

**CITY OF WASILLA AREA PLANS FOCUS GROUP
BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY
Wasilla City Hall
Saturday, January 27, 2007
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

Purpose

The City of Wasilla has formed focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of community attitudes and opinions and gather information and constituent perspectives. The focus groups will meet only one-time and have no formal decision-making or advisory authority; however, the results will be incorporated into the planning process. The results will help shape area concepts, which will be presented to the community during the mini-charrettes. Originally, five focus groups were proposed. However, due to participant availability, the focus groups were collapsed into three:

- Real Estate, Developers, Architects, Designers / Property Owners
- Arts, History, Culture, Volunteers, Faith Community / Parks, Recreation, and Outdoor Interest Groups
- Business Community and Transportation Industry

INTRODUCTIONS

All participants introduced themselves, including name and special interests. Participants were also asked to complete the following phrase:

In 10 to 15 years, I see Wasilla (as)...

- an improved, more organized city with a reputation for attractive planned development; a city that has a more positive reputation than it does currently.
- more of a tourist attraction, particularly the airport and transportation area. However, access to develop the area as a tourist attraction is a primary concern.
- a city with a museum that draws all the tourists that travel to Alaska. The Museum of Alaska Transportation Industry (MATI) contains many things that appeal to the older demographic, which is probably the majority of the tourists.
- a home; let it grow.
- a cultural center.
- a city where transportation helps people and businesses function better.
- a city where transportation positively contributes to development.
- with a state office building.

- with a high speed transportation corridor.
- with the Iditarod and a hotel(s) in the Airport and Transportation Museum area.
- with an expanded airport that is the focal point of the entire Matanuska-Susitna Valley.
- with a variety of transportation options that can residents and tourists anywhere.
- a community that is proactive to transportation.
- a city that is supportive of commuter rail.
- a sustainable community that includes not only services, but a variety of professional employment options.

For each area, the participants were asked to provide their thoughts regarding the particular area's strengths and weaknesses, as well as provide responses to six specific questions. The outcome of the exercise is summarized in the following tables.

DOWNTOWN: STRENGTHS		
Location	Shops / Services	Miscellaneous
Natural government locations	Variety of services	Small town name recognition within rest of state
		Compact
Hometown of Gov. Palin		Exists

DOWNTOWN: WEAKNESSES				
Traffic	Safety	Shops / Services	Access / Parking	Miscellaneous
Bottleneck traffic because this area provides the only north/south road on this side of the Valley	Dangerous railroad crossing in town center	Lacks good mix of shopping and dining	Lacks parking for available services	Lacks character
Summer tourists add to existing traffic congestion			Over-abundance of access to services	
Disjointed traffic flow			Lack of sidewalks	

DOWNTOWN: WHAT DRAWS BUSINESSES TO THIS AREA?			
Access	Traffic	Shops / Services	Miscellaneous
Better access (maybe a two-way frontage road and RR)	High visibility in high traffic area	Close proximity to like businesses	Property values
	High traffic flow draws small businesses (which need traffic in lieu of advertising)		Opportunity for building
	Parks Highway goes directly through town so travelers have access to businesses; but traffic congestion goes hand-in-hand with this		

DOWNTOWN: WHAT SHOULD COMMUNITY LEADERS BE MINDFUL OF? WHAT WOULD PROMOTE BUSINESS GROWTH IN THIS AREA?	
Identity / Atmosphere	Miscellaneous
Area identity	Small businesses need traffic control

DOWNTOWN: WHAT WOULD INHIBIT BUSINESS GROWTH IN THIS AREA?		
Access	Traffic	Property
Off the highway	Traffic flow	Lot size and block size are too small
		High market price of property
		Water drainage

DOWNTOWN: WHAT OPPORTUNITIES EXIST THAT ARE NOT TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF IN THIS AREA?	
Miscellaneous	
Public relations plan or other promotion for downtown assets	

DOWNTOWN: WHERE ARE THE PUBLIC PLACES IN THIS AREA WHERE PEOPLE CAN MEET TO DISCUSS COMMUNITY ISSUES?	
Parks/Open Space	Facilities/Services
Iditapark	Lake Lucille Inn

DOWNTOWN: WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE PLANNING PRIORITIES IN THIS AREA?		
Transportation	Safety	Infrastructure
Traffic congestion	Unsafe railroad crossings	Infrastructure congestion

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS: STRENGTHS			
Aesthetics	Access	Potential	Miscellaneous
Wonderful views	Palmer-Wasilla Highway extension has alleviated some traffic congestion	Could be developed with taste and aesthetics	No planning
	Very good access for anything that would draw lots of traffic	Clean slate for development	Not industrial.
		Can make (or break) Wasilla's image	

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS: WEAKNESSES	
Aesthetics	Access
Trees have been cleared. Looks barren.	Lacks of connectors to the Parks Highway (Alaska Railroad)

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS: WHAT DRAWS BUSINESSES TO THIS AREA?		
Available Land	Aesthetics	Miscellaneous
Clean slate for development	View	Perception of businesses or services
Open areas		
Large plots of land available		

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS: WHAT SHOULD COMMUNITY LEADERS BE MINDFUL OF? WHAT WOULD PROMOTE BUSINESS GROWTH IN THIS AREA?	
Shops / Services	Regulations
A mix of shopping and dining	Incentives for responsible development
	Regulations. This is the last large area to develop, the industrial yard is ugly
	Proactive planning that anticipates possible problems

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS: WHAT WOULD INHIBIT BUSINESS GROWTH IN THIS AREA?			
Access	Land	Transportation	Miscellaneous
Access	Parcel size—will require developer to drive this issue	Traffic lights	Excess governmental interference Need for services (e.g., dining, gas, dry cleaning)
Poor access—roads, transit			Unreasonable zoning or development regulations Unsanitary development

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS: WHAT OPPORTUNITIES EXIST THAT ARE NOT TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF IN THIS AREA?
Nothing identified

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS: WHERE ARE THE PUBLIC PLACES IN THIS AREA WHERE PEOPLE CAN MEET TO DISCUSS COMMUNITY ISSUES?	
Needs	Miscellaneous
Need one. Wasilla area lacks indoor place for large meetings.	Condemn one or force its creation as condition of use

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS: WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE PLANNING PRIORITIES IN THIS AREA?		
Planning	Transportation	Regulations
Formal plans	Transportation (roads and transit)	Regulate to promote development, not inhibit development now
Responsible development		

AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA: STRENGTHS			
Facilities	Tourism	Zoning	Miscellaneous
Three great community facilities exist in the area	Best tourist stop in area	Industrial focus	Exists
Airport location	Great tourist draw		There is a need to lighten Anchorage Airport traffic
	Wonderful area to expand for tourists		Lots of potential / City owns the airport
			Who will pay for airport expansion?
			Great aspect of Wasilla's past and present
			Wonderful area to expand for locals, schools, and commuters

AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA: WEAKNESSES			
Facilities	Access	Miscellaneous	
Airport location (noise)	Not visible from the highway or railroad	City commitment to the airport	
	Limited access from Wasilla	Reputation (lack of direction)	
	Access is very bad	Size and shape	
		Many locals have never been to the museum	

AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA: WHAT DRAWS BUSINESS TO THIS AREA?			
Facilities	Access	Infrastructure	Miscellaneous
Proximity to public facilities (i.e., sports center, airport, transportation museum)	Safe and good access with ample parking	City services (i.e., water and sewer)	Interest in our history by the public
Business facilities / potential for air taxi – airlines, flight schools, hotels, etc	Accessibility to leased land for reasonable price	Police protection	Clean slate—the area is a natural industrial use area
	Easy use		
	Good highway access		

AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA: WHAT SHOULD COMMUNITY LEADERS BE MINDFUL OF? WHAT WOULD PROMOTE BUSINESS GROWTH IN THIS AREA?				
Facilities	Access	Infrastructure	Incentives / Regulations	Miscellaneous
Businesses that are purpose driven, not just destination driven	Connections to other facilities / easy access would raise awareness	Good signage	Incentives for responsible development	Curiosity of our past
Ancillary uses	Public transportation		Tax incentives	
Open air markets (i.e., farmer's market or Saturday market)			Proactive planning	

AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA: WHAT WOULD INHIBIT GROWTH IN THIS AREA?		
Regulations	Access	Miscellaneous
Excessive governmental interference (e.g., unreasonable zoning or development regulations)	Poor access (i.e., roads, transit)	More tourist services (e.g., camping, gas)
	Lack of connectivity to community (there is no sense that it is a part of Wasilla)	Absence of a consistent and committed area plan
	Existing poor access and dangerous corner	

AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA: WHAT OPPORTUNITIES EXIST IN THIS AREA THAT ARE NOT TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF?		
Infrastructure	Access	Miscellaneous
The state could own the airstrip	Extend Church Road to the airport and museum	Federal and state grant money

AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA: WHERE ARE THE PUBLIC PLACES IN THIS AREA WHERE PEOPLE CAN MEET TO DISCUSS COMMUNITY ISSUES?	
Facilities	Future facilities
Museum of Alaska Transportation Industry	Activities / entertainment
Sports complex	Lodging / dining

AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA: WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE PLANNING PRIORITIES IN THIS AREA?			
Funding	Land	Access / Transportation	Planning
Federal aid to airports	Land availability	Road access.	Formal plans
Determining who pays for what		Extending Church Road into the airport so there are two access points	Responsible development
		Transportation—roads, transit	Zoning
			Encourage development through tax incentives

CLOSING REMARKS AND COMMENTS

Iditarod and Iron Dog should promote Wasilla more because they claim Wasilla as their “home.”

We should be aware of the conditions that accompany funding from different sources, for instance there are many conditions and regulations that the City will need to abide by if they accept funding from the FAA. We should not treat these regulations and conditions as obstacles, instead we should treat them as challenges to make the area better.

The planning team identified its next steps as:

- Write up today’s product
- Continue implementation of school project
- Distribute results of focus groups
- Public charrettes/workshops (March)
- Draft area plans (spring)
- Public review of draft plans (early summer)
- Release of final plans (late summer)

Wasilla Area Plans Charrette

Saturday, March 31, 2007

Multi-Use Sports Complex

Summary

As part of the Wasilla Areas Planning Project, the City of Wasilla and URS Corporation conducted a planning charrette with three separate sessions to identify visions and goals for each the three planning areas: Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and the Airport and Transportation Museum area. The sessions were advertised in the *Frontiersman* and *Anchorage Daily News*, and publicized on local radio. The charrette brought together interested members of the public, key stakeholders, city planners, and planning team members. Attendees included a broad mix of city residents, including property owners, real estate and land developers, retirees, and students. Some Visioning Committee members and focus group participants also attended.

The charrette was divided into two hour sessions to focus on each planning area. Each session began with a brief presentation that summarized the purpose of the area plans, role of the Visioning Committee, and purpose of the focus groups. The planning team provided a brief synopsis of Visioning Committee and focus group comments to date regarding the planning area strengths and weaknesses and the stakeholders' ideas for area planning priorities.

Each two hour session was divided into three separate exercises: state a vision of a development emphasis, identify preferred land uses that support the development emphasis, and draw recommended spatial locations of preferred land uses on the map. The map exercise was a collaborative group activity. The groups then reported out and presented their map results to the rest of the participants.

The planning team recorded development vision concepts and potential land use elements. Many ideas were shared, with detailed suggestions for potential development. Participants were then asked to take part in a mapping exercise to transcribe their visions and preferred land uses onto maps of the planning areas.

The planning team has synthesized the charrette proceedings: a table of vision themes, list of potential land uses, and narrative conclusions were developed for each planning area. Several suggestions for goals and objectives were woven through the visions and potential land uses. The planning team will build upon the information provided to date to develop goals, objectives, and specific implementation action items. The implementation tables will be developed to pursue opportunities, overcome obstacles, and encourage development within preferred vision. The draft tables and land use maps will be presented and reviewed at the next public meeting, to be held on Tuesday, May 1, 2007.

DOWNTOWN: Vision*					
Community Character / Lifestyle	Infrastructure / Transportation	Services	Connectivity	Assets	Regulation / Building Restraints
Pedestrian friendly with mix of community-centered services (e.g., restaurants and shops; should be able to spend the afternoon downtown) Enhance and maintain the community atmosphere	The city should involve and coordinate with the Borough and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities New streets should be required to include sidewalks	Expand the library Locate government buildings downtown, with historic character—not high-rises	Sidewalks, ATV and bike paths should be developed Three schools outside the core downtown area need to be connected to downtown area and library Trail connectivity; provide trail access throughout town	Encourage use of current facilities and services Build on the current assets—lakes, Cottonwood Creek, railroad, road	Parcels are too little and incentives should be developed to vacate lot line and develop small lots Develop creative non-mall mixed use
Incorporate "Alaska heritage" into design	Opportunity to get from outlying areas into downtown area (transportation options)		Pedestrian overpass on the Parks Highway is needed		Zoning codes should be developed that have foresight; accommodate future growth Be aware of geologic hazards and constraints
Future designs address healthy lifestyle issues; encourage walking	Many problems stem from transportation: start with transportation and work backwards from that				
Keep it friendly (i.e., don't go too industrial)	Land for parking area should be set aside by the City (this would be developed by City) Mini bus				Railroad needs to move in order to distribute growth Implement regulations to maintain the community character (e.g., consider the impacts of the proposed Knik Arm Bridge)
Design standards should include green parking lots and landscape minimums					
Aesthetics should be maintained Keep historical vision	Street lights Frontage and thru roads Improve streets				

* Area development emphasis suggestions are organized by theme in each column; there is no intended correlation across rows

Downtown should include the following land uses:

- Large library
- Government office buildings
- Meeting spaces
- Teen center (near library and located among other fun, interesting services; promote it)
- Restaurants
- Parking area
- Road upgrades that include ATV trails and bike trails
- Multi-use meeting facilities: Trade shows (e.g., craft shows)
- Mixed retail/office space
- Movie theatre
- Co-locate tourist information center and museum

Analysis and Synthesis for Downtown:

Based on the mapping exercise and prior comments from the Visioning Committee and focus groups, the boundaries for the Downtown planning area should be adjusted. Nearly all participants have expressed that the planning boundaries of Downtown should change. The mapping exercise during the charrette clearly illustrated that people identify the downtown core of Wasilla encompassing the Iditapark, the western shoreline of Wasilla Lake, and the schools north of the current downtown boundary. It was also clear during the mapping exercise that participants did not envision much, if any, development related to the Downtown to occur south of the Parks Highway.

The Parks Highway divides the community; such a large transportation corridor does not lend to developing a downtown identity. The area to the north of the highway has the majority of the facilities and attractions that people associate with the Downtown. Few connections were identified between services and facilities on the north and south sides of the highway. The City may wish to reconsider the planning area boundaries; the area to the south of the highway could be combined with the South Wasilla Heights planning area.

If we were to move forward with redesigning the planning area boundaries, the southern boundary for the Downtown planning area could be the Parks Highway, from North Weber Drive to the western shore of Wasilla Lake. The western boundary would zigzag from North Weber Drive to West Nelson Avenue and North Lucille Street. The northern border could follow lot lines from North Lucille Street (just north of East Glen Circle) to the Wasilla-Fishhook Road and continue east on Aspen Avenue. The eastern border would not neatly follow a road, but rather lot lines that are west of East Dellwood Street between Aspen Avenue and the Parks Highway.

Some participants envisioned Swanson Avenue being developed and shaped into a “main street,” and that the Parks Highway become more of a bypass. Also, any new commercial development should be accompanied with planned and adequate parking. The land use visions of the participants are not drastically different from current zoning. However, there are some areas in direct conflict including the area by Wasilla-Fishhook Road and Aspen Avenue. A part of this area is currently zoned for rural residential, and participants envision this area as one where the schools can expand. Also, there are areas that were identified for recreational use that are currently zoned commercial. In addition to zoning conflicts, there may be land ownership conflicts that would also have to be addressed.

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS: Vision					
Community Character / Lifestyle	Infrastructure / Transportation	Services	Connectivity	Assets	Regulation / Building Restraints
Cater to sportsmen	Proactive infrastructure; project future capacity and demands and build infrastructure to address future uses	No more car lots	Provide for connectivity between Lucille and Wasilla lakes	Existing tunnel under the Parks Highway could enhance connectivity between South Wasilla Heights and DOWNTOWN Area is essentially a blank slate	Reserve land for green space and parks Minimize residential development Plan for snow
Attract white collar employment		No more big box stores			
Maintain the view					

* Area development emphasis suggestions are organized by theme in each column; there is no intended correlation across rows

South Wasilla Heights should include the following land uses:

- Parks
- Visitor's center
- Museum
- Hotels
- Good signage and lighting (safety)
- Post office
- Frontage road on the Palmer Wasilla Highway extension
- Office parks
- Civic center
- Playing fields (soccer and ball fields)
- Green spaces that can add to ambiance; greenbelts joining buildings
- Library
- Theatre
- Restaurants

Analysis and Synthesis for South Wasilla Heights:

Based on the mapping exercise discussed for the DOWNTOWN area, the South Wasilla Heights planning area boundaries should correspondingly be adjusted. The area south of the Parks Highway, presently zoned as commercial, could be added to the South Wasilla Heights planning area.

The participants' land use visions for this planning area conflict somewhat with current zoning. For instance, the vacant lots west of Home Depot are currently zoned for rural residential, as are the four lots to the south of that block of land on the south side of the Palmer Wasilla Highway. There is a triangle of land on the south end of the planning area that is currently state right-of-way that participants envision as public or park land with a viewpoint. The state right-of-way located at the east tip of the planning area was identified by participants as an area ideal for commercial development. A key theme discussed was trail and pedestrian access between the Parks Highway and the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension.

AIRPORT & TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA: Vision

Community Character / Lifestyle	Infrastructure / Transportation	Services	Connectivity	Assets	Regulation / Building Restraints
Be mindful of existing residential development; traffic levels should be appropriate in residential areas; separate residential and commercial/industrial traffic; integrate bike paths as well	Utility expansion	Expand airport capabilities/extend runway to handle greater air traffic (e.g., executive jets)	Increase access	Use surrounding area as a buffer	Reserve area for facility expansion (Sports Center and airport); development is currently occurring around the airport
Be mindful of existing human environment (i.e., physical, biological, and social)	Safety (e.g., lighting)	Expand tourist attractions/destinations in this area	Increase availability of pedestrian access	MATI is an anchor for additional development	Streamline government processes so the ability exists to act swiftly and take advantage of opportunities that are priorities
		Build on the three modes of transportation (road, rail, and air) and recognize its uniqueness	Existing facilities are tourist destinations		City processes make it difficult to take advantage of short-term opportunities for property acquisition
		Expand services (e.g. hotels, restaurants)			
		Enlarge the multi-use sports complex			
		Develop economic base, including commercial and industrial economic opportunities (so fewer people need to commute to Anchorage)			
		Support the airport			
		Support commercial air operators (e.g., Grant Air and Era)			

* Area development emphasis suggestions are organized by theme in each column; there is no intended correlation across rows

Airport and Transportation Museum Area should include the following land uses:

- Bike path
- Seaplane base
- Services/Restaurants
- Museums
- Day use campsites
- Hotels
- Day user camp for fly-ins
- Education
- Terminals
- Stockpile yard (lumber)
- Scheduled airline service and cargo
- Trails/Connectivity
- Imaginariums
- Restaurants
- Duck pond with viewing and recreation opportunities
- Commuter train
- Zoo
- Saturday/Farmer's Market
- Hiking/ Trail to old Knik/ Nature hikes
- Picnics
- Parking facilities that are adequate for commuter train
- Nordic skiing
- Railroad Depot and steamers
- Biking
- Radio airplane fields
- Multi-modal transportation

Analysis and Synthesis for the Airport and Transportation Museum area:

Participants identified several areas for potential annexation to the city limits. The zoning conflicts in this planning area include two areas identified for recreation that are currently zoned industrial, a commercial triangle in the west part of the planning area currently zoned industrial, and a commercial area in the western portion of the planning area that participants envision larger. Participants also envision a trail that would connect to the Knik townsite, as well as some new road connections.

**WASILLA AREA PLANS PUBLIC MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 1, 2007
WASILLA CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Purpose

The City of Wasilla and URS Corporation organized a public meeting to review the products of the planning process to date and solicit further comments to incorporate in the draft area plans. The public meeting was advertised in the Frontiersman and the Anchorage Daily News, and noticed at the City Council Chambers. In addition, the Anchorage Daily News published an article on the planning process the Friday prior to the meeting. Members of the Visioning Committee, participants in the focus groups and charrette, and interested members of the public attended the meeting.

As participants arrived, they were able to view suggested land use maps that were developed from a mapping exercise during the charrette. Participants in the charrette illustrated their visions for growth and preferred land uses on maps for each planning area. Three maps of suggested land uses were developed for Downtown and South Wasilla Heights; and two maps were developed for the Airport and Transportation Museum area.

Next, a brief presentation provided an overview of the area plans and the key topics that will be addressed in the plans. The public participation steps in the process as well as the significance and results of each step were also explained, including the Visioning Committee, the focus groups, the charrette, the school project, and the public meeting that night.

After the presentation, there was a question and answer session. The participants were encouraged to share comments and/or ask questions about the process to date and the maps with suggested land uses in each area developed at the charrette. Following this, participants were invited to study the suggested land use maps further and provide written comments identifying what they like and dislike about each. Blank maps of each area were also provided for participants to draw new ideas on. Several participants requested that maps be mailed to them so they could make suggestions and/or give friends and neighbors an additional opportunity to comment also.

Summary of Comments

Question and Answer Session

As the plan progresses and the City of Wasilla identifies specific parcels of land for future development, can the City purchase those parcels and charge rent for a different use until the City can develop the parcel(s) for its identified use?

Currently, the planning team is identifying and reviewing tools and implementation methods that can be used to attain the community vision for each of the three areas. Funding will often be an issue and potential obstacle for scenarios like this. However, this is the “out-of-the-box” thinking that should be presented to the City Council. The City Council may be reluctant to advise spending tax dollars this way, but if the idea

originates with the citizens and citizens are supportive of it, then the City Council may see opportunities like this differently. Ideas like this should be shared throughout the remainder of the process, as well as after adoption of the plans.

Will goals and objectives that are identified in these plans be executed? For instance, there has been a lot of talk throughout the years about an expanded/new library, yet it does not appear to be going anywhere. Will this happen with these plans?

The library issues are being addressed, and an architect has been hired. Regarding these area plans, it will be important to establish priorities. These plans are a roadmap for the future of the three areas. Wasilla is developing two factors that are necessary to achieve the goals identified in the plans: continued public support and enthusiasm demonstrated to the Planning Commission and City Council, coupled with suitable and realistic implementation mechanisms. Plans often fail because of lack of specificity regarding responsibilities for implementing actions identified in the plan. Completing basic and straightforward tasks early on help achieve larger successes in the long-term.

Written Comment Session (maps are attached at the end for more detail)

Downtown (D1)

Note: ATV crossings were suggested on this map at the Parks Highway and Crusey Street, and at the Parks Highway and Wasair Drive.

Things I LIKE about the suggested land uses	Things I do NOT LIKE about the suggested land uses
Nothing identified	ATV crossings should be located only at current at-grade railroad crossings. There should be no new crossings of the railroad in the core area.

Downtown (D2)

Note: There were no suggested changes to the location of historical buildings on this map.

Things I LIKE about the suggested land uses	Things I do NOT LIKE about the suggested land uses
I second keeping historical buildings left where they are for a place to go to “see” old Wasilla.	Nothing identified
Keep current City Hall building where it is as it is—a historic building.	

Downtown (D3)

Note: There were no suggested changes to the location of historical buildings on this map. It was suggested that the post office move across the Parks Highway to a lot by Iliamna Street and Susitna Avenue. City and state government offices were suggested to be located between Knik Avenue and Willow Street, off of Herning Avenue.

Things I LIKE about the suggested land uses	Things I do NOT LIKE about the suggested land uses
Leaving museum and historic park where they are.	Nothing identified
Yes, post office needs to be moved.	
Current City Hall building should remain where it is as one of the historic buildings in the original Wasilla downtown area.	

South Wasilla Heights (S1)

Note: On this map, it was suggested that the library and post office relocate to the southeast portion of this planning area on the Palmer-Wasilla Highway. A middle school was suggested across the highway from the library.

Things I LIKE about the suggested land uses	Things I do NOT LIKE about the suggested land uses
I like the post office where you have it.	I think the library should be closer to schools—so students can walk to it after school.

South Wasilla Heights (S2)

Things I LIKE about the suggested land uses	Things I do NOT LIKE about the suggested land uses
Nothing identified	Nothing identified

South Wasilla Heights (S3)

Note: On this map, the railroad depot building was located south of the Parks Highway on Railroad Avenue. An overpass was suggested over the railroad across from Crusey Street. Box Stores were suggested in the southern portion of this planning area. The suggested location for the museum is adjacent to a visitor center south of the Parks Highway on Railroad Avenue. An area for restaurants was illustrated in the central west portion of this planning area off the Knik-Goosebay Road.

Things I LIKE about the suggested land uses	Things I do NOT LIKE about the suggested land uses
Railroad depot should stay where it is for historic reasons.	Be careful to route pedestrian trails/off-road vehicles through <u>current</u> crossings.
This is a perfect site for a tall restaurant offering views of the Talkeetna Mountains, the Alaska Range, and Denali.	No more box stores.
	Do not move the museum to the spot indicated—unless this is a different museum.
	Railroad depot is probably not located properly—check with the City—they have a plan to move.

Airport and Transportation Museum Area (A1)

Note: The Airport and Transportation Museum area is south of the Parks Highway and no portion of the area's boundaries are adjacent to the highway. Restaurants were suggested in the southeast portion of this planning area.

Things I LIKE about the suggested land uses	Things I do NOT LIKE about the suggested land uses
Nothing identified	Restaurants need to be close to the Parks Highway.

Airport and Transportation Museum Area (A2)

Note: On this map, a bike path was suggested to skirt the northern boundary of this planning area.

Things I LIKE about the suggested land uses	Things I do NOT LIKE about the suggested land uses
Very good. Needs to be merged with A1.	Nothing identified
Tie proposed bike path into existing bike path on the Parks Highway.	

Blank Maps and General Comments

DOWNTOWN

Parking is suggested at the corner of West Herning Avenue and Lucille Street.

An existing plan identifies the Synder Road railroad crossing is unsafe and should be closed. Alternative access should be provided. Access could be rerouted from Pioneer Drive located at the northeast end of Lucille Lake through Hallea Lane located at the northwest end of Lucille Lake. There is a utility easement adjacent to Lucas Road that

crosses the Parks Highway and ties into Selina Lane that could provide alternate access across the railroad.

Need walkability in downtown area to get around better; make it a more pleasurable experience.

Move the old fire station (now used as a repair shop) and make it corner parking for the museum and historic park and small shops in the area.

Perhaps use the (existing) post office for a library.

Once vacated, the post office building should be reused for something compatible with schools and historic area.

When the new library is built, have the “old” library building become part of the museum for use of 1) art display, 2) historic research, and 3) possible small meeting area.

Some streets in downtown area should be one way and accommodate heavy traffic use.

Wonderland Park is a great asset to the City. There should be signage on the Parks Highway indicating where it is

There should be a walking/skate corridor between Wonderland Park and the schools.

SOUTH WASILLA HEIGHTS

A tall (elevated) restaurant that offers views of Denali is suggested in the area west of the Home Depot.

AIRPORT AND TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM AREA

An existing plan identifies a railroad maintenance facility next to the transportation museum. This facility could also support commuter rail.

An existing plan identifies a potential multi-modal facility supporting Park’n’Ride west of Church Road and north of Aviation Avenue in the northeast corner of the Airport and Transportation Museum area.

There is an existing plan that identifies there should be grade separated crossings with a tight diamond interchange at the Church Road railroad crossing and at the intersection of Church Road and the Parks Highway. These improvements would be funded through the Highway Safety Improvement Program.

