus system or BRT corridor. Major roads that connect popular destinations like downtown and Tikahtnu Commons – that also have plenty of road right-of-way available – are candidates for a BRT system. Other roads with potential

to support BRT include Glenn Highway, Muldoon and Tudor.

### Desired Outcome:

*Transit facilities in the District are improved.*

### Policy Actions:

- 2.2.1** Implement the short-term recommendations in 2035 MTP including:
- » Locate a new transit hub near town center development in the vicinity of DeBarr and Muldoon.
  - » Upgrade bus stop sites to meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and operational needs. Typical improvements include bus shelters, benches, trash receptacles, landscaping, grading, paving, utility relocations, lighting, pathways, and turnouts.
  - » Provide enhanced bus facilities at town centers, community centers and major destinations. [High Priority; Transit]

### Desired Outcome:

*Initiate planning for long-term enhanced transit service between East Anchorage and downtown and northern communities.*

### Policy Actions:

- 2.2.2** Initiate a BRT feasibility study to connect East Anchorage to downtown, possibly to the Mat-Su Valley or the communities in Chugiak-Eagle River. [Medium Priority; Transit]
- 2.2.3** Explore implementation of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) that use technologies to improve the safety, security and efficiency of the transportation system through informing users of transportation issues, delays and next bus arrivals. [Medium Priority; Project Management and Engineering]

## STRATEGY 2.3

### Improve the safety on major roadways.

East Anchorage's arterials provide three types of vehicular service:

- People who live or work outside of the District traveling through East Anchorage to access other areas of

the Bowl.

- People who live or work inside the District using the arterials to travel to other parts of the Bowl.
- People who live and work inside the District using the arterials for their local connections within or near the District.

This use of major roadways creates conflicts between people who want to move through the District quickly on their way to further away destinations, and those who are using major roadways to get to their favorite neighborhood restaurant because the lack of local street connectivity between residential and commercial areas requires them to. Recent improvements on Tudor and Muldoon have addressed some of the vehicular safety issues posed by high traffic levels and competing travel patterns by providing turn lanes, medians, and some curb and sidewalk improvements.

Pedestrians are the most vulnerable user of the transportation system. As a pedestrian, motor vehicle speeds greatly affect the severity of crashes and impact fatality rates. Streets with high pedestrian activity should maintain slow motor vehicle speeds, and in particular, areas close to parks, schools and similar pedestrian destinations should

require special pedestrian consideration. Pedestrian-oriented designs should also aim to minimize conflicts with motorized traffic. Intersections should be designed for pedestrians of all ages and abilities. ADA compliant curb ramps, crosswalks and accessible pedestrian signals should be provided to the maximum extent feasible.

#### Desired Outcome:

*Ongoing safety enhancements are completed along Muldoon, Tudor and other major thoroughfares.*

#### Policy Actions:

- 2.3.1** Complete existing improvement program to provide medians, turning lanes and curb and sidewalk improvements. [Medium Priority; Project Management and Engineering, ADOT/Public Facility]
- 2.3.2** Work with ADOT/PF for consideration of reduced speed sections from DeBarr to the Glenn Highway. [Medium Priority; Project Management and Engineering]

#### Desired Outcome:

*Access management along thoroughfares is improved.*

#### Policy Actions:

- 2.3.3** Adopt an access management policy for major thoroughfares to control the number of driveway cuts onto thoroughfares and collectors, and to promote internal access on new development sites. [Medium Priority; Project Management and Engineering]
- 2.3.4** Consult traffic studies that have analyzed crash hotspots. Create a traffic safety review panel or use the AMATS Bike Pedestrian Advisory Committee, which will identify and seek solutions to reoccurring collision sites in the District. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 2.3.5** Partner with ADOT/PF and their Highway Safety Improvement Program to address reoccurring collision sites with appropriate corrective actions. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- 2.3.6** Implement access management best practices including, where feasible: [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
  - » Minimize the frequency of driveways

and provide access internally or via alleys, where possible. Evaluate driveway consolidation where driveway spacing is less than 50 feet.

- » Vehicles entering the right-of-way are required to yield to all cross traffic, including pedestrians. Convey this requirement through the design of the driveway/sidewalk interface, distinguishing driveways from roadway intersections.
- » Clearly delineate the sidewalk across the driveway and maintain the grade, slope and material of the adjacent sidewalk on either side.
- » Meet current ADA guidelines.
- » Maintain a 5-foot minimum sidewalk across driveways with no more than a 2% cross slope.
- » Place driveways a minimum of 20 feet from crosswalks to provide good sight lines between vehicles and pedestrians, and so that vehicles do not block the visibility of pedestrians.

