

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA**

Vern Halter, Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Mary Anderson, District 1
Thomas Healy, District 2
John Klapperich, Chair, District 3
Colleen Vague, District 4
William Kendig, District 5
Tomas Adams, District 6
Vern Rauchenstein, District 7



John Moosey, Borough Manager

**PLANNING & LAND USE
DEPARTMENT**

Eileen Probasco, Director of Planning &
Land Use
Sara Jansen, Acting Planning Services
Chief
Alex Strawn, Development Services
Manager
Fred Wagner, Platting Officer
Mary Brodigan, Planning Clerk

*Assembly Chambers of the
Dorothy Swanda Jones Building
350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer*

**October 17, 2016
REGULAR MEETING
6:00 p.m.**

- I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- IV. CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the consent agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Commission and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Commission Member so requests, in which case the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

A. MINUTES

- 1. August 15, 2016, regular meeting minutes

B. INTRODUCTION FOR PUBLIC HEARING: QUASI-JUDICIAL MATTERS

- 1. **Resolution 16-37**, a request for a Conditional Use Permit in accordance with MSB 17.70, Regulation of Alcoholic Beverage Uses, for the operation of an alcoholic beverage dispensary (bar) at the 907 Club, located at 2541 S. Rosalie Court; MSB Tax ID# 5428000T00A; within Township 17 North, Range 3 West, Section 21, Seward Meridian. Public Hearing: November 7, 2016. (*Applicant: Mark Button, dba RMB, LLC, 907 Club, Staff: Mark Whisenhunt*)

C. INTRODUCTION FOR PUBLIC HEARING: LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

1. **Resolution 16-40**, A resolution recommending Assembly approval of amending the City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan in accordance with MSB 15.24.030(B)(5). Public Hearing: November 7, 2016. (Staff: Van Le, R&M Consultants)

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

VI. AGENCY/STAFF REPORTS

VII. LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

VIII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (*three minutes per person, for items not scheduled for public hearing*)

IX. PUBLIC HEARING: QUASI-JUDICIAL MATTERS (*Public Hearings shall not begin before 6:15 p.m.*)

Commission members may not receive or engage in ex-parte contact with the applicant, other parties interested in the application, or members of the public concerning the application or issues presented in the application.

The Planning Commission members may submit questions to the Planning Commission Clerk concerning the following matters or request for more information from the applicant at the time of the introduction. All questions and requests submitted by the Commission shall be in writing and copies will be provided to the applicant and made available to all interested parties and the public upon request. Answers to questions and additional material requests will be addressed in the staff report for the public hearing.

- A. **Resolution 16-33**, a request for a variance in accordance with MSB 17.65 – Variances, regarding a variance to MSB 17.55 – Setbacks and Screening Easements, allowing a proposed garage to be built 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way, located on Block 8, Lot 12, Longbeach Subdivision, Division 2, Palmer Recording District; Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Section 1, Seward Meridian. (Applicant: Denny & Rebecca Nelson, Staff: Susan Lee)
- B. **Resolution 16-38**, a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) in accordance with MSB 17.67 – Tall Structures including Telecommunication Facilities, Wind Energy Conversion Systems, and Other Tall Structures, for a 200-foot-tall telecommunication tower (THP1), located at 29625 S. Talkeetna Spur; MSB Tax ID 25N04W19A006; within Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Section 19, Seward Meridian. (Applicant: MTA, Staff: Mark Whisenhunt)

X. PUBLIC HEARING: LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

- A. **Resolution 16-36**, recommending Assembly approval of amendments to MSB 8.45.010, Buildings and Construction; Adoption of Codes Section to Reflect International Codes. Referred to the PC on 8/17/16 for 90 days and due back to the Assembly by November 15, 2016. (Staff: Bill Gamble)

- B. **Resolution 16-35**, recommending Assembly approval of an Ordinance modifying MSB 17.28 and MSB 17.30 in order to Eliminate the Interim Materials District (IMD) Process. Referred to the PC on 8/2/16 for 90 days and due back to the Assembly by October 31, 2016. (*Staff: Alex Strawn*)

XI. CORRESPONDENCE & INFORMATION

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

XIV. COMMISSION BUSINESS

- A. Upcoming Planning Commission Agenda Items (*Staff: Alex Strawn*)

XV. DIRECTOR AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

XVI. ADJOURNMENT (Mandatory Midnight)

In order to be eligible to file an appeal from a decision of the Planning Commission, a person must be designated an interested party. See MSB 15.39.010 for definition of "Interested Party." The procedures governing appeals to the Board of Adjustment & Appeals are contained in MSB 15.39.010-250, which is available on the Borough Internet home page, <http://www.matsugov.us>, in the Borough Clerk's office, or at various libraries within the Borough.

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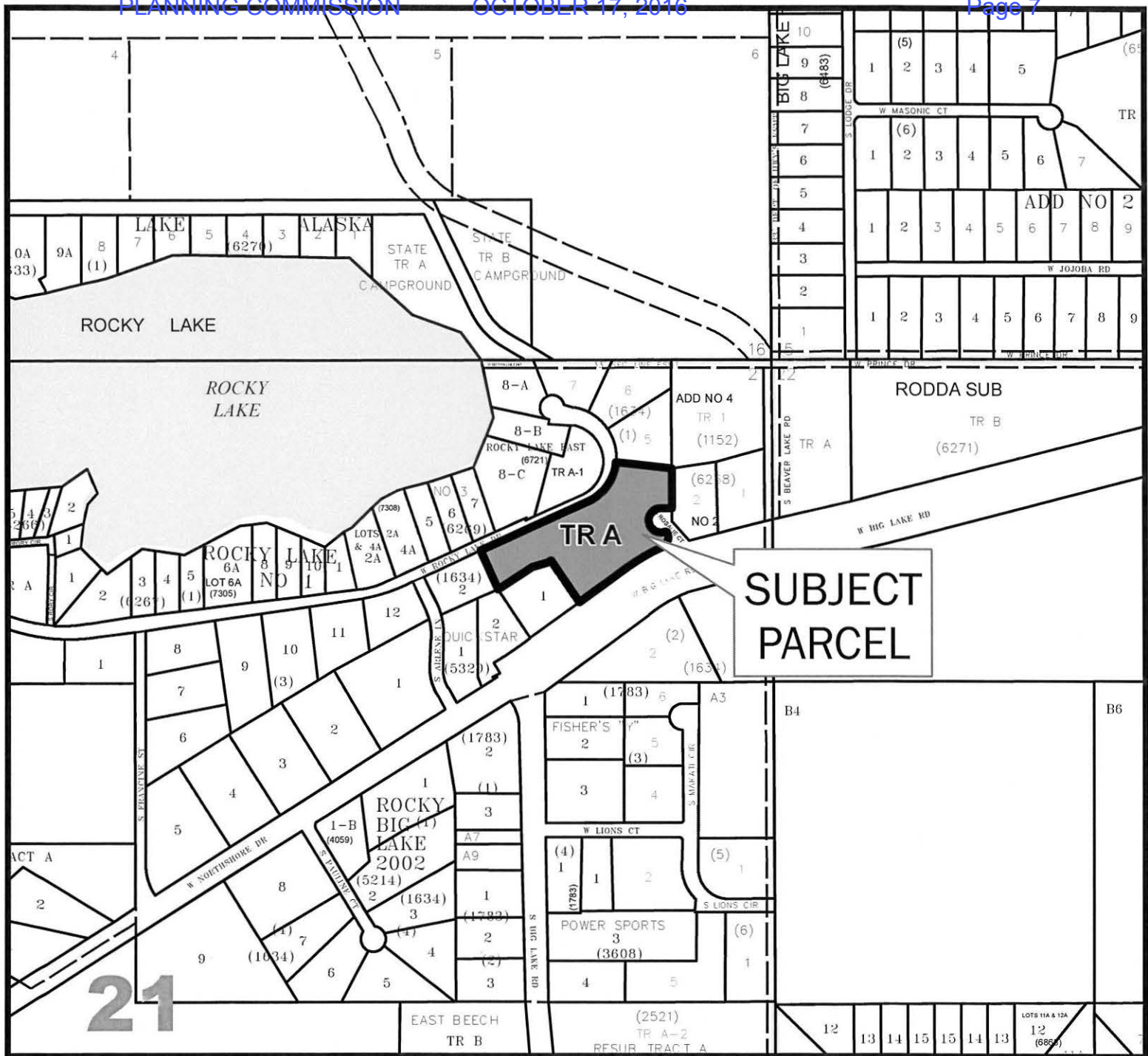
INTRODUCTION FOR PUBLIC HEARING QUASI-JUDICIAL

Resolution No. 16-37

**907 Club CUP
25411 S. Rosalie Court**

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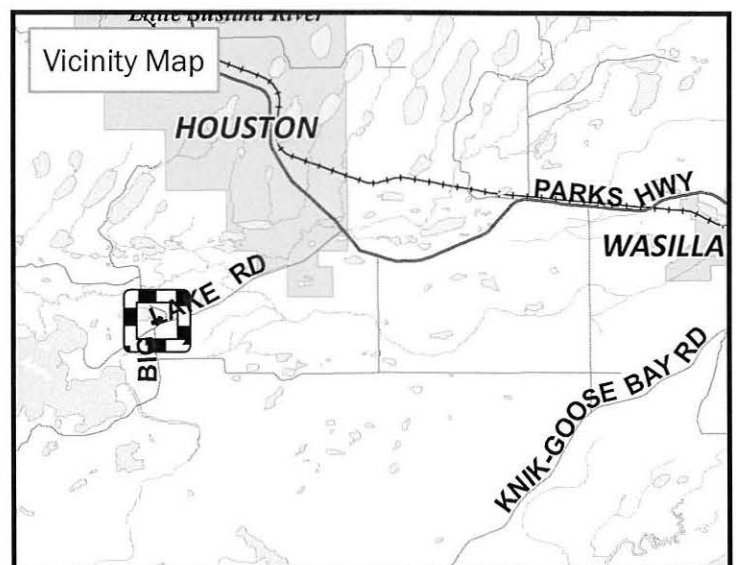
INTRODUCTION FOR PUBLIC HEARING



5428000T00A



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MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Planning and Land Use Department

Development Services Division

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7822 • Fax (907) 861-7876

Email: permitcenter@matsugov.us

APPLICATION FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REGULATION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE USES – MSB 17.70

Carefully read instructions and applicable borough code. Fill out forms completely. Attach information as needed. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

RECEIVED
JUL 22 2016

Application fee must be attached:

☒ \$1,000 for Liquor Beverage Dispensary

☐ \$1,000 for Liquor Package Store

PERMIT CENTER

Prior to the public hearing, the applicant must also pay the mailing and advertising fees associated with the application. Applicants will be provided with a statement of advertising and mailing charges. Payment must be made prior to the application presentation before the Borough Planning Commission.