Is there any place in this area where a commuter rail station might be? Maybe down off Glenwood by Old Matanuska Road.

THROUGHOUT WASILLA

Move forward with the plan that the railroad would not relocate and elevate track through Wasilla.

Plan for access across the tracks during a 2-year construction period of elevating the tracks.

Review the Downtown Couplet Study.

The City may have concepts identified if the railroad right-of-way was vacated.

This page intentionally left blank.

Appendix C – School Project

The Wasilla Area Plans will assist to shape the community as today's high school students become part of the workforce and local leadership. A curriculum was developed, which supported the existing curriculum and education objectives for the school district, to engage youth in the planning process. This appendix includes the curriculum and summary notes from the sessions with the high school students.

Almost all of the groups drew the boundary of Downtown to include more area than original boundaries. Iditapark was often included, as were the school campuses.

The students illustrated a strong desire for centrally located urban amenities. They tended to locate facilities and services that are important to teens near the high school. Such amenities included a Department of Motor Vehicles office, driver's education center, gas station, shopping mall, public transportation routes, movie theatre, pool/water park, teen center, athletic club/YMCA.

While some of the students' ideas may be viewed as naive or dismissed as impractical, many of the suggestions directly contributed to development of the community's vision for Downtown. The sessions generated practical learning opportunities; the students are engaged in the planning process and are looking forward to the review and implementation processes. We would like to acknowledge the students of Wasilla High School, teacher Sandy Aschenbrenner, and Principal Dwight Probasco for their contributions to the Wasilla Area Plans. We regret that the busy school year limited their participation to the Downtown portion of the plan.

Common Ideas

- Paint Ball Park
- Water park
- Bike paths
- Golf
- Concert hall
- Ferry transportation on Lucille Lake
- Strip mall
- Food Courts
- ATV park/trails
- Amusement park (in SWH)
- Movie /drive-in theatre
- Pedestrian oriented development and sidewalks

Other Highlights

- Underpass along Parks Highway in the Downtown area
- A better Alaska Club/YMCA
- Dirt bike track
- Parks Highway through downtown as toll
- Skate shop next to the skate park
- Hotel
- Town Square (with fountain)
- College campus
- Incorporate snowboard activities in the winter into the skate park
- Homeless center
- Schools primarily stay where they are, but be expanded

Specific Stores to Encourage Locating in Wasilla

- Sonic
- Olive Garden
- Zumies
- Torrid
- Hello Kitty Store
- Domino's
- Dairy Queen
- Pizza Hut
- Hollister
- AE
- Cabela's
- Starbuck's
- Ice cream shop
- Digital Cup
- Krispy Kreme
- Abercrombie and Fitch

Wasilla Youth Involvement Project:

Activities to Engage Youth in Visioning the Future



Produced for
City of Wasilla,
Community and Economic Development Department,
Planning Commission, and City Council

Prepared by
URS Corporation
2700 Gambell Street, Suite 200
Anchorage, AK 99503-2835
Heather M. Coulehan, principal author

November 2006

April Brehm
Jon Isaacs
Joan Kluwe

This page intentionally left blank.

WASILLA YOUTH INVOLVEMENT PROJECT:

Activities to Engage Youth in Visioning the Future

**Produced for the City of Wasilla
Community and Economic Development Department,
Planning Commission, and City Council**

**Produced by URS Corp.
2700 Gambell
Anchorage, AK 99503
Heather M. Coulehan, principal author**

**April Brehm
Jon Isaacs
Joan Kluwe**

November 2006

Wasilla Youth Involvement Project

Table of Contents

Section One Introduction to Wasilla Youth Involvement Project

Section Two Activity Objectives & Standards

Section Three Lesson Plans

Section Four Supporting Materials

Developmental Assets

Map of Planning Locations

Discussion & Essay Questions

Excerpts from the 1996 Comprehensive Plan (Chapters 1 & 2)

Graph Handouts

Section 1

This page intentionally left blank.

Wasilla Youth Involvement Project: Activities to Engage Youth in Visioning the Future

"Mat-Su Borough School District develops citizens for a global society by inspiring students to learn, achieve, and care."

-Mat-Su Borough School District website

City of Wasilla Area Plans

The City of Wasilla Comprehensive Plan, approved in April 1996, has guided development in Wasilla for the past 10 years. Currently, the City of Wasilla is developing Area Plans to guide development in three areas of the community, specifically Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and the Airport and Transportation Museum areas. The plans will define a vision for each area and help to guide decisions for future growth and development. Community input is needed regarding existing and future growth for these portions of the city. The City has formed a Vision Steering Team to guide and review the planning process. The team is composed of community residents from various stakeholder groups who will work to represent all interests in the process.

Because these area plans will be affecting changes in Wasilla as today's high school students become part of the workforce and local leadership, the City is very interested in engaging youth in the planning process. The planning team would like to work with the school district to involve high students in a manner that supports existing curriculum and education objectives. The goals of the Wasilla Youth Involvement Project include:

1. Increase students' awareness of their role in local government.
2. Raise students' knowledge of community planning and its role in local government.
3. Incorporate students' visions for their community into the Area Plans.
4. Promote a sense of community and commitment to the well being of Wasilla.

Mat-Su Borough School District Priorities and Standards

The Wasilla Youth Involvement Project supports two of the Mat-Su School Board priorities for the 2006-07 school year. The project activities directly explore ways to best plan for the future and also promote high instructional standards based on the knowledge and skills students will need in the future.

All of the project activities support selected Alaska State Content Standards and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Performance Standards. Project activities can increase students' proficiency in:

- English/Language Arts (Reading and Writing)
- Geography
- Government & Citizenship
- Mathematics
- Science
- Employability

The table in Section Two specifies the objectives for each activity, as well as the state content standards and the NCLB performance standards the activity supports. The project activities make learning relevant and meaningful as students learn about and contribute to a local government process that directly affects their lives.

Developmental Assets

The fourth goal of the Wasilla Youth Involvement Project is to promote a sense of community and commitment to the well being of the community. The project promotes a sense of community by building key developmental assets in youth. Assets are building blocks in children's lives that help them grow up strong, capable, and caring.

The State of Alaska is a leader in the national youth developmental asset movement. The Alaska Initiative for Community Engagement (Alaska ICE) is the community outreach component of the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB). Alaska ICE compliments the AASB mission by giving Alaskans the information, tools, and assistance to work together and engage in shared responsibility for preparing Alaska's youth for the future. Section Four includes more information on developmental assets and Alaska ICE.

By involving youth in the community planning process, Wasilla will be building specific developmental assets in youth. These assets include:

- **Community values youth** (asset #7): Youth believes that community adults value young people.
- **Youth have useful roles** (asset #8): Youth are taught and given useful roles in community life.
- **High expectations** (asset #16): Parents, community members, and teachers encourage youth to do well.
- **Equality and social justice** (asset #27): Youth respects self and others; places high value on sharing and cooperation.
- **Responsibility** (asset #30): Youth accepts and takes personal responsibility.

- **Personal power** (asset #37): Youth feels in control over “many things that happen to me”
- **Positive view of personal future** (asset #40): Youth is optimistic about his or her personal future.

The project demonstrates to youth in a very concrete way that the city values them and their ideas, and encourages youth to take an active role in local government to shape the future. The project reinforces the high expectations the community has for youth as they accept their responsibility in creating a positive future for all residents of Wasilla.

Wasilla Youth Involvement Project Activities

The Wasilla Youth Involvement Project targets high school students and includes the choice of nine activities. The lesson plan for each activity can be found in Section Three and provides teachers with detailed instructions for facilitating the activity. In addition, the planning team is available to assist with implementing all of the project activities. The activities include:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Activity 1 | Introduction to the Community Planning Process |
| Activity 2 | Reading Technical Material: Background for Community Planning |
| Activity 3 | Using Socioeconomic Data for Community Planning |
| Activity 4 | Reading Technical Material: Understanding the Issues in Wasilla |
| Activity 5 | Recognizing Wasilla’s Strengths, Resources, & Major Issues |
| Activity 6 | Small Group Activity: Identifying Challenges and Solutions |
| Activity 7 | Focus Group: A Classic Community Planning Method |
| Activity 8 | Individual Writing Project: My Vision for the Future |
| Activity 9 | Student Vision Public Awareness Campaign |

Activities 1 - 4 are background or foundation activities. They prepare students for participating in a community planning activity. The community planning activity occurs in Activities 5 - 8. These activities are different formats in which to facilitate community planning - in a small group format, in a focus group setting, or through an individual writing project. Activity 9 celebrates student contributions to the community planning process and to the vision of the future for Wasilla.

Implementing the Project Activities

Each activity has a suggested time, but can either be lengthened or shortened depending on classroom needs. The activities can be facilitated as stand alone activities or can be paired with others to create a unit or theme. Activities 2, 3, 4, and 8 could

lend themselves well to homework assignments. Following are a few ideas for pairing the activities:

Comprehensive:

- Activity 1
- Activity 2 (homework)
- Activity 3
- Activity 4 (homework)
- Activity 5
- Choice of Activity 6 or 7
- Activity 8 (homework)

Intermediate

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Activity 1 | Activity 1 |
| Activity 3 | Activity 5 |
| Activity 5 | Choice of Activity 6 or 7 |
| Choice of Activity 6, 7, or 8 | Activity 8 (homework) |

Brief

- Activity 1
- Activity 7

The intent of the Wasilla Youth Involvement Project is certainly not to create additional work for school personnel, but rather to provide meaningful learning opportunities in which students can apply what they learn in class to real life. Planning team members can be a resource for teachers implementing project activities. With prior arrangements, team members can:

- Act as guest speakers in classrooms;
- Co-teach lessons with the classroom teacher;
- Teach the lessons;
- Facilitate focus groups; or,
- Provide project summaries and other ideas for the publicity campaign.

Citizens of a Global Society

Wasilla is a fairly young community. Children under age 19 comprise 36% of the population. It is these youth who will be the citizens of a global society as they become the community leaders and residents affected by the Wasilla Area Plans. The Wasilla Youth Involvement Project will help youth build the academic proficiency they will need to take on these roles and will help youth become strong, capable, and caring adults committed to the future of their community.

Section 2

This page intentionally left blank.

Wasilla Youth Involvement Project Objectives & Standards

Objectives	State Content Standards	NCLB Performance Standards
Activity 1: An Introduction to the Community Planning Process		
<p>Explain the purpose and process of community planning.</p> <p>Recognize current community planning efforts in Wasilla.</p> <p>Identify the three areas targeted for current planning efforts.</p> <p>Understand students' role in planning efforts.</p>	<p>Geography: A, B, D, E, F</p> <p>Government: E, G</p>	
Activity 2: Reading Technical Material - Background for Wasilla Community Planning		
<p>Read technical material in a public planning document.</p> <p>Understand the background information necessary to community planning.</p> <p>Read about the history, geology, soils, topography, drainage, climate, and wildlife of Wasilla.</p>	<p>English: B, D</p> <p>Geography: E, F</p> <p>Government: E</p> <p>Science: C, D, F</p>	<p>Reading: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 4.9</p> <p>Science: C2, D2</p>
Activity 3: Using Socioeconomic Data for Community Planning		
<p>Explain how socioeconomic data is important in community planning.</p> <p>Use socioeconomic data to create and discuss graphs.</p> <p>Recognize how students fit into the socioeconomic data.</p>	<p>Math: A, C, E</p> <p>Geography: A, B, D, F</p> <p>Government: E, G</p> <p>Employability: B</p>	<p>Math: 6.4.1, 7.4.1, 8.4.2, 10.4.1</p>
Activity 4: Reading Technical Material - Understanding the Issues in Wasilla		
<p>Read technical material in a public planning document.</p> <p>Understand the major planning issues and strategies discussed in the Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p>Examine these issues and strategies in relation to the Area Plans.</p>	<p>English: B, D</p> <p>Geography: E, F, D</p> <p>Government: E, G</p>	<p>Reading: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 4.9</p>
Activity 5: Recognizing Wasilla's Strengths, Resources & Major Issues		
<p>Recognize the community's strengths and resources.</p> <p>Identify the major issues for each targeted planning area.</p> <p>Understand the relevance to students' lives.</p>	<p>Geography: E, F, D</p> <p>Government: E, G</p>	

Objectives	State Content Standards	NCLB Performance Standards
Activity 6: Small Group Activity - Identifying Challenges & Solutions		
<p>Participate in a community planning activity. Identify two major issues that could be addressed in the Area Plans. Identify strengths and resources that could be used to address the issues. Identify solutions to the issues and who would implement the solutions.</p>	<p>English: C, D, E Geography: F Government: E, G</p>	
Activity 7: Focus Group - A Classic Community Planning Method		
<p>Participate in a community planning activity. Identify major issues that could be addressed in the Area Plans. Identify strengths and resources that could be used to address the issues. Identify solutions to the issues and who would implement the solutions.</p>	<p>English: D, E Geography: F Government: E, G</p>	
Activity 8: Individual Writing Project - My Vision for the Future		
<p>Strengthen writing skills as part of a community planning activity. Identify major issues that could be addressed in the Area Plans. Identify strengths and resources that could be used to address the issues. Identify solutions to the issues and who would implement the solutions.</p>	<p>English: A, B, D Geography: F Government: E, G</p>	<p>Writing: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3</p>
Activity 9: Student Vision Public Awareness Campaign		
<p>Show students that the community values their ideas. Reinforce that students have an important role in the community and in local government. Educate students who did not participate in activities about community planning. Engage parents and other adults in student learning. Promote parent and school cooperation. Help students understand and respect the perspectives of others.</p>	<p>English: A Geography: F Government: E</p>	

Alaska State Content Standards Wasilla Youth Involvement Project

Geography

- A. A student should be able to make and use maps, globes, and graphs to gather, analyze, and report spatial (geographic) information. (Activities 1, 3)
- B. A student should be able to utilize, analyze, and explain information about the human and physical features of places, regions. (Activities 1, 3)
- D. A student should be able to interpret spatial characteristics of human systems, including migration, movement, interactions of cultures, economic activities, settlement patterns, and political units in the state, nation, and world. (Activities 1, 3, 4, 5)
- E. A student should understand and be able to evaluate how humans and physical environments interact. (Activities 1, 2, 4, 5)
- F. A student should be able to use geography to understand the world by interpreting the past, knowing the present, and preparing for the future. (Activities 1 - 9)

Government & Citizenship

- E. A student should have the knowledge and skills necessary to participate effectively as an informed and responsible citizen. (Activities 1 - 9)
- G. A student should understand the impact of economic choices and be able to participate effectively in the local, state, national, and global economies. (Activities 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

English/Language Arts

- A. A student should be able to speak and write well for a variety of purposes and audiences. (Activities 8, 9)
- B. A student should be a competent and thoughtful reader, listener, and viewer of literature, technical materials and a variety of other information. (Activities 2, 4, 8)
- C. A student should be able to identify and select from multiple strategies in order to complete projects independently and cooperatively. (Activity 6)
- D. A student should be able to think logically and reflectively in order to present and explain positions based on relevant and reliable information. (Activities 2, 4, 6, 7, 8)
- E. A student should understand and respect the perspectives of others in order to communicate effectively. (Activities 6, 7)

Science

- C. A student should understand and be able to apply the concepts, models, theories, facts, evidence, systems, and processes of life science. (Activity 2)
- D. A student should understand and be able to apply the concepts, models, theories, facts, evidence, and systems of earth and space sciences. (Activity 2)
- F. A student should understand the dynamic relationship among scientific, cultural, social, and personal perspectives. (Activity 2)

State Content Standards, continued

Mathematics

- A. A student should understand mathematical facts, concepts, principles and theories. (Activity 3)
- C. A student should understand and be able to form and use appropriate methods to define and explain mathematical relationships. (Activity 3)
- E. A student should be able to apply mathematical concepts and processes to situations within and outside of school. (Activity 3)

Employability

- B. A student should be able to identify career interests and plan for career options. (Activity 3)

No Child Left Behind Performance Standards Wasilla Youth Involvement Project

Reading

- 4.1 Students apply knowledge of syntax, roots, and word origins, and use context clues and reference materials to determine the meaning of new words and to comprehend text. (Activities 1, 4)
- 4.2 Students summarize information or ideas from a text and make connections between summarized information or sets of ideas and related topics or information. (Activities 1, 4)
- 4.3 (a) Students identify and assess the validity, accuracy, and adequacy of evidence that supports an author's main ideas (b) Students critique the power, logic, reasonableness, and audience appeal of arguments advanced in public documents. (Activities 1, 4)
- 4.7 Students express and support assertions, with evidence from the text or experience, about the effectiveness of a text. (Activities 1, 4)
- 4.9 Students analyze the effects of cultural and historical influences on texts. (Activities 1, 4)

Science

- C2 Students develop an understanding of the structure, function, behavior, development, life cycles, and diversity of living organisms. (Activity 2)
- D2 Students develop an understanding of the origins, ongoing processes, and forces that shape the structure, composition, and physical history of the Earth. (Activity 2)

Performance Standards, continued

Writing

- 4.1 Students write a coherent composition with a thesis statement that is supported with evidence, well-developed paragraphs, transitions, and a conclusion. (Activity 8)
- 4.2 Students demonstrate understanding of elements of discourse when completing expressive, persuasive, research-based, informational, or analytic writing assignments. (Activity 8)
- 4.3 Students use the conventions of standard English independently and consistently including grammar, sentence structure, paragraph structure, punctuation, spelling, and usage. (Activity 8)

Math

- 6.4.1 Students analyze and draw inferences from a wide variety of data sources that summarize data: construct graphical displays with and without technology. (Activity 3)
- 7.4.1 Students recognize and formulate mathematical problems from within and outside the field of mathematics. (Activity 3)
- 8.4.2 Students use numerical, graphic, and symbolic representations to support oral and written communication about math ideas. (Activity 3)
- 10.4.2 Students apply mathematical skills and processes to global issues. (Activity 3)

This page intentionally left blank.

Section 3

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 1

Introduction to the Community Planning Process

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 1

An Introduction to the Community Planning Process

SUGGESTED TIME: 50 minutes

OBJECTIVES

- Explain the purpose and process of community planning.
- Recognize current community planning efforts in Wasilla.
- Identify the three areas targeted for current planning efforts.
- Understand students' role in community planning efforts.

CONTENT STANDARDS

Geography: A, B, D, E, F

Government: E, G

MATERIALS

Map of Area Plan Locations (handout)

PREPARATION

1. Copy the map handout for each student.

LESSON PLAN

Plans in Our Lives (10 minutes)

1. Go-Around

Ask each student to name one thing that she or he needs to make a plan for in life. Answers might include things like saving money for college, buying something expensive like a car, etc. Give an example of something you made a plan for to start to the go-around.

2. Discussion

Ask students the following question and write their answers on the board. If you were planning a birthday party for a friend, what kinds of things would you need to include in your plan (resources, materials, people, money, etc.)?

Understanding the Community Planning Process (15 minutes)

1. Mini-Lecture

Just like planning for a birthday party, the community planning process is a way to look into the future and think about how to get there. Why does a community like Wasilla need community plans? State law says that communities need plans to guide land management and many federal and state agencies require an approved plan before they give out grants and funds.

The Wasilla Comprehensive Plan was approved in April 1996. A comprehensive plan is a way to look into the future and think about how to get there. The word “comprehensive” means to look at the big picture. A comprehensive plan shows community needs and sets priorities. It is an opportunity for people in the community to say what is important and to identify actions that need to be taken.

The City of Wasilla is currently in the process of developing three additional plans. These are Area Plans that will guide development in three specific areas of the city – Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and the Airport and Transportation Museum area.

2. Discussion

Ask students the following question and write their answers on the board in a column next to their ideas about planning a birthday party. What kinds of things do communities need to include in their plans when they are preparing for the future? How do these things compare to the list of things to consider when planning a birthday party?

3. Mini-Lecture

Wasilla’s most valuable assets today may be location and available space. As Wasilla continues to grow, Area Plans are needed to maintain the value and utility of Wasilla’s many assets, while creating new opportunities. With continuing growth, the attributes that originally drew today’s residents to the area could be

transformed as additional land is developed. Early planning and citizen involvement is crucial to maintaining the quality of life that drew people to Wasilla.

The City of Wasilla has identified three specific areas where existing and future growth need guidance from the community. The city is developing Area Plans for Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and the Airport and Transportation Museum area. The City has formed a Vision Steering Team to guide and review the planning process. The team is composed of community residents who will work to represent all stakeholders' interests.

As a high school student, you are a stakeholder too! When you enter the workforce and become part of the local leadership, these Area Plans will be in effect. Because these plans will affect you, the Vision Steering Team wants to hear your concerns about the community and your ideas for solutions. You have a different, and equally as important, viewpoint than adults in the community.

Wasilla Area Plans (20 minutes)

1. Map of Wasilla

Distribute the map of the three planning areas.

Downtown – This is the oldest part of Wasilla and is situated between Crusey and Lucille Streets to the east and west, Nelson Street to the North and Park Avenue to the south. It is an area of mixed use, without a specific identity or vision.

South Wasilla Heights – The Palmer-Wasilla Highway extension, the Parks Highway, and Knik-Goose Bay Road frame the South Wasilla Heights area. Home Depot is located along the eastern boundary of this area. Currently this area is mixed use, with both commercial and rural residential development.

Air and Transportation Museum – This industrial section of Wasilla is located around the east side of South Mack Drive, the Alaska Railroad right-of-way, Aviation Avenue, and Lucille Creek. The Multi-Use Sports Complex, museum of Alaska Transportation and Industry, and the Wasilla Airport are located in this planning area.

2. Discussion

Facilitate a discussion about community planning using the following questions:

- Where do you live in relation to the three areas identified for planning?

- When do you go to the three identified areas? How do you and your family use these areas?
- What do you think “mixed use” means? What does “commercial and residential development” mean? What does “industrial section” mean?
- Why do you think these three areas have been identified for community planning?
- Why should you give your input? Why is it important for the City to hear from high school students?

ACTIVITY 2

Reading Technical Material: Background for
Community Planning

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 2

Reading Technical Material: Background for Wasilla Community Planning

SUGGESTED TIME: 50 - 75 minutes (or as homework assignment)

OBJECTIVES

- Read technical material in a public planning document.
- Understand the background information necessary to community planning.
- Read about the history, geology, soils, topography, drainage, climate, and wildlife of Wasilla.

CONTENT STANDARDS

English: B, D
Geography: E, F
Government: E
Science: C, D, F

NCLB PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Reading: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 4.9
Science: C2, D2

MATERIALS

Excerpt from the *Comprehensive Plan*, Chapter 2: Background for Planning (pp 22-32)
Map of Area Plan Locations (handout)
Chapter 2 Discussion Questions

PREPARATION

1. Copy Chapter 2, map, and discussion questions for each student.

LESSON PLAN

Reading to Understand the Community (30 - 55 minutes)

1. Reading Technical Material

One of the first steps in the community planning process is to learn as much as possible about the location and setting of the community. You must know about the history, geology, topography, climate, and wildlife of the community. These are all issues that effect community planning in different ways.

Read *Chapter 2: Background for Planning* (pages 22-32) from the Comprehensive Plan. Reading this information will help you understand some of the things that need to be considered in developing the Area Plans for Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and the Airport and Transportation Museum area.

Discussing Wasilla & Community Planning (20 minutes)

1. Discussion

Distribute the Map of Area Plan Locations and facilitate a discussion based on the following questions:

- Develop a timeline describing Wasilla's history. How much of this history did you already know? What was new information to you?
- What would you say were the two most important factors in the development of Wasilla?
- How do the three planning areas fit into Wasilla's history?
- What soil types does Wasilla have? Which ones are good for development? Why?
- What do you think the soil is like in the three areas targeted for planning?
- How do topography and drainage effect community development?
- What are the topography and drainage like in the areas targeted for planning?
- How does knowing about the community's climate and wildlife help in community planning?

ACTIVITY 3

Using Socioeconomic Data for Community Planning

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 3

Using Socioeconomic Data for Community Planning

SUGGESTED TIME: 50-75 minutes (or as homework assignment)

OBJECTIVES

- Explain how socioeconomic data is important in community planning.
- Use socioeconomic data to create and discuss graphs.
- Recognize how students fit into the socioeconomic data.

CONTENT STANDARDS

Math: A, C, E
Geography: A, B, D, F
Government: E, G
Employability: B

NCLB PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Math: 6.4.1, 7.4.1, 8.4.2, 10.4.1

MATERIALS

Map of Area Plan Locations
Wasilla Census History (data handout)
Blank column graph
Wasilla Census History Column Graph
Wasilla's Population by Age (data handout)
Blank pie chart
Population by Age Pie Chart
Employment by Industry (data handout)
Blank bar graph
Employment by Industry Bar Graph
Wasilla Land Use (data handout)
Wasilla Land Use Pie Chart
Graph Discussion Questions

PREPARATION

1. Decide if you will have students create graphs based on the data or if you will just discuss the pre-made graphs.
2. Decide if you will use all four graphs or only selected ones.
3. Copy handouts for students.

LESSON PLAN

Understanding Socioeconomic Data (20 - 45 minutes)

1. Mini-Lecture

Understanding the local economy and population is another important step in the community planning process. Looking at socioeconomic data, or data about the economy and population, of Wasilla can help guide planning efforts.

2. Creating Socioeconomic Graphs

Have students create all of the following graphs or have students create only selected graphs. If time is limited, distribute the completed charts and graphs and then proceed to the discussion questions.

Column Graph: Wasilla's Population History

Distribute the "Wasilla Census Population History" data handout and the blank column graph sheet. Instruct students to create a column graph that shows how Wasilla's population has increased since 1930.

Pie Chart: Wasilla's Population by Age

Distribute the "Wasilla Population by Age" data handout and the blank pie chart sheet. Instruct students to (1) calculate the percentage of population for each age category and (2) create a pie chart showing the Wasilla population by age.

Bar Graph: Employment by Industry

Distribute the "Employment by Industry" data handout and the blank bar graph sheet. Instruct students to create a bar graph showing Wasilla employment by industry.

Pie Chart: Wasilla Land Use

Distribute the "Wasilla Land Use" data handout and the blank pie chart sheet. Instruct students to (1) calculate the percentage of land use for each category and (2) create a pie chart showing Wasilla land use.

How Socioeconomic Data Influences Community Planning (30 minutes)

1. Discussion: Wasilla's Population History

- What does the column graph tell us?
- Why do you think Wasilla's population has been increasing, especially since 1980?
- What do you think Wasilla's population will be in 2010?
- How are people, land, and government affected when population increases?
- Distribute the Map of Area Plan Locations. How will population increase affect the three areas targeted for community planning (Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and Airport and Transportation Museum)?

2. Discussion: Wasilla's Population by Age

- What does this graph tell us?
- What age group has the highest percentage of people? Second highest? Third?
- How will having a young population affect Wasilla?
- How does age influence community planning?
- What does this mean for you as one of the young people?

3. Discussion: Employment by Industry

- What does this graph tell us?
- What industry employs the most people?
- In 1996, 38% of the Wasilla population commuted to Anchorage or the North Slope. What industries do you think people would need to commute for?
- Do you think 38% still commutes or do you think the percentage is higher or lower today? Why?
- How does employment affect community planning?
- Which of these industries interest you in terms of a career? What would you need to do to prepare for this career?

4. Discussion: Wasilla Land Use

- What does this graph tell us?
- What type of land use do you think is most common in each of the three areas targeted for planning (Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and Airport and Transportation Museum)?
- How does type of land use affect community planning?
- The data in this chart is from 1991. How do you think land use has changed since this data was collected? Why?

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 4

Reading Technical Material: Understanding
the Issues in Wasilla

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 4

Reading Technical Material: Understanding the Community Planning Issues

SUGGESTED TIME: 50-75 minutes (or as homework assignment)

OBJECTIVES

- Read technical material in a public planning document.
- Understand the major planning issues and strategies discussed in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Examine these issues and strategies in relation to the Area Plans.