#### Desired Outcome:

*Pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular conflict areas are made safer through signage, roadway and sidewalk enhancements, and*



other traffic control mechanisms.

### Policy Actions:

- 2.3.7** Assess the need for improved pedestrian lighting and develop a program to install enhanced lighting as road improvements or development occurs. Pedestrian lighting is particularly important in business districts along mixed-use street types where it can enhance the environment and highlight businesses. Best practices for a pedestrian lighting program include: [Medium Priority; Planning Department]
- » Prioritize pedestrian lighting at intersections and mid-block pedestrian crossings.
  - » Provide pedestrian-level lighting at both sides of crosswalks.
  - » Use lampposts lower than 20 feet tall and combine with roadway scale lighting in high-activity areas.
  - » Incorporate dark-sky and cutoff features when installing new pedestrian lighting.
  - » Place light poles so they do not impede the sidewalk, are located three feet from the curb face and five

feet from fixed objects such as fire hydrants.

- 2.3.8** Design and install crosswalks and signalization with the goal of creating pedestrian-friendly walking environments. Best practices include: [Medium Priority; Project Management and Engineering]
- » Crosswalks should be a minimum of 10 feet wide.
  - » When locating crosswalks, maximize the visibility of pedestrians to turning vehicle movements.
  - » Provide pedestrian signal heads at all signalized intersections for all marked crosswalks. Install crosswalks on all legs of a signalized intersection unless determined otherwise by an engineering study.
  - » Set timing for each phase to account for the walking speeds of people of all ages and abilities, especially children, the elderly and disabled.
  - » For crosswalks without a stop sign or traffic signal, provide enhanced signage to ensure that pedestrians are visible.
- 2.3.9** Evaluate use of maintenance agreements with ADOT/PF

wherein the MOA takes full time responsibility of pedestrian and sidewalk features along state roads. [Medium Priority; Project Management and Engineering]

## Social and Economic Strategies

### STRATEGY 3.1

#### Encourage the growth of local and regional businesses.

East Anchorage stakeholders expressed a need to expand existing businesses and attract new business by capitalizing on the District's quality of life, natural beauty, diversity, and uniqueness. The diversity of the District supports creativity and uniqueness. Residents and stakeholders would like to create a financial climate that encourages entrepreneurs to start up, expand or relocate to East Anchorage. In addition, residents feel that the District has a need for targeted job training beyond what is currently offered to enable young workers to find area jobs.

The major economic sectors for Anchorage are transportation, the military, oil and

gas, local and federal government, and convention and tourism. Finance, construction, education, and healthcare are also significant contributors to the economy. With the District's central position within the region, and its proximity to JBER, East Anchorage is in a prime location to provide jobs for people of all ages. It is one of the most diverse districts in Anchorage.

Expansion of local businesses can be limited by a shortage of skilled workers, while young people capable of performing these jobs go untrained. A program that trains young people in core workplace competencies, as well as effectively integrates them into various work settings, provides a benefit to both the employee and to those businesses wanting to grow.

**The following Social and Economic Development Policy Actions would be implemented through a partnership of economic development organizations, business groups and community organizations.**

**Desired Outcome:**

*East Anchorage has expanded training opportunities for area youth to engage in*

*the 21st century economy.*

**Policy Actions:**

- 3.1.1** Foster cooperation among civic, business and government entities to develop training programs that result in filling current job opportunities. Businesses and industries who have unfulfilled job openings should partner with job training organizations to meet their needs. [Medium Priority, Mayor's Office]
- 3.1.2** Conduct a study of existing businesses in the District to better understand their current needs, as well as to identify ways to prepare new employees as existing businesses expand or other businesses move into the area. The study should include an analysis of existing job training programs and gaps and a plan for serving youth and the District's diverse populations. [Medium Priority, Planning Department]
- 3.1.3** Provide outreach to existing local businesses to learn more about their opportunities and issues, and work with them to address the issues and help them pursue opportunities. [Medium Priority; Anchorage Community Development Agency]
- 3.1.4** Develop high school programs to train students for available, local jobs. [Medium Priority; Anchorage School District]
- 3.1.5** Design and implement high school program curriculum to meet employment requirements as well as establish a program to assess students' interests, aptitudes and abilities. [Medium Priority; Anchorage School District]
- 3.1.6** Use existing training facilities or schools and secure apprenticeship arrangements with local businesses to conduct hands-on education. [Medium Priority; Anchorage School District]
- 3.1.7** Develop training programs for the East Anchorage workforce to ensure that residents are prepared to fill future employment opportunities. [Medium Priority, State of Alaska]
- 3.1.8** Study emerging businesses and develop training programs to meet those industry needs. Such