Subject Property Township: 17N, Range: 03W, Section: 21, Meridian S

MSB Tax Account # 5428000T00A

SUBDIVISION: Marjorie's Manor Tract A BLOCK(S): _____, LOT(S): _____

STREET ADDRESS: 2541 S. Rosalie Court, Big Lake, Alaska 99652

(US Survey, Aliquot Part, Lat. /Long. etc) _____

Ownership A written authorization by the owner must be attached for an agent or contact person, if the owner is using one for the application. Is authorization attached? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Name of Property Owner

RMB, LLC, DBA: Nine OH Seven Corp, 907 Club

Address: P.O. Box 521115

Big Lake, Alaska 99652

Phne: Hm 892-7831 Fax 892-8165

Wk 892-8000 Cell 982-4365

E-mail suprmark@mtaonline.net

Name of Agent/ Contact for application

Jenna Lundy-Conner

Address: P.O. Box 521115

Big Lake, Alaska 99652

Phne: Hm _____ Fax _____

Wk 907-521-2768 Cell _____

E-mail jlsagesse@gmail.com

In order to grant a conditional use permit under MSB 17.70, the Planning Commission must find that each of the following requirements have been met. Explain the following in detail:	Attached
1. Is the conditional use compatible with and will it preserve or not materially detract from the value, character and integrity of the surrounding area?	Yes See Attached
2. Will the granting of the conditional use permit be harmful to the public health, safety, convenience and welfare?	No See Attached

3. Are sufficient setbacks, lot area, buffers and other safeguards being provided?	Yes, See attached
4. Is there any potential negative effect upon other properties in the area due to such factors as dust, noise, obtrusive advertising and glare?	No See Attached
5. Is there any potential negative effect on the safe, efficient flow of traffic on any highway, arterial, collector or street from which access to and from the establishment is obtained?	No See Attached
6. What measures are being proposed to reduce any negative effect upon adjacent and nearby properties by property line buffers and arterial buffers, planted berms, landscaping, reduction or elimination of obtrusive or garish signing or other features, lowered building elevation, clustering with other commercial establishments and use of frontage roads to reduce the number of entries and exits onto highways, arterials and collectors and where the surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, site and building design features that contribute to the residential character of the development?	See Attached
7. Are there adequate parking facilities to accommodate a reasonably expected increased demand for parking created by issuing the permit?	Yes See Attached
8. Will access to the premises create an unreasonable traffic hazard?	No, See Attached
9. Will a reasonably expected increase in traffic overtax the existing road system?	No See Attached
10. Is the use compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood?	Yes, See Attached
11. Is there or would the use tend to result in, a high crime rate or a high incidence of alcohol-related accidents in the area?	No See Attached
12. Does the applicant or a person with an interest in the application have an interest in a liquor license which was suspended or revoked in the 12 months preceding the application?	No See Attached
13. Has the applicant or person with an interest in the application demonstrated that the person is untrustworthy or unfit to conduct the operation of a licensed business, or is a potential source of harm to the public?	No See Attached

Supplemental Information – Explain in Detail	Attached
1. Maximum occupancy capacity of facility as determined by Fire Marshall	96
2. Number of employees proposed to work on largest work shift.	10
3. Number of regular parking spaced provided.	44
4. Number of handicapped parking spaces provided.	2
5. Is the use a sole occupant in a building or a tenant in a building?	Sole Occupant
6. Total square footage of space in building occupied by this use.	2687 S.F.
7. Hours of operation.	See Attached
8. Noise mitigation measures	See Attached

177020160002

SITE PLAN – Attach a detailed, to scale, site plan clearly showing the following information:	Attached
1. Proposed and existing structure(s) on the site. Indicate which structure(s) will be used for the liquor use. Draw lot dimensions and indicate setback distance of structure(s) from the lot lines, rights-of-way, and waterbodies.	✓
2. Dimensions of all structures	✓
3. Interior floor plans (specific location of the use or uses to be made of the development)	✓
4. Signage – Existing and Proposed	✓
5. Location and dimensions for all access points to and from the site to public rights-of-way or public access easements.	✓
6. Proposed contouring	✓
7. Vegetation and any landscaping	✓
8. Buffering – Fences, trees, topography, or berms	✓
9. Drainage	✓
10. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns	✓
11. Exterior site lighting	✓
12. Distance(s) to the nearest intersection in all directions from proposed permit site along roads adjacent to the site.	✓
13. Location and dimensions of parking areas to be provided	✓
14. Boundary protection	✓
15. Scale and north arrow.	✓

OWNER'S STATEMENT: I am owner of the following property:

MSB Tax parcel ID #(s) 5428000T00A and,
I hereby apply for approval an alcoholic beverage use conditional use permit on that property as described in this application.

I understand all activity must be conducted in compliance with all applicable standards of MSB 17.70 and with all other applicable borough, state or federal laws.

I understand that other rules such as local, state and federal regulations, covenants, plat notes, and deed restrictions may be applicable and other permits or authorization may be required. I understand that the borough may also impose conditions and safeguards designed to protect the public's health, safety and welfare and ensure the compatibility of the use with other adjacent uses.

I understand that it is my responsibility to identify and comply with all applicable rules and conditions, covenants, plat notes, and deed restrictions, including changes that may occur in such requirements.

I understand that this permit and zoning status may transfer to subsequent owners of this land and that it is my responsibility to disclose the requirements of this status to the buyer when I sell the land.

I understand that changes from the approved conditional use permit may require further authorization by the Borough Planning Commission. I understand that failure to provide applicable documentation of compliance with approved requirements, or violation of such requirements will nullify legal status, and may result in penalties.

177020160002

Revised 7/1/2015

Permit# _____

Page 3 of 4

I grant permission for borough staff members to enter onto the property as needed to process this application and monitor compliance. Such access will at a minimum, be allowed when the activity is occurring and, with prior notice, at other times necessary to monitor compliance.

The information submitted in this application is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Robert M. Button Robert M. Button 07/21/2016
Signature: Property Owner Printed Name Date

Jenna Lundy-Conner Jenna Lundy-Conner 7/21/2016
Signature: Agent Printed Name Date

Conditional Use Permit Application

RMB, LLC, Nine OH Seven, Corp; DBA The 907 Club

Letter of Introduction

My name is Robert Mark Button and I am the petitioner for the Conditional Permit for the RMB, LLC, Nine OH Seven, Corp; DBA The 907 Club.

You will notice that this application does not have near the quantity of narrative that my Application from last attempt at getting a license approved and that was done intentionally, not maliciously, and I mean no disrespect. I am not certain what information you are requesting be it either narrative or additional information on some issue.

If you could send this to your departments, and they would like more information or narrative, about any issue, I would be more than happy to furnish you the information. If Borough Department Staff has questions, or require more information, please let me know specifically what they would like, because I am not sure. I will answer every question that I can, and give narrative to any questions posed.

I feel that in this way, I will know specifically what you require, can respond appropriately by giving you the specific information that you require. Rather than putting a lot of things down that may not be pertinent, and may be time consuming for all of us.

I want to tell you that I come to you with a legal, Alcoholic Beverage Dispensary License, and property and a building. The project building has been designed by a local architect and meets all codes.

As stated earlier, if a Borough Department Staff has questions, or requires more information, please let me know specifically what you would like. I am not sure of exactly what information you will need. I will answer every question that I can, and give narrative to any questions posed.

Under Alaska State Law, Title 4, it states that local governing bodies may impose restrictions, and/or conditions upon the license.

I am asking the Matanuska-Susitna Borough to tell me the conditions that I may legally operate the Alcoholic Beverage License.

I hope this letter demonstrates that I am ready to answer questions and comply with conditions that may be set upon this license/permit to appease my neighbors, the community, and the Borough and State.

I feel very confident that the area of Big Lake, and its fine residents and visitors will greatly appreciate the good food, and good service that our establishment plans on delivering.

Please do not hesitate to speak with either Jenna Lundy, my Assistant, or myself with any correspondence. I look forward to working with you and want this process to go smoothly for all of us, and would not want a repeat of last year. I will work with the local residents, the Borough and State and ensure that the issuance of this license will be a benefit to all of us!!!

Respectfully,

Robert Mark Button

Nine OH Seven, Corp

08/05/2016

RMB, LLC – DBA Nine OH Seven Corporation
P.O. Box 521115
Big Lake, Alaska 99652

**Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Application for Conditional Use Permit**

Narrative Responses for: Questions 1 thru 13;

1. **Yes. The proposed development is compatible with the surrounding area and will preserve rather than detract from the value, character and integrity of the surrounding area.**

The proposed project will be within the core area as set forth in the Big Lake Comprehensive Plan, and will adhere to said plan, that allows for diverse and “mixed use” businesses. The site itself will be beautifully landscaped with a log sided “cabin look” structure and visually appealing. The proposed project is located in an area that is well known within the State of Alaska as being “Alaska’s Playground”. This proposed full service restaurant and bar will promote a family atmosphere offering a full menu.

The proposed restaurant and bar will not only preserve the value, character and integrity of the Big Lake Gateway Corridor, but will also enhance it. The proposed business will cater to the public in a very basic way ~ to provide wholesome meals. There are very few dining options within the core area which provide wholesome meals. Those that do, have very limited hours. The proposed project will provide a much needed service by enhancing the dining options for not only the residents, but also our visitors.

The proposed project will enhance the value and integrity of the surrounding area by providing needed services that all residents and visitors may use on a year-round basis

2. **No. The proposed development will not be harmful to the public health, safety, convenience or welfare.**

First and foremost, the applicant has a proven history of operating businesses within the boundaries of the law. For over 20 years the applicant has operated a convenience store in the Big Lake core area. For the past five years, the applicant has operated a liquor package store within the core area of Big Lake. The State of Alaska laws are very specific to operating a liquor license of any type, which are enacted to protect the public health, safety and welfare of the public. The applicant has a proven track record of operating a law-abiding business.

RMB, LLC – DBA Nine OH Seven Corporation
P.O. Box 521115
Big Lake, Alaska 99652

RMB, LLC and Nine OH Seven, Corp takes the State of Alaska laws regarding the sale and distribution of liquor, under Alaska State Statutes, seriously. All of the employees of the proposed establishment will have the required TAP certification. In-House policies will ensure the laws are explicitly followed regarding the sale of liquor to minors as well as the sale of liquor to individuals who are intoxicated, not only by requiring the TAP certification, but providing In-House training and general expectations for employees and their responsibilities to the public welfare while serving alcohol. In House policies will reflect the concerns we all have regarding individuals driving under the influence. Explicit measures will be taken to ensure individuals who may be impaired do not leave the premises in their own vehicle, ATV, snow-machine or by walking. Alaska State law requires an establishment notify law enforcement in the event an impaired individual refuses to cooperate with these policies which are reflective of Alaska State Statutes.

3. Yes. The plan provides for sufficient setbacks, lot area, buffers and other safeguards. Please refer to the attached, relevant plans.

The setbacks for the actual structure exceed required setback guidelines. In addition, there will be an eight-foot fence which will border the property on the North-east side of the property and protect the public and property from the cut-through that is a utility easement between the said property and the Yamaha Shop.

4. No. The other properties in the surrounding area will not be negatively affected by dust, noise, obtrusive advertising or glare. Paved areas will prevent and control dust. Noise levels and signage will comply with Matanuska-Susitna Borough regulations. Glare from lighting will be at a minimum and will comply with all Matanuska-Susitna Borough, State of Alaska and Federal laws and regulations.

Dust: The artery that will be used to access the proposed project, which is Rosalie Court is paved. The parking lot for the proposed project will be paved as well. This will do a great service to the surrounding area by to a great degree eliminating, but keeping to a minimum, the dust that would arise if the road and/or parking lot were not paved. In addition, the areas not paved will be seeded and landscaped. The paving, landscaping and fence will contribute to the reduction of dust that presently comes from the area that has been traditionally used for the Big Lake Mud Volleyball event.

RMB, LLC – DBA Nine OH Seven Corporation
P.O. Box 521115
Big Lake, Alaska 99652

Noise Levels: The building will be constructed with 2x6 walls with three inches of foam insulation and fiberglass insulation. This in itself will decrease the noise level significantly. In addition, an Acoustica Barrier (DB-3, Model # DB348X96BX) will be used in the walls and ceiling. This material has an NRC (Noise Reduction Coefficient) rating of .75. Which essentially means that 75% of the noise that hits the material will be deflected. This material will be installed between the foam insulation and the sheetrock. The building will be sided with two inch “log” siding. The layers of said walls will be: two-inch log siding, Tyvec wrapping, ½” CDX sheathing, three inches of sprayed high density foam, 2 1/2 inches of fiberglass insulation, Acoustica Barrier, and ¾ inch sheetrock. In addition, the ceiling will have the aforementioned as well as dropped ceiling panels. The total NRC rating is .90, this calculates to exterior decibels of 12, directly outside of the building. Normal speaking registers at roughly 50 decibels. All walls and ceiling will be constructed in the manner described above to virtually eliminate any sounds coming from the building.

The windows will be tripled paned, High E Argon, with an NRC rating of .68. The highest window rating on the market.