CONTENT STANDARDS

English: B, D
Geography: E, F, D
Government: E, G

NCLB PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Reading: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 4.9

MATERIALS

Excerpt from the *Comprehensive Plan*, Chapter 1: Summary & strategies (pp 4-21)
Map of Area Plan Locations
Chapter 1 Discussion Questions

PREPARATION

1. Copy Chapter 1, the map, and discussion questions for each student.

LESSON PLAN

Reading to Understand the Issues (30 – 55 minutes)

1. Reading Technical Material

The Comprehensive Plan, approved in 1996, focuses on four areas for planning. The plan identifies goals and strategies for each area. The planning areas include:

- Land Use
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Transportation

Read *Chapter 1: Summary & Strategies* (pages 4-21) from the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter discusses Land Use, Parks and Recreation, Public Facilities and Services, and Transportation. Reading this information will help you understand the issues involved in developing the Area Plans for Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and the Airport and Transportation Museum area.

Discussing the Issues (20 minutes)

1. Discussion

- Why does Wasilla need a Comprehensive Plan?
- The 2% sales tax accounts for what percentage of the city's budget?
- What are some of the improvements that occurred between 1992 and 1996?
- What are some of the economic challenges that have faced Wasilla between 1992 and 1996?
- What strategies are recommended to expand tourism?
- What is the issue with snow machines?
- What kind of events and land use trends may affect the community?
- What land use goals are included in the Plan?
- Which goals and/or strategies in the Parks and Recreation Plan are most interesting to you? Why?
- Which public facilities and services do you use most often? Have you seen any of the changes in these facilities or services that were recommended in the Plan?
- What transportation issues do you think are most important? Why?
- What has changed over the last 10 years since the Comprehensive Plan was approved? What has stayed the same?
- What are new issues that Wasilla is facing today?
- Distribute the Map of Area Plan Locations. Which of the issues identified in the Comprehensive Plan will affect each of the planning areas?

ACTIVITY 5

Recognizing Wasilla's Strengths, Resources,
& Major Issues

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 5

Recognizing Wasilla's Strengths, Resources, & Major Issues

SUGGESTED TIME: 50 minutes

OBJECTIVES

- Recognize Wasilla's strengths and resources.
- Identify the major issues for each targeted planning area.
- Understand the relevance of these issues to students' lives.

CONTENT STANDARDS

Geography: E, F, D

Government: E, G

MATERIALS

Flip chart paper, tape, & markers

Map of Area Plan Locations

PREPARATION

None

LESSON PLAN

Identifying Wasilla's Strength's and Resources (25 minutes)

1. Go-Around

Invite each student to share what she or he likes best about living in Wasilla. What are students proud of about living in Wasilla?

2. Brainstorm

Ask the class to list the strengths and resources (organizations, services, money, activities, etc.) of Wasilla. Record all answers on the board or on flip chart paper for use in another activity.

Identifying Wasilla's Major Issues (25 minutes)

1. Go-Around

Invite each student to share one regret she or he has about living in Wasilla. What do students wish were different about Wasilla?

2. Brainstorm

Divide the board into three columns (or use three pieces of flip chart paper). Label each column with one of the three planning areas – Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and Airport and Transportation Museum. Distribute the map.

Have students identify the major issues, challenges or needs for each area. Record their answers for use in another activity.

3. Discussion

- Which issues are of most concern to you and/or your family? Why?
- Which issues do you think need to take priority? Why?

*** After this activity, please give the planning team the brainstorming ideas from the class. The planning team will review the students' ideas to include them in the Area Plans.**

ACTIVITY 6

Small Group Activity: Identifying Challenges
and Solutions

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 6

Small Group Activity: Identifying Challenges and Solutions

SUGGESTED TIME: 50-75 minutes

OBJECTIVES

- Participate in a community planning activity.
- Identify two major issues that could be addressed in the Area Plans.
- Identify strengths and resources that could be used to address the issues.
- Identify solutions to the issues and who would implement the solutions.

CONTENT STANDARDS

English: C, D, E
Geography: F
Government: E, G

MATERIALS

Strengths, resources, and major issues brainstorming lists from activity 5
Flip chart paper & markers
Map of Area Plan Locations

PREPARATION

None

LESSON PLAN

Small Group Project: Visioning Our Community (30 - 55 minutes)

1. Small Group Work

Divide the class into small groups of three or four students. Explain to the small groups that they are going to participate in a community planning activity. They are actually going to come up with ideas that their community could use to address the challenges identified in Activity 5. The planning team will review their ideas to be included in the Area Plans.

Small groups should look at all of the major issues and challenges the class listed in Activity 5 and decide on the two issues they feel are most important in their own community. Give each small group two pieces of flip chart paper. Instruct the groups to divide each paper into three columns with the following headings:

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Community Strengths and Resources	Community Challenge or Issue	Solutions: What can be done to solve the problem? Who could implement this solution?

Step 1: Groups should write one of their community challenges in **column 2** on each piece of flip chart.

Step 2: Groups should answer two questions for each challenge they picked. “What can be done to solve this problem?” and “Who would implement the solution?” Emphasize that their suggestions must be realistic ideas that could actually be implemented in their community. Students can use words and/or drawings to describe their ideas. Groups should write their solution ideas in **column 3**.

Step 3: Groups should look at the list of community strengths and resources from the brainstorming list in Activity 5. For each challenge and solution they picked, groups should write down in **column 1** the strengths and resources their community could use to address the challenge.

Sharing the Vision (20 minutes)

1. Go-Around

Invite each group to share one challenge and one solution from their visioning session.

2. Discussion

- What similarities did you see among the groups, in terms of their ideas on challenges and solutions?
- What differences did you see?
- How do you feel about the future of your community? Why?

*** After this activity, please give the planning team the brainstorming ideas from each small group. The planning team will review the students’ ideas to include them in the Area Plans.**

ACTIVITY 7

Focus Group: A Classic Community Planning
Method

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 7

Focus Group: A Classic Community Planning Method

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

OBJECTIVES

- Participate in a community planning activity.
- Identify major issues that could be addressed in the Area Plans.
- Identify strengths and resources that could be used to address the issues.
- Identify solutions to the issues and who would implement the solutions.

CONTENT STANDARDS

English: D, E

Geography: F

Government: E, G

MATERIALS

Flip chart paper, tape, & markers

Map of Area Plan Locations

PREPARATION

1. Decide who will facilitate the focus group. Planning team members, teachers, or students themselves, can facilitate the focus group.
2. Training students as facilitators is an opportunity to empower young people with the knowledge and skills to be active leaders in the community planning process. Planning team members could meet with identified student leaders prior to the focus group to brief them about the Area Plans and to provide training on group facilitation.

LESSON PLAN

Community Strengths and Resources (30 minutes)

1. Go-Around and Brainstorm

Have the group finish this sentence, “The best thing about living in Wasilla is...” Record all answers on flip chart paper. Continue brainstorming a list of community strengths and resources.

Community Challenges, Weaknesses and Solutions (30 minutes)

1. Go-Around and Brainstorm

Ask the participants to finish this sentence, “What I regret about living in Wasilla is...” Generate a list of community challenges and weaknesses students think should be addressed in each Area Plan (Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and the Airport and Transportation Museum area). Record their ideas on flip chart paper so the whole group can see and remember the ideas.

For each issue, discuss solutions and who would be responsible for implementing the solution.

Vision for the Community (15 minutes)

1. Image for the Future

Give each participant a sheet of blank paper and tell them to think about one issue or challenge mentioned in the discussion that is most interesting to them. How could the community solve this challenge? Ask students to write a word or phrase or to draw a symbol that illustrates their vision for the future of their community.

2. Go-Around

When participants are finished with their image, invite each person to share their vision.

*** After this activity, please give the planning team the brainstorming ideas. The planning team will review the students’ ideas to include them in the Area Plans.**

ACTIVITY 8

Individual Writing Project: My Vision for the
Future

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 8

Individual Writing Project: My Vision for the Future

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes (or as homework assignment)

OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen writing skills as part of a community planning activity.
- Identify major issues that could be addressed in the Area Plans.
- Identify strengths and resources that could be used to address the issues.
- Identify solutions to the issues and who would implement the solutions.

CONTENT STANDARDS

English: A, B, D
Geography: F
Government: E, G

NCLB PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Writing: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3

MATERIALS

Strengths, resources, and major issues brainstorming lists from activity 5
Map of Area Plan Locations
Essay Questions

PREPARATION

None

LESSON PLAN

My Vision for the Future (10 minutes)

1. Mini-Lecture

Explain to the students that they will be working on a three-page assignment to describe their own vision for the future of their community. The first parts of the assignment will be a detailed essay about how the community can address their challenges. The last part of the assignment will be creating a drawing or symbol to illustrate their dreams for the future of their community.

2. Choosing an Issue

Instruct students to choose one challenge or weakness that is most interesting to them, from either class brainstorming or from the Comprehensive Plan. Students should answer these questions about the issue they chose:

- How would you describe this challenge to someone not from your community?
- Why is this issue interesting to you?
- How could Wasilla use its strengths and resources to deal with this challenge?
- Who would be responsible for implementing these ideas?

Writing about My Vision (50 minutes)

1. Essay

Students will be writing a four part essay about their vision for the community.

Part 1: Describe your community's strengths and resources. What do you like about living in your community? What is unique and special about your community?

Part 2: Define or describe your chosen challenge or weakness in detail. Explain your hopes, fears or concerns about the issue. How would you describe this issue to someone not from your community? Who or what is impacting or affecting this issue today? Why is this issue interesting to you?

Part 3: State how your community could use its resources and strengths to deal with this challenge. Who would be responsible for implementing these ideas?

Part 4: Create a symbol, drawing or abstract form to represent your hopes and dreams for the future of your community. Reassure students that it is okay if they can't draw well - a very simple symbol or an abstract form would be great!

Sharing the Vision (15 minutes)

1. Go-Around

Invite each student to share one of their solutions or their drawing from the "My Vision for the Future" essay assignment.

*** After this activity, please give the planning team the student essays. The planning team will review the students' ideas to include them in the Area Plans.**

ACTIVITY 9

Student Vision Public Awareness Campaign

This page intentionally left blank.

ACTIVITY 9

Student Vision Public Awareness Campaign

GOALS

- Show students that the community values their ideas.
- Reinforce that students have an important role in the community and in local government.
- Educate students who did not participate in activities about community planning.
- Engage parents and other adults in student learning.
- Promote parent and school cooperation.
- Help students understand and respect the perspectives of others.

CONTENT STANDARDS

English: A
Geography: F
Government: E

MATERIALS

Student work (essays, group projects, focus group notes or student-drawn images)

ACTIVITIES

Student Project Display

Display the small group project (activity 6) and the “My Vision of the Future” essays (activity 8) in schools, the district office, or other places in the community to educate students who did not participate in the project.

Parent Newsletter

Include students’ artwork and visioning ideas in parent newsletters or other school publications to engage parents and families in the project.

Website

Include the students' visioning ideas on the Mat-Su district website. Students' ideas support and compliment the statement on the website, *"Mat-Su Borough School District develops citizens for a global society by inspiring students to learn, achieve, and care."*

Speaking on the Issues

Describe students' vision of the future in the Mayor's and/or Vision Steering Team comments to highlight the valuable role youth have in the future of the community.

Community Events

Report on the Wasilla Youth Involvement Project at community events to encourage continued discussions by youth and elders on the future of the community.

Section 4

This page intentionally left blank.

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

This page intentionally left blank.

Developmental Assets

List of 40 developmental assets from pp 10-12 in *Helping Kids Succeed Alaskan Style*;

see also

Search Institute website: <http://www.search-institute.org/assets/40Assets.pdf>

and

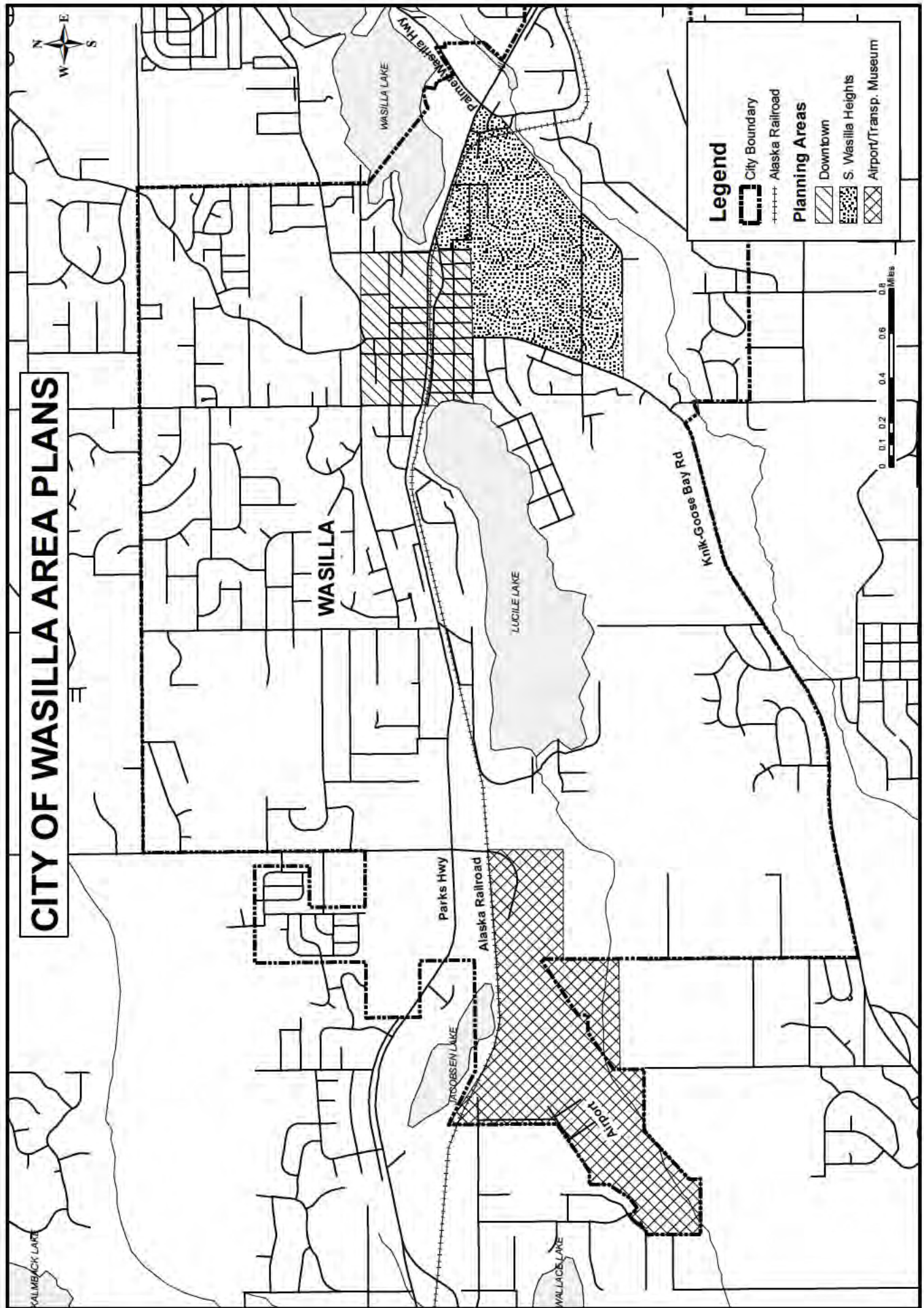
Alaska ICE website: <http://www.alaskaice.org> for information regarding the Assets Framework and the Alaska ICE Mission

This page intentionally left blank.

MAP OF PLANNING LOCATIONS

(Activities 1-8)

This page intentionally left blank.



This page intentionally left blank.

DISCUSSION & ESSAY QUESTIONS

(Activities 2, 3, 4, & 8)

This page intentionally left blank.

Reading Technical Material: Background for Wasilla Community Planning

Read *Chapter 2: Background for Planning* (pages 22-32) from the Comprehensive Plan. Reading this information will help you understand some of the things that need to be considered in developing the Area Plans for Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and the Airport and Transportation Museum area.

1. Develop a timeline describing Wasilla's history. How much of this history did you already know? What was new information to you?
2. What would you say were the two most important factors in the development of Wasilla?
3. How do the three planning areas fit into Wasilla's history?
4. What soil types does Wasilla have? Which ones are good for development? Why?
5. What do you think the soil is like in the three areas targeted for planning?
6. How do topography and drainage effect community development?
7. What are the topography and drainage like in the areas targeted for planning?
8. How does knowing about the community's climate and wildlife help in community planning?

Using Socioeconomic Data for Community Planning

1. Discussion: Wasilla's Population History

- What does the column graph tell us?
- Why do you think Wasilla's population has been increasing, especially since 1980?
- What do you think Wasilla's population will be in 2010?
- How are people, land, and government affected when population increases?
- How will population increase affect the three areas targeted for community planning (Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and Airport and Transportation Museum)? Refer to the map of Area Plan Locations.

2. Discussion: Wasilla's Population by Age

- What does this graph tell us?
- What age group has the highest percentage of people? Second highest? Third?
- How will having a young population affect Wasilla?
- How does age influence community planning?
- What does this mean for you as one of the young people?

3. Discussion: Employment by Industry

- What does this graph tell us?
- What industry employs the most people?
- In 1996, 38% of the Wasilla population commuted to Anchorage or the North Slope. What industries do you think people would need to commute for?
- Do you think 38% still commutes or do you think the percentage is higher or lower today? Why?
- How does employment affect community planning?
- Which of these industries interest you in terms of a career? What would you need to do to prepare for this career?

4. Discussion: Wasilla Land Use

- What does this graph tell us?
- What type of land use do you think is most common in each of the three areas targeted for planning (Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and Airport and Transportation Museum)?
- How does type of land use affect community planning?
- The data in this chart is from 1991. How do you think land use has changed since this data was collected? Why?

Reading Technical Material: Understanding the Community Planning Issues

Read *Chapter 1: Summary & Strategies* (pages 4-21) from the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter discusses Land Use, Parks and Recreation, Public Facilities and Services, and Transportation. Reading this information will help you understand the issues involved in developing the Area Plans for Downtown, South Wasilla Heights, and the Airport and Transportation Museum area.

1. Why does Wasilla need a Comprehensive Plan?
2. The 2% sales tax accounts for what percentage of the city's budget?
3. What are some of the improvements that occurred between 1992 and 1996?
4. What are some of the economic challenges that have faced Wasilla between 1992 and 1996?
5. What strategies are recommended to expand tourism?
6. What is the issue with snow machines?
7. What kind of events and land use trends may affect the community?
8. What land use goals are included in the Plan?
9. Which goals and/or strategies in the Parks and Recreation Plan are most interesting to you? Why?
10. Which public facilities and services do you use most often? Have you seen any of the changes in these facilities or services that were recommended in the Plan?
11. What transportation issues do you think are most important? Why?
12. What has changed over the last 10 years since the Comprehensive Plan was approved? What has stayed the same?
13. What are new issues that Wasilla is facing today?
14. Which of the issues identified in the Comprehensive Plan will affect each of the planning areas?

My Vision for the Future Essay

Part 1: Describe your community's strengths and resources. What do you like about living in your community? What is unique and special about your community?

Part 2: Define or describe your chosen challenge or weakness in detail. Explain your hopes, fears or concerns about the issue. How would you describe this issue to someone not from your community? Who or what is impacting or affecting this issue today? Why is this issue interesting to you?

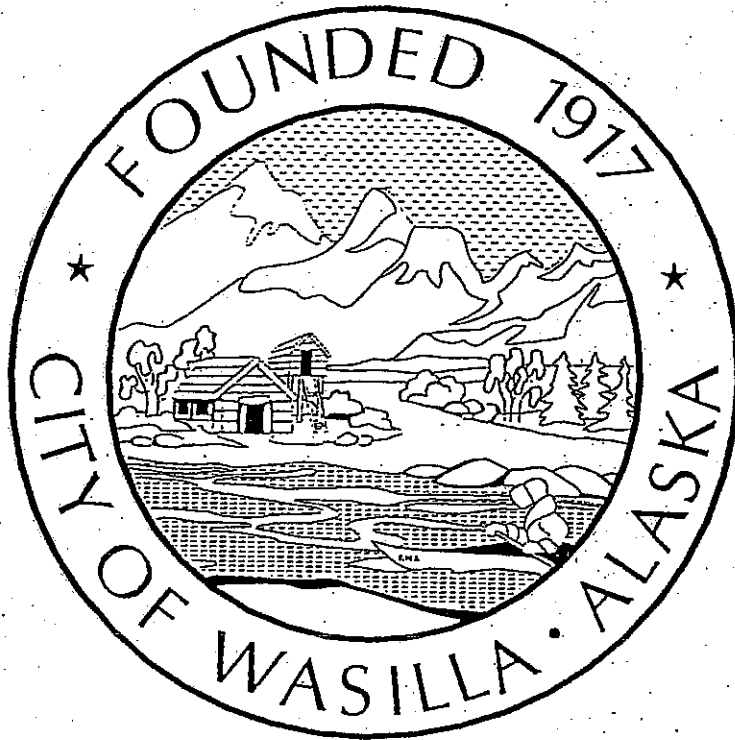
Part 3: State how your community could use its resources and strengths to deal with this challenge. Who would be responsible for implementing these ideas?

Part 4: Create a symbol, drawing or abstract form to represent your hopes and dreams for the future of your community. It is okay if you can't draw well - a very simple symbol or an abstract form would be great!

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

(Activities 2 & 4)

This page intentionally left blank.



**CITY OF WASILLA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
CITY APPROVED DRAFT**

April 1996

Prepared by:
The Canelos Group
Community Planning
LCMF, Ltd.
Wasilla Planning Office

Chapter 1 Summary & Strategies

This document is the City of Wasilla's Comprehensive Plan. It is designed to serve as a guide for citizens and civic decision makers concerning land use, growth, development and enhancement of the quality of life for residents and visitors to the community. The plan contains important background information on the community's history, natural environment and economy.

Wasilla's citizens are in the midst of long term city building. Located in the heart of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the City has grown ten-fold over the past 30 years. Wasilla is the dominant trade, retail and service center for the Valley, as well as a major suburban locality for the Anchorage metropolitan area. The population is relatively young and active. The area offers the best of Alaska: it has relatively affordable land, housing, small-town living and spectacular scenery.

The community features paved streets, water and sewer utilities, public buildings and schools, a variety of residential areas, recreational opportunities and a large business district. Wasilla is also a winter community, and all plans for the town should recognize the importance of living and working in a winter environment.

This plan contains the following major elements:

- ◆ Chapter 1, Summary and Strategies
- ◆ Chapter 2, Background for Planning
- ◆ Chapter 3, Economy and Population
- ◆ Chapter 4, Land Use Plan
- ◆ Chapter 5, Parks and Recreation Plan
- ◆ Chapter 6, Public Facilities and Services
- ◆ Chapter 7, Transportation Plan

The remainder of this chapter summarizes the major goals, policies, themes and recommendations contained within this plan. Goals (the long-term end towards which programs or activities are ultimately directed) are shown in bold text, while policies (the way in which programs and activities are conducted to achieve an identified goal) or city positions are shown with check marks.

Chapter 2, Background for Planning

Wasilla's setting offers what many consider to be the best of Alaska: extensive forests, numerous lakes and streams, abundant wildlife and spectacular mountain scenery. Wasilla is a "winter city" with lengthy periods of inclement conditions. This chapter

summarizes Wasilla's important environmental conditions and history, and provides important background for comprehensive planning.

Chapter 3, Economy and Population

The economy of Wasilla has evolved dramatically since the last Comprehensive Plan update was approved in 1992. Local voters approved a 2% sales tax which now accounts for over 75% of the operational city budget of \$6,089,160 for FY 1996. Local property tax rates have dropped by more than half from 4.2 mills in FY 1993 to 1.7 mills for FY 1995 and 1996. Several miles of local streets have been paved and improved, and work continues on local bike paths and amenities. A new police force was established, and recently completed its second year on the job. The first major national retailer to discover the Valley, Wal Mart, opened with great fanfare inside the city limits. The State of Alaska completed the four lane upgrade from the junction of the Glenn and Parks Highway across the Palmer Hay Flats to Anchorage. Land use permits are up, and more small businesses are opening branches in Wasilla. The local fire service area has an improved rating, lowering costs for fire insurance. Valley school enrollments and overall population are at all time highs.

All is not good news, however. Several major proposed economic development projects in the Valley, including the capital move initiative, coal mining at Wishbone Hill, and short-term development of Port MacKenzie, are on hold for the foreseeable future. The Valley is even more dependent on Anchorage for steady employment, and at least 38% of valley workers must commute to Anchorage or the North Slope for employment. ARCO Alaska and other oil companies have undertaken substantial reductions in force. State budget gaps continue without easy solutions. Diversification of the economy remains an important, but elusive goal.

The message for Wasilla remains the same as in the 1992 plan: the more self-sufficient the community can become in terms of revenue generation, and the more efficient local government can become, the more assured the future will be.

The City should continue its strong support of an educated workforce as the underpinning of Wasilla's private sector economy. By continuing to serve as the retail and service center of the Valley, Wasilla should continue to grow, and have the resources to improve the area's quality of life.

Tourism is growing in importance. To help increase tourism to Wasilla, the City should:

- ◆ Support improved access to the community through highway improvement projects and more frequent rail passenger service.
- ◆ Strongly support local efforts to landscape and beautify Wasilla. Amend the Wasilla Development Code to include provisions for landscaping and winter city design.

Wasilla Comprehensive Plan

- ◆ Encourage the Borough to require landscaping and removal of unsightly buildings, including the building packages of national chains of fast food franchises, filling stations, retail and warehouse groups whose trademark is gaudy and not in keeping with the standards for building and sign design set forth in the Wasilla Development Code.
- ◆ Continue to expand the Iditarod Days Festival associated with the Iditarod sled dog race re-start;
- ◆ Co-sponsor an annual spring visitor industry/tourism conference with the MSCVB, Chambers, Palmer, State Parks and private industry. The conference could debrief the past season, looking at successes and problem areas to be corrected.
- ◆ Install new Wasilla entry signs on the Parks Highway and major roads. Continue to work to upgrade parking and pedestrian amenities in the museum and historic block area
- ◆ Work closely with the MSCVB, the Chamber of Commerce and the Borough on joint planning for tourism and visitor promotions
- ◆ Continue to publicize the historic connections between Knik, Wasilla and the Hatcher Pass Mining Districts
- ◆ Provide for visitor-related information and displays as part of the master plan for the old airport
- ◆ Include visitor information and amenities at the airport
- ◆ Work with DOT&PF to install appropriate signs marking the crossing of the Iditarod Trail at the Parks Highway.

The issue of whether or how snow machines should be allowed to operate within the City needs to be resolved. Wasilla should seek acceptable ways to encourage people on their snow machines to come into town, without endangering pedestrians and vehicle traffic. If Wasilla wants to pursue working to include snow machines as part of its winter recreation attractions, the City should take the following steps:

- ◆ Work with the borough and state to accommodate registered snowmachine access on designated streets.
- ◆ Encourage snowmachine users and clubs to join together to develop a connecting trail system to public lands in the area. It is especially important that this be done soon before the addition of landowners makes the job of acquiring access more difficult.

- ◆ Develop rules and a means of enforcement for clean, quiet and safe operation of snow machines within the city.
- ◆ Work with the borough to open parks in the area for winter use. A cooperative agreement could provide funds for the maintenance needed.

This chapter offers five population forecasts. The most likely scenario is based upon an annual growth rate of 3.5%. This mid-level case assumes continued business and residential growth in the Valley, relatively stable oil prices, and the gradual expansion of city boundaries. Under this scenario, Wasilla's population would rise from 4,028 to 7,735 people by 2010.