industries could be businesses associated with the military, medical field, oil and gas industry, or other leading employers. [Medium Priority, State of Alaska]

- 3.1.9** Work with local business leaders to establish basic entry-level job descriptions and requirements. Requirements would be comprehensive, not just specific trade skills, but other important qualities to be a successful employee, e.g. responsible behavior, safety consciousness, communication ability, problem solving, performance expectations, and teamwork. [Medium Priority, State of Alaska]
- 3.1.10** Provide training prior to employment so that workers are ready to be hired. [Medium Priority, State of Alaska, Trade Unions/ Organizations]

#### Desired Outcome:

*East Anchorage has development-ready sites to attract new business.*

#### Policy Actions:

- 3.1.11 Work with property owners of

vacant land or with aging structures to help them prepare and plan for new economic development opportunities including the creation and/or expansion of local businesses that provide services to support nearby residents and the military bases. [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

- 3.1.12** Identify and secure a portfolio of economic development tools that can be applied expeditiously as opportunities and needs arise. [Medium Priority; Anchorage Community Development Agency]

#### Desired Outcome:

*East Anchorage has a business incubator facility where new businesses can find support for their startups.*

#### Policy Actions:

- 3.1.13** Engage in a public-private partnership to create a business incubator or “commercial/ community kitchen” in an abandoned or aging structure, church or community facility. [High Priority; Anchorage Community Development Agency]

- 3.1.14** Create the framework to support entrepreneurs and those interested in starting a business. Many creative incubators have been recently developed in other areas, including: [Low Priority; Anchorage Community Development Agency]
- » A restaurant incubator where new restaurants can begin and move to other areas once started. This also would attract people from all over the region who want to try new restaurants.
  - » A commercial kitchen that is rented out to small business owners on an hourly basis who need a commercial sized kitchen to produce desired quantities to sell.
  - » A more traditional incubator that allows people to start office, support and service-oriented small businesses and provides guidance for startups, including management and tax support.

#### STRATEGY 3.2

##### Expand and improve access to needed social services.

East Anchorage stakeholders have

expressed concern about the difficulties in accessing needed social services and family support, such as life skills training, school support skills, job skills, youth programs, after-school tutoring, medical assistance and specialized services for new residents. Given the diversity of the District, and the number of recent immigrants, specialized services should be considered. In addition, residents expressed a need for an indoor recreation facility for children and youth. The MOA Library staff identified the need for a centralized, more visible and easily accessed branch facility, which might best be located in the Town Center.

**Desired Outcome:**

*Through community, nonprofit and business partnerships, East Anchorage has an expanded community center that provides services to new and existing residents and facilities to support programs and provide indoor recreation opportunities.*

**Policy Actions:**

**3.2.1** Inventory existing community and social services and identify gaps in service levels currently provided. [Medium Priority; Department of Health and Human Services]

**3.2.2** Work with existing nonprofits, and educational, medical and social service providers to develop a comprehensive community facility to support families and individuals needing improved access to these facilities. [Medium Priority; AEDC/ Live Work Play]

**3.2.3** Consider an indoor recreation and tutoring facility to support youth staying in the educational system. [Medium Priority; Anchorage School District]

**3.2.4** Explore funding through a public/private/nonprofit partnership. [Medium Priority; AEDC/Live Work Play]

**Desired Outcome:**

*The Anchorage School District, city and nonprofits work together to allow the community access to arts and culture facilities in existing facilities such as the world class recently renovated East High.*

**Policy Actions:**

**3.2.5** Coordinate with arts groups, nonprofits and the school district for continuing community use of school buildings for performances and training. [Medium Priority;

Anchorage School District]

**STRATEGY 3.3**

**Coordinate locally, regionally, with the State and JBER.**

Successful implementation of the East Anchorage District Plan requires coordination between local organizations, the state, the school district and other agencies such as JBER. While these agencies coordinate in areas that have overlapping jurisdictions, such as the state roadway system and the Municipality, early coordination in planning and implementation programs can result in cost savings and enhanced outcomes.