The main entrance door will face East, to allow for any noise pollution which may occur with the opening and closing of doors.

These construction methods and planned building practices have been designed to mitigate and address any noise concerns the residents of Big Lake may have regarding noise pollution.

Glare: The signage will be located between the building and Big Lake Road. The building itself will if not block completely, will deflect any glare that may travel through the existing foliage/trees that border Rocky Lake Drive. In addition, the sign will be Alaskan in design. The sign will picture a map of our great State of Alaska painted with the Aurora Borealis. The words 907 Club will be written over the Aurora Borealis. The back ground color will be night sky blues. The sign will be backlit. The night sky blue background will deflect any glare that would result if say the background was a light color or white. The sign will have a border of blue lights similar to blue rope lighting The and presentation will be reflective of the aesthetics of a “log cabin” and therefore will not be garish.

RMB, LLC – DBA Nine OH Seven Corporation
P.O. Box 521115
Big Lake, Alaska 99652

The lighting in respect to exterior lighting will as required follow required lighting expectations for a commercial building of this type. The plans indicate four parking lot lamps. The parking lot lamps will be at each side of the West and East sides of the parking lot. The lamps will be LED bulbs and will reflect downward. The light poles will be approximately 24 feet tall. If looking from the Rocky Lake Road area, there will be zero glare due to side shields as well as existing natural foliage/trees that are presently in the road easement. Building codes requires that the building be lit sufficiently to accommodate Federal ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) laws. The lighting fixtures on the side of the building will be flush mount within the soffit of the building and spaced every 20 feet around the perimeter of the building. These will reflect down upon the building and pathways and will not have any glare associated with them for residents within the Rocky Lake area or the traffic along Big Lake Road. The entrance will also be lit according to Federal ADA guidelines, but as mentioned above, will deflect to the actual building and pathway.

5. No. Safe and efficient flow of traffic will not be negatively impacted.

With the new roundabout road construction that is presently occurring in Big Lake, the roundabout creates a safer corner and will increase the safety level of access to and from Rosalie court. Cars will no longer be able to careen around the corner and proceed down Big Lake Road at a high rate of speed. Therefore, entrance to and exit from Rosalie Court will be much safer. In addition, Rosalie Court only has one access point as it has a cul-de-sac at the end. The driveway for the proposed project is located in the cul-de-sac area. In addition, the applicant has hopes that a street light will be placed at the junction of Big Lake Road and Rosalie Court. The need for this street light installation will be determined by the State of Alaska DOT and/or the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and is not within the direct control of the applicant.

6. To reduce any negative affect upon adjacent and nearby properties, the applicant proposes to follow all Matanuska-Susitna Borough, State of Alaska and Federal laws regarding all identifiers addressed within question number six. The proposed development's primary goal in aesthetics is to be compatible with the Big Lake surrounding area.

The proposed project will be within the core area as set forth in the Big Lake Comprehensive Plan, and will adhere to said plan, that allows for diverse and "mixed use" businesses

RMB, LLC – DBA Nine OH Seven Corporation
P.O. Box 521115
Big Lake, Alaska 99652

As described above, the property will be bordered by an eight-foot fence. The building will be sided with beautiful “log cabin” siding and constructed to have a minimal noise impact. The property will be beautifully landscaped with plantings of grass, shrubbery and Canadian Red Maples. The sign will measure 10 feet by 16 feet. The bottom edge of the sign will be 16 feet from the ground. The signage will be Alaskan in design and presentation, as described above, and be reflective of the aesthetics of a “log cabin” and therefore will not be garish. The entry/exit is directly onto Rosalie Court which feeds from Big Lake Road as described in detail above. The surrounding area is within the Big Lake core and commercial by nature.

7. Yes. Adequate parking facilities are provided. The proposed project will follow all applicable Alaska State Building Codes, applicable Fire Marshall Codes and applicable tenants within the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Alaska State Fire Marshall and Building Codes have specific requirements for parking guidelines based on the building size and building use. The local architect has determined through a review of these requirements, this project requires 44 parking spaces, two of which will be handicapped accessible. In the event there is an increased demand for parking, the applicant will have enough available and useable land to accommodate the needs for increased parking.

8. No. Access to the proposed project will not create an unreasonable traffic hazard.

As described above, with the new roundabout road construction that is presently occurring in Big Lake, the roundabout creates a safer corner and will increase the safety level of access to and from Rosalie court. Cars will no longer be able to careen around the corner and proceed down Big Lake Road at a high rate of speed. Therefore, entrance to and exit from Rosalie Court will be much safer. In addition, Rosalie Court only has one access point as it has a cul-de-sac at the end. The driveway for the proposed project is located in the cul-de-sac area. In addition, the applicant has hopes that that a street light will be placed at the junction of Big Lake Road and Rosalie Court. The need for this street light installation will be

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determined by the State of Alaska DOT and/or the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and is not within the direct control of the applicant.

9. No. A reasonable increase in traffic will not overtax the existing road system.

The new roundabout has been designed with an eye-to-the future and an expectation of increased traffic along the Big Lake Gateway Corridor. Rosalie Court is located on a straight stretch of road between the new roundabout and the Parks Highway. The existing traffic consists of residents and visitors. The proposed project has the ultimate goal of serving existing residents and the visitors that have traditionally made their way to Big Lake. Therefore, it is not expected that there will not be an influx of patrons who will drive to Big Lake *only* for the purpose of visiting the new establishment which would overtax the existing road system. In addition, the other access to Big Lake from Wasilla is Hollywood Road. Individuals who presently come to Big Lake for other purposes use Hollywood Road as well as Big Lake Road. If a patron accesses Big Lake from Hollywood Road will necessarily pass through the new roundabout to access Rosalie Court.

10. Yes. The proposed project use is compatible with the surrounding area because it adheres to the Big Lake Comprehensive Plan, which states that the proposed site is within the "Big Lake Gateway Corridor". This plan allows for a diverse and mixed set of business. The proposed project will promote a family atmosphere, full-service restaurant and provide services to the community members as well as the plethora of visitors Big Lake receives each year. In addition, the site will be aesthetically beautiful and will be an asset to visitors entering the Big Lake Gateway Corridor.

11. No. First and foremost, the applicant has a proven history of operating businesses within the boundaries of the law. For the past five years, the applicant has operated a liquor package store within the core area of Big Lake. The State of Alaska laws are very specific to operating a liquor license of any type, which are enacted to not only protect the public health, safety and welfare of the public, but to decrease any crime that would result from alcohol abuse and alcohol related accidents. The applicant has a proven track record of operating a law-abiding business.

RMB, LLC – DBA Nine OH Seven Corporation
P.O. Box 521115
Big Lake, Alaska 99652

RMB, LLC and Nine OH Seven, Corp, seriously regards the State of Alaska laws regarding the sale and distribution of liquor, under Alaska State Statutes. All of the employees of the proposed establishment will have the required TAP certification. In House policies will ensure the laws are explicitly followed regarding the sale of liquor to minors as well as the sale of liquor to individuals who are intoxicated, not only by requiring the TAP certification, but providing In-House training and general expectations for employees and their responsibilities to the public welfare while serving alcohol. In-House policies will reflect the concerns we all have regarding individuals driving under the influence and other crime related issues that could arise. Explicit measures will be taken to ensure individuals who may be impaired do not leave the premises in their own vehicle, ATV, snow-machine or by walking. Alaska State law requires an establishment notify law enforcement in the event an impaired individual refuses to cooperate with these policies which are reflective of Alaska State Statutes.

Summary: The proposed project will operate fully under Alaska State laws regarding the service of food and alcohol. All patrons who attempt to purchase alcohol will be carded. In addition, all employees will hold TAP certification to ensure knowledge of the law and ensure practical application of the law.

12. No. The applicant does not have a history of liquor license violation. The applicant in fact has a long history of liquor license compliance and has operated successfully without a single suspension or revocation within the last twelve months.
13. No. The applicant has been a contributing member of the Big Lake community for more than 20 years. During this time, the applicant has fully demonstrated competence in business practice. The day-to-day operations of his existing businesses have always reflected safe and courteous service to the community members of Big Lake *and* the Settler's Bay area of the greater Knik-Goosebay community.

In addition, the State of Alaska requires fingerprint cards to be submitted along with a liquor license application. In the event the applicant is found criminally unworthy of holding said license, the State of Alaska will not issue said license to the applicant.

RMB, LLC – DBA Nine OH Seven Corporation
P.O. Box 521115
Big Lake, Alaska 99652

Supplemental Information Questions 1 thru 8

1. **Maximum Capacity:** 96
2. **Number of Employees proposed on larges shift:** 10
3. **Number of regular parking spaces:** 44
4. **Number of handicapped parking spaces provided:** 2
5. **The sole occupant of the building will be the applicant.**
6. **Total Square feet:** 2687 S.F.
7. **Hours of Operation:**

Restaurant/Food Service

Sunday through Saturday: 6:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.

Liquor Service

Sunday through Saturday: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 a.m.

8. **Noise Mitigation Issues**
Noise levels will comply with applicable Matanuska-Susitna Borough and State of Alaska noise compliance codes.

The building will be constructed with 2x6 walls with three inches of foam insulation and fiberglass insulation. This in itself will decrease the noise level significantly. In addition, an Acoustica Barrier (DB-3, Model # DB348X96BX) will be used in the walls and ceiling. This material has an NRC (Noise Reduction Coefficient) rating of .75. Which essentially means that 75% of the noise that hits the material will be deflected. This material will be installed between the foam insulation and the sheetrock. The building will be sided with two inch "log" siding. The layers of said walls will be: two-inch log siding, Tyvec wrapping, 1/2" CDX sheathing, three inches of sprayed high density foam, 2 1/2 inches of fiberglass insulation, Acoustica Barrier, and 3/4 inch sheetrock. In addition, the ceiling will have the aforementioned and dropped ceiling panels. The total NRC rating is .90, this calculates to exterior decibels of 12, directly outside of the building. Normal speaking registers at roughly 50 decibels. All walls and ceiling will be constructed in the manner described above to virtually eliminate any sounds coming from the building.