Chapter 4, Land Use Plan

The land use plan is a guide for current and future land use and development decisions affecting the City of Wasilla. The plan's objective is to anticipate and respond to development trends, respect natural site characteristics, and reflect the community's attitudes about future growth. The plan assigns all land areas in the city to appropriate land use categories, based upon existing and emerging patterns of development, transportation access, availability of utilities and other sound planning principles.

The chapter includes discussions of existing land use, growth trends, and objectives for residential, commercial, industrial, and park sites. Not every future land use problem or concern can be predicted. However, a fairly accurate prediction of short term issues can be made and long term goals can be stated to provide guidance for the Planning Commission and Council.

Over the past decade, Wasilla has witnessed a number of important events that shape land use. These include:

- ◆ The economic recession of the mid to late 1980's;
- ◆ The gradual recovery of the Valley economy during the 1990's;
- ◆ Development of a new city owned airport, and closure of the old downtown airfield;
- ◆ Significant improvements to the Glenn Highway between Anchorage and the junction of the Parks Highway;
- ◆ The arrival of a national discount store to Alaska: Wal-Mart;
- ◆ Voter approval of a city 2% sales tax;
- ◆ Voter approval of a city Police Department;
- ◆ The growth of new businesses in Wasilla, gradually filling in the downtown area
- ◆ Rapidly increasing summer tourism
- ◆ Moving the official start of the Iditarod to Wasilla (the ceremonial start remains in Anchorage)

Wasilla Comprehensive Plan

The Land Use Plan and recommended strategies attempt to guide civic decision making over a 10-20 year period. However, if the 1992 plan is any guide, this current document will need to be frequently revisited and revised. Wasilla continues to change rapidly. Here is a listing of events and land use trends which may affect the community:

- ◆ The passage and reaffirmation of the Sales Tax and Police Force were fundamental turning points in Wasilla's growth and development. They will continue to contribute to local government and the quality of life in Wasilla.
- ◆ Traffic congestion will continue to increase, although DOT&PF will make major improvements to the George Parks Highway and other state maintained arterials and collectors in the Valley.
- ◆ Commercial growth should continue in the Valley, sometimes in unpredictable ways. The arrival of major discount stores (such as Wal Mart) to Alaska was not widely forecast, for example.
- ◆ Builders and developers favor home construction in what's locally known as "the golden triangle" bordered by the Palmer-Wasilla Highway, the Parks Highway and Trunk Road. This burgeoning area of the central Valley has relatively easy access to major highways for the commute to Anchorage or the short trip into Wasilla. This "core area" of the Valley can be expected to continue to grow.
- ◆ DOT&PF plans to improve the Parks Highway and extend the Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Knik-Goose Bay Road, provides opportunities for Wasilla to encourage development south of the railroad tracks. Widening the physical aspect of the commercial area is a long-standing community goal.
- ◆ Several unincorporated areas of the Valley will likely consider and apply for municipal status over the coming years. Talkeetna and Memory Lakes are considering such a move.
- ◆ The old Wasilla Airport will be gradually developed into the focus of Wasilla's public amenities.
- ◆ Long-term, Wasilla and Palmer may consider expanding their boundaries to meet at Trunk Road, or to even combine their forces in a new mega-city encompassing much of the populated area of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.
- ◆ Long-term, the Knik Arm Crossing may again come to life, prompting significant shifts and land use patterns and development.
- ◆ Municipal boundaries will gradually expand, both by request and necessity. The City will be much larger in 20 years.

Goal: Encourage growth and development that promotes the economy, protects the environment and improves the quality of life. The City should do everything it can to encourage economic development, while protecting and enhancing the small town atmosphere and semi rural way of life.

- ◆ The R-1 residential area should be expanded in those areas which actively, by 100 percent vote, seek protection for exclusively residential use.
- ◆ The city should allow for conversion of some of the Intermediate zoned land to other uses.
- ◆ Change the Creekside Estates District to R-1 or Intermediate. The present Creekside Estates District is an anomaly, and allows for modular homes as a major development permit.
- ◆ The city should consider ways to encourage the development of starter homes in the city to meet these needs. The city should help the expanding service sector work-force, and first time homeowners to find a wider range of housing options.
- ◆ The City should continue its strong support of active senior housing programs and organizations.
- ◆ Facilitate the upgrading and in-filling of commercial uses throughout the western downtown area to more fully utilize existing development. The redevelopment of the old airport site should help revitalize this area. This will help create a more vital downtown, and promote a cost effective distribution system for water, sewer and other utilities.
- ◆ Designate land adjoining the airport and railroad for future industrial purposes.
- ◆ Changing zoning designation, with 100 percent support of the landowners, between the Parks Highway and Mission Hills Subdivision, from Intermediate to R-1 or Industrial. Lands between the Parks Highway and Mission Hills Subdivision are presently zoned Intermediate.
- ◆ Wasilla should seek to diversify its economic base, but should not expend significant city funds to develop a speculative industrial park.
- ◆ New industrial areas may be added in the intermediate zone if separated from existing residential uses and do not significantly interfere with adjacent known potential residential development.

Goal: Encourage growth and development in appropriate areas south of the Alaska Railroad to create geographic balance in the downtown area.

Wasilla Comprehensive Plan

A long standing community goal has been to expand commercial development south of the Alaska Railroad line and the Parks Highway. ADOT&PF's plans to extend the Palmer-Wasilla Highway westward to Knik-Goose Bay Road. This offers opportunities for the City to encourage commercial expansion in this area. Other areas with high potential are the Palmer-Wasilla Highway and the Knik-Goose Bay Road corridors. These well traveled routes are experiencing expanding commercial uses along the right-of-way.

- ◆ The Land Use District north of Glenwood Avenue is zoned Core Area. This will facilitate commercial expansion south of the Parks Highway.
- ◆ Extend the Core Area zone along Hallea Lane and the area surrounding Lake Lucille Lodge, in recognition of this area as an important waterfront commercial area. The Lake Lucille Lodge may be expanded in the near future. Since the Waterfront Core District does not allow lodges, this is a conforming pre-existing use.
- ◆ Support programs to extend the Palmer-Wasilla Highway, Church Road and similar projects which provide improved access south of the railroad.
- ◆ Over the next twenty years, the City should focus on developing and improving several key public parcels. These include:
 - the 30 acre old airport site
 - the City's downtown historic area
 - the new airport site
 - recreational opportunities along Wasilla Lake and Lake Lucille
 - the Smith Ballfields
 - the Bumpus Ballfield

Goal: Carry out land use regulations and planning that is equitable, cost-effective and responsive to the needs of the public.

- ◆ The Planning Commission and City Council should continue to strive for maximum public involvement in all phases of the decision-making process.
- ◆ The City should go "on line" with computer-accessible public notices advertisements, agendas, minutes and other important city documents.
- ◆ Rewriting the Wasilla Development Code is a key step in the assumption of planning powers from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.
- ◆ The city should work with the Borough to ensure that newly platted areas are compatible with potential urban services such as bike trails, street lights and sewer and water.

Goal: Improve the appearance of Wasilla for the benefit of residents and visitors.

- ◆ Wasilla should continue to work closely with local volunteer and civic organizations such as the local garden clubs, service clubs and the Historical Society to establish and carry out programs to beautify the downtown area.
- ◆ The Parks Highway should receive special attention as a landscape corridor. Locally crafted wooden signs welcoming visitors to Wasilla should replace or augment the present regulation metal signage along the highway.
- ◆ The Iditarod Trail crossing of the Parks Highway should receive special attention with a suitable sign and markings.
- ◆ The wooded corridor west of the downtown along the Parks Highway should be protected as development increases in the area.
- ◆ City codes should require landscaping from new development.
- ◆ The city should initiate a program to encourage landscaping by existing development.

Goal: Expand municipal boundaries cautiously as required to provide cost effective government services to the maximum number of people.

The city should adopt the following guidelines to assure that annexation, need for in-fill and the provision of services are kept in balance. The City should:

- ◆ Prepare it's own analysis of the fiscal impacts to revenues and expenditures from all annexation proposals.
- ◆ Require paving city maintained streets inside the 1994 city limits through the use of local improvement districts.
- ◆ Ensure that developed areas proposed for annexation have a high percentage of Occupied lots.
- ◆ Complete infrastructure consisting of paving, sewer, water, storm drainage, sidewalks and street lights in areas proposed for annexation.
- ◆ Balance the inclusion of new residential areas with new commercial areas. A high ratio of commercial property value over residential property value should be maintained.
- ◆ The city should work with the Borough to ensure that adjoining areas are platted and developed in a manner that will preserve their rural character, and not make

the provision of infrastructure such as roads, sewer and water prohibitively expensive.

Chapter 5, Parks and Recreation Plan

Wasilla's park and recreation program is working hard to catch up with rapid population growth and demand for services over the past decade. Officially, most parks and recreation services have historically been provided by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. Many services within Wasilla, however, have been delegated to the City under contract. A major challenge facing Wasilla and other borough communities is the lack of funding to support and maintain existing parks and programs.

Park and recreation powers are held by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough under state law. After several years of declining funding and upkeep of local parks, however, the City of Wasilla approached the borough requesting a delegation of park and recreation powers. The Borough passed Ordinance No. 93-027 in 1993 authorizing an Inter-Governmental Cooperation Agreement for parks and recreational activities within the City of Wasilla.

The FY 95 Parks and Recreation Services Agreement provides for the City to operate, maintain and improve Newcomb (Wasilla Lake), Nunley and Carter Parks. In return, the Borough agrees to compensate the City \$10,000. The three named parks are the only park facilities in town recognized by the Borough in this agreement.

Goal: Involve the community in creating a public common and recreation preserve within the City at the old airport site.

Goal: Develop a comprehensive public parks and greenway Master Plan.

Wasilla has an extraordinary opportunity to reshape and define the character and quality of its urban center. The City has obtained title to the old 30-acre Wasilla airport site from the State of Alaska. With the opening of the new airport at Jacobsen Lake, this downtown site is now available for other public uses.

- ◆ Carry out a phased, conceptual plan which includes the following major elements:
 - Public ownership
 - A greenway within the city
 - Beginning of the Iditarod sled dog race
 - Wasilla Wonderland Community playground
 - Fully functioning in winter and summer
 - Visitor information
 - Greenhouse, rose garden and botanical garden

- Circuit trails with lights
- Event fields, picnic areas and informal sport areas
- Parking on the periphery
- Utilities and limited snow storage.

The City should take several steps in the near-term (1-3 years) to institutionalize the development of this public use area in a cost-effective manner. The City should:

- ◆ designate a lead department or official within the administration to take overall responsibility for carrying out an adopted master plan;
- ◆ Establish several recreational uses during 1995 at minimum cost. For example, a number of the concrete slabs remaining from the former hangars can be converted into half-court basketball areas and similar uses. Sand lot volleyball could be provided;
- ◆ Coordinate the planting of the site to accelerate the "greening up" transformation of the area from industrial/airport to greenbelt/public open space. The community could be invited to participate in a number of volunteer or memorial tree plantings throughout the site;
- ◆ Work closely with the Iditarod Committee and the Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities to design and place permanent trail signage both on-site and on the Parks Highway. The race is a significant Alaskan and national event, and should be suitably recognized;
- ◆ Continue the support given to Valley Performing Arts, including provision of space for parking on the edge of the site. This parking will provide parking for park users during summer months when VPA is inactive;
- ◆ Forming a permanent "Friends of the Wasilla Greenbelt Master Plan" organization to coordinate civic involvement and development of the property following an adopted master plan. Development should be funded through a combination of public and private funds;
- ◆ Begin programming each facility and activity. At this stage, architectural and preliminary engineering can be done to determine square footage, capacities, utility design and cost estimates. Design themes should also be adopted, so that all structures relate well to the site, and to each other.

Goal: Provide organizations and programs to meet current and future recreational needs.

- ◆ Continue community beautification efforts.

Wasilla Comprehensive Plan

- ◆ Enthusiastically support youth and adult sports and recreation organizations and programs.

Goal: Acquire, develop and maintain suitable parkland for current and future needs.

Successful park programs balance the continuing need to maintain existing facilities with a long-term vision of acquiring and developing lands to meet growing demand. The Wasilla Parks and Recreation Commission projects a significant shortfall in park property in the near future. The City currently has a number of important opportunities to greatly improve the size and quality of parks within the community.

- ◆ Acquire and develop an 80 acre parcel owned by the State of Alaska adjacent to the Smith Ballfields.
- ◆ Expand recreational opportunities at the Bumpus Ballfields to include all segments of the population.
- ◆ Acquire and develop the wooded peninsula known as Green Acres Park for future public access to Wasilla Lake.
- ◆ Expand Carter Park on Lake Lucille.

Goal: Acquire, develop and maintain suitable facilities and improvements for current and future recreational needs.

- ◆ Continue to support the Wasilla Wonderland Community Playground Project
- ◆ Craft and install suitable gateway and directional signs throughout the community.
- ◆ Continue development of a citywide trails system.
- ◆ Support development of a tournament-capable sports field complex.
- ◆ Find a suitable site for equestrian and rodeo corrals and facilities.
- ◆ Support construction of a new public library.
- ◆ Support construction of a multi-purpose community center.
- ◆ Long-term, the feasibility of a "full-facility" recreation center

Chapter 6, Public Facilities and Services

Goal: Successfully support the need to carry out cost-effective, basic governmental services with bold and visionary planning to prepare Wasilla for the future.

Water and Sewer System

The City should seek federal funding to fund construction of a more conventional sewage treatment plant, such as a granular recirculating filter system. Once this is accomplished, the City can do major expansions to the system, most likely eastward along the Parks Highway commercial corridor.

Surface Water Drainage

- ◆ Surface water drainage studies need to be updated, and the City needs to address construction of a surface/storm water drainage system.

Public Safety. The Police Department currently occupies two former classrooms in the original 1934 school building at the rear of City Hall. These facilities are expensive to maintain and are not designed for efficient law enforcement administration. A major need for the Police Department in the coming years will be to have suitable housing in a public safety building.

- ◆ One option would be to construct a new Public Safety Building for both the Police Department and portions of the Wasilla Lakes Fire Service Area personnel and equipment. The plan recommends that a suitable location for this facility be identified on existing City lands, if possible, or on land to be acquired if necessary.
- ◆ The plan recommends relocating the downtown fire station elsewhere in the core area. One option is to construct a joint Public Safety Building at the eastern edge of the old airport site on Lucille. This option is shown in the conceptual Master Plan for the old airport site. Use of the old airport site for structural development may depend on a follow-up planning process to focus solely on the old airport site.

Public Library. Wasilla Public Library is the fourth busiest library in Alaska. Only Juneau, Fairbanks and Anchorage have more activity. To resolve these problems, the plan recommends the City pursue one of these two options:

- ◆ If the Post Office facility becomes available, the City should conduct a feasibility and cost study to determine whether the library could cost-effectively relocate across Swanson Road into this structure. Remodeling this facility could provide a new library very near the current location in the downtown core. The facility

would have increased parking, and an elevated pedestrian crossing would provide safe access between the library and museum/historic area. The library would remain close to the museum, taking advantage of many common programs and constituents.

- ◆ A second option, shown as part of the conceptual Wasilla Greenbelt Master Plan (Figure 5-1) is to construct a new library as a major element of the new Iditarod Greenbelt area at the old airport site.

Conceptually, Figure 5-1 shows a new two-story structure with about 16,100 square feet. The library would be located adjacent to a new Community Center. Together, these facilities would have about 200 parking spaces and be located on the citywide trails system. The proposed site is about one mile from existing schools and is conveniently located for most residents. This proposal is based upon the evolution of prior plans including the 1992 Comprehensive Plan and the more recent Iditarod Park plan which was not adopted by the City Council. Use of the site will depend on a follow-up planning process to specify areas on the old airport.

Museum and Townsite Park. The Dorothy Page Museum and Visitor Center, together with the historic block, provide significant economic, educational and cultural benefits to Wasilla. The area lacks suitable zoning protection, has limited parking, and incompatible land uses within the historic area. The plan recommends:

- ◆ Designating the area as public/institutional lands to better protect these activities and facilities from conflicting uses and activities.
- ◆ Vacating Boundary Street between Heming and Swanson Avenues to provide additional room and site flexibility.
- ◆ Relocating the library and the fire station to other locations, and expand museum/historic functions to take advantage of these facilities
- ◆ Purchasing or otherwise acquiring private property within the historic block area

Post Office. With recent growth and development in the community, the main facility located at the corner of Swanson and Main Street has become overcrowded and the cause of considerable traffic congestion in the downtown area. The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) estimates that site selection for a replacement facility will take place in 1996. Construction would begin in 1997 or 1998.

- ◆ The plan supports a potential new site for the Post Office along the Knik-Goose-Bay Road corridor, near the Glenwood intersection. This site would be the most beneficial to the overall development of the city. The new Post Office would establish a new and significant traffic generator on the south side of the Parks Highway. This should, in turn, encourage commercial development in this area.

Snow Removal Although relatively expensive, a snow removal program would benefit the community in several ways. Besides improving vehicular and pedestrian traffic, the hauling of snow from the core area will reduce storm water drainage problems in the spring, and make it easier for people to shop and conduct business downtown.

- ◆ The City should initiate a snow removal program which keeps downtown roadways and sidewalks clear of snow.

Going On-line. Municipalities across the country are discovering the benefits of going on-line with many city services. Some municipal systems are simple read-only bulletin boards, such as notices of upcoming meetings and hearings, agendas, detailed city budgets, procurement announcements, job openings and voice telephone numbers. Some city bulletin boards go a step further and allow messages and comments on specific items. Still others are more elaborate with access to ordinances, resolutions, plans and the city code that are sorted by subject or keyword and access to other sites. Systems can also feature electronic mail to connect residents with city departments, employees and elected representatives.

- ◆ Wasilla should install a basic on-line system to provide better access for the community to its local government.

City Hall. The current facility, while adequate for administrative and police functions, is housed in a 60-year old former school. Maintenance, energy and repair costs are expensive, and the building is less and less suited to the operations of modern city government.

- ◆ Long-term, the City should begin to plan for a new City Hall.
- ◆ A new City Hall should remain in the downtown area, north of the Parks Highway and probably located between Lucille Street, Nelson Road/Bogard Road and Crusey Street.

Chapter 7 Transportation Plan

The Transportation Plan identifies and evaluates ongoing and proposed state, borough and local projects for road and highway improvements, including pedestrian and bicycle amenities. The plan focuses on continuing with an aggressive local road improvement program, while supporting regional and state efforts to build a transportation infrastructure to meet current and future needs.

Past improvements to Wasilla's road and highway system have stimulated community growth and development, contributed to economic diversification, and encouraged more people to relocate to the Valley and to Wasilla. Additional improvements are essential, however, to ensure that traffic flows efficiently and safely through the city, to upgrade

local streets to uniform standards, to contribute to the community's quality of life, and to keep pace with population growth and economic development.

Goal: Develop and maintain a transportation system that meets the current and future needs of Wasilla and the Matanuska Valley.

The successful development, operation and maintenance of the Wasilla area transportation network depends upon a creative and cooperative strategy between the public, City of Wasilla, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and all affected highway users.

- ◆ The City should continue to work closely with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the DOT&PF to develop and execute a visionary, regional strategy for transportation improvements.
- ◆ Design standards and level of service standards for arterials and collectors should be coordinated at the borough level in various stages of discussion or implementation. The area's transportation system is still "catching up" with land use, population, traffic pressures and growth patterns. Improvements should be designed to enhance traffic flow, help prevent accidents and maintain or improve access to businesses and private property.

Goal: Improve the safety and traffic carrying capacity of the area's arterial and major collector systems.

- ◆ State and Borough planning should reflect the priorities, constraints and concerns expressed in this Comprehensive Plan.
- ◆ All modifications to arterial or collector routes within Wasilla and the surrounding area should include provision for sidewalks or pathways at the time of construction or upgrade.
- ◆ The City supports the following state projects:
- ◆ Main Street and Bogard Road Intersection Improvements. DOT&PF is currently designing major improvements to the intersection of Bogard Road, Main Street and Nelson Avenue. Design is set for completion by August 1996 with construction scheduled for 1997. The goal is to create a safe, 4-way intersection, either through conventional design, or perhaps with a "round-about" scheme. The City supports this upgrade as a local priority, and looks forward to commenting formally once a design is presented to the public.

Two pathways are also part of this project: the first proceeds from the intersection along Bogard Road to Peck Street; the other runs along the west side of Crusey from Swanson Avenue to the Parks Highway. The City supports these pathway extensions and are part of its overall city pathway plan. In

addition the City supports a below grade pedestrian crossing between Wasilla High School and Wasilla Middle School as part of the related pathway development.

- ◆ Palmer-Wasilla Highway Bike path. DOT&PF is planning long-range construction of a separated pathway along the length of the Palmer-Wasilla Highway. About \$1.5 million is available for construction of the first segment, beginning at the Parks Highway. Construction is scheduled for FY 1996.
- ◆ Church Road. DOT&PF is currently designing major upgrades to Church Road between the Parks Highway and Spruce Avenue. This \$3.4 million project will include paving of the roadway, and construction of a pathway. Construction is set for 1997. This project should resolve serious safety problems and is fully supported by the City.
- ◆ The City takes the following position concerning DOT&PF plans to reconstruct the Parks Highway, MP 37-44:

Crusey Street to Seward Meridian: This phase should be completed on an accelerated schedule. The approved design must successfully move traffic safely through town, while not unduly compromising safe and convenient access to businesses and commercial establishments. Given available information, the City supports a four lane design, with a two-way left turn lane system. Frontage roads would add to the design, provided direct access to most property is not unduly restricted. The City passed resolutions No. WR94-45 and WR96-02 supporting the five lane concept through Wasilla. In addition, the separated pathway should include an under-crossing near Cottonwood Creek.

Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension. This phase should also move ahead on an accelerated schedule. The opportunity for commuting traffic to avoid downtown Wasilla by directly reaching Knik-Goose Bay Road should help alleviate traffic congestion. In addition, this project facilitates Wasilla's strategy to encourage expansion of the downtown area south of the railroad tracks. Highway designers should consider options which permit full development and access of surrounding property near the Parks Highway intersection. The City does not support the creation of a limited access interstate highway through the heart of Wasilla.

- ◆ The City urges a more comprehensive examination of highway and road options and alternative transportation options, including a serious investigation of constructing a by-pass highway at some point in the future.

Over the past two decades, the Wasilla business sector has grown to the point where a by-pass is not likely to harm Wasilla's retail and commercial sector. The City supports a cooperative effort with the Borough and DOT&PF to examine the bypass option when it becomes feasible and prudent to do so.

Wasilla Comprehensive Plan

- ◆ The City supports the following projects sponsored by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough:
- ◆ Intersection Improvements: Wasilla Fishhook/Bogard/Nelson, Bogard Road/Crusey Street, Peck Street and Wasilla-Fishhook
- ◆ Trunk Road
- ◆ Seward Meridian Road
- ◆ Bogard Road – The Seldon Road extension east to Bogard Road was supported by City Resolution WR94-43.
- ◆ Church Road – Resolutions WR94-44 and WR95-28 lists this project as the city's highest priority on their state recommended list.
- ◆ DOT&PF should include upgrading Wasilla-Fishhook Road from Glenwood to Schrock Road as a priority in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan.

The City supports the development of a pedestrian crossing along Bogard road to connect the Wasilla High School and Junior High School campuses and across Wasilla Fishhook Road in front of Iditarod Elementary School.

Eliminating dangerous curves and improving driving conditions is important for public safety. From Glenwood Avenue to Lakeview Avenue, the two-lane roadway could be widened to a rural three-lane roadway with a striped median designated for two-way left turns.

Goal: Maintain and improve the system of collectors and local streets to serve present and future needs.

Because of rapid growth in Wasilla and the lack of funding to improve local streets and collectors, many serious instances of gaps, poor alignment and substandard roadways exist in the City. These problems need to be recognized and remedied if the transportation needs of the area are to be effectively met.

- ◆ Decisions to improve collectors and local roads should be consistent with the Land Use Plan.
- ◆ The City should continue its aggressive program to bring all collectors and local streets up to standard, including paving. The City should continue to encourage the formation of Local Improvement District's (LID's) to fund one-third the cost of local street improvements. The City should continue to fund 100% of improvements to collector streets.

- ◆ The City should work diligently to carry out projects identified on the Wasilla Road Projects Short List (FY 96) and Deferred List FY 96/FY 97. These are identified in Chapter 7.

Goal: Create a citywide and regional system of pathways and trails to provide for alternative methods of transportation, improve public safety and enhance quality of life for residents and visitors.

- ◆ The bicycle, pedestrian and winter trails proposed in the Parks & Recreation element and the Transportation element should be recognized and supported for their value as part of the local transportation system.
- ◆ The City should work diligently to carry out projects identified on the
- ◆ The City should design and construct a trail linking the city's three major public spaces: the proposed Wasilla Greenbelt Master Plan (including the old Wasilla Airport and Nunley Park), the Dorothy Page Museum and historic building district, and Newcomb Park.
- ◆ Continue to seek acceptable solutions to accommodate snow machine activities within Wasilla without endangering pedestrians and vehicles or the quality of life in neighborhoods.

Goal: Encourage the development of alternative transportation means.

- ◆ Wasilla should support recurring efforts to initiate commuter bus or rail service between Wasilla and Anchorage.
- ◆ The Comprehensive Plan supports replacing the railroad crossing being eliminated with the new overpass near Rocky Ridge Road with a new railroad crossing for the extension of Church Street south to the airport.
- ◆ Wasilla should continue to market the advantages of the airport, together with carrying out airport projects on the Short List (FY 96) and Deferred List FY96/FY97

Chapter 2

Background for Planning

Location and Setting

Wasilla's setting offers what many consider to be the best of Alaska: extensive forests, numerous lakes and streams, abundant wildlife and spectacular mountain scenery. The City is located near the center of the Matanuska Susitna Borough in the heart of south-central Alaska. The Borough encompasses about 23,000 square miles, including much of the drainage of the Susitna and Matanuska Rivers. Wasilla lies south of the Talkeetna Mountains, about 12 miles north of Knik Arm on Cook Inlet. The City is located only 30 air miles NNE of Anchorage, alongside the Alaska Railroad main line and the George Parks Highway. Driving time between Wasilla and Anchorage is about one hour, depending on the time of year and weather conditions. The highway and railroad connect Anchorage and Fairbanks, with the Denali National Park and preserve lying about halfway between these two urban areas.

Figures 1 and 2 depict Wasilla's regional and local setting and location.

The Wasilla area owes its varied setting to the glacial forces that shaped the area during the end of the last ice age. The broad Susitna River valley is the landward extension of Cook Inlet which was formed by an underlying trough of poorly consolidated rocks from the Tertiary age. Several glacial advances and retreats left a complex system of hills, ridges, lakes and lowlands that define the topography of today. Landforms in and around Wasilla consist of undulating ridges of glacial till and flat benches of sand and gravel out-wash.

Cottonwood Creek, Lucille Creek and several smaller streams traverse the Wasilla area. Two large lakes, Lucille and Wasilla, are partially or wholly within the city limits.

History

Understanding Wasilla's development patterns provides insights for updating the comprehensive plan. The townsite was named after Chief Wasilla, a local Dena'ina chief and shaman who died in 1907 (there are many variant spellings of his name; however, the chief having received a rudimentary education, reportedly spelled his name Visilla). Numerous lakes and streams surrounding Visilla's residence provided ample fishing for indigenous populations, thereby becoming a popular wintering ground for small semi-permanent native villages.

Native trails crisscrossed the area, some connected with distant hunting grounds in the Susitna Valley and Talkeetna Mountains, while others linked with the Ahtna people, north of the Matanuska River. These trails also served as trade networks between remote villages. During the Russian American fur trade local native populations prospered until the small pox epidemic struck many villages, causing area-wide abandonment of homes in the mid-19th Century. Surviving populations deserted many remote villages, congregating into larger population centers closer to trading posts in the Upper Cook Inlet.