**Desired Outcome:**

*Governmental entities in East Anchorage implement an intergovernmental partnership program that lays out clear coordination procedures.*

**Policy Actions:**

**3.3.1** Coordinate with arts groups, nonprofits and the school district for continuing community use of school buildings for performances and training. [Medium Priority; Planning

Department]

- » Analyzes existing coordination efforts and opportunities.
- » Identifies opportunities for shared data and resources.
- » Identifies redundant services and promotes efficiency.
- » Communicates with MOA, the public and community councils.

**3.3.2** Coordination should include, but is not limited to, these programs/ areas: [Medium Priority; Planning Department]

- » Trail access between the eastern city limits and JBER.
- » Development within the flight path and JBER planning areas and the Municipality.
- » State roadways and improved pedestrian and bike facilities.
- » Community use of school district facilities.
- » Recreational access from East Anchorage to JBER land, and potential access to Chugach State Park from East Anchorage through JBER land.

# Appendix A:

## Zoning and Housing Analysis

### Zoning on Vacant Lands

Zoning designations include a description of the intended character of the built environment and a set of regulations such as building height, lot coverage and parking requirements that determine the levels of intensity and types of uses allowed. On a given property, what gets built can fall anywhere within the range of allowed density. To determine capacity totals on vacant land, the *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis* evaluated a range of residential density assumptions, leading to a range of capacity totals. The research from this analysis documented a trend that found that new construction was being developed significantly below maximum densities allowed by each zoning district.

Figure 1 shows the density assumptions used for three vacant land capacity alternatives in the *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis* compared to the maximum densities allowed in Title 21. Figure 2 shows the total vacant land capacity within the District based on these assumptions.

The reasons for building less than the maximum density as zoning allows vary, but are most often linked to the effect and constraints of site conditions, market conditions, and regulatory requirements, such as required parking and lot setbacks. For example, the development

### *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis Density Descriptions*

- **Recent Densities:** A continuation of the average residential densities (dwellings per acre) and mix of housing structure types achieved over the past ten years of development activity, in each zoning district.
- **Historic Densities:** The average residential densities and mix of housing structure types achieved by all existing housing stock, regardless of year built.
- **Accelerated Densities:** A transition to higher average densities closer to the maximum achievable residential densities allowed by zoning. This scenario assumes the average future density is the median between recent achieved densities (Scenario 1) and the maximum allowed density in each zoning district.

proformas tested during the East Anchorage District Plan planning process show that despite being zoned for up to 40 units per acre, the effective density of the R-3 district is closer to 20-25 units per acre. In order to achieve the higher densities described by the zoning, a developer would likely need to provide structured parking. This is an expensive proposition that is typically associated with projects on land more expensive and often more suited to what is typically found in the District.

Figure 1: Residential Density Assumption (dwelling units per acre)

Source: Anchorage Housing Market Analysis

<b>Residential Zoning District</b>	<b>#1: Recent Densities</b>	<b>#2: Historic Densities</b>	<b>#3: Accelerated Densities</b>	<b>Max. Allowable Gross Density by Zoning</b> <i>(Title 21 Chapter 4: Zoning Districts)</i>
R-1	4.79	4.87	5.90	5
R-1A	3.25	3.63	4.13	4
R-2A Two-family	6.33	6.61	8.16	7
R-2D Two Family	8.52	7.71	11.26	8
R-2M Multi-family	12.07	9.21	14.53	15
R-3 Multi-family	14.12	17.63	28.06	40
R-4 Multi-family <sup>1</sup>	17.23	24.19	58.61	100

Figure 2: Projected Residential Capacity in North East Subarea

*(based on vacant land and the densities from the Anchorage Housing Market Analysis)*

	<b>#1: Recent Densities</b>	<b>#2: Historic Densities</b>	<b>#3: Accelerated Densities</b>
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	2,496	2,718	4,441

1 The maximum zoned density for most districts is expressed in terms of minimum lot size per number of allowed dwelling units. However, the high density R-4 district is more difficult, where density is controlled by a maximum FAR of 2.0. The maximum density expressed for R-4 district is based on a review of the effects of the zoning ordinance on actual built developments. Most are below 100 DUA.