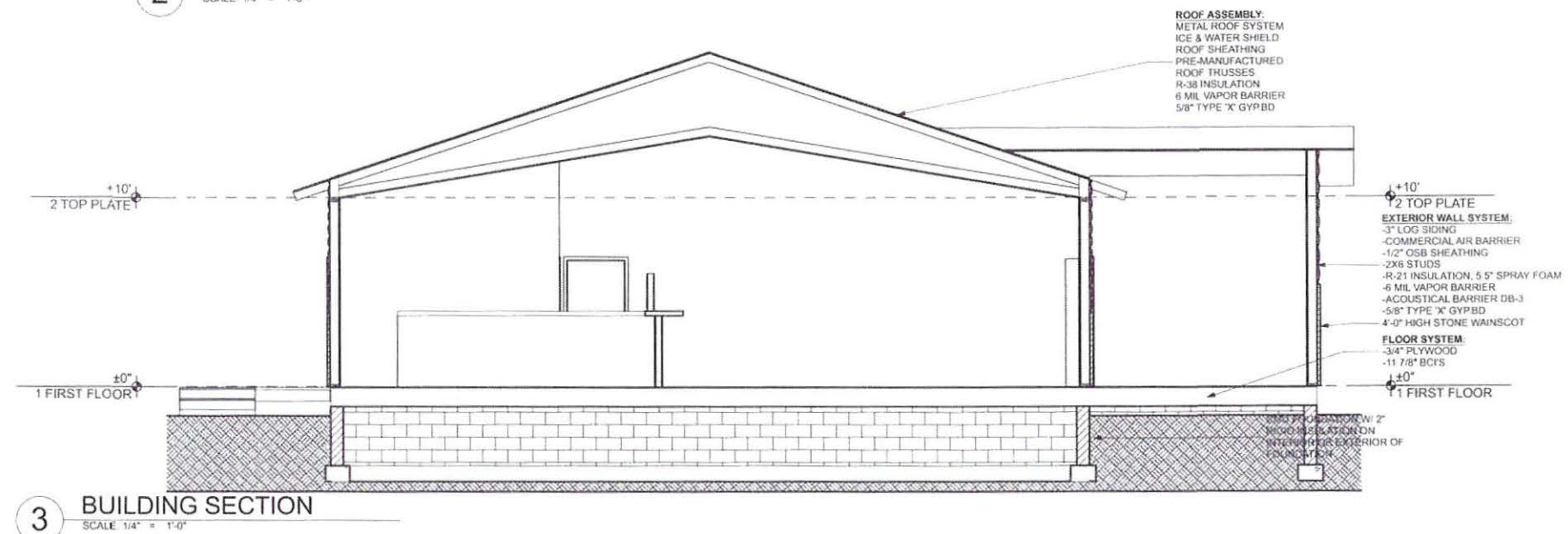
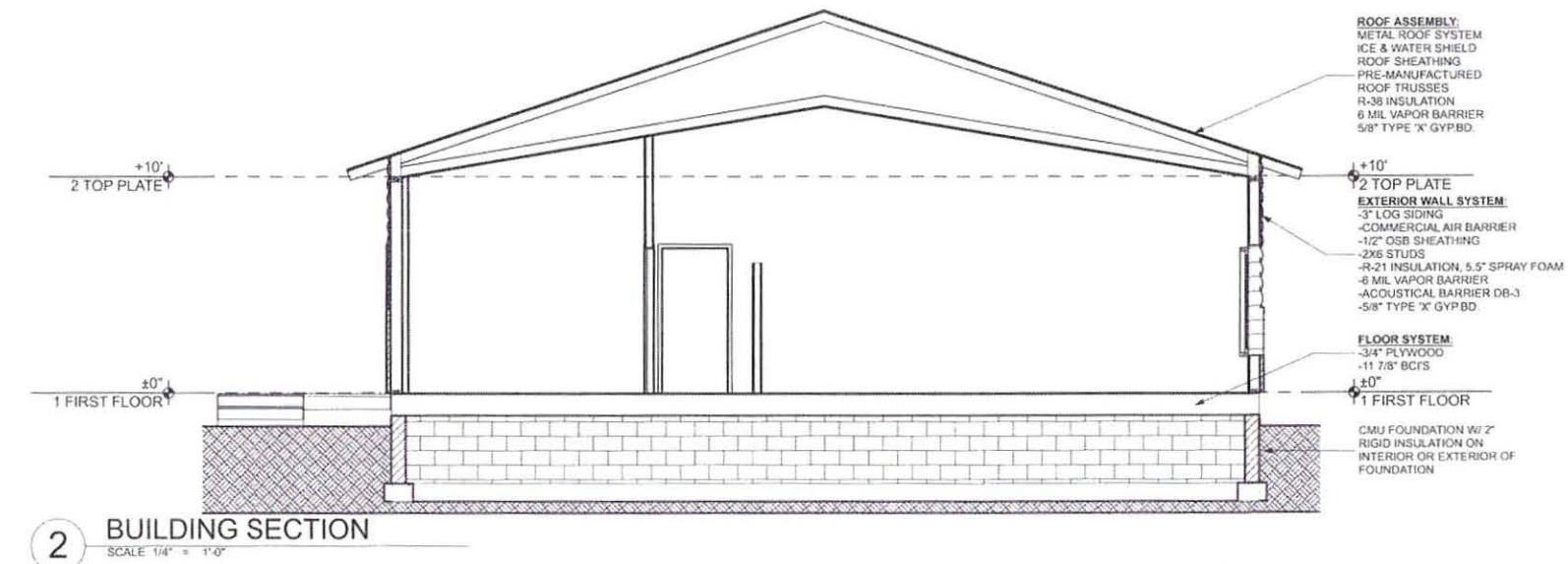
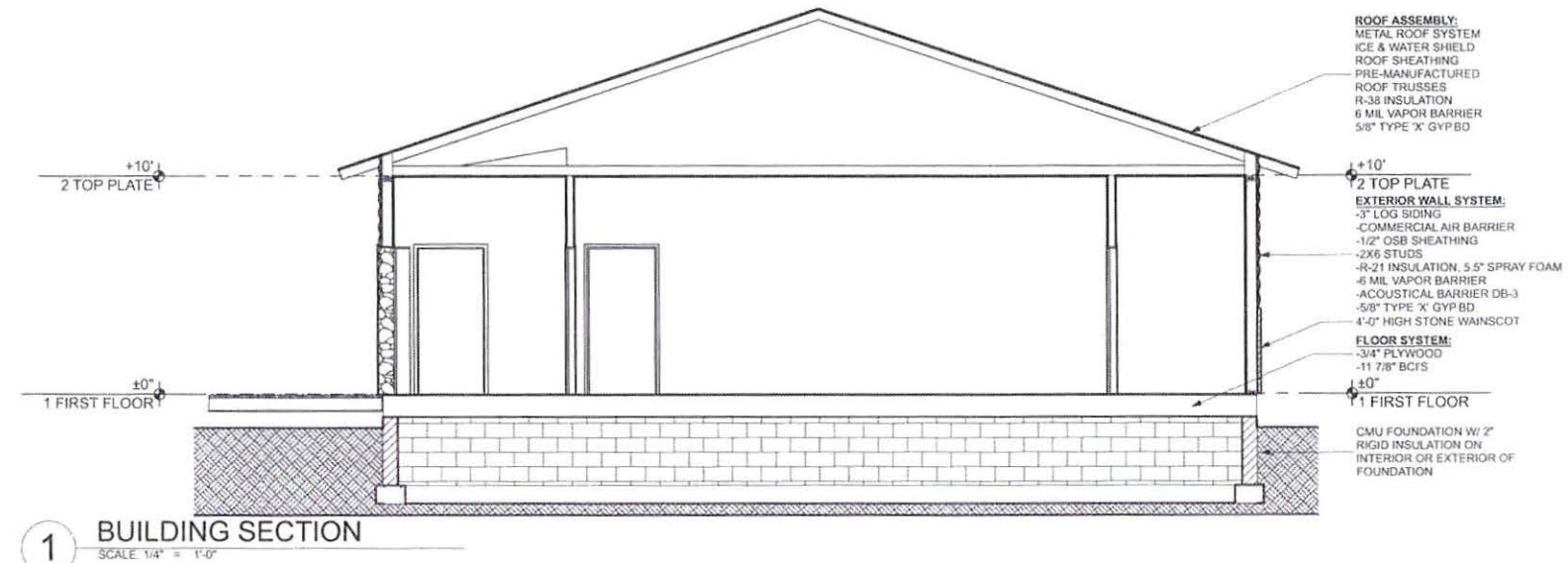
**RMB, LLC – DBA Nine OH Seven Corporation
P.O. Box 521115
Big Lake, Alaska 99652**

The windows will be tripled paned, High E Argon, with an NRC rating of .68, the highest window rating on the market.

The main entrance door will face East, to allow for any noise pollution which may occur with the opening and closing of doors.

These construction methods and practice have been designed to mitigate and address any noise concerns the residents of Big Lake may have regarding noise pollution.

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McMILLEN DESIGNS



907 CLUB

MARK BUTTON
BIG LAKE, ALASKA
Tel 907.892.8000

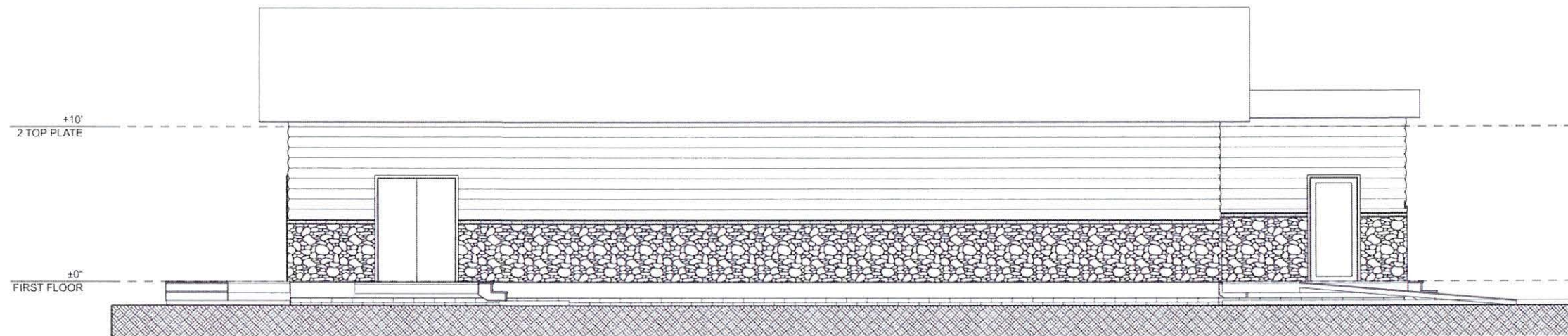
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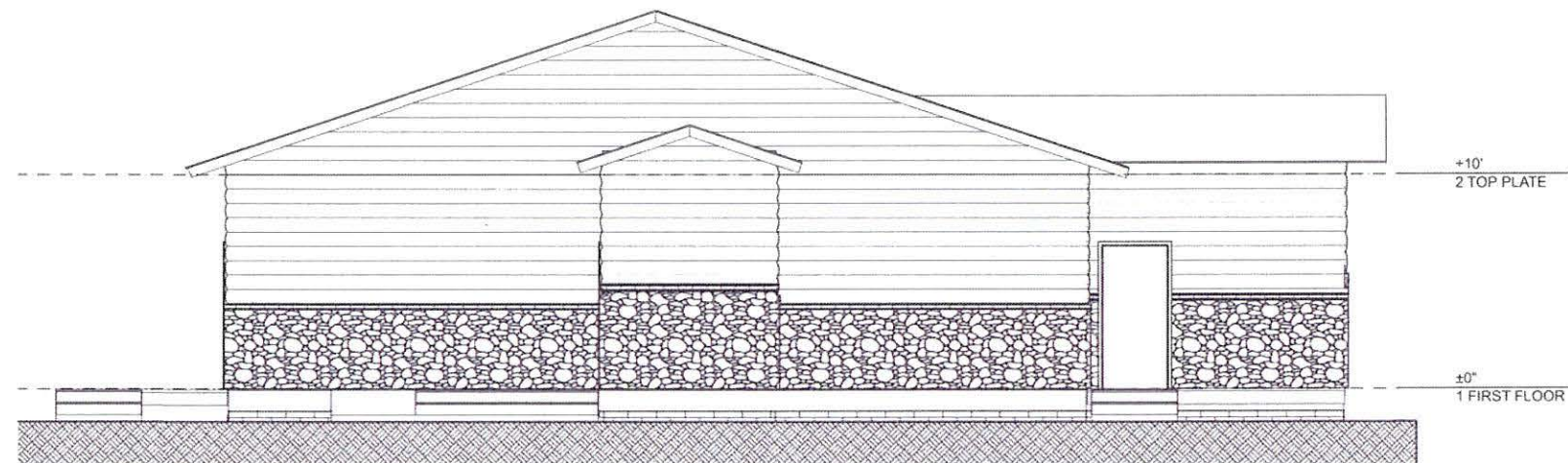
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BUILDING SECTIONS





1 EAST ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



3 NORTH ELEVATION
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



2 WEST ELEVATION
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

McMILLEN DESIGNS



907 CLUB

MARK BUTTON
BIG LAKE, ALASKA
Tel 907.892.8000

[illegible]

A.03

Plotted On 7/13/16

BUILDING ELEVATIONS



FLOOR PLANS

907 CLUB

COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL
ARCHITECTURE

PHONE: 907.376.8765 FAX: 907.376.8765
Email: Brandy@McMullenDesigns.com www.McMullenDesigns.com



907 CLUB

MARK BUTTON
BIG LAKE, ALASKA
Tel 907.892.8000

[illegible]

A.01

Plotted On: 7/15/16

TITLE SHEET / GENERAL INFO

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INTRODUCTION FOR PUBLIC HEARING LEGISLATIVE

Resolution No. 16-40

City of Houston
2016

Comprehensive Plan Update

(Page 31 - 488)

INTRODUCTION FOR PUBLIC HEARING

Staff Report



CITY OF HOUSTON

STAFF REPORT

DATE: Agenda of October 17, 2016

TO: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission

THROUGH: Houston City Council

SUBJECT: **Ordinance 16-22:** An Ordinance of the Houston City Council repealing the 1999 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan as amended in 2003, and adopting the 2016 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan.