Continuing to lead a subsistence lifestyle, native communities again began to prosper during the American fur trade. This is especially true of Chief Wasilla who maintained a subsistence diet, while accruing numerous trade items through the American Commercial Company. Chief Wasilla harbored his extended family in a village not too far from the current townsite of Wasilla. His village, which once stood adjacent to Cottonwood Creek, was called "Benteh," meaning a Place Among the Lakes.

Gold strikes on Willow Creek in the late 19th Century not only increased traffic along existing trails but helped to create numerous new ones. Native populations from Wasilla area moved to the trading posts at Knik on the west side of Knik Arm to participate in the gold rush; many worked as guides or haulers for the gold miners. Knik was established in the late 19th Century as a trading post and commercial center for gold miners plying the Susitna River and its tributaries for gold. Establishment of the Iditarod Trail in 1908 added to the importance of Knik's link with distant gold mines. By 1914 Knik had grown to encompass several businesses including a newspaper office and schoolhouse.

Wasilla's Euro-American history began in 1916 when the Alaska Engineering Commission (AEC) selected construction of a work camp at the intersection of the proposed railroad with the Carle Wagon gold mining trail (now known as Wasilla-Fishhook Road). The road, connected Knik with the Willow Creek mines in the Talkeetna Mountains. Resembling a tent town, the camp harbored railroad men engaged in surveying, clearing and establishing the rail line right-of-way through Wasilla which eventually would connect the open port of Seward with Fairbanks. The first business opened in 1916 when Mrs. Small, catering to railroad construction workers, operated a modest restaurant.

Wasilla was established on well-drained lands in a beautiful setting between two lakes. After platting the townsite on June 20, 1917, from the railroad platform in Wasilla, the AEC sold townsite lots by auction. Spelling the demise of Knik, several traders from Knik bought Wasilla lots and re-established their businesses in the new townsite. It did not take long before additional trails fanned out to the mines making Wasilla the new gateway to the gold mines. The Iditarod trail also became connected with the new townsite bringing both gold and traffic to Wasilla Depot for rail transportation to Seward.

Reportedly the first building in Wasilla was constructed by Harry Shough who freighted for the mines. It later served as Wasilla's public library between 1942 and 1950, before being replaced. Many early businesses which were moved from Knik have long since been replaced by newer commercial entities. Some of the earliest buildings constructed in 1917, however, can be found today behind the Dorothy Page Museum located in the Old Wasilla Townsite. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places is the Heming/Teeland/Mead Store which served as a commercial dry goods store in Wasilla for over 65 years before closing its doors. Teeland's Country Store, evoking memories of a forgotten era has been rehabilitated by the Dorothy Page Museum. Other buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places include Wasilla's first elementary school, the Dorothy Page Museum (former Community Hall) and Wasilla Depot. There are several other buildings such as the Thorpe log cabin located on Main Street and the Tryck house on Knik which help recall Wasilla's early days.

Over 400 homesteaders were registered in the Valley prior to the First World War. The number fell back during the war years but grew again in the twenties. The Alaska Railroad sponsored a program to bring farm settlers to the area in 1929, but the most successful effort occurred in the midst of the Great Depression in 1935. That year the Federal Emergency relief Administration sponsored 202 families to the Valley via steamship and rail. The townsite of Palmer was established to serve the needs of farm families in the eastern part of the valley. Since many of the Colonists were closer to Wasilla they went there to shop and established an economic trend which continues today.

1940 was a high water mark for pre-war Wasilla. Many of the farm families were well established, mining operations were thriving and the development of Fort Richardson and Elmendorf Field brought the first boom to the area. World War II abruptly ended the boom by closing the mines and draining labor from the farms and businesses. The influx of military personnel to Alaska brought a wider knowledge of the area, however, and many chose to stay or return after their enlistment. Wasilla's role as the main distribution center for the mining industry in the Valley ended.

In 1947 the government released 45,000 acres for homesteading, this land had been held in reserve for the farm project. Many former military people took the opportunity to homestead the area.

The discovery of oil in Cook Inlet and the Kenai Peninsula in the mid-1950's assured statehood for Alaska and brought increased development to upper Cook Inlet. As road conditions and access improved between Anchorage and the Valley, the Wasilla area gradually became important as an area for recreational and second home development.

Construction of the George Parks Highway through Wasilla in the early 1970's provided direct access to and from Anchorage. This development enabled workers and their families to live in the Wasilla area, and commute to the city. Support and service industries began to expand to meet the needs of new residents.

Alaska experienced a boom in the late 1960's and 1970's with the discovery of oil on the North Slope and construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. Oil field and construction workers found the environment and climate in the Wasilla area to their liking and hundreds of subdivisions were approved as an additional influx of people came to the Valley to live. Regional government, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, was established in 1964 by the state under the Mandatory Borough Act. During this period farming declined and the area became more dependent on the statewide and Anchorage economic situation.

The George Parks Highway, completed in October 1971, passes by the entrance to Denali National Park and links Anchorage and Fairbanks, the main population centers of the state. The Parks Highway is heavily used throughout the year by tourists and resident Alaskans. Increased traffic and a rapidly-expanding population encouraged the development of strip malls, services and a variety of retail businesses along the highway in the Wasilla area. The characteristic strip development, that marks the area, was solidified during this period.

The City of Wasilla was incorporated in 1974 as a second class city under Alaska statutes. In 1984, the City upgraded to first class status. By the mid 1970's, Wasilla had become the commercial and retail center of the Borough. Wasilla is referred to as a "bedroom community", because of its easy access to Anchorage.

During the late 1970's, Wasilla became a focus of public debate, as the state considered whether to relocate Alaska's capital city from Juneau to an undeveloped site between Wasilla and Willow. Settler's Bay and many other subdivisions were developed in anticipation of the capital move. Although the move was defeated in public votes, real estate speculation and development continued through the mid 1980's.

The years from 1980 to 1986 witnessed the period of most rapid growth for Wasilla and the Matanuska- Susitna Borough. State oil money fueled a real estate boom, and the Valley's population expanded as housing prices in Anchorage escalated. During these years, both Wasilla and the Borough grew two to three times faster than Anchorage.

Economic booms are often followed by periods of bust, or economic adjustment. During the late 1980's the economy in Wasilla had its "adjustment". Like most Alaska communities, Wasilla is extremely vulnerable to economic forces beyond its control. Real property values in Wasilla peaked in 1986 at \$333 million. At the bottom of the recession in 1990, real property values had plummeted by almost half, bottoming out at approximately \$170 million. Business failures were high and both the City and Valley lost population. Many homes in Wasilla and the outlying area were left empty as banks and state financial institutions foreclosed on overdue mortgages. Much of the newly developed commercial area along the Parks Highway became empty store fronts and office space.

During 1992, Wasilla voters passed a 2% local sales tax, and also approved formation of a local Police Department. Wal-mart established the first national discount store in the Wasilla in 1993. Currently, Wasilla enjoys an improving economic situation, rebounding real estate prices, continuing retail activity and a growing population. Many local schools face record student enrollments, and the State has recently completed construction of a new airport for the community.

While the commercial and residential development patterns have obscured much of the frontier town setting, many people are still attracted to the Valley and to Wasilla as a desirable place to live and raise families. Attractions include a small town atmosphere, the area's natural amenities, a manageable commute to Anchorage and affordable housing.

Geology and Soils

During glacial times much of the Susitna River valley lowland was a glacial lake. Large chunks of ice left stranded formed many small depressions in the area. This lake and the deposition of glacial silts and clays played an important part in the make up of the soils of the area.

Most of the soils in the area are generally well suited for development and provide good sources of sand, gravel and topsoil. Finding good road-fill, gravel and building sites is generally not a problem. Some areas remain poorly drained, however, and pose limitations for septic systems. The deposition of silt, clay and organic muck in old lakes and depressions means that some areas have soil conditions which change substantially in a short distance.

Wasilla's city limits do not encompass known reserves of minerals such as silver, gold or copper. However, deep deposits of gravel in the city do provide a ready source of material for construction.

The U.S. Soil Conservation Service has mapped seven soil associations in and around Wasilla. The general lay of the land and the vegetation it supports are good clues to soil types. Although the primary concern for soil suitability has been septic systems frost heaving, slopes and high water tables can also affect development. In many areas a community water system is necessary to protect the health of local residents. Minimal investigation such as digging or an engineering analysis of any site prior to planning for development is a wise decision.

Two soil types, the Homestead and the Knik, predominate in the Wasilla area. Both of these soils are well suited to most types of development. Small localized pockets of compacted silt and depressions, however, contribute to problems with drainage and frost heave, especially in the Homestead series.

The **Homestead** series is common in the Wasilla area especially north of the Parks Highway from the west end of Lake Lucille. Homestead soils are shallow, well-drained silty soils over loose sand and gravel. They have formed on broad out-wash plains and gravel moraines and run from nearly flat terrain to steep areas. These soils generally support forests of paper birch, white spruce and aspen. The understory often supports low growing shrubs and a thin blanket of moss.

Homestead soils are found along Church Road north of the Parks Highway and throughout the Mission Hills subdivision. This soil type has good suitability for septic systems, but excessive drainage ability can lead to contamination of nearby well water. Building is occasionally restricted by boulders and cobble stones, and some localized problems can occur with frost heaving. Low depressions in this series typically have considerably poorer capabilities for development.

The **Knik** series is the other major soil type in the area. It includes most of the downtown area, north and south of Lake Lucille and Wasilla Lake. Except along streams, lakes and in depressions this is the soil and surficial geology most suited for land development.

Knik soils are shallow, well-drained and silty, overlaying coarse, gravelly material, although scattered areas of poorly drained soils are also included. The soils are extensive over a broad range of slopes from flat to steep escarpments. Native vegetation includes forests of paper birch, white spruce and quaking aspen. Many areas have been cleared for pasture or crops.

Soils in this association can support a variety of construction activities such as buildings and roads. Septic systems are usually not a problem as long as the lot size is big enough to keep adequate separation between wells and drain fields. The wetter areas in this series are subject to frost heaving.

The remaining soil associations in the immediate Wasilla area have severe limitations for development. Extensive site work will be necessary to use these areas. Figure 3, Soil

Limitations for Development, shows areas generally unsuited for development without special precautions.

The **Coal Creek** series consists of dark colored, poorly drained soils that formed in moderately deep silty material over compacted, fine-textured sediments. These soils occur in nearly level to gently sloping stream valleys, on the border of muskegs and in small depressions. They are sometimes characterized by hillside seeps. The vegetation on these soils is most commonly sparse forests of paper birch, white spruce and black spruce with undergrowth of alder, willow, grasses and horsetail. This soil unit is found in small areas north and west of the downtown area (see Figure 3) and is unsuitable for building due to poor drainage and slope.

The *Jacobsen* series is a very poorly drained, very stony silt loam found in broad depressions. It is usually covered with a thick mat of sphagnum moss and supports scattered stands of willow and stunted black spruce. The type is found west of Lake Lucille, south of the railroad, about even with Church Road. These soils are nearly undevelopable owing to their high water table and stony condition.

The *Salamatof* and *Slikok* soils require extensive work and should remain undeveloped. Found within low areas of the Knik series, they consist of poorly drained, peat, muck and silty sediments in shallow depressions throughout the eastern side of the city. High water tables, often at or just below the surface, are characteristic of these soils. Vegetation consists of sparse bog birch, willow and stunted black spruce. The banks of Cottonwood Creek south of Wasilla Lake have the greatest concentrations of these soils.

Finally, the *Wasilla* series consists of somewhat poorly drained soils with layers of sand and compacted finer material. They do not have the high organic content of the Slikok series. These soils are not extensive in the local area and are most commonly found southeast of Lake Lucille along the Knik-Goose Bay Road.

Topography and Drainage

Topography in the City of Wasilla varies from about 300 feet to 500 feet above sea level. Generally, terrain gradually rises from south to north. The downtown area is relatively level.

Hills and varying terrain present excellent opportunities for planning a better community. For example, the hilly terrain north of Wasilla High School offers excellent potential for expansion of cross-country ski trails.

Figure 4, Steep Slopes, shows areas of the community which have slopes exceeding 30 degrees. These areas should remain undeveloped, unless care is taken during construction to prevent erosion and the collapse of hillsides.

Views looking southeast and south from the Parks Highway towards Pioneer Peak and the Palmer Hay Flats are striking and should be protected. In addition the Talkeetna Mountains can be seen from many points in the city, with Government Peak at 4,781 feet being the most prominent.

The Wasilla area is blessed with several large lakes and two substantial streams (See figure 5, Drainage and Wetlands). *Wasilla Lake* is partially within the eastern city limits along the Parks Highway. At 387 acres, it is one of the largest lakes in Southcentral Alaska which is easily accessible from a main highway.

Wasilla Lake is part of the Cottonwood Creek drainage system which begins northeast of Wasilla and eventually discharges into Knik Arm about 15 miles to the south. Several lakes are interconnected along this drainage and Wasilla Lake is the largest and last major lake. It is a popular recreation area for both local residents, and for people traveling the highway to other destinations. The lake has limited public and private access points for swimming and boating, however. The Mat-Su Resort has the only boat launch on the lake and it is outside Wasilla's corporate limits. Fishing is very popular year-round and the lake is stocked with silver salmon by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to help support recreational fishing.

The overall water quality of Wasilla Lake appears to be good and is considered safe for human contact and the lake's aquatic life. No water quality testing program is done on a regular basis but water samples taken by the State and City several years ago did not indicate any problems. The patterns of circulation and natural flushing contribute to stable water quality.

Cottonwood Creek is a very popular salmon fishing stream, although fishing is closed within the city limits. Several species of salmon pass through or use Wasilla Lake as a spawning ground. The average rate of flow for Cottonwood Creek is about 16 cubic feet per second near the outfall from Wasilla Lake. However, average flows are occasionally grossly exceeded during heavy rains especially during spring and fall months. Residential development along the banks of the creek south of Wasilla has sometimes experienced flooding.

Lake Lucille is about the same size as Wasilla Lake (362 acres). However, even though Lake Lucille and Wasilla Lake are in close proximity, they are part of two separate drainages and have very different characteristics. Lake Lucille is very shallow with an average depth of only five and a half feet. The lake's primary source of water is springs in the lake bed. No significant creek leads into it and only a small creek drains it. Lucille Creek is a low flow stream that drains Lake Lucille into Big Lake. Flushing action and water circulation through the lake is slow. In the last few years Lake Lucille has become quite eutrophic and has experienced fish kills during the winter months. The shores of Lake Lucille are developed with many residences on individual water systems. The city sewer service was provided to virtually all lake side development in 1987. Shallow lakes surrounded by development such as this often have problems with water quality. While city water quality testing has not revealed any problem with sewage contamination, the lake should be tested on a regular basis.

Groundwater supplies are abundant in the area, although the quality can vary significantly in a short distance. Much of the core area of the city has a central water system and several subdivisions have private water systems. Many homes in the surrounding area, however still rely on individual wells for their water supply. Most of these wells are shallow with depths of less than 100 feet. Static water levels in many of these wells is around 30 feet below the surface. The coarse gravel underlying the city provides a large aquifer even in the winter when infiltration is very low. Some wells are

drilled much deeper and suggest that another aquifer exists still lower down closer to bedrock. Water from these wells is usually of good quality and moderately hard, although iron concentrations are high some localized areas.

Climate

Wasilla's climate is transitional between the extremes of Interior Alaska and the wet maritime conditions found along the coastal areas.

Wasilla is less than 10 miles from Knik Arm and about 75 miles from Prince William Sound. The proximity to the coast means that summer temperatures are more moderate than those in the Interior. The Alaska Range, Chugach and Talkeetna Mountains also protect Wasilla from the extreme cold of the Interior winter and serve to break up strong storm fronts.

This combination of location and topography gives Wasilla a less severe climate than other nearby communities. Wasilla tends to be warmer in the summer with fewer clouds and less rain than communities further south along Cook Inlet such as Homer. Although generally protected from the Matanuska and Knik winds which blow more than 60 miles per hour from 16 to 25 days each year, buildings in the community occasionally suffer wind damage.

Wasilla averages only about 18 inches of precipitation per year, including about 59 inches of snowfall (see Figure 6). Moreover, thaws during the winter months can decrease snow cover to a few inches. However significant variations from these averages do occur. For example the late 1980's witnessed several intense rain storms that brought Wasilla's yearly precipitation totals to over 25 inches.

Sunrise and sunset are only 5.5 hours apart on December 21st. Spring breakup usually is underway by late March or the first week in April. The longest day of the year, June 21, brings 19.5 hours of daylight.

Mean temperatures are shown in Figure 7. Mean monthly high temperatures in Wasilla range from about 22 degrees in December and January to 69 degrees in July. The frost-free period in spring and summer averages 115 days, with the first frost usually arriving by September 1st.

The long hours of daylight means that many crops and plants grow rapidly during the growing season. The record low for the City was -50 degrees in January 1947. The years from 1945 to 1948 were a period of extreme cold and contain the low records for ten months. The highest recorded temperature was 90 degrees in 1969.

Fish and Wildlife

Moose are abundant in the Wasilla area and use a large variety of habitats, including stream valleys, lowlands and south-facing foothills. They forage among a variety of woody and herbaceous plants associated with early successional stages and woodland fringe areas.

Moose populations are cyclical with periodic low and high numbers. Summer range in the mountains north of Wasilla is critical for breeding and calf production. The winter range is mainly within lowland and stream bank areas that support preferred browse such as willow, birch and aspen. Mature successional forests found in undeveloped areas of the city are not particularly suitable for providing the large nutritional demands of these animals. Natural predators are wolves and bears but the largest number of moose are lost due to human conflicts.

Moose are most visible during the winter months when snow forces them out of remote areas and onto the road system and into subdivisions. Especially dangerous for all concerned are moose-vehicle accidents. The large number of commuters, widely separated residential units and long hours of darkness during the seasons when the moose leave the higher elevations pose a significant seasonal traffic hazard to Wasilla residents. According to ADF&G, between 20 and 50 moose are hit each year in the immediate Wasilla area.

A significant number of moose are also killed in railroad accidents each winter. Moose using the snow-free tracks are often hit by trains. Efforts have been made to reduce the winter kill by the railroad. Nevertheless, despite damage to vehicles, summer gardens and ornamental plantings, the presence of moose is considered a desirable attraction of the area.

Both black and brown bear are found in the Wasilla area with black bear being the more abundant. In the spring when bears emerge from hibernation they feed mainly on new green vegetation and carrion. In early summer bear take newborn moose.

Spawning salmon draw bears to nearby streams to take advantage of this readily available food source. Berries become an important food item in the fall as the bears go on an eating binge to put on food reserves for the winter. Black bear are sociable and opportunistic, resulting in increased human-black bear encounters and incidents. Some black bear have discovered the excellent source of food found in residential garbage cans. The growth of rural subdivisions in the Wasilla area has provided an excellent source of food for black bear, especially in the spring and fall.

Brown bear have not adapted to human habitation as well as black bear. Browns prefer to stay in the higher elevations and do not come into contact with humans as often as their black bear cousins.

Small game and furbearers are also abundant. Even within the city limits it is not unusual to find fox, rabbit, coyote, mink, weasel, muskrat and beaver. In the past these small game and furbearing animals supported many local residents with income and food. The importance of small game as income has declined as most people now have other, more conventional, occupations. These small animals are presently important as an ingredient which adds to the local quality of life and as a component of the city's ambience.

The streams and lakes in Wasilla contain a large variety of fish. Fishing is a year-round activity, especially on Wasilla Lake. Freshwater fish include rainbow trout, landlocked coho, and whitefish. Non-game species such as sticklebacks, suckers and sculpins are common in both lakes and the two streams. Lake Lucille has experienced some winter die-offs due to lack of oxygen.

Anadromous fish are an important part of the Wasilla area's natural ecosystem. All five species of Pacific salmon are present. King, Coho, Sockeye, Pink and Chum salmon pass through the city streams and lakes each year. Steelhead, Dolly Varden and a few cutthroat trout are also present. Cottonwood Creek and Lucille Creek provide important habitat for migration, spawning and rearing of anadromous fish. Deep pools within the streams and Cottonwood Lake provide winter habitat for juvenile salmon. Anadromous fish are very sensitive to siltation and deterioration of water quality. Spawning areas and juvenile fish are especially sensitive to changes in the water quality associated with urbanization.

Given the environmental importance of protecting shorelines against urban development and potential pollution, the Borough has established 75 foot minimum setback requirements for construction near lakes and streams. The City also operates a sewage collection and treatment system which prevents untreated waste from entering Lake Lucille and Wasilla Lake, at least within the city limits.

GRAPH HANDOUTS

(Activity 3)

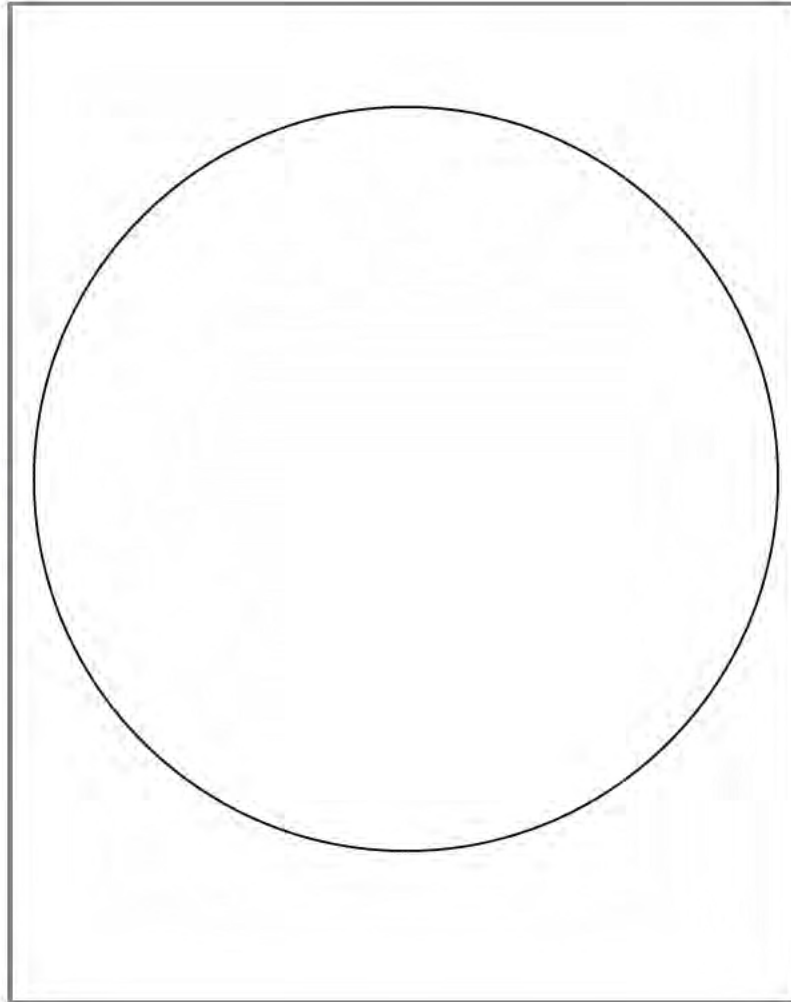
This page intentionally left blank.

Wasilla Population History

Population

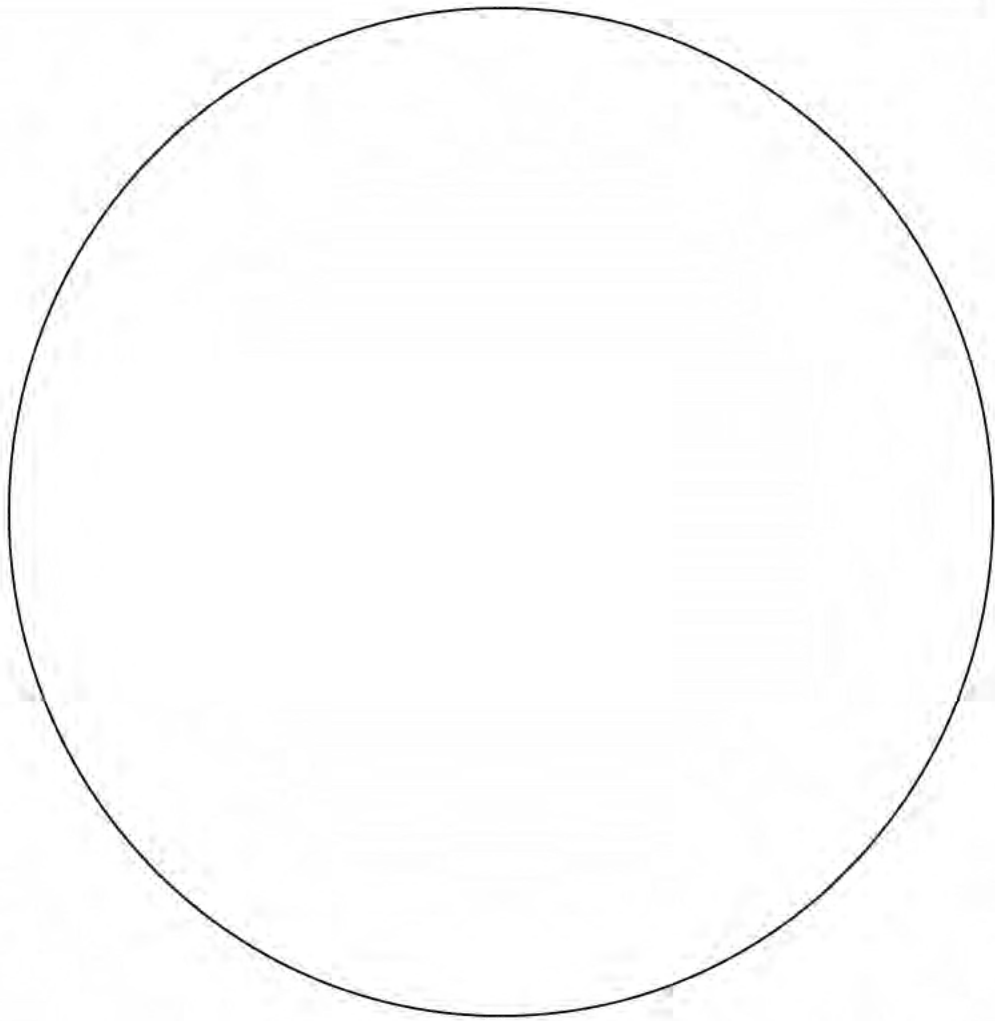
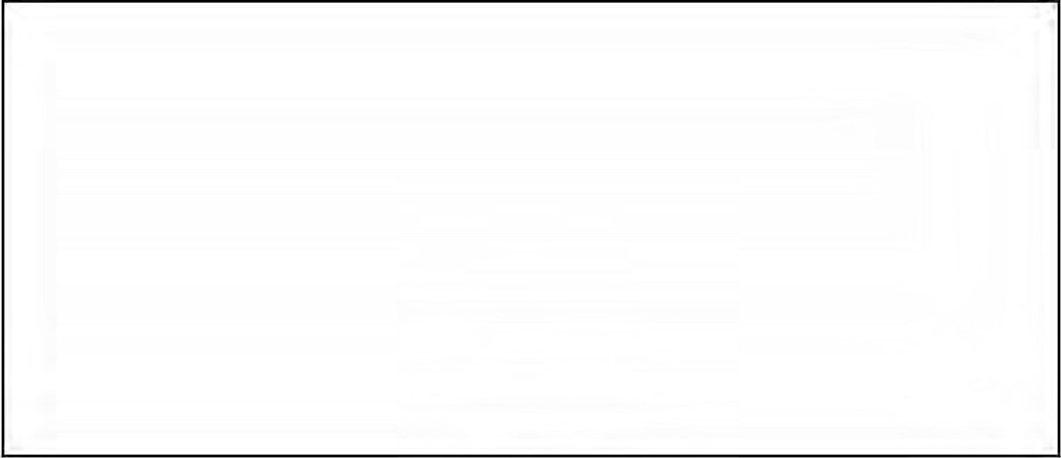
Years

**Wasilla Population by Age
2000**



Empty rectangular box for additional information or notes.