Attachments:

Ordinance 16-22
Public Notices

Summary statement:

Over the past two years, the City of Houston has worked with R & M Consultants, Inc. to revise the 1999 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan. Numerous public workshops and meetings were held to obtain input from the residents, Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee ("Committee"), Planning Commission, City Staff, and other interested parties. The final draft of the proposed 2016 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan ("Plan") is attached for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's Planning Commission review and recommendation for adoption as an element of the MSB's Comprehensive Plan.

This Plan is a compilation of the input received from the public including residents and businesses, agencies, Committee, and Planning Commission including the following:

Steering Committee Meetings

The City of Houston's five member Steering Committee for the CIA and Comprehensive Plan Revision met seventeen times over the course of two years during plan development. All meetings were open to the public and posted to the City of Houston's website, where the agendas were posted at least one week prior to the meeting.

City of Houston Household Opinion Survey

As part of the Comprehensive Plan update and CIA, a community-wide survey was conducted in November 2014 to identify the community's future needs as well as evaluate the community's opinion on a range of City priorities to help inform the goals and policies of the Plan. The community survey was mailed to 1651 households (including renters and home owners) and seasonal or part-time residents. A follow up mailing was sent to the 1259 non-respondents of the first survey mailing in December 2014 to encourage participation.

Public Meetings

In addition to the Steering Committee's regular monthly meetings, community-wide public meetings and workshops provided a hands-on approach at the start of the project to identify and develop the future vision for the City of Houston. Substantial input from residents, business owners, property owners, and agency stakeholders such as the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) on September 18, 2014 helped inform the Vision, Goals, Objectives and Implementation Strategies of the Draft Comprehensive Plan. The project coordinated with City of Houston's annual Founders Day to provide a staffed Informational Booth on August 16, 2014 to notify residents in person about the CIA and Comprehensive Plan's kickoff to over 4000 attendees to the event. Subsequent public meetings coincided with major project milestones including Public Meeting 2 for the Community Impact Assessment on June 4, 2015. Public Meeting 3 provided the community an opportunity to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan and ask the project team questions on May 5, 2016.

City of Houston Planning Commission & City Council

Throughout the project, Steering Committee members and consultant staff presented periodic updates to the Planning Commission and City Council. After the Comprehensive Plan was drafted for a Public Hearing, two Planning and Zoning Commission meetings were held including the Draft Comprehensive Plan Introduction on June 30, 2016 and the Public Hearing on July 28, 2016. After the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval to City Council, an Introduction of the Draft Plan was held on August 11, 2016. The City Council held a public hearing on the Draft Comprehensive Plan on September 8, 2016.

A detailed list of the public notices and public outreach is an attachment to this Staff Report. The public involvement summaries and public materials can be found in the Comprehensive Plan's Appendix B.

This Plan includes goals, objectives, strategies and actions for:

- Growth and Economic Development;
- Land Use for Town Center, Residential and Commercial Development;
- Parks and Recreational Opportunities;
- Environmental Quality;
- Community Facilities;

- Transportation Facilities and Infrastructure; and
- Plan Implementation.

The Plan provides a cohesive vision for decisions specific to the City, based on its unique challenges and opportunities. The Plan will serve as a road map to meet future growth needs. It will also serve as the legal foundation for the City's Land Development Code. The Plan will help justify investments in capital improvements, involve residents with future planning efforts, and be useful in securing grant funding and partnerships.

Administrative recommendation: Approval and recommendation of City of Houston Comprehensive Plan for adoption by the Mat-Su Borough Assembly.

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Comp Plan

CITY OF HOUSTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



CITY OF HOUSTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 8, 2016
HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL ORDINANCE 16-22

CITY OF HOUSTON
VIRGIE THOMPSON, MAYOR



PREPARED BY:
R&M CONSULTANTS, INC.
VAN LE, AICP, PROJECT MANAGER

CITY OF HOUSTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



Dear Citizens of Houston,

It is with great pride that I, along with the City Council and the Planning Commission, present the City of Houston this Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan highlights our resources and development opportunities, which include jobs, economic vitality and revitalization, educational opportunities, safety, security and preservation of Houston's unique character.

The Comprehensive Plan is a living and breathing document which represents the future for Houston. Through its goals, objectives and policies, the plan will serve as our roadmap for the future. The Comprehensive Plan recommends specific actions and projects: but, more importantly, it gives the community a standard measuring tool to help evaluate proposals and plans for development.

Having an updated comprehensive plan is critical to Houston's future success. On behalf of the City Council, I wish to extend our thanks to R&M Consultants, Inc., specifically the project manager Van Le, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, the Planning Commission, staff and the citizens that participated in preparing this plan.

Sincerely,

Virgie Thompson
Mayor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

STEERING COMMITTEE

Len Anderson
Lance Wilson
Ron Jones
Gina Jorgensen
Christopher Johnson

CITY OF HOUSTON STAFF

Rebecca Rein
Sonya Dukes
Virgie Thompson

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Len Anderson
Ron Jones
Christian Hartley
Rosemary Burnett
Steven Mistor

CITY COUNCIL

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Chris Johnson
Lance Wilson
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Kristi McLean, LEED-AP+BC
Environmental Planner
Katie Chan
Graphic Designer

MCDOWELL GROUP, INC.

Donna Logan
Senior Economist
Garrett Everidge
Economist

KINNEY ENGINEERING, LLC

Jeannie Bowie, PE, PhD, PTOE
Traffic Engineer
James Smith, PE
Traffic Engineer

PHOTO CREDITS: City of Houston, Christian Hartley,
Virgie Thompson, Lance Wilson, Patricia Jones,
Ron Jones, Rebecca Rein, R&M Consultants, Inc.,
Kinney Engineering, ARRC.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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- 8 | Need And Purpose For Revised Plan
- 8 | Planning Context
 - Relationship To Other Plans, MSB, Zoning Regulations
 - 9 | What Is A Comprehensive Plan?
 - How Will This Plan Be Used?
 - How Will This Plan Be Implemented?
 - Plan Development Process

CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

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 - Waterbodies
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 - Floodplains
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CITY OF
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION



Houston, Alaska is a growing rural residential community that has developed around the Parks Highway, a National Highway Systems Highway bisecting the community. A rural town setting within 15 minutes of urban amenities, Houston is at a crossroads for change and growth.

NEED AND PURPOSE FOR REVISED PLAN

In 2016, the City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan underwent a revision. Originally written in 1999 by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and amended in 2003, the City of Houston now assumed the responsibility of revising its Comprehensive Plan. Comprehensive Plans are used as a tool to guide future growth, development, and change within a community. Emphasized by the experiences in other Matanuska-Susitna Borough communities, unplanned development creates numerous economic, social, and governmental problems. The City of Houston recognizes that these problems are largely preventable with proper planning and clear implementation strategies.

Population growth, with its increased demand for services, as well as major transportation infrastructure projects underway within or adjacent to the City of Houston, have prompted the city to determine and thus capitalize on future opportunities. Such possibilities will arise from changes in the community's infrastructure, economy and development. Since the adoption of the amended 2003 Plan, multiple new sets of census data have become available and a Community Impact Assessment is underway simultaneously with this effort. In addition, information on transportation infrastructure initiatives by the Alaska

Department of Transportation & Public Facilities and Alaska Rail Road anticipated in the Houston area in the near future has become available. With significant development changes affecting the community's qualities of life anticipated, it has become crucial that the City of Houston revise the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan Revision seeks to describe the community's vision as it responds to future growth and development changes. It provides direction for development decisions and future growth in Houston. The Plan Revision validates the community's core values. They include accommodating orderly growth; the need for enhanced education, health, and governmental services; promoting local employment and economic opportunity; and maintaining a high quality semi-rural residential environment.

PLANNING CONTEXT

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS, MSB, ZONING REGULATIONS

Alaska Statute 29.40.020. requires the submission of a comprehensive plan for the systematic and organized development of first and second class boroughs or cities. Alaska Statute 29.40.030 outlines the requirements of a comprehensive plan.

Although the City of Houston is its own jurisdiction, this comprehensive plan is part of the overall Matanuska Susitna Borough Comprehensive Plan.



Cities in the Borough are responsible for the creation and updating of their individual comprehensive plans. The City of Houston's Land Use Regulations, Title 10 of the Municipal Code, is designed "to regulate the use of land and improvements, in accordance with the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan." The Comprehensive Plan provides guidelines for land use regulations and development in compliance with community defined goals. Together, the Land Use Regulations and the Comprehensive Plan provide the basis for consistent development and provide a tool to adhere to the community's vision of what Houston should be like 20 years forward. If subarea plans are developed and adopted in the future by the City of Houston, those subarea plans become part of this Comprehensive Plan.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan reflects a community's goals, objectives and policies for governing future land uses and its desired future. Comprehensive Plans provide the best prediction, based on existing conditions, of the future growth and development of a community through implementation of adopted policies and strategic actions. Comprehensive Plans typically plan for a 20-year future with provisions

to check in and revise plans if new information arises, such as updated population and Census data. This Comprehensive Plan validates the community's core values, needs, and desires while providing a framework for development in the City of Houston through the year 2035.

HOW WILL THIS PLAN BE USED?

The Comprehensive Plan serves as a guiding document for policy makers, the city council, state, federal, and local agencies, and the general public in evaluating if regulatory actions, public investments, and land use changes meet the Plan's goals and objectives. As a guidance document, this Comprehensive Plan does not make decisions about individual properties or specific facilities and thus does not limit future decisions by making an overly detailed future vision.

HOW WILL THIS PLAN BE IMPLEMENTED?

The Comprehensive Plan will be implemented through the policies and action strategies identified in Chapter 7 of the plan.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Comprehensive Plan Update occurred over a two year period and included multiple public involvement opportunities, technical studies, and continuous support from the Steering Committee. The process included:

- Existing Conditions Inventory and Report
- 2003 Comprehensive Plan Reevaluation
- Public Outreach: Futures Workshop
- Community Household Survey
- Economic Analysis
- Community Impact Assessment
- Public Outreach: Community Impact Assessment Open House
- Land Use Assessment
- Draft Land Use and Transportation Plan
- Draft Comprehensive Plan
- Public Outreach: Comprehensive Plan Review Open House
- Final Comprehensive Plan Revision.



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CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY OVERVIEW



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Comprehensive Plan

This chapter summarizes the physical environment within the City of Houston, including historical development, existing land use characteristics, public facilities, and transportation system.

LOCATION

The City of Houston, Alaska is located in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, approximately 57 road miles from Anchorage, Alaska's largest employment and population center. Located 7.5 miles northwest of Wasilla and adjacent to Big Lake, Houston is along the western edge of the most populous portion of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. Houston's city limits encompass about 25.3 square miles, ranging from Mile 61 of the Parks Highway at the northern boundary to Mile 52 at the southern boundary. The center of the community lies near the junction of the Little Susitna River and Mile 57.2 of the Parks Highway. The commercial and residential development along the first mile of Big Lake Road lies within the Houston city limits.

The Alaska Railroad traverses the Parks Highway within the city limits. The Port MacKenzie Rail Extension runs from its junction with the main line south of the Little Susitna River in Houston and continues 32 miles southwest to the port at Point MacKenzie. Full air service

is available at Anchorage International Airport. Other local air service is available at small Mat-Su airports and a local seaplane base on Morvoro Lake. See Figure 1. Project Area.

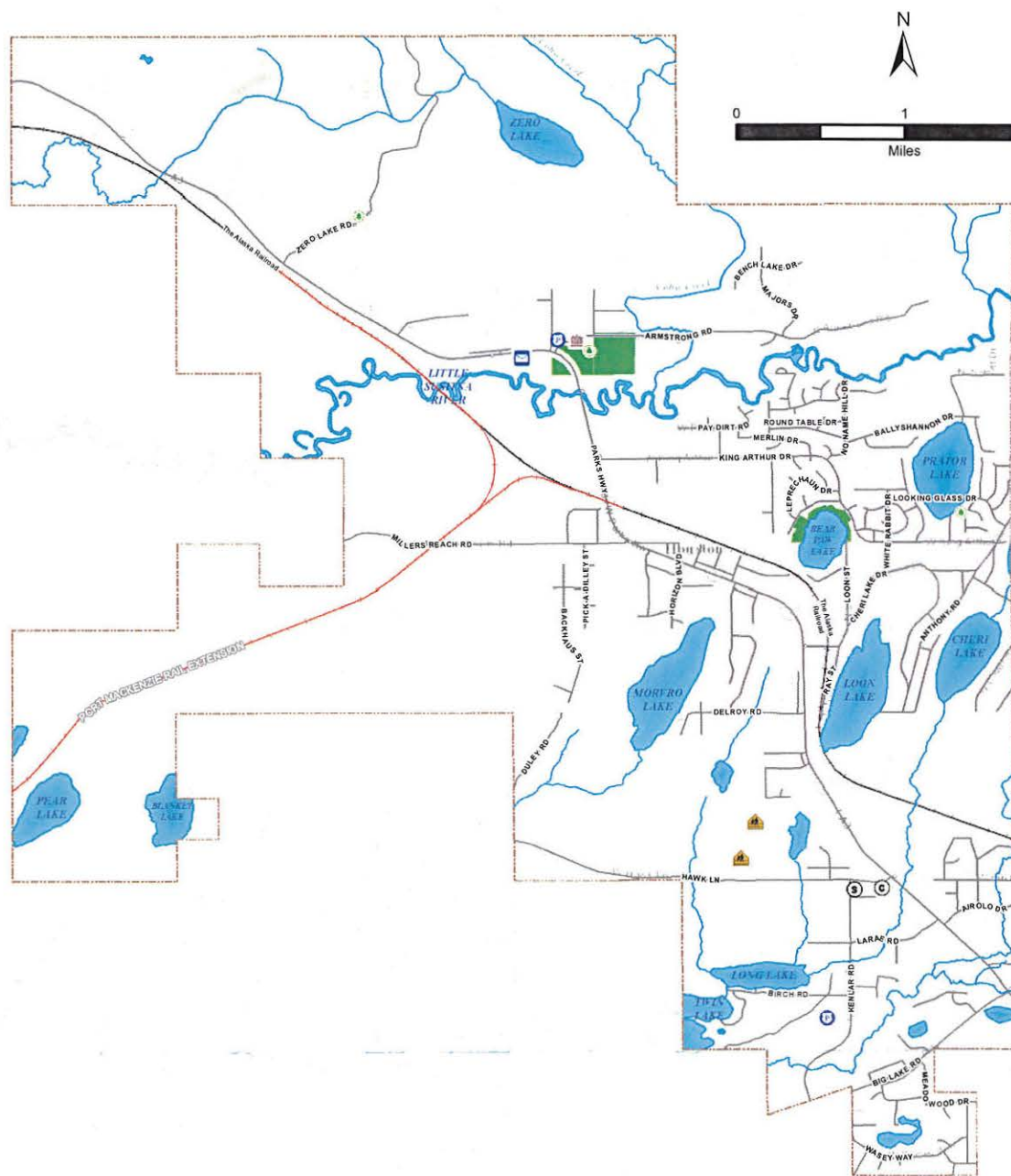
conditions in 1987, 1999, and the most recent amendment in 2003. In keeping with the community's commitment to prepare for changing opportunities in the community's infrastructure, economy, population, and development, the City of Houston initiated this revision in 2014.

HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS, TIMELINE

Houston, Alaska was first listed on a 1917 blueprint Alaska railroad map as "Houston Siding," named after Tennessee Congressman William Cannon Houston. The city's origins began with natural resource development and the Herning Trail. Now called the Willow Creek Sled Trail, it was first used to freight supplies to the Willow Creek Mining District, according to the State of Alaska's Community and Regional Affairs database. Several coal mines developed in the area in 1917-1918 and a railroad spur was built that supplied coal to Anchorage and the LaTouche Mining Company in Prince William Sound. The coal from Houston was heavily mined through World War II, after which mine operations shut down. In 1953-1954 gravel roads and power lines were extended west of Wasilla and Houston quickly settled. Houston incorporated as a third-class city in 1966 and was reclassified in 1973 to a second-class city. The City of Houston has historically grown and continues to be a residential community with a few commercial developments adjacent to the Parks Highway.

In June of 1982, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly, on behalf of the City of Houston, officially adopted the city's first Comprehensive Development Plan. The city updated and revised the comprehensive plan to reflect more accurately changing economic

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LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| City Boundary | Railroad | City Hall | Community Center |
| Parcels | Port MacKenzie Rail Extension | Public Safety | Senior Center |
| Park | | Post Office | Recreational |
| | | School | |

CITY OF HOUSTON

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AND
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

PROJECT AREA

JUNE 2016

FIGURE 1

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CITY OF
HOUSTON
Comprehensive Plan

PHYSICAL SETTING

Houston's pastoral setting is against the backdrop of the Talkeetna Mountains with the Little Susitna River running east-west through the city boundaries. Lakes are scattered throughout the city, attracting many residents and non-residential recreational users.

SOILS

Soils in Houston generally range from well-drained, well-sorted gravel to hydric wetland soils. A number of small lakes dot the central and southern portions of the community limits and are bordered by glacial moraines consisting of non-sorted glacial till. Soils located south of the Little Susitna River and east of the Parks Highway are generally well drained sand and gravels of pitted outwash and till material. Larger intermittent areas of poorly drained soils and peat bogs occur to the west of the Parks Highway.

The northern topography is characterized by rolling hills and perched silty areas. These soils are fine grained and poorly draining. Development within the area is sparse with only a few gravel pits cut into glacial moraine and esker/kame complexes.

Soils in the central portion of Houston are suitable for cultivated crops and agricultural development. Portions of these areas are presently zoned for low density residential and agricultural use.

WATERBODIES

Approximately 864 acres, or 5%, of Houston consists of surface waters. The most notable is the Little Susitna River which crosses the Parks Highway in the middle of the community. This river originates in the Talkeetna Mountains in Hatcher Pass and flows southwest ultimately into Cook Inlet. The Little Susitna River, Coho Creek, and a number of contributing unnamed streams are listed in the Anadromous (salmon producing) Waters Catalog.

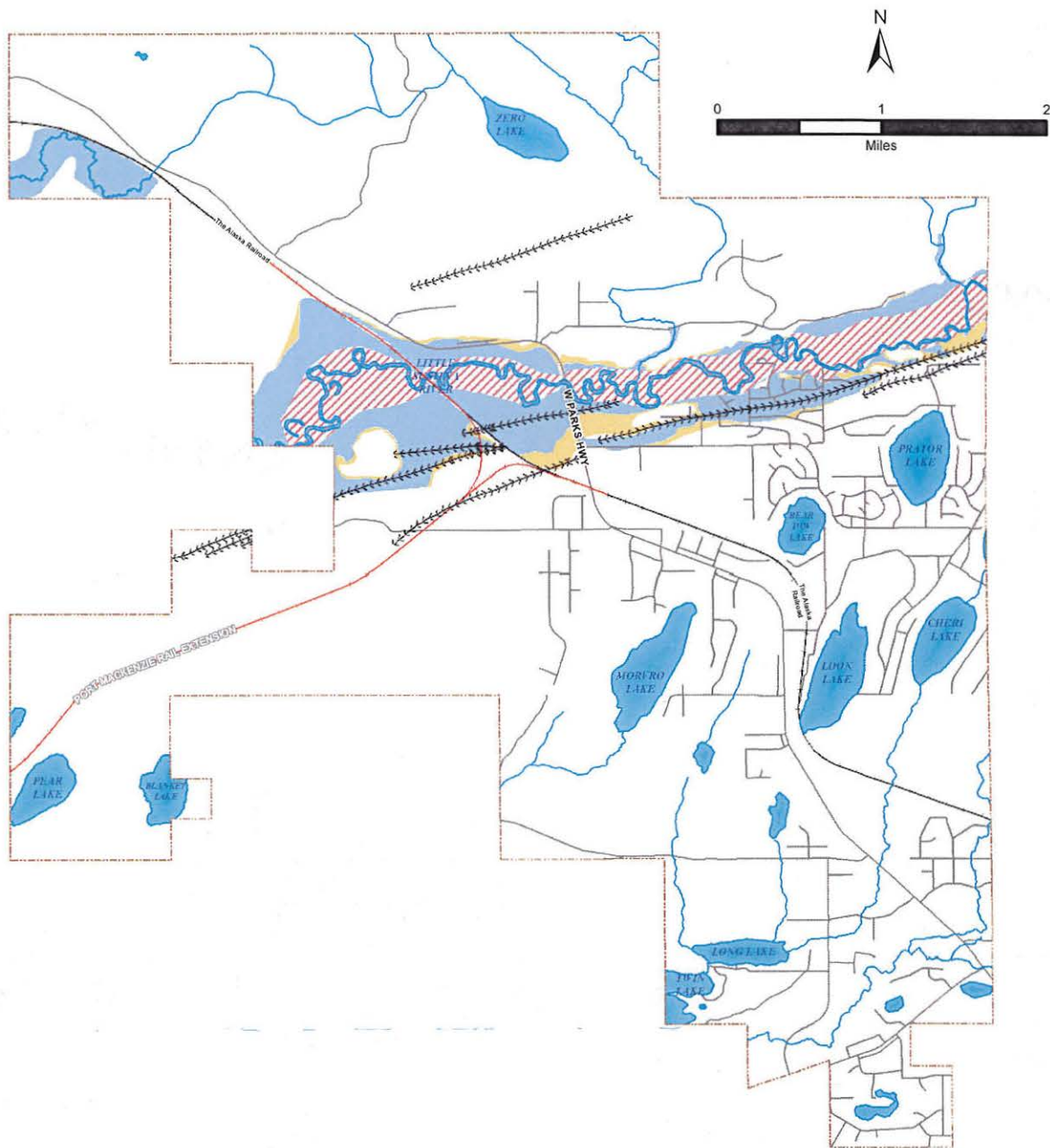
Several popular lakes exist within the City limits including Zero Lake, Bear Paw Lake, Prator Lake, Frog Lake, Cheri Lake, Loon Lake and Morvro Lake. Bear Paw, Prator, Morvro, and Loon Lakes are stocked annually with various fish species. There are no designated "Impaired Waterbodies" within the city of Houston.

WETLANDS

A number of riverine, lacustrine, and palustrine wetlands are present within Houston. Most wetlands are riparian buffers along the Little Susitna River, Coho Creek, and surrounding ponds. Several other wetlands are present in low lying areas between Zero Lake and the Little Susitna River.

FLOODPLAINS

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) completed a Flood Insurance Study and remapped the Special Flood Hazard Areas for the Mat-Su Borough. The Borough adopted the new floodplain mapped in 2011 which shows the floodplain surrounding the Little Susitna River; see Figure 2 Flood Zones. A floodplain development permit from the Borough is required prior to building or development within a federally designated flood hazard area.