Wasilla Land Use 1991



Wasilla Employment by Industry

Number of Employees

Industry

Wasilla Socioeconomic Data Sheet

Wasilla Employment by Industry (2000 Census Data)

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining	96
Construction	254
Manufacturing	66
Wholesale Trade	40
Retail Trade	387
Transportation, warehousing & Utilities	196
Information	67
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	104
Professional, Administrative, & Waste Management	109
Education, Health & Social Services	525
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, & Hospitality	181
Other Services	157
Public Administration	261

Wasilla Land Use 1991 (1996 Comprehensive Plan)

Single Family	1091 acres
Multi-Family	77
Mobile Homes	2
Commercial	198
Industrial	150
Airport	386
Public Lands (e.g. parks, schools)	340
Semi-Public (e.g. churches)	55
Lakes & Streams	750
Vacant Land (includes roads)	4311

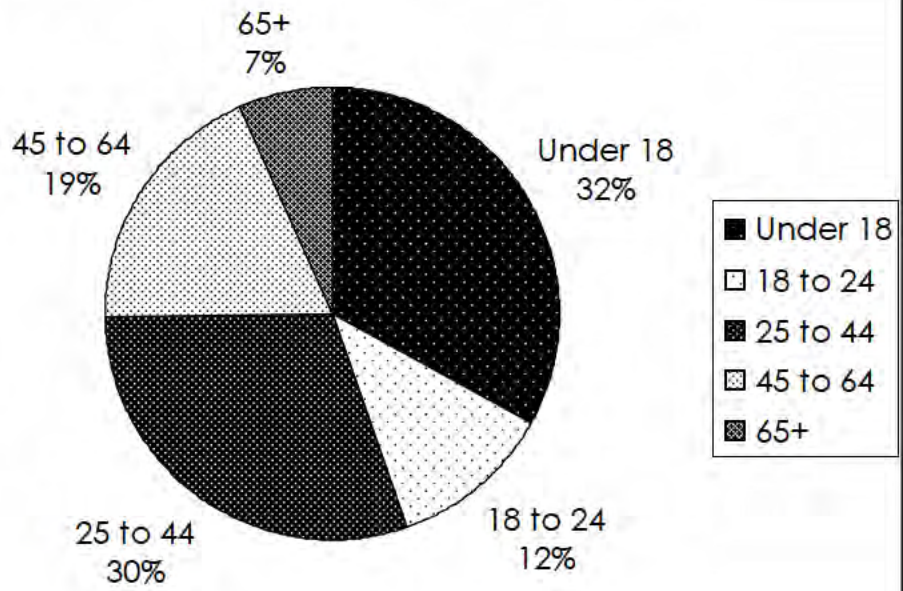
Wasilla Population History (2000 Census Data)

1900	0
1910	0
1920	0
1930	51
1940	96
1950	97
1960	112
1970	300
1980	1559
1990	4028
2000	5469

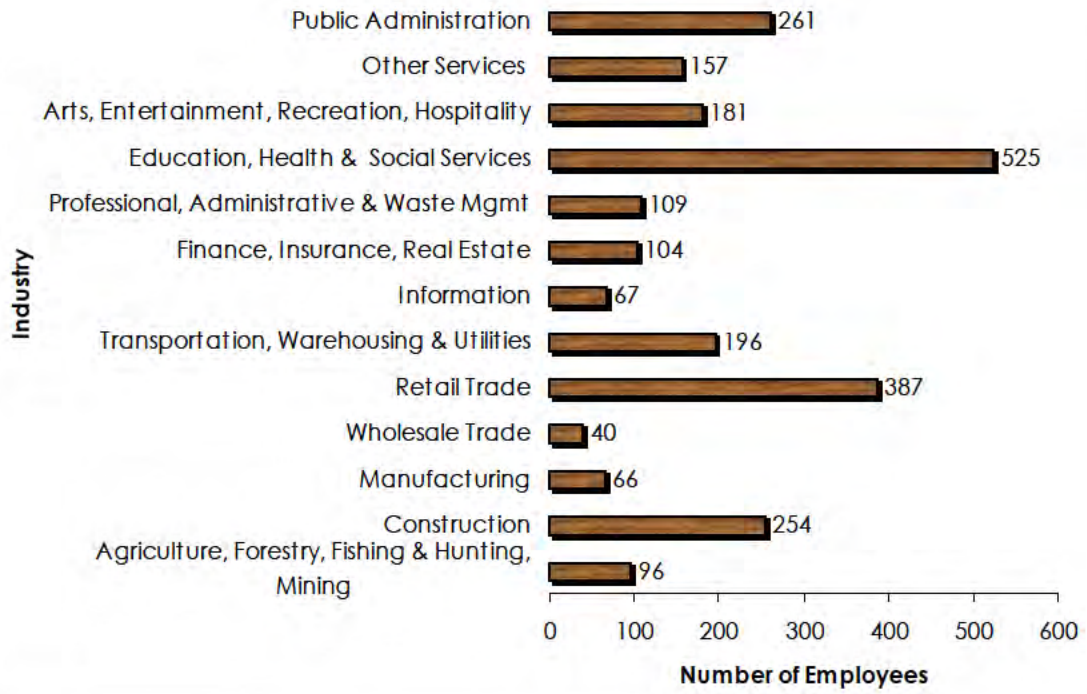
Wasilla Population by Age (2000 Census Data)

Under 18	1837
18 to 24	656
25 to 44	1681
44 to 64	1037
Over 65	369

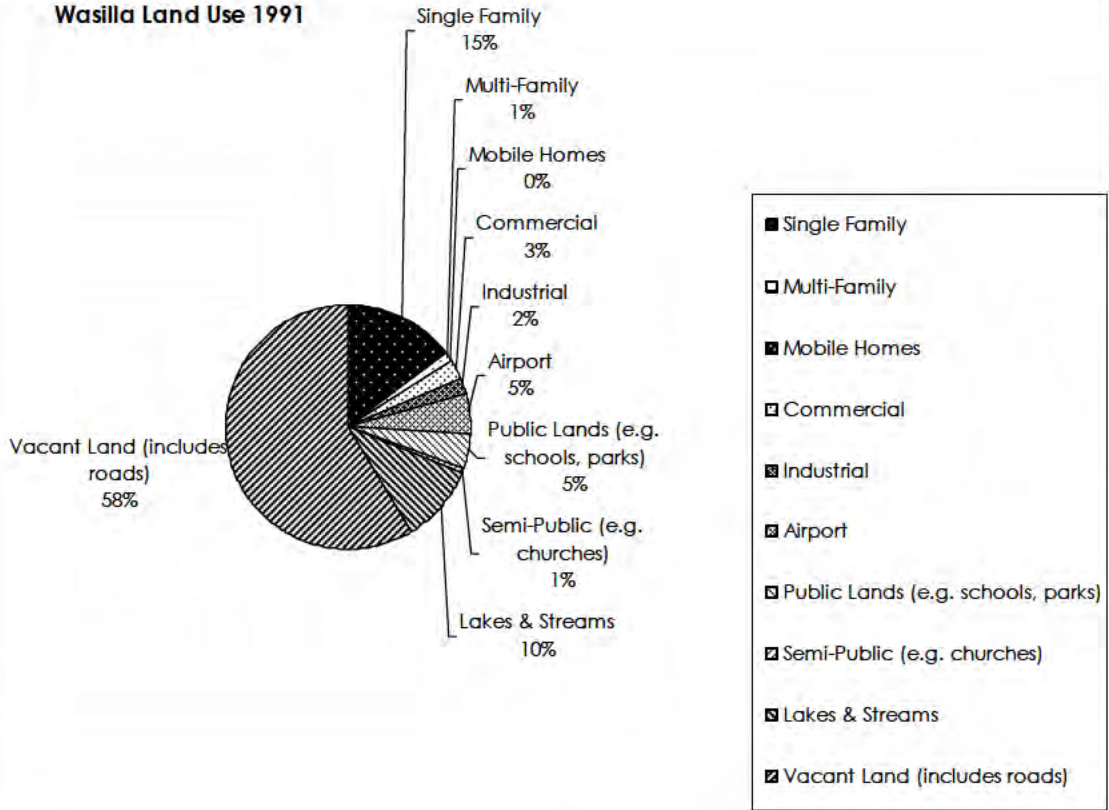
City of Wasilla Population by Age 2000



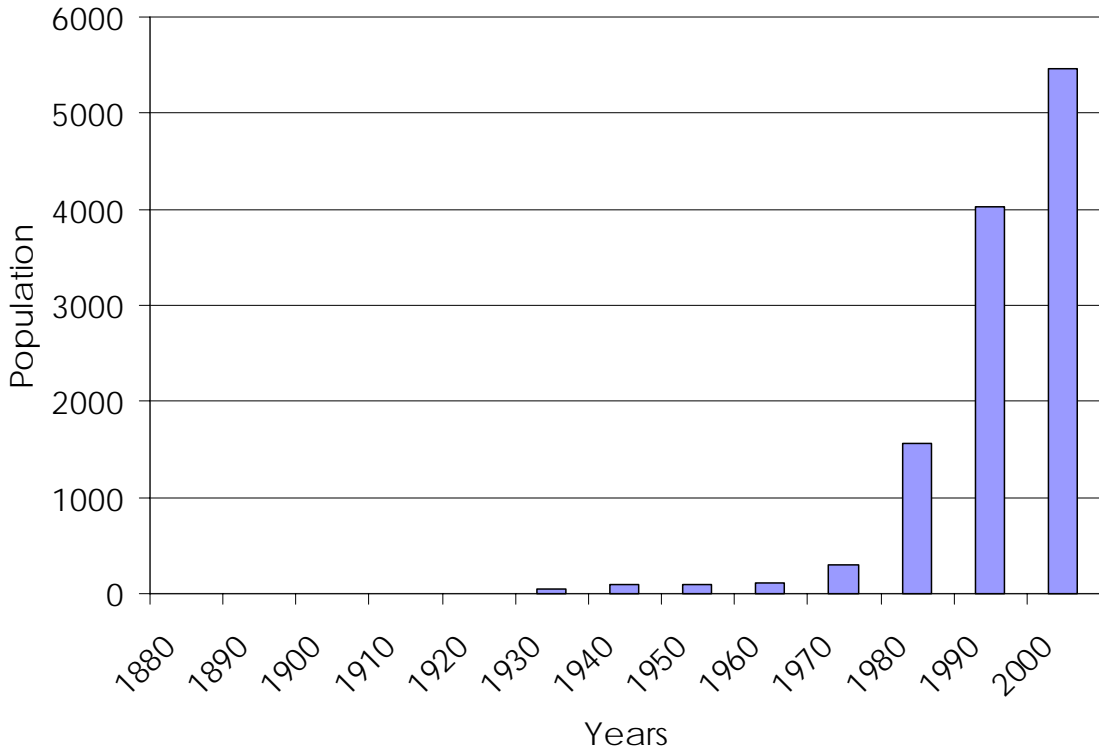
Wasilla Employment by Industry



Wasilla Land Use 1991



Wasilla Population



WASILLA HIGH SCHOOL MAY 2007

Joan Kluwe met with two of Sandy Aschenbrenner's classes at Wasilla High School on Wednesday, May 16, 2007 to discuss the students' visions for the Downtown area of Wasilla. The 7:30am class was mostly Freshmen and the 11:36am class was mostly Juniors. An overview of the Wasilla Area Planning Process was provided, followed by a discussion of land uses. The students brainstormed ideas for potential land uses in the Downtown area, predominantly focusing on commercial and public uses. Transportation issues were also identified and discussed.

The classes were divided into groups of approximately 5 students and each group was provided a map of the Downtown area. They were asked to identify locations for suggested land uses and to identify boundaries for the Wasilla Downtown. The sessions concluded with the students brainstorming the strengths and weaknesses of Wasilla.

These notes summarize the suggested developments or land uses in Downtown Wasilla, as well as the students' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the community.

Suggested Developments/Uses for Downtown Wasilla:

Commercial

- Businesses, few homes
- Small local businesses; no chains
- Few restaurants, but have local cafes
- Restaurants such as Olive Garden, Dairy Queen, Sonic, and local restaurants
- Shopping mall
- Toy stores
- Skate shop
- Clothing stores, including Abercrombie and Fitch
- Starbucks
- Tanning salon
- Game/computer store
- Apple store
- Bookstore
- Teen club
- Clubs/social settings for adults
- Theaters: movie, drive-in, performing arts
- Arcade
- Amusement park
- Water park
- Paintball park

Public

- Keep parks and green space
- Develop winter parks, expand beyond summer uses
- Bike paths/sidewalks
- Beautification/landscaping
- Increase space between buildings/uses
- Downtown courthouse
- Bigger library
- Schools, especially a new high school
- Concert area
- Town square
- Nature walk
- Parks
- Museum
- Fountain
- Playground
- Climbing structure
- Frisbee golf
- Stadium
- YMCA

Transportation

- Improve traffic and parking
- Centralized parking and green space
- Need to be more pedestrian-friendly, you can't walk through downtown Wasilla
- Winter access and convenience for parking
- Public transportation

Strengths—What Students Like About Wasilla:

- It's not like Anchorage
- Lots of space
- I'm not bugged by authorities here; the community is less strict than other places
- Safe
- Quiet – no sirens
- Less strict
- Not lots of cars
- Not cluttered together
- Open
- Nature
- Don't get lost
- Family owned business
- Some modern conveniences/services here

- Skate park (could be better, but it's better than none)
- Environment – calm
- Lakes
- Close together, but not crowded
- Nicely placed
- IHOP
- 4-wheeler paths
- Not too crowded
- Laid back/relaxed

Weaknesses—What Students Dislike About Wasilla:

- Old houses that are run-down
- The community is unorganized (referred to geographic layout)
- Need better roads that are paved
- Sloppy/dirty
- Reputation of the community
- Drugs
- Need better zoning
- “Valley trash”
- People think Wasilla is uncivilized or rough around the edges
- Hicktown
- Nothing to do
- Boring
- Need more daycare
- Increase fire safety service
- People are not polite
- Middle and high school should be farther apart
- Get rid of train tracks
- Have high school open campus
- Need new, bigger schools
- Need better restaurants
- Bad road conditions
- Parks underpasses
- Improve Knik/Parks Highway intersection
- Need more activities for teens
- Need a bus/trolley/public transportation

[Home](#)

[Local News](#)

[Sports](#)

[Opinion](#)

[Subscribe](#)



[Home](#)

Wasilla seeks planning input



[News](#)

High school students get to weigh in on how city should look

- [Local News](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Opinion](#)

May 18, 2007

By Will Elliott/Frontiersman

[Sports](#)

WASILLA - A monorail, a greenbelt, a mega-mall, a casino. Wasilla High School students have been asked by city planners to design their community's future, and their visions may be surprising.

[Features](#)

- [Valley Life](#)
- [Bullseye](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Police Beat](#)

The city of Wasilla has commissioned a study to determine what residents want Wasilla to look like in 20 years. URS Corporation, a global design and engineering firm, will conduct the process and draft plans this summer. The plans will guide development in three key Wasilla areas: near the sports complex, near the Home Depot store, and in the Wasilla downtown area.

[Classifieds](#)

- [Place an Ad](#)

URS environmental scientist Joan Kluwe met with Sandy Aschenbrenner's fifth-hour Law Related Studies class at Wasilla High Wednesday to gather suggestions from the students for the future of downtown. That area has been provisionally defined by URS as a rectangle extending from Wasilla Middle School to a point a few blocks west of Main Street, and a few blocks south of the Parks Highway. URS has already met with other classes at the school, as well as focus groups and community boards. They will unveil the finished plans this fall.

[Info Desk](#)

- [2007 Summer](#)

[Visitors Guide](#)

- [About Us](#)
- [Subscribe](#)

According to Kluwe, in 20 years, some estimates expect Wasilla to surpass Anchorage in size. "We need to plan today if we want to make things happen tomorrow," Kluwe said. "These plans have a 10 to 20 year outlook, so it's important to get the opinions of young people."



Those opinions varied wildly Wednesday.

[Archives](#)

Some students focused mainly on commercial options, such as which franchises to welcome and how big to build new shopping centers. For many, the all-inclusiveness of modern mega-malls simplified planning, as shopping, restaurants and entertainment could all be integrated in a few mammoth buildings. Others favored a more exurban model, in which chain stores, franchises and their attendant parking lots would spread out across downtown.

[City of Palmer](#)

- [Borough Web site](#)

Other students hoped to see more family-owned businesses and green space in the Wasilla metro area, and suggested bike paths, parking garages, and a city square to encourage walking and reduce traffic.

URS was also interested in how students felt about living in the wider Valley.

This page intentionally left blank.



STAFF REPORT
Prepared by:
For the meeting of:

Case # CU 13-01
Planning Staff
May 14, 2013

I. SUMMARY FACTS:

Applicant: Pat Eder, The Design Company
Land Owner: Russell and Pamela Burlingame
Proposal: Construction of a 11,252 square feet medical building for Alyeska Physical Therapy Center
Location: 401 E. Bogard Road
Lots C2 and C3, Section 3, Township 17 North, Range 1 West
Parcel Size: 2.33 acres±
Existing Zoning: Commercial
Comprehensive Plan: Generally Commercial/Business
Surrounding Zoning: North: Commercial
South: Commercial
East: Commercial
West: Commercial

II. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval with Conditions

III. COMPLIANCE WITH WMC 16.16.050 – GENERAL APPROVAL CRITERIA

16.16.050 *An administrative approval, use permit, elevated administrative approval, elevated use permit or conditional use may be granted if the following general approval criteria and any applicable specific approval criteria of Section 16.16.060 are complied with. The burden of proof is on the applicant to show that the proposed use meets these criteria and applicable specific criteria for approval. An approval shall include a written finding that the proposed use can occur consistent with the comprehensive plan, harmoniously with other activities allowed in the district and will not disrupt the character of the neighborhood. Such findings and conditions of approval shall be in writing and become part of the record and the case file.*

16.16.050(1)&(5) *Neighbors/Neighborhoods. Due deference has been given to the neighborhood plan or comments and recommendations from a neighborhood with an approved neighborhood plan.*

Staff Finding: This criterion is not applicable since this parcel is not part of an adopted neighborhood plan.

- 16.16.050(2)** *Plans. The proposal is substantially consistent with the city comprehensive plan and other city adopted plans.*
- Staff Finding: The proposed use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Generally Commercial/Business Future Land Use Map designation and the Commercial zoning that implements the Comprehensive Plan.
- 16.16.050(3)** *Special Uses. The proposal is substantially consistent with the specific approval criteria of Section 16.16.060.*
- Staff Finding: The specific approval criteria under 16.16.060 are not applicable since medical facilities are not one of the special uses with additional criteria.
- 16.16.050(4)** *Reviewing Parties. Due deference has been given to the comments and recommendations of reviewing parties.*
- Staff Finding: The City mailed 81 notices to neighboring property owners within 1200' and the 25 review agencies that are typically provided with the opportunity to comment. At the time of packet preparation, no comments expressing concerns regarding the project were received by Planning. Any comments received after the compilation of the packet will be provided at the public hearing and can be addressed at that time.
- 16.16.050(6)** *Fire Safety and Emergency Access. The proposal shall not pose a fire danger as determined by the State Fire Marshal or the fire chief of the district in which the proposed use is located. Adequate access for emergency and police vehicles must be provided.*
- Staff Finding: The MSB Fire Chief's office will review the plans for compliance with all applicable fire codes, building codes and emergency access as related to the public health, safety and welfare prior to construction. Two access points are proposed – Bogard Road and Wasilla-Fishhook.
- 16.16.050(7)** *Traffic. The proposed use shall not overload the street system with traffic or result in unsafe streets or dangers to pedestrians.*
- Staff Finding: The area is currently developed with a mix of commercial uses and the proposed use should have similar vehicular traffic.
- 16.16.050(8)** *Dimensional Standards. The dimensional requirements of Section 16.24.010 are met.*
- Staff Finding: Staff finds that this criterion is met since the attached site plan submitted by the applicant complies with the minimum setbacks and maximum height requirements of §16.24.010.
- 16.24.050(9)** *Parking. The parking, loading areas, and snow storage sites for the proposed development shall be adequate, safe and properly designed. The developer may be required to install acceptable lighting at pedestrian or vehicular access points.*

Staff Finding: The attached site plan indicates the required parking spaces and snow storage.
16.16.050(10) *Utilities. The proposed use shall be adequately served by water, sewer, electricity, on-site water or sewer systems and other utilities.*

Staff Finding: The site is adequately served by water and sewer and other utilities are currently available in the area.

16.16.050(11) *Drainage. The proposed use shall provide for the control of runoff during and after construction. All roads and parking areas shall be designed to alleviate runoff into public streets, adjoining lots and protect rivers lakes and streams from pollution. Uses may be required to provide for the conservation of natural features such as drainage basins and watersheds, and land stability.*

Staff Finding: The proposed drainage plan indicates on-site storage for runoff from the site. Additionally, in-depth review and approval of the plans will be required by the Public Works department prior to construction.

16.16.050(12) *Large Developments. Residential development of more than four units or non-residential development of more than ten thousand (10,000) square feet gross floor area may be required to provide a site plan showing measures to be taken for the preservation of open space, sensitive areas and other natural features; provision of common signage; provision for landscaping and provisions for safe and effective circulation of vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles. Nonresidential large developments must be located with frontage on one of the following class of streets: interstate, minor arterial, major collector or commercial.*

Staff Finding: The site plan indicates sufficient open space, vehicle and pedestrian circulation, and landscaping and there are no sensitive areas or natural areas to be preserved on site. The site is located on Bogard Road, which is designated as an Arterial road. Signage will be reviewed for consistency with Title 16 at time of submittal of sign permit.

16.16.050(13) *Peak Use. The proposed use shall not result in significantly different peak use characteristics than surrounding uses or other uses allowed in the district.*

Staff Finding: There should not be different peak use characteristics than the surrounding uses or area since the surrounding area is developed and zoned commercial.

16.16.050(14) *Off-Site Impacts. The proposal shall not significantly impact surrounding properties with excessive noise, fumes or odors, glare, smoke, light, vibration, dust, litter, or interference in any radio or television receivers off the premises, or cause significant line voltage fluctuation off the premises. Radio transmitters and any electronic communications equipment regulated by the Federal Communications Commission is specifically excluded from regulation by this section. Welding, operation of electrical appliances or power tools, or similar activities that cause off site impacts as described*

above are specifically regulated by this subsection. Buffering may be required to ameliorate impacts between residential and nonresidential uses. The owner of the property upon which the buffer is constructed is responsible for the maintenance of the buffer in a condition that will meet the intent of these criteria.

Staff Finding: The proposed use should not generate any negative impacts to the surrounding properties. No additional buffering is required since only commercially zoned land abuts the property lot lines.

16.16.050(15) *Landscaping. The proposed use shall be designed in a manner that minimizes the removal of trees and vegetative cover, and shall conform to the standards in this title concerning the provision and maintenance of landscaping, and any landscaping plan that is required for the proposed use under this title. The approval authority also may condition approval on the provision of the following:*

- a. A fenced storage area for common use, adequate to store boats, trailers, snowmobiles, recreational vehicles and similar items.*
- b. Adequately sized, located and screened trash receptacles and areas.*

Staff Finding: The site plan indicates the location of the enclosed dumpster and required landscaping. Additionally, the applicant will be required to provide a landscape bond/guaranty equal to the amount of the estimated cost of the required landscaping.

16.16.050(16) *Walkways, Sidewalks and Bike Paths. Pedestrian walkways or bicycle paths may be required where necessary to provide reasonable circulation or access to schools, playgrounds, shopping areas, transportation or other community facilities. Improvements must be constructed to standards adopted by the engineer.*

Staff Finding: Any necessary sidewalks will be constructed as part of the Main Street Couplet road project or a Safe Routes to School project.

16.16.050(17) *Water, Sewage and Drainage Systems. If a proposed use is within five hundred (500) feet of an existing, adequate public water system, the developer may be required to construct a distribution system and the connection to the public system. A developer may be required to increase the size of existing public water, sewer or drainage lines or to install a distribution system within the development. The commission may require any or all parts of such installation to be oversized. The developer must submit to the engineer an acceptable plan that shows that if within ten (10) years an increase in capacity will be required to serve other areas how these needs will be met by oversized facilities. When installation of oversized facilities is required, the developer shall install such facilities at their own expense. The developer shall be reimbursed the amount determined by the engineer to be the difference in cost between the installed cost of the oversized utility lines and the installed cost of the utility lines adequate to serve both the development concerned and all other land to be served by the lines which is owned or under the control of the developer, provided the*

developer may not be required to install facilities unless funds for such oversizing have been appropriated for the purpose by the city and there is a sufficient unencumbered balance in the balance in the appropriation. No reimbursement may be made unless the developer has entered into such agreement with the city, including conveyances of personal property including lines, lift stations and valves and conveyances of land or rights in land, as the city determines may be necessary to ensure complete control by the city of its sewer, drainage and water lines when they are extended to serve the property of the developer. Notwithstanding the requirement that the developer construct improvements to existing systems, the commission may elect to accomplish the design or construction, or both, of improvements to be made to existing public systems. In such a case, the commission may require advance payment to the city of the estimated cost of work to be accomplished by the city. The developer shall reimburse the city for all expenses of such design or construction not paid in advance. A public system is adequate if, in the judgment of the engineer, it is feasible for the developer to make improvements to the public system which will provide the increased capacity necessary to serve the existing users and the new development at the same level as is being provided to the existing users. Prior to approval of a use for which a community water system is required, the developer must submit evidence showing that there is available a satisfactory source of water. A source of water is satisfactory only if it can be shown that the proposed source will produce water sufficient in quality and quantity to supply the development. The water system and the connection between such distribution systems and the source must be sized and constructed to meet fire flow and hydrant requirements for fire protection and that the developer has obtained or can obtain a water appropriation permit or certificate for the water from the state. The system must be built to city specifications available from the engineer.

Staff Finding: This criterion is met since the Public Works Director has determined that City utilities are in the immediate area and sufficient capacity exists for the proposed use. The applicant will coordinate with the Public Works department to obtain all necessary City permits.

16.16.050(18) *Historic Resources. The proposed use shall not adversely impact any historic resource prior to the assessment of that resource by the city.*

Staff Finding: At this time there are no known historic resources on the site. However, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Cultural Resources Office was notified of the plans to develop this site.

16.16.050(19) *Appearance. The proposed use may be required to blend in with the general neighborhood appearance and architecture. Building spacing, setbacks, lot coverage, and height must be designed to provide adequate provisions for natural light and air.*

Staff Finding: There is adequate spacing between the buildings and the proposed use will be compatible with the surrounding uses.

16.16.050(20) Open Space and Facilities. The applicant may be required to dedicate land for open space drainage, utilities, access, parks or playgrounds. Any dedication required by the city must be based on a written finding that the area is necessary for public use or safety and the dedication is in compliance with adopted municipal plans and policy. The city finding shall conclude that a direct connection exists between the development and the need for the provision of the dedication...

Staff Finding: This criterion is not applicable.

16.16.050(21) *Winter Hassles. The proposed use shall not significantly increase the impact on the surrounding area from glaciation or drifting snow.*

Staff Finding: This criterion is met since no foreseeable problems associated with winter conditions are anticipated for the proposed use and all snow storage will be accommodated on site.