LEGEND

Flood Hazard Areas

- Floodway
- 1% Annual Chance of Flooding
- 0.2% Annual Chance of Flood hazard
- Area of Minimal or Undetermined Flood Hazard
- Castle Mountain Fault (Susitna Section)

CITY OF HOUSTON

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AND
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

FLOOD ZONES AND FAULTS MAP

JUNE 2016

FIGURE 2

LAND USE

Approximately 16,210 acres of land are within the City of Houston. The City has eleven distinct zoning districts that implement the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. The zoning districts are a part of Houston's Municipal Land Use Regulations. The table to the right summarizes the current zoning district area by type. See Figure 3 Existing Zoning.

Of the approximately 16,210 acres within the City of Houston, almost 80% or 12,961 acres of that total land is undeveloped. Approximately 15% of the total land in Houston is currently being used for residential purposes. The following table summarizes the area of existing land uses by type and Figure 4 Existing Land Use shows currently land use in Houston.

There are approximately 7,570 acres of land zoned for residential uses within the City of Houston. Currently, 15% of that zoned land is being used for residential purposes. The following table summarizes the vacant residentially zoned land by residential zoning district.

The few existing commercial land uses are mostly concentrated to the city's southern border where the Parks Highway and Big Lake Road intersect, which is congruent with existing zoning. Commercial development in this location reflects the greater area trend of development along the Parks Highway and the expansion north from Anchorage and Wasilla, which is anticipated to continue.

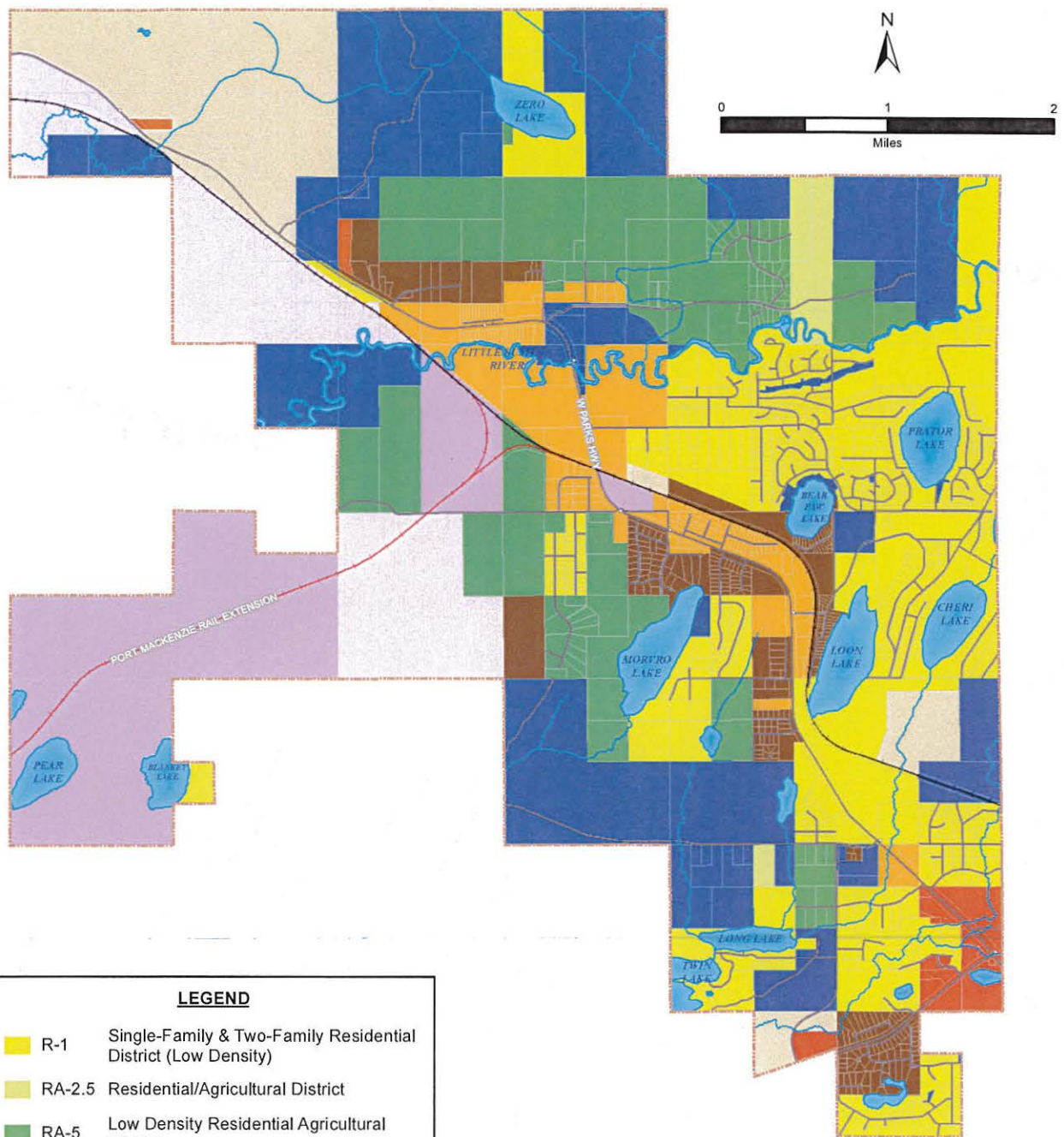
The Alaska Railroad extension from Port MacKenzie to the mainline through Houston has increased the amount of land used for transportation purposes and provides an opportunity for more transportation support uses to emerge in the future. This would be a new trend in Houston's land use which remains dominantly residential.

Zoning District	Approx. Area (acres)	Percent of Total Land
PLI – Public Lands and Institutions	3450	21.28%
R-1 – Single-family and Two-family Residential	3940	24.30%
MFR – Multifamily Residential	960	5.92%
RA 2.5 – Residential / Agriculture	190	1.17%
RA 5 – Low-Density Residential Agriculture	2480	15.30%
NC – Neighborhood Commercial District	0	0%
C – Commercial District	210	1.30%
LI – Light Industrial	1290	7.96%
HI – Heavy Industrial	1460	9.01%
H – Holding District	1270	7.83%
PH – Parks Highway District	960	5.92%

Source: City of Houston Zoning Map, November 2015

Zoning	Vacant (Acres)	Land Use	Area (acres)	% of Total
R-1	2582	Churches	2	0.01%
RA-2.5	55	Commercial – Heavy	12	0.07%
RA-5	1690	Commercial – Light	32	0.20%
MFR	416	Communications	10	0.06%
Total	4327	Duplex – Two-Family	11	0.07%
		Education – Public	241	1.49%
		Mobile Home	97	0.60%
		Mobile Home Parks	1	0.01%
		Multi Family	12	0.07%
		Public Use	18	0.11%
		Public Safety	93	0.57%
		Recreation	3	0.02%
		Residential	2435	15.02%
		Residential Garage	261	1.61%
		Residential W/ Commercial Use	10	0.06%
		Transient Lodging	11	0.07%
		Vacant	12961	79.96%
		Total	16,210	100%

Source: City of Houston Land Use Map, per Mat-Su Borough Assessment Office

**LEGEND**

R-1	Single-Family & Two-Family Residential District (Low Density)
RA-2.5	Residential/Agricultural District
RA-5	Low Density Residential Agricultural District
MFR	Multi-Family Residential District (Medium Density)
C	Commercial
LI	Light Industrial District
HI	Heavy Industrial District
PLI	Public Lands and Institutions
H	Holding District
PH	Parks Highway District

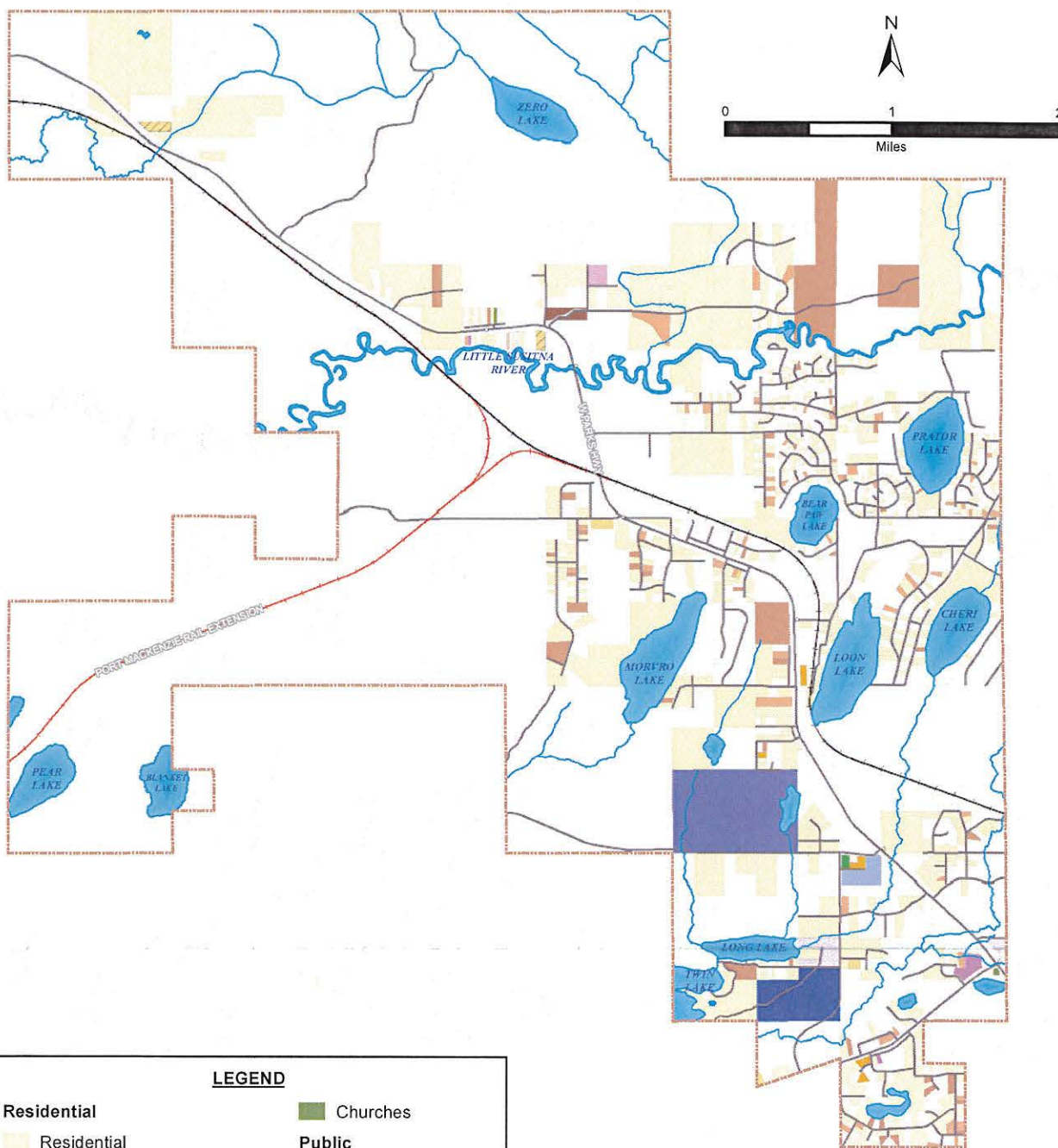
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AND
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

EXISTING ZONING

JUNE 2016

FIGURE 3



LEGEND			
Residential		Churches	
	Residential		Churches
	Duplex	Public	
	Multi Family		Public
	Mobile Home		Education - Public
	Mobile Home Parks		Public Safety
	Residential Garage	Commercial	
	Residential W/ Commercial Use		Communications
	Transient Lodging		Commercial - Light
Community			Commercial - Heavy
	Recreation	Unclassified	
			Vacant

Note: Land use designations based on the MSB GIS parcel dataset Building Use 1 attribute.