V. FINDINGS

Application: Planning staff has determined that the application along with supporting data is complete and submission requirements were met in a timely manner.

Public Notice: All public noticing requirements of WMC 16.16.040(B) have been met. Public notice was mailed to all properties within a 1,200' radius, allowing for the proper number of days in which to comment in accordance with 16.16.040, notices were posted on the property and at City, and an advertisement for the hearing ran in the May 7, 2013 edition of the Frontiersman.

Comment Period: The written comment period was appropriately given and comments received by mail have been included in the packet. Any comments received after distribution of the packet will be provided at the meeting.

Public Hearing: The public hearing is scheduled in compliance with the requirements of WMC 16.16.040(D).

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

Staff recommends approval of this request with the following conditions of approval:

1. Construction on the site must substantially comply with the site plan date stamped April 23, 2013, attached as Exhibit B. Any changes to the site plan must be submitted to the City Planner for review. Substantial modifications will require submittal of an amended use permit application, including application fee and Planning Commission review and approval.
2. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fire Chief's Office must review this proposal for compliance with all applicable fire codes, building codes and emergency access as related to the public health, safety and welfare prior to construction.
3. A landscape bond or guaranty, consistent with the requirements in §16.44.040 of the Wasilla Municipal Code, must be submitted to the Planning Department prior to any clearing or construction on the site.
4. An as-built survey must be submitted to the Planning Department after completion of the structure.

By: Planning
Public Hearing: 05/14/13
Adopted:

**WASILLA PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 13-08**

A RESOLUTION OF THE WASILLA PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NUMBER CU 13-01 TO CONSTRUCT A 11,252 SQUARE FEET MEDICAL BUILDING, LOCATED ON LOTS C2 and C3, SECTION 3, TOWNSHIP 17 NORTH, RANGE 1 WEST, SEWARD MERIDIAN, ALASKA IN THE COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT; GENERALLY LOCATED AT THE NORTH EAST CORNER OF WASILLA-FISHHOOK AND EAST BOGARD ROAD.

WHEREAS, Pat Eder, agent for Russell and Pamela Burlingame, owners, submitted Conditional Use Permit Number 13-01, requesting approval to construct a 11,252 square feet medical building on April 23, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the application included the required site plan and narrative that addresses the general approval criteria in §16.16.050 of the Wasilla Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, notice of the application was mailed to all property owners within a 1,200 feet radius, the appropriate review agencies, the Wasilla Planning Commission, and the Wasilla City Council as required by §16.16.040(A)(2) of the Wasilla Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, a notice of the public hearing was published in the Frontiersman on May 7, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on this request on May 14, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Wasilla Planning Commission deliberated on this request taking into account the information submitted by the applicants, evaluation and recommendations of staff contained in the staff report, public testimony - both written and verbal comments, the applicable provisions of the Wasilla Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan, and other pertinent information brought before them; and

WHEREAS, the Wasilla Planning Commission adopted Findings of Fact, attached as Exhibit A, summarizing basic facts and reasoning of the Commission; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wasilla Planning Commission hereby approves this application with the Findings of Fact, attached as Exhibit A and incorporated herein, with the following conditions:

1. Construction on the site must substantially comply with the site plan date stamped April 23, 2013, attached as Exhibit B. Any changes to the site plan must be submitted to the City Planner for review. Substantial modifications will require submittal of an amended use permit application, including application fee and Planning Commission review and approval.
2. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fire Chief's Office must review this proposal for compliance with all applicable fire codes, building codes and emergency access as related to the public health, safety and welfare prior to construction.
3. A landscape bond or guaranty, consistent with the requirements in §16.44.040 of the Wasilla Municipal Code, must be submitted to the Planning Department prior to any clearing or construction on the site.

4. An as-built survey must be submitted to the Planning Department after completion of the structure.

ADOPTED by the Wasilla Planning Commission on -, 2013.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Daniel Kelly, Jr., Chairman

Tina Crawford, AICP, City Planner

EXHIBIT A
Wasilla Planning Commission Resolution 13-08

FINDINGS OF FACT – Section 16.16.050, General Approval Criteria

An administrative approval, use permit, elevated administrative approval, elevated use permit or conditional use may be granted if the following general approval criteria and any applicable specific approval criteria of Section 16.16.060 are complied with. The burden of proof is on the applicant to show that the proposed use meets these criteria and applicable specific criteria for approval. An approval shall include a written finding that the proposed use can occur consistent with the comprehensive plan, harmoniously with other activities allowed in the district and will not disrupt the character of the neighborhood. Such findings and conditions of approval shall be in writing and become part of the record and the case file.

16.16.050(1)&(5) *Neighbors/Neighborhoods. Due deference has been given to the neighborhood plan or comments and recommendations from a neighborhood with an approved neighborhood plan.*

Finding: This criterion is not applicable since this parcel is not part of an adopted neighborhood plan.

16.16.050(2) *Plans. The proposal is substantially consistent with the city comprehensive plan and other city adopted plans.*

Finding: The proposed use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Generally Commercial/Business Future Land Use Map designation and the Commercial zoning that implements the Comprehensive Plan.

16.16.050(3) *Special Uses. The proposal is substantially consistent with the specific approval criteria of Section 16.16.060.*

Finding: The specific approval criteria under 16.16.060 are not applicable since medical facilities are not one of the special uses with additional criteria.

16.16.050(4) *Reviewing Parties. Due deference has been given to the comments and recommendations of reviewing parties.*

Finding: The City mailed 81 notices to neighboring property owners within 1200' and the 25 review agencies that are typically provided with the opportunity to comment. At the time of packet preparation, no comments expressing concerns regarding the project were received by Planning. Any comments received after the compilation of the packet will be provided at the public hearing and can be addressed at that time.

16.16.050(6) ***Fire Safety and Emergency Access. The proposal shall not pose a fire danger as determined by the State Fire Marshal or the fire chief of the district in which the proposed use is located. Adequate access for emergency and police vehicles must be provided.***

Finding: The MSB Fire Chief's office will review the plans for compliance with all applicable fire codes, building codes and emergency access as related to the public health, safety and welfare prior to construction. Two access points are proposed – Bogard Road and Wasilla-Fishhook.

16.16.050(7) ***Traffic. The proposed use shall not overload the street system with traffic or result in unsafe streets or dangers to pedestrians.***

Finding: The area is currently developed with a mix of commercial uses and the proposed use should have similar vehicular traffic.

16.16.050(8) ***Dimensional Standards. The dimensional requirements of Section 16.24.010 are met.***

Finding: Staff finds that this criterion is met since the attached site plan submitted by the applicant complies with the minimum setbacks and maximum height requirements of §16.24.010.

16.24.050(9) ***Parking. The parking, loading areas, and snow storage sites for the proposed development shall be adequate, safe and properly designed. The developer may be required to install acceptable lighting at pedestrian or vehicular access points.***

Finding: The attached site plan indicates the required parking spaces and snow storage.

16.16.050(10) ***Utilities. The proposed use shall be adequately served by water, sewer, electricity, on-site water or sewer systems and other utilities.***

Finding: The site is adequately served by water and sewer and other utilities are currently available in the area.

16.16.050(11) ***Drainage. The proposed use shall provide for the control of runoff during and after construction. All roads and parking areas shall be designed to alleviate runoff into public streets, adjoining lots and protect rivers lakes and streams from pollution. Uses may be required to provide for the conservation of natural features such as drainage basins and watersheds, and land stability.***

Finding: The proposed drainage plan indicates on-site storage for runoff from the site. Additionally, in-depth review and approval of the plans will be required by the Public Works department prior to construction.

16.16.050(12) ***Large Developments. Residential development of more than four units or non-residential development of more than ten thousand (10,000) square feet gross floor area may be required to provide a site plan showing measures to be taken for the preservation of open space, sensitive areas and other natural features; provision of common signage; provision for landscaping and provisions for safe and effective circulation of vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles. Nonresidential large developments must be located with frontage on one of the following class of streets: interstate, minor arterial, major collector or commercial.***

Finding: The site plan indicates sufficient open space, vehicle and pedestrian circulation, and landscaping and there are no sensitive areas or natural areas to be preserved on site. The site is located on Bogard Road, which is designated as an Arterial road. Signage will be reviewed for consistency with Title 16 at time of submittal of sign permit.

16.16.050(13) ***Peak Use. The proposed use shall not result in significantly different peak use characteristics than surrounding uses or other uses allowed in the district.***

Finding: There should not be different peak use characteristics than the surrounding uses or area since the surrounding area is developed and zoned commercial.

16.16.050(14) ***Off-Site Impacts. The proposal shall not significantly impact surrounding properties with excessive noise, fumes or odors, glare, smoke, light, vibration, dust, litter, or interference in any radio or television receivers off the premises, or cause significant line voltage fluctuation off the premises. Radio transmitters and any electronic communications equipment regulated by the Federal Communications Commission is specifically excluded from regulation by this section. Welding,***

operation of electrical appliances or power tools, or similar activities that cause off site impacts as described above are specifically regulated by this subsection. Buffering may be required to ameliorate impacts between residential and nonresidential uses. The owner of the property upon which the buffer is constructed is responsible for the maintenance of the buffer in a condition that will meet the intent of these criteria.

Finding: The proposed use should not generate any negative impacts to the surrounding properties. No additional buffering is required since only commercially zoned land abuts the property lot lines.

16.16.050(15) Landscaping. The proposed use shall be designed in a manner that minimizes the removal of trees and vegetative cover, and shall conform to the standards in this title concerning the provision and maintenance of landscaping, and any landscaping plan that is required for the proposed use under this title. The approval authority also may condition approval on the provision of the following:

a. A fenced storage area for common use, adequate to store boats, trailers, snowmobiles, recreational vehicles and similar items.

b. Adequately sized, located and screened trash receptacles and areas.

Finding: The site plan indicates the location of the enclosed dumpster and required landscaping. Additionally, the applicant will be required to provide a landscape bond/guaranty equal to the amount of the estimated cost of the required landscaping.

16.16.050(16) Walkways, Sidewalks and Bike Paths. Pedestrian walkways or bicycle paths may be required where necessary to provide reasonable circulation or access to schools, playgrounds, shopping areas, transportation or other community facilities. Improvements must be constructed to standards adopted by the engineer.

Finding: Any necessary sidewalks will be constructed as part of the Main Street Couplet road project or a Safe Routes to School project.

16.16.050(17) Water, Sewage and Drainage Systems. If a proposed use is within five hundred (500) feet of an existing, adequate public water system, the developer may be required to construct a distribution system and the connection to the public system. A developer may be required to increase the size of existing public water, sewer or drainage lines or to install a distribution system within the development. The commission may require any or all parts of such installation to be oversized. The developer must submit to the engineer an acceptable plan that

shows that if within ten (10) years an increase in capacity will be required to serve other areas how these needs will be met by oversized facilities. When installation of oversized facilities is required, the developer shall install such facilities at their own expense. The developer shall be reimbursed the amount determined by the engineer to be the difference in cost between the installed cost of the oversized utility lines and the installed cost of the utility lines adequate to serve both the development concerned and all other land to be served by the lines which is owned or under the control of the developer, provided the developer may not be required to install facilities unless funds for such oversizing have been appropriated for the purpose by the city and there is a sufficient unencumbered balance in the balance in the appropriation. No reimbursement may be made unless the developer has entered into such agreement with the city, including conveyances of personal property including lines, lift stations and valves and conveyances of land or rights in land, as the city determines may be necessary to ensure complete control by the city of its sewer, drainage and water lines when they are extended to serve the property of the developer. Notwithstanding the requirement that the developer construct improvements to existing systems, the commission may elect to accomplish the design or construction, or both, of improvements to be made to existing public systems. In such a case, the commission may require advance payment to the city of the estimated cost of work to be accomplished by the city. The developer shall reimburse the city for all expenses of such design or construction not paid in advance. A public system is adequate if, in the judgment of the engineer, it is feasible for the developer to make improvements to the public system which will provide the increased capacity necessary to serve the existing users and the new development at the same level as is being provided to the existing users. Prior to approval of a use for which a community water system is required, the developer must submit evidence showing that there is available a satisfactory source of water. A source of water is satisfactory only if it can be shown that the proposed source will produce water sufficient in quality and quantity to supply the development. The water system and the connection between such distribution systems and the source must be sized and constructed to meet fire flow and hydrant requirements for fire protection and that the developer has obtained or can obtain a water appropriation permit or certificate for the water from the state. The system must be built to city specifications available from the engineer.

Finding: This criterion is met since the Public Works Director has determined that City utilities are in the immediate area and sufficient capacity exists for the proposed use. The applicant will coordinate with the Public Works department to obtain all necessary City permits.

16.16.050(18) *Historic Resources. The proposed use shall not adversely impact any historic resource prior to the assessment of that resource by the city.*

Finding: At this time there are no known historic resources on the site. However, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Cultural Resources Office was notified of the plans to develop this site.

16.16.050(19) *Appearance. The proposed use may be required to blend in with the general neighborhood appearance and architecture. Building spacing, setbacks, lot coverage, and height must be designed to provide adequate provisions for natural light and air.*

Finding: There is adequate spacing between the buildings and the proposed use will be compatible with the surrounding uses.

16.16.050(20) *Open Space and Facilities. The applicant may be required to dedicate land for open space drainage, utilities, access, parks or playgrounds. Any dedication required by the city must be based on a written finding that the area is necessary for public use or safety and the dedication is in compliance with adopted municipal plans and policy. The city finding shall conclude that a direct connection exists between the development and the need for the provision of the dedication...*

Finding: This criterion is not applicable.

16.16.050(21) *Winter Hassles. The proposed use shall not significantly increase the impact on the surrounding area from glaciation or drifting snow.*

Finding: This criterion is met since no foreseeable problems associated with winter conditions are anticipated for the proposed use and all snow storage will be accommodated on site.

Comprehensive Plan Information	
Expected Future Land Use Map shows property as :	
Generally Residential <input type="checkbox"/>	Parks <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed Use Area <input type="checkbox"/>
Generally Commercial/Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Generally Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Public/Institutional <input type="checkbox"/>

Land Use	
Describe current use of property covered by this application: Single family residence.	
Surrounding property: (Describe how land adjacent to the property is currently being used.)	
North:	Iditarod Elementary School
South:	Bogard Road with MVFCU offices.
East:	Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
West:	Wasilla Fishhook Road with commercial businesses.

Attach a written narrative addressing the following Criteria –	
16.16.050	
A. An administrative approval, use permit, elevated administrative approval, elevated use permit or conditional use may be granted if the following general approval criteria and any applicable specific approval criteria of Section <u>16.16.060</u> are complied with. The burden of proof is on the applicant to show that the proposed use meets these criteria and applicable specific criteria for approval. An approval shall include a written finding that the proposed use can occur consistent with the comprehensive plan, harmoniously with other activities allowed in the district and will not disrupt the character of the neighborhood. Such findings and conditions of approval shall be in writing and become part of the record and the case file.	
1.	Neighbors. Due deference has been given to the neighborhood plan or comments and recommendations from a neighborhood with an approved neighborhood plan.
2.	Plans. The proposal is substantially consistent with the city comprehensive plan and other city adopted plans.
3.	Special Uses. The proposal is substantially consistent with the specific approval criteria of Section <u>16.16.060</u> .
4.	Reviewing Parties. Due deference has been given to the comments and recommendations of reviewing parties.
5.	Neighborhoods. Due deference has been given to the neighborhood plan or comments and recommendations from a neighborhood with an approved neighborhood plan.
6.	Fire Safety and Emergency Access. The proposal shall not pose a fire danger as determined by the State Fire Marshal or the fire chief of the district in which the proposed use is located. Adequate access for emergency and police vehicles must be provided.
7.	Traffic. The proposed use shall not overload the street system with traffic or result in unsafe streets or dangers to pedestrians.
8.	Dimensional Standards. The dimensional requirements of Section <u>16.24.010</u> are met.
9.	Parking. The parking, loading areas and snow storage sites for the proposal shall be adequate, safe and properly designed. The developer may be required to install acceptable lighting at pedestrian or vehicular access points.

<p>10. Utilities. The proposed use shall be adequately served by water, sewer, electricity, on-site water or sewer systems and other utilities.</p>
<p>11. Drainage. The proposed use shall provide for the control of runoff during and after construction. All roads and parking areas shall be designed to alleviate runoff into public streets, adjoining lots and protect rivers, lakes and streams from pollution. Uses may be required to provide for the conservation of natural features such as drainage basins, watersheds, and land stability.</p>
<p>12. Large Developments. Residential development of more than four units or nonresidential development of more than ten thousand (10,000) square feet gross floor area may be required to provide a site plan showing measures to be taken for the preservation of open space, sensitive areas and other natural features; provision of common signage; provision for landscaping and provisions for safe and effective circulation of vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles. Nonresidential large developments must be located with frontage on one of the following classes of streets: interstate, minor arterial, major collector or commercial.</p>
<p>13. Peak Use. The proposed use shall not result in significantly different peak use characteristics than surrounding uses or other uses allowed in the district.</p>
<p>14. Off-Site Impacts. The proposal shall not significantly impact surrounding properties with excessive noise, fumes or odors, glare, smoke, light, vibration, dust, litter, or interference in any radio or television receivers off the premises, or cause significant line voltage fluctuation off the premises. Radio transmitters and any electronic communications equipment regulated by the Federal Communications Commission is specifically excluded from regulation by this section. Welding, operation of electrical appliances or power tools, or similar activities that cause off-site impacts as described above are specifically regulated by this subsection. Buffering may be required to ameliorate impacts between residential and nonresidential uses. The owner of the property upon which the buffer is constructed is responsible for the maintenance of the buffer in a condition that will meet the intent of this criteria.</p>
<p>15. Landscaping. The proposed use shall be designed in a manner that minimizes the removal of trees and vegetative cover, and shall conform to the standards in this title concerning the provision and maintenance of landscaping, and any landscaping plan that is required for the proposed use under this title. The approval authority also may condition approval on the provision of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A fenced storage area for common use, adequate to store boats, trailers, snowmobiles, recreational vehicles and similar items. b. Adequately sized, located and screened trash receptacles and areas.
<p>16. Walkways, Sidewalks and Bike Paths. Pedestrian walkways or bicycle paths may be required where necessary to provide reasonable circulation or access to schools, playgrounds, shopping areas, transportation or other community facilities. Improvements must be constructed to standards adopted by the engineer.</p>
<p>17. Water, Sewage and Drainage Systems. If a proposed use is within five hundred (500) feet of an existing, adequate public water system, the developer may be required to construct a distribution system and the connection to the public system. A developer may be required to increase the size of existing public water, sewer or drainage lines or to install a distribution system within the development. The commission may require any or all parts of such installation to be oversized. The developer must submit to the engineer an acceptable plan that shows that if within ten (10) years an increase in capacity will be required to serve other areas, how these needs will be met by oversized facilities. When installation of oversized facilities is required, the developer shall install such facilities at their own expense. The developer shall be reimbursed the amount determined by the engineer to be the difference in cost between the installed cost of the oversized utility lines and the installed cost of the utility lines adequate to serve both the development concerned and all other land to be served by the lines which is owned or under the control of the developer, provided the developer may not be required to install facilities unless funds for such oversizing have been appropriated for the purpose by the city and there is a sufficient unencumbered balance in the balance in the appropriation. No reimbursement may be made unless the</p>

developer has entered into such agreement with the city, including conveyances of personal property including lines, lift stations and valves and conveyances of land or rights in land, as the city determines may be necessary to ensure complete control by the city of its sewer, drainage and water lines when they are extended to serve the property of the developer. Notwithstanding the requirement that the developer construct improvements to existing systems, the commission may elect to accomplish the design or construction, or both, of improvements to be made to existing public systems. In such a case, the commission may require advance payment to the city of the estimated cost of work to be accomplished by the city. The developer shall reimburse the city for all expenses of such design or construction not paid in advance. A public system is adequate if, in the judgment of the engineer, it is feasible for the developer to make improvements to the public system which will provide the increased capacity necessary to serve the existing users and the new development at the same level as is being provided to the existing users. Prior to approval of a use for which a community water system is required, the developer must submit evidence showing that there is available a satisfactory source of water. A source of water is satisfactory only if it can be shown that the proposed source will produce water sufficient in quality and quantity to supply the development. The water system and the connection between such distribution systems and the source must be sized and constructed to meet fire flow and hydrant requirements for fire protection and that the developer has obtained or can obtain a water appropriation permit or certificate for the water from the state. The system must be built to city specifications available from the engineer.

18. Historic Resources. The proposed use shall not adversely impact any historic resource prior to the assessment of that resource by the city.

19. Appearance. The proposed use may be required to blend in with the general neighborhood appearance and architecture. Building spacing, setbacks, lot coverage, and height must be designed to provide adequate provisions for natural light and air.

20. Open Space and Facilities. The applicant may be required to dedicate land for open space drainage, utilities, access, parks or playgrounds. Any dedication required by the city must be based on a written finding that the area is necessary for public use or safety and the dedication is in compliance with adopted municipal plans and policy. The city finding shall conclude that a direct connection exists between the development and the need for the provision of the dedication. No land may be accepted by the city unless:

- a. The location, shape, size and character of the area is suitable for the planned use;
- b. The uses authorized for an area are appropriate to the scale and character of the uses considering its size, density, expected population, topography, and the number and type of dwellings and uses to be conducted;
- c. The area must be suitably improved for its intended use, but common open space containing natural features worthy of preservation may be left unimproved;
- d. If the final development plan provides for buildings, landscaping or other improvements in the dedicated area, the developer must provide a bond or other adequate assurance that such improvements will be completed. The city shall release the bond or other assurance when the buildings, structures or improvements have been completed according to the development plan;
- e. All land must be conveyed under one of the following options:
 - i. It may be conveyed to an agency that will agree to maintain in perpetuity the area and any buildings, structures, or improvements which have been placed on it.
 - ii. When no maintenance of the area is required, it may be conveyed to all new owners in undivided joint ownership.
 - iii. When the land is not dedicated to a public agency and maintenance of the common space is required, an association for maintenance of the area must be established. Covenants establishing the association must be approved as to form by the city attorney, and by the commission as to whether the covenants provide for maintenance of the area in a manner which

assures its continuing use for its intended purpose.
 iv. Conveyance of an area must be consistent with AS 34.07 the Horizontal Property Regime Act.
 21. Winter Hassles. The proposed use shall not significantly increase the impact on the surrounding area from glaciation or drifting snow. (Ord. 06-47(AM) § 4, 2006; prior code § 16.43.508)

Application Check list:

- Applicant has owner's authorization to submit application.
- Narrative addressing criterion is attached.
- Application fee.
- Legal description.

Accepted by:	Representative Affidavit: N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Fee: * 25886 \$500 4/23/13	Tentative WPC Hearing Date: 5/14/13
--------------	---	-------------------------------	--

City Planner Approval:

This Land Use Permit is valid beginning _____, 20____, unless an appeal is filed, upon which all activity must cease on this property.

Approval of City Planner: _____ Date: _____

Notice of Right to Appeal: All decisions of the City Planner are appealable per WMC Title 16.



ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

design@mtaonline.net

Box 520189 Big Lake, Alaska 99652 (907) 863-6022 Fax 892-7977

RECEIVED

APR 23 2013

Planning Office
City of Wasilla

April 23, 2013

City of Wasilla
Planning Office
290 E. Herning Avenue
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

Attn: Tina Crawford, City Planner

Subject: Alyeska Physical Therapy Center - Conditional Use Permit Submission
Lot 1, City View Subdivision 401 East Bogard Road

Please initiate a review of a Conditional Use Permit for the construction of the Alyeska Physical Therapy Center Building on the pending Lot 1 (currently Parcels C2 & C3), City View Subdivision. Attached you will find the Conditional Use Permit Application, a project description, the permit fee of \$500.00, half size site and building plans.

The two existing parcels are in the process of being replatted by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough to create a single Lot 1 for this project. The preliminary plat has been approved and the final plat is currently under review.

The attached project description includes the narrative addressing how the proposed project complies with the general and specific approval criteria.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at 863-6022 or email design@mtaonline.net.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Pat Eder'.

Pat Eder, Architect



View to the Northeast towards the subject property from across the Bogard and Fishhook intersection.

Project Description

The design process has begun on a one story, wood frame professional office building that will house the Alyeska Physical Therapy Center. The building will be located on Bogard Road at the intersection with Wasilla Fishhook Road, Main Street, and Nelson Avenue.

The site design will provide the required parking and landscaping and the site grading plan will ensure that site drainage will not cause problems on adjacent property and in the public right of way. A construction storm water prevention pollution plan will be submitted as required to the State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation for review and approval.

Compliance with Section 16.16.050

1. Neighbors. This project will continue the existing commercial development pattern in the neighborhood. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is located to the east. Iditarod Elementary School is located adjacent to the north. Matanuska Valley Federal Credit Union offices are located to the south across Bogard Road. Commercial businesses are located to the west across Wasilla Fishhook Road and Main Street.

2.Plans. The city’s current land use map shows the area zoned commercial. The future land use map shows generally commercial/business designation. This project appears to be consistent with current and future land use plans.

3.Special Uses. The proposed project occupancy includes none of the special uses listed under 16.16.060.

4.Reviewing Parties. The plans for this project will be submitted to the Central Mat-Su Fire Department for plan review, to the State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation for construction storm drainage review and approval, to the City of Wasilla for public hearing and review for the conditional use permit, and sewer and water design will be reviewed by the City of Wasilla Public Works for approval to connect to the City systems.

5.Neighborhoods. Consideration has been given to comments received from the public during the replatting process for City View Subdivision.

6.Fire Safety and Emergency Access. This project will be reviewed and approved by the Central Mat-Su Fire Department before construction for emergency access requirements. All parts of the new building are within 150 feet of fire equipment access points as required by the International Fire Code.



The existing house will be removed and the garage relocated to the rear of the property.

7. Traffic. The traffic volume for this development will be less than 44 vehicles during the peak hour per Table B using the Medical Office Building factor. This will not overload the existing adjacent collector and arterial street system.

8. Dimensional Standards. Front and rear yard setbacks are twenty-five feet and side yard setbacks are ten feet or none. There is no density limitation in the commercial district. Height is limited to thirty-five feet. All dimensional standards are met or exceeded as shown on the attached site plan.

9. Parking. This project requires one parking space per 300 square feet of gross floor area under the Offices Use per 16.24.040. This project contains 11,252 square feet requiring thirty eight parking spaces. Thirty nine parking spaces are proposed. The 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design requires twenty percent of patient and visitor parking spaces to be accessible parking spaces. Of the 39 parking spaces provided 12 will be staff parking and 27 will be for patients and visitors. Twenty percent of the 27 patient and visitors parking spaces equals 6 accessible parking spaces required and provided. For each six or fraction of six accessible spaces at least one van accessible space is required and four will be provided. All parking and driveways will be asphalt paved. The driveways will be a minimum of twenty-five feet wide and the parking spaces will be ten feet wide by twenty feet long. A minimum of two flood lights for the parking area are required. Three light poles will be installed on the site to illuminate the parking areas and will have two light fixtures on each pole. Additional wall mounted light fixtures will provide additional illumination near the building. Snow storage areas of 3,800 square feet will be provided, exceeding the 975 square feet required. One twelve foot by thirty foot loading space will be provided. A trash dumpster with screening will be provided on site. The driveways from Bogard and Fishhook Roads are lighted by the existing street lighting.

10. Utilities. Water and sewer will be connected to the existing City of Wasilla public water and sewer systems located to the south. Electric, telephone, natural gas, and cable all are adjacent to the site. Existing overhead electric and telephone lines will be removed and replaced with underground service.

11. Drainage. The site drainage will flow across paved parking to grass covered drainage swales along the perimeter of the driveways and parking. These drainage retention areas will be shaped to retain drainage on site and reduce the current runoff to the drainage ditches along the streets. A construction storm water pollution prevention plan will be prepared by the civil engineer and submitted to DEC.

12. Large developments. See attached site plan.

13. Peak Use. This proposed use is similar to the existing adjacent commercial business uses and will not result in significantly different peak use characteristics than currently exist.

14. Off-Site Impacts. There will be no off-site impacts caused by this development. No buffering of adjacent property will be required. Existing natural vegetation will remain at the north and east sides of the property to act as a screen for the elementary school to the north and the church to the east.

15. Landscaping. This property was partially cleared sometime ago and contains two single family residences and a detached garage. One residence will be removed. The other residence will remain and be used for storage purposes. The detached garage will be relocated near the remaining residence and also used for storage. The property is just over two acres in size and requires a minimum of 18 newly planted trees and 36 newly planted shrubs within the property perimeter. These plant materials will be provided along with grassed lawns covering the area of the property that is disturbed by construction activities and is not covered by building structures, asphalt paving for driveways and parking, or concrete walks and pads. One third of the existing native vegetation will be undisturbed. See attached site plan and site notes.



16. Walkways, Sidewalks, and Bike Paths. An existing paved pathway parallels the Wasilla Fishhook Road and a connecting pathway runs along the north property line and connects to Wasilla High School to the east. Paved parking areas and concrete sidewalks will provide pedestrian circulation within the site.

17. Water, Sewage and Drainage Systems. There are existing connections to the city water and sewer systems on the property. A civil engineer will design the necessary changes to the existing connections working with the City of Wasilla Public Works Department. The existing drainage system is along the state maintained Bogard and Wasilla Fishhook Roads.

18. Historic Resources. There are no historic resources on this property.

19. Appearance. The general neighborhood appearance and architecture is not of one style or period. The proposed building will be of clean, modern design. The building spacing, setbacks, lot coverage, and height meets both the City of Wasilla Land Development Code and the International Building Code for adequate natural light and air.

20. Open Space and Facilities. This is a private commercial development of moderate size. No public dedication for open space of facilities is anticipated.

21. Winter Impacts. There is minor snow drifting around existing buildings in the area. New covered and heated concrete sidewalks along the parking to the north and east will help alleviate drifting in that area. The building is angled on the site to allow the prevailing wind to clear the main entry area.



View to the west from the southwest corner of the subject property looking across Wasilla Fishhook Road.

PAGE

INTENTIONALLY

LEFT

BLANK



ALYESKA PHYSICAL THERAPY CENTER

401 EAST BOGARD ROAD
WASILLA, ALASKA 99654

PROJECT TITLE

THE **DESIGN** COMPANY
ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

Box 520189
Big Lake, AK 99652
907 863-6022
fax 892-7977
design@mtaonline.net

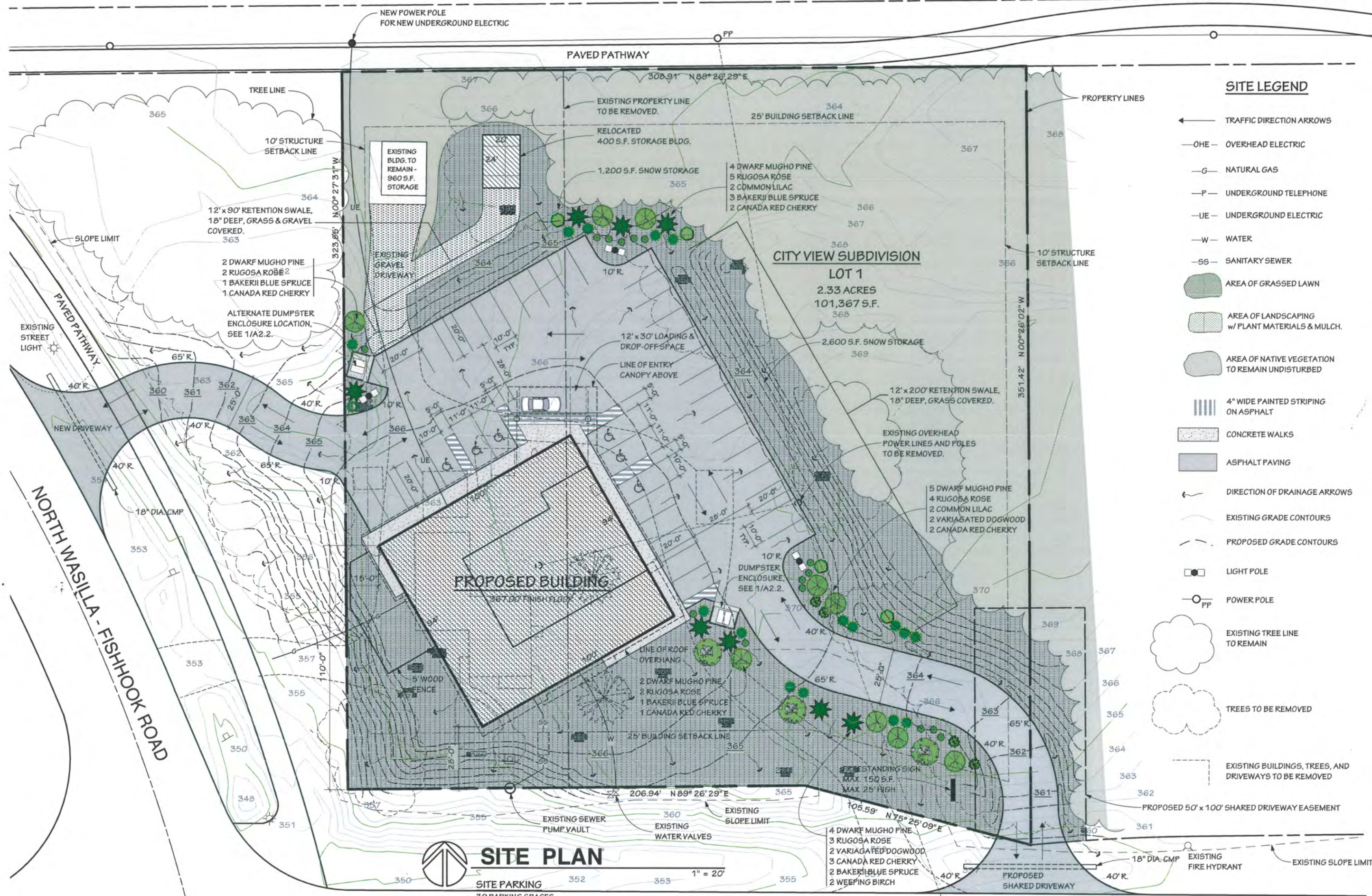
DRAWN BY JPE

DATE MAY 3, 2013

REVISED

SHEET TITLE
SITE PLAN

SHEET **A2.1**



SITE LEGEND

- ← TRAFFIC DIRECTION ARROWS
- OHE— OVERHEAD ELECTRIC
- G— NATURAL GAS
- P— UNDERGROUND TELEPHONE
- UE— UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC
- W— WATER
- SS— SANITARY SEWER
- AREA OF GRASSED LAWN
- AREA OF LANDSCAPING w/ PLANT MATERIALS & MULCH.
- AREA OF NATIVE VEGETATION TO REMAIN UNDISTURBED
- 4" WIDE PAINTED STRIPING ON ASPHALT
- CONCRETE WALKS
- ASPHALT PAVING
- DIRECTION OF DRAINAGE ARROWS
- EXISTING GRADE CONTOURS
- PROPOSED GRADE CONTOURS
- LIGHT POLE
- POWER POLE
- EXISTING TREE LINE TO REMAIN
- TREES TO BE REMOVED
- EXISTING BUILDINGS, TREES, AND DRIVEWAYS TO BE REMOVED

SITE PLAN

SITE PARKING
39 PARKING SPACES
INCLUDING 6 ACCESSIBLE SPACES, 4 VAN ACCESSIBLE,
AND ONE 12' x 30' LOADING SPACE.

EAST BOGARD ROAD

NOTE: FOR 11" x 17" SIZE PLANS, ALL SCALES SHOWN ARE TWICE THE ACTUAL SCALE.

PAGE

INTENTIONALLY

LEFT

BLANK

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

1. I am the Planning Clerk for the City of Wasilla.
2. I certify on this 25 day of April, 2013, I mailed 113 notices of: 81 residents, 25 review agencies & 6 to PC via first class U.S. Mail and by hand delivery regarding the following:
6 to City Council and public works for
Land Use Permit # CU13-01.

Residents within 1,200'	<u>81</u>
Review Agencies	<u>25</u>
Planning Commissioners & City Council Members	<u>13</u>
Total	<u>119</u>

DATED at Wasilla, Alaska, April 25, 2013

CITY OF WASILLA

Tahirih Revet
TAHIRIH REVET
Planning Clerk

Attest:
Tina Crawford
TINA CRAWFORD
City Planner



CITY OF WASILLA

290 E HERNING AVENUE
WASILLA AK 99654-9050
PHONE: (907) 373-9050
FAX: (907) 373-9092

NOTICE

OF APPLICATION FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

APPLICANT/OWNER: Russell & Pamela Burlingame,
Alyeska Physical Therapy Center

LOCATION: Lots C2 & C3, Section 3, Township 17
North, Range 1 West, S.M., Alaska.

FILE NO: C 13-01

PROJECT: Conditional Use Permit to build an 11,252
square feet, commercial building at 401 E.
Bogard Road, which is located on Lots C2
& C3, Section 3, Township 17 North,
Range 1 West, S.M., Alaska.

A public hearing will be held on **May 14, 2013** at 7:00 PM in the City of Wasilla, Council Chambers.

Comments may be submitted in writing on or before **May 9, 2013**.
Please, submit comments or requests for more information to:

CITY OF WASILLA
PLANNING OFFICE
290 EAST HERNING AVE
WASILLA, AK 99654

TELEPHONE: 373-9020
FAX: 373-9021
EMAIL: planning@ci.wasilla.ak.us

**NOTIFICATION OF PUBLIC HEARING
-CONDITIONAL USE REQUEST-**

DATE: April 24, 2013

CASE: CU 13-01

APPLICANT (S): Russell and Pamela Burlingame, Alyeska Physical Therapy Center
(Tax ID #s 17N01W03C002 & 17N01W03C003)

REQUEST:

Conditional use permit to build an 11,252 square feet medical building at 401 E. Bogard Road, which is located on Lots C2 and C3, Section 3, Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Seward Meridian, Alaska.

You are being notified of this action as you are a property owner within 1,200' of the subject property, (WMC 16.16.040). A Planning Commission public hearing on this request is scheduled for **May 14, 2013 at 7:00 PM** in the City Council Chambers. Comments may be submitted in writing by filling in the spaces provided below and mailing to: City of Wasilla, Planning Office, 290 E. Herring Ave, Wasilla, AK 99654. If there is not enough room below please attach a separate piece of paper. You may also fax comments to (907) 373-9021 or email to planning@ci.wasilla.ak.us.

Anyone wishing to review the application for this case is encouraged to contact the Planning Office for additional information.

Name _____

Address _____

Lot _____ Block _____ Subdivision _____

Comments:



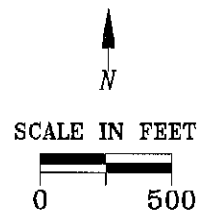
CITY OF WASILLA
PLANNING OFFICE
290 E HERNING AVE
WASILLA, AK 99654
PHONE 373-9020 FAX 373-9021

FIRST CLASS

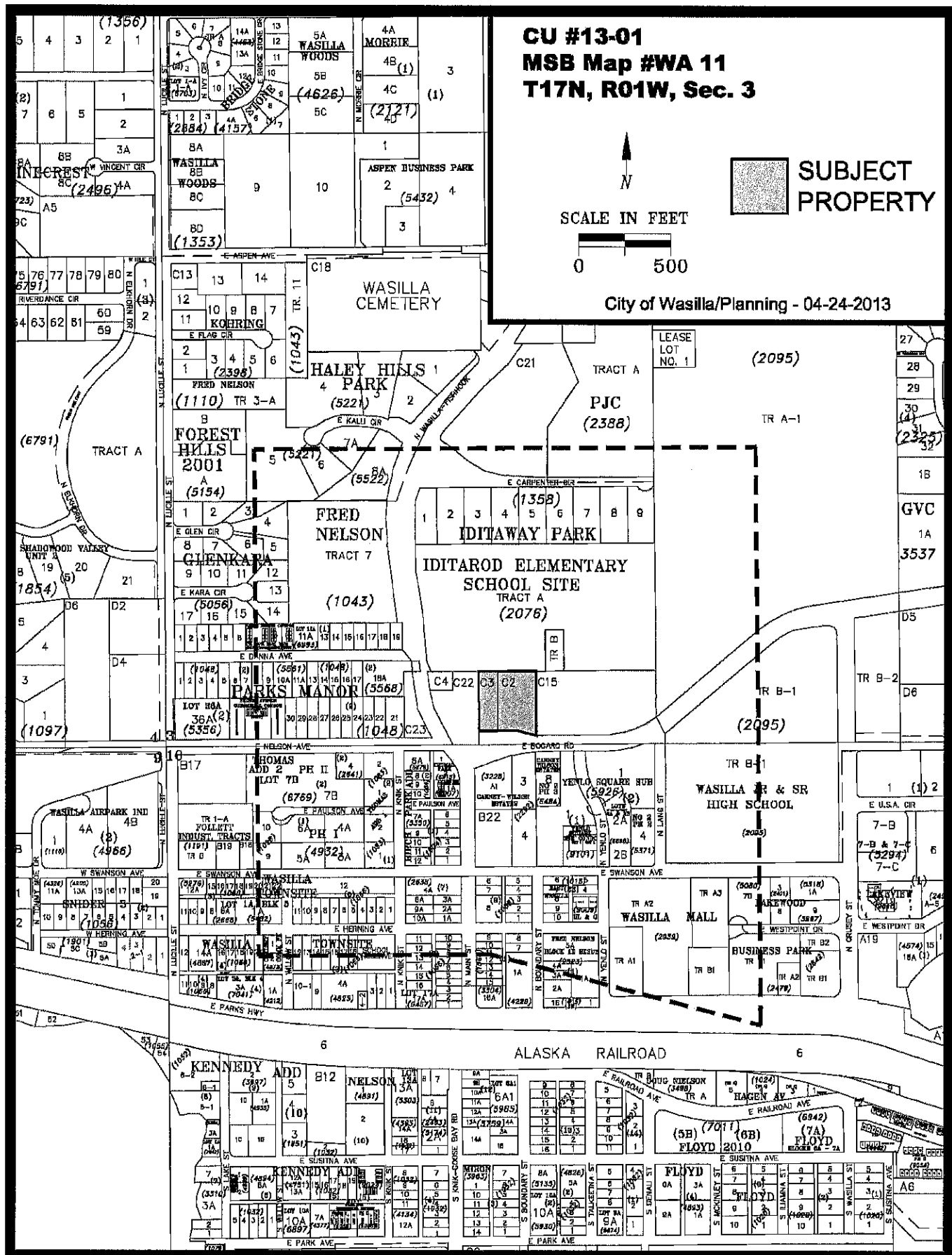
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

CU #13-01
MSB Map #WA 11
T17N, R01W, Sec. 3

SUBJECT PROPERTY



City of Wasilla/Planning - 04-24-2013



1043000T009
ALASKA STATE OFDEPT OF TRANS
& PUB FAC
PO BOX 196900
ANCHORAGE, AK 99519-6900

1004B02L009
ATTITUDE 49 LLC
PO BOX 871745
WASILLA, AK 99687-1745

1048B02L024
BLACKARD JOE D FAMILY
TRUSTBLACKARD MARY P TRE
1121 MCCLINTOCK DR
SHADY SHORES, TX 76208

1358000L007
BUCARIA GARVAN P TR
TREBUCARIA JEANENE B TR TRE
PO BOX 870298
WASILLA, AK 99687-0298

17N01W03C002
BURLINGAME RUSSELL W &
PAMELA J
2273 N SADDLE HORSE DR
WASILLA, AK 99654-3563

1083B01L002
BUTCHER & BETTINE LLC
191 E SWANSON AVE
WASILLA, AK 99654

1048B01L013
CARTER RAYMOND & K
TRECARTER RAYMOND & K LVG TR
251 DANNA AVE
WASILLA, AK 99654

1066B02L009
CEDERHOLM ROBT & RANSOM
LCEDERHOLM ROBT E TRE
RANSOM LINDA A TRE
PO BOX 871017
WASILLA, AK 99687-1017

1048B02L009
CHESTER LLC
PO BOX 240961
ANCHORAGE, AK 99524-0961

1004B01L003
CONOVER DALE L & LINDA A
7362 W PARKS HWYPMB 782
WASILLA, AK 99623-9300

5926B02L001
COOK INLET HOUSING AUTHORITY
3510 SPENARD RDSTE 100
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

1066B02L010
COTTLE COLLEEN G
425 W LAKE VIEW AVE
WASILLA, AK 99654

5522000L008A
CRITERION PROPERTIES LLC
2820 COMMERCIAL DR
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

9089000U005
CROZIER D KEVINCROZIER
BARBARA A
3100 N BANNER WAY
WASILLA, AK 99654

9007000U00A
CROZIER DANIEL K & B A
PO BOX 871052
WASILLA, AK 99687-1052

9007000U00D
CROZIER DAN'L K & BARBARA
PO BOX 871052
WASILLA, AK 99687-1052

1066B01L012
DEBENHAM FAMILY LTD
2960 C STSTE 202
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

5561B02L011A
DENEKI HOUSE INC
1075 S CHECK ST# 202
WASILLA, AK 99654

9055000U201A
DREWRY LOGAN R & SAMANTHA A
201 E DANNA AVEAPT A
WASILLA, AK 99654-6499

5056000L014
DUSKIN GEORGE J & RACHEL R
170 E KARA CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654-6374

9009000U001
EDWARDS M DELON& GLENNA G
760 BARRA LOOP
WASILLA, AK 99654

1083B02L001
EUWER ARCHIE NELSON
PO BOX 2081
PALMER, AK 99645-2081

7090B01L015A
FAMILY CENTERED SERVICES
1825 MARIKA RD
FAIRBANKS, AK 99709-5521

9055000U201D
FRYE IVY
14851 E TWIGS CIR
PALMER, AK 99645-5609

1358000L001
GERSICH PATRICIA M
350 E CARPENTER CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654-6433

9007000U00H
GIANOPOULOS STEVEN
500 N MAIN ST# G
WASILLA, AK 99654

9007000U00C
GLEASON CANDACE MTHUDE
NICOLETTE
PO BOX 1335
PALMER, AK 99645-1335

6769B02L007B
GLOBAL FINANCE & INV CO
119 CEDAR ST
SEATTLE, WA 98121-1231

17N01W03C015
GOOD SHEPHARD LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF WASILLA INC
501 BOGARD RD
WASILLA, AK 99654

9069000U215D
GRADY PATRICK M
215 E DANNA AVEAPT D
WASILLA, AK 99654-6409

1358000L009
HALL ALAN R & PETRA Y
590 E CARPENTER CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654

1066B08L002
HATCHER KELCI KHRIN STEVEN E
322 N BOUNDARY ST
WASILLA, AK 99654-7128

5056000L013
HEATH RICHARD F
190 E KARA CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654-6374

1358000L002
HENRY LARRY B & DEANNA L
390 E CARPENTERS CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654

9089000U003
HESS JAMES M & KATHLEEN M
189 E NELSON AVEPMB 118
WASILLA, AK 99654

5878B02L006A
HULL RONALD R & JANE M
4875 W STACY ST
WASILLA, AK 99623-4182

1066B01L009
IMLACH WILLIAM E REV TR
PO BOX 872526
WASILLA, AK 99687-2526

6993B01L011A
JAKONES PATRICIA A
PO BOX 15212
FRITZ CREEK, AK 99603

1048B02L028
JANICE RENE PROPERTIES LLC
PO BOX 670085
CHUGIAK, AK 99567-0085

1004B01L009
JMAK1 LLC
PO BOX 241567
ANCHORAGE, AK 99524-1567

2641B02L004
JUGE CHARLES FSWEET DANA E
PO BOX 871314
WASILLA, AK 99687-1314

9007000U00E
LACHER LOUIS R & BARBARA
ACULBERTSON WILLIAM P LACHER
RANDY K
1175 SNOWHILL DR
WASILLA, AK 99654-5751

5056000L012
LARSON JOAN E
171 E KARA CIRCLE
WASILLA, AK 99654

5371000L004
LARUE TR THEMARTIN ROBT J TRE
MARTIN PAMELA S TRE
10756 GREEN VALLEY RD
GILROY, CA 95020

1358000L004
LEE SCOTT H & KATHERINE A
446 CARPENTER CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654

2638B07L004A
LEGACY VENTURES LLC
360 N MAIN ST
WASILLA, AK 99654-7017

5056000L015
LEHMER STEVEN W & SARA B
160 E KARA CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654-6374

1048B02L016
LET LLC
PO BOX 110409
ANCHORAGE, AK 99511-0409

1358000L008
LUDLUM ALEXANDER S & M R
560 E CARPENTER CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654

1004B01L010
MARTIN JAMES D & CINDI L
400 N MAIN ST
WASILLA, AK 99654

4229B01L001A
MARTIN RANDALL
PO BOX 871748
WASILLA, AK 99687-1748

5484000L008
MATANUSKA VALLEY FCU
1020 S BAILEY ST
PALMER, AK 99645

17N01W03C021
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
350 E DAHLIA AVE
PALMER, AK 99645-6488

9069000U215C
MCGLASHAN LOUIS M
3413 134TH PL SW# A
LYNNWOOD, WA 98087-1667

1066B02L011
MOUNTS ZELLA ZINK REV TR TRE
343 NE KIRBY% MARILYN PASSOW
ROSEBURG, OR 97470

9089000L200
NELSON AVENUE LLC
179 E NELSON AVE
WASILLA, AK 99654-6462

1358000L006
NYBERG DAVID A & JACKIE S
PO BOX 872361
WASILLA, AK 99687-2361

1066B01L007
ORLANDO DAVIDBROOKS LINDA
PO BOX 2196
VOLCANO, HI 96785-2196

6915000L002
PAYNE MANAGEMENT LLC
546 N MAIN ST
WASILLA, AK 99654

9048000U191B
POOLER IVAN C & PATRICIA
191 E DANNA AVEUNIT B
WASILLA, AK 99654

9069000U215B
RACHOW MAXINE
215 E DANNA AVECONDO B
WASILLA, AK 99654-6409

1048B02L008
ROSE DAVID A & JULIE C
7800 E SETTLEMENT AVE
WASILLA, AK 99654-9342

9055000U201B
SMITH CRAIG R & NORMA L
201 E DANNA AVE# 201B
WASILLA, AK 99654

1048B02L014
TICHENOR LIVING TRUSTTICHENOR
JOHN W & SANDRA J TRES
PO BOX 871218
WASILLA, AK 99687-1218

9048000U191A
URDA STEPHANIE B
191 E DANNA AVE# A
WASILLA, AK 99654

9009000U002
WALLIS ROY D & NANCY A
505 E HERNING% CHIMO GUNS
WASILLA, AK 99654

6698B02L002A
YENLO SQUARE PHASE I LTD
PRTNRSHP
1075 S CHECK STSTE 102
WASILLA, AK 99654-8067

Tom Brooks
Alaska Railroad Corp
PO Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99501

ENSTAR
PO Box 190288
Anchorage, AK 99519-0288

Troy Scheuner
GCI
501 N. Main StSuite 130
Wasilla, AK 99654

9007000U00B
REXRODE GERALD L
PO BOX 870725% SLEATER LTD
INVEST PRTN
WASILLA, AK 99687-0725

1004B01L002
SAGE ALASKA PROP LLC
2508 N POINTE CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654-9348

1358000L005
STEWART GARY D & SYLVIA L
490 E CARPENTER CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654

1048B02L022
TRIPLE BS LLC
PO BOX 3435
PALMER, AK 99645-3435

9101000U001
VALLEY CHARITIES INC
400 N YENLO ST% JOHN ROZZI
WASILLA, AK 99654

2959000T00A3
WASILLA LLC
4000 W DIMOND BLVD # 240%
DENALI COMMERCIAL MGMT
ANCHORAGE, AK 99502

9048000U191C
YOST MARK E & VIRGINIA E
700 W LAZY K LN
WASILLA, AK 99654-1063

Corps of EngineersRegulatory Branch
PO Box 6898
Elmendorf AFB, AK 99506-0898

John Lovett
FAAAirport Division
222 W. 7th Ave#14
Anchorage, AK 99513

MEA
PO Box 2929
Palmer, AK 99645

5056000L005
ROFF JAMES WSMITH JENNIFER M
200 E GLEN CIR
WASILLA, AK 99654

9055000U201C
SANDVIK DAVID & CARRIE
7362 W PARKS HWY #CPMB 606
WASILLA, AK 99654-9132

9069000U215A
STIRLING ANGELA M
215 E DANA AVE# A
WASILLA, AK 99654

2292000L004
U S POSTAL SERVICE
2700 CAMPUS DR#FSC551
SAN MATEO, CA 94497-9470

6698B02L002B
VALLEY RESIDENTIAL SERVICES
1075 S CHECK STSTE 102
WASILLA, AK 99654-8067

9048000U191D
WHEELER BRENDON D
191 E DANNA AVE# D
WASILLA, AK 99654

1358000L003
ZEHM DARLENE R
PO BOX 871373
WASILLA, AK 99687-1373

Richard Boothby
EMS/Central Mat-Su Fire DeptFire
Code Official Captain
101 W. Swanson Ave
Wasilla, AK 99654

Kathy Wells
Friends of Mat-Su
PO Box 116
Palmer, AK 99645

MSB Chief of Code Compliance
350 E. Dahlia Ave
Palmer, AK 99645

MSB Cultural Resources Specialist
350 E. Dahlia Ave
Palmer, AK 99645

MSB Fire Chief
101 S. Swanson Ave
Wasilla, AK 99654

MSB Planning Director
350 E. Dahlia Ave
Palmer, AK 99645

MSB Platting Division Officer
350 E. Dahlia Ave
Palmer, AK 99645

MSB Public Works Director
350 E. Dahlia Ave
Palmer, AK 99645

MTA Real Estate Department
PO Box 3550
Palmer, AK 99645

NRCSSoil & Water Conservation
1700 E. Bogard Rd#203
Wasilla, AK 99654

Oran Wooley
SOA/DECWaste Water RVW
1700 E. Bogard RdBldg B, #103
Wasilla, AK 99654

Roy Robertson
SOA/DECWaste Water RVW
1700 E. Bogard RdBldg B, #103
Wasilla, AK 99654

SOA/DNRCommissioner's Office
550 W. 7th AveSuite 1400
Anchorage, AK 99501

SOA/DNRWATER Resources
550 W. 7th AveSuite 1020
Anchorage, AK 99501

SOA/DFG/Habitat
1800 Glenn HwySuite 6
Palmer, AK 99645

SOA/DNRTechnical Services
550 W. 7th AveSuite 650
Anchorage, AK 99510-3577

SOA/DOTPFMat-Su Area Planner
PO Box 196900
Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

Superintendent
SOA/DOTPF
289 Inner Springer Loop
Palmer, AK 99645

Patrick Brown
693 W. Nelson Ave
Wasilla, AK 99654

Daniel Kelly, Jr
581 Briar Dr
Wasilla, AK 99654

Glenda Ledford
960 S. Century Drive
Wasilla, AK 99654

Jessica Dean
209 S. Vix Way
Wasilla, AK 99654

William Green
PO Box 875470
Wasilla, AK 99687

Jesse Sumner
PO Box 872992
Wasilla, AK 99654

COW Public Works DirectorArchie
Giddings

City CouncilSteven Lovell

City CouncilLeone Harris

City CouncilDianne Woodruff

City CouncilCollen Sullivan-Leonard

City CouncilClark Buswell

City CouncilBrandon Wall