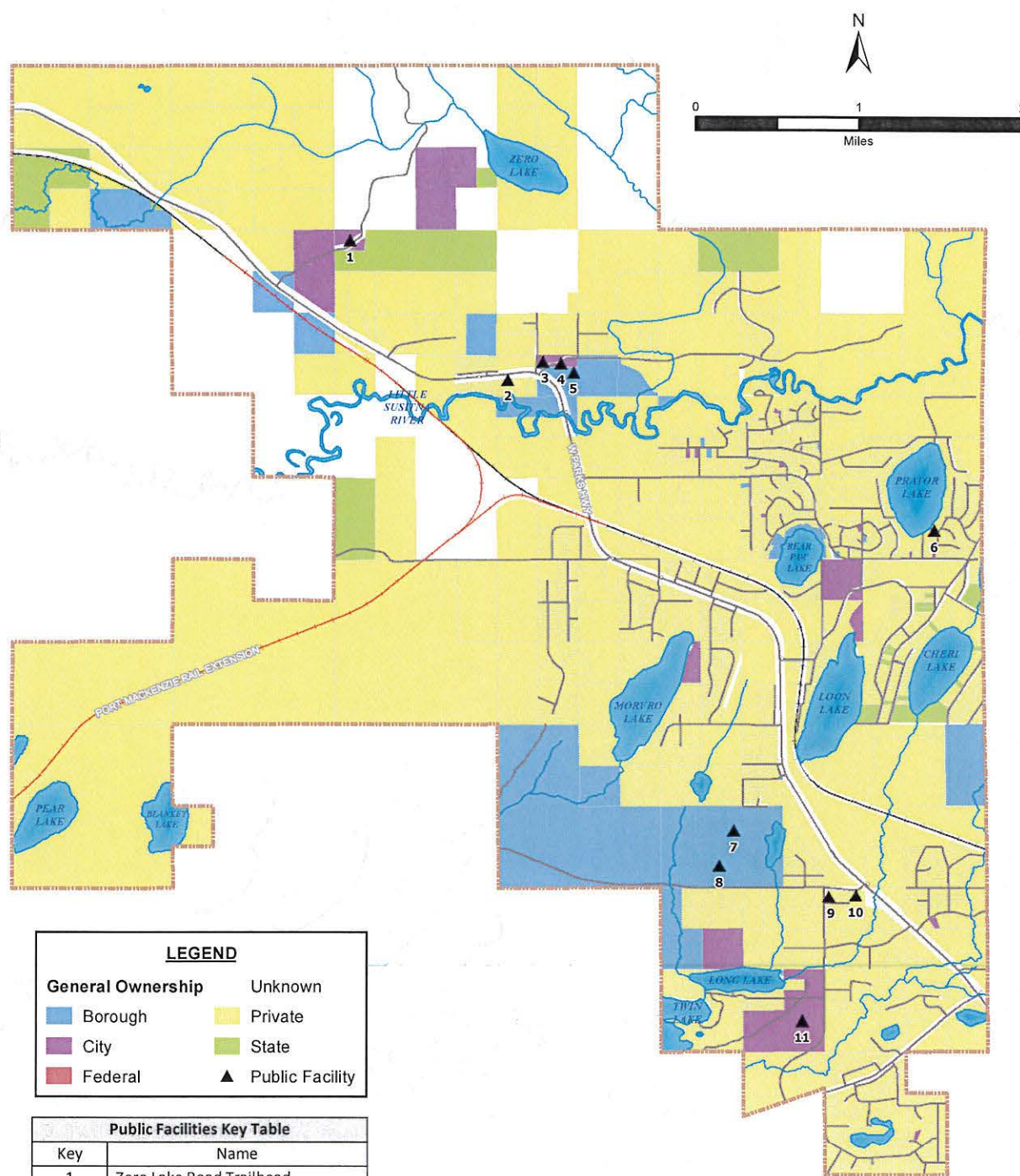
CITY OF HOUSTON
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISON
EXISTING LAND USE
JUNE 2016

FIGURE 4



LAND OWNERSHIP

The Existing Land Ownership map depicts the landownership status for all parcels within the City of Houston's limits. The majority of land is privately owned, about 14,000 acres of the total 16,210 acres. Other large tract land owners include the City of Houston, 420 acres, and the Mat-Su Borough's 1,200 acres. The State of Alaska also owns about 470 acres of land in the city. See Figure 5 Existing Land Ownership.



CITY OF HOUSTON

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AND
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

LAND OWNERSHIP

JUNE 2016

FIGURE 5

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Like most of Alaska, access to parks and outdoor recreational facilities is essential to the quality of life for Houston residents and visitors. The Little Susitna River provides outdoor recreation in the form of camping, boating, and fishing. Many of the lakes in Houston are stocked by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game with various fish species for recreational purposes. The Little Susitna Campground is located on the east side of the Parks Highway at Mile 57.3. The Campground is open 24 hours from Memorial Day to Labor Day weekends. The facility includes a day use area, pavilion, play grounds, camp sites equipped with fire pits and trash cans, rest rooms, two public water wells, and RV facilities. The City of Houston maintains a Public Use Facility opposite this campground, which provides additional access to the Little Susitna River.

The Riverside Camper Park is located in the core of Houston along the Parks Highway and adjacent to the Little Susitna River. This park provides shower and laundry facilities, electricity, and a grocery store.

The Houston/Willow Creek Sled Trailhead recreation area is located at Mile 59 of the Parks Highway off Zero Lake Road. This recreation area provides parking for approximately 60 vehicles with trailers and provides rest room facilities and trailhead access to the Hatcher Pass recreation area.

Most trails within the community are informal and do not have clearly dedicated public access. These trails are utilized as transportation corridors for snow machines, ATVs, dog sleds, bikers, horses, pedestrians, and skiers. The Haessler-Norris Trail System consists of 20 trails of various distances shown on a map published in April 2011 and created for the Willow Dog Mushers Association.

The Hatcher Pass/Independence Mine, Big Lake, the Susitna Flats State Game Refuge, the Mat-Su Visitor's Center, and Nancy Lake Recreation Areas are all located near the community of Houston. They offer various recreational opportunities to local residents as well as regional, out of state, and international tourists. See Figure 6 for existing Parks and Recreation Facilities.

COMMUNITY CENTERS, SERVICES, AND LIBRARIES

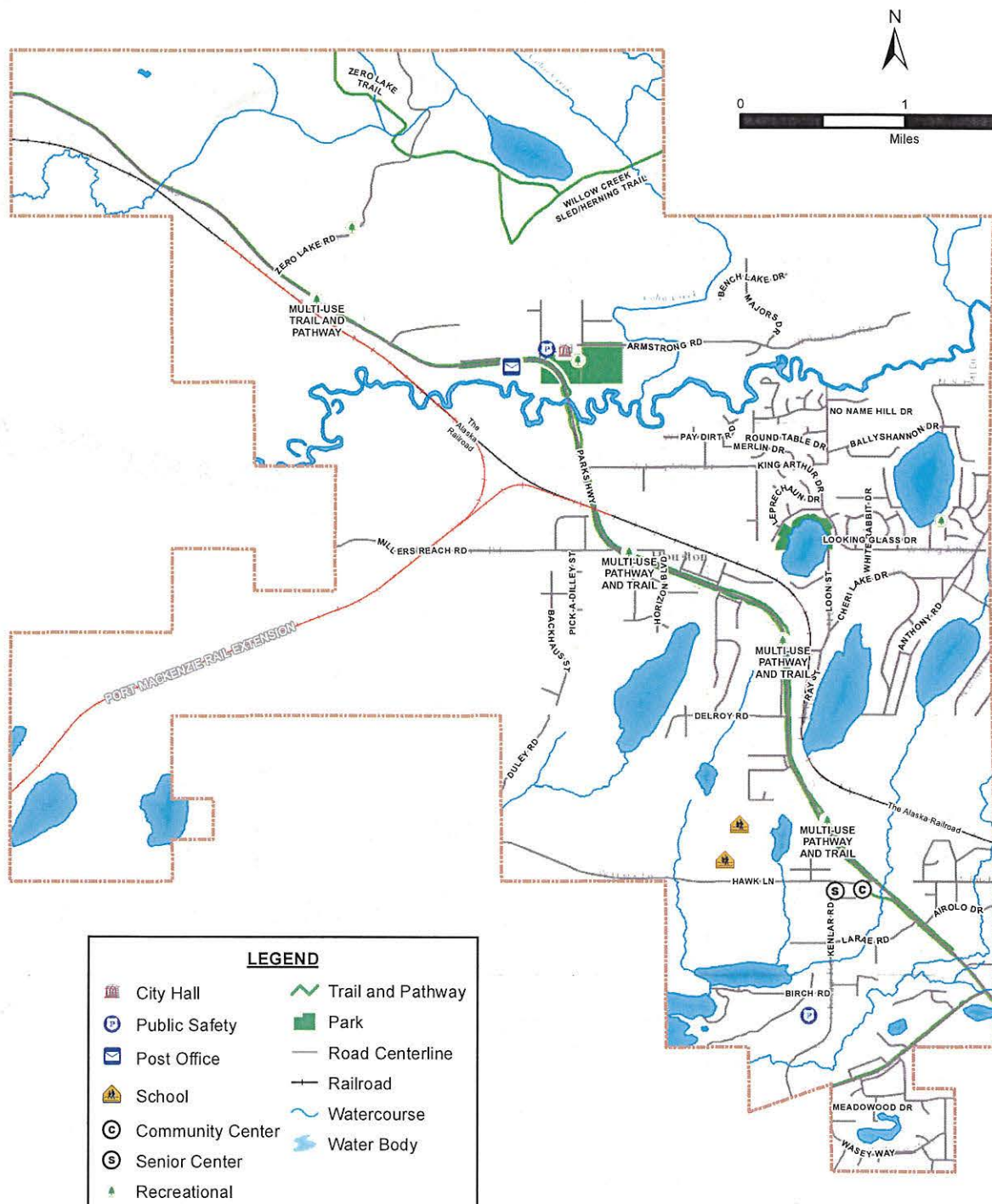
The Homesteaders Community Center, located just west of Mile 53.5 of the Parks Highway on Community Drive, has provided a meeting place and fellowship for area residents since its inception in 1957. The nonprofit organization's members, who are local area residents, host social gatherings, holiday parties, and bingo. The building is rented for functions and on-site amenities include ball fields, a mail hall, kitchen facilities, restrooms, and a storage area.

Mid-Valley Seniors, Inc. is a nonprofit organization founded in 1983. The association provides fellowship and nutritional programs to member seniors in

Big Lake, Houston, Meadow Lakes, and Willow areas. In 1987 the Mid-Valley Senior Center opened in Houston which includes a cafeteria, recreation room, and an office.

There are no public libraries in Houston, although the Mat-Su Borough does have libraries in the neighboring communities of Big Lake and Willow. There are libraries available to students at the Houston High School and Middle School. Public libraries are also located in Wasilla, Palmer, Sutton, Talkeetna, and Trapper Creek.

The Big Lake Country Club, founded in 2000, is a 24-hour services provider for developmentally delayed and emotionally challenged adults. The main campus is located in Houston and provides daily support, monitoring and supervision for adults in need. A fenced and secure facility, amenities include a group home and cabins, a game room, kitchen and meals, and a horse facility for therapeutic horseback riding.



LEGEND	
	City Hall
	Public Safety
	Post Office
	School
	Community Center
	Senior Center
	Recreational
	Trail and Pathway
	Park
	Road Centerline
	Railroad
	Watercourse
	Water Body

CITY OF HOUSTON
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION
PARKS & RECREATION

FIGURE 6



PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Houston is located within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, which consists of 45 schools. There are no elementary schools within the municipal boundaries of Houston; Big Lake, Willow, and Meadow Lakes elementary schools serve the city's elementary school age children. Houston Middle/High School Complex located on Hawk Lane has students from grades six through twelve. Bus service is provided for all public schools in the Houston area.



PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The City of Houston Emergency Services building is located at Mile 57.3 of the Parks Highway. The building houses the Houston Fire Department and unstaffed Police Department facilities. The Emergency Services building serves as Houston Fire Station 9-1 and a Fire Station 9-2 is located on Birch Road, north of Big Lake Road. Local law enforcement is being handled by the Alaska State Troopers. The fire department is supported by active volunteers who also provide emergency medical services.



UTILITIES

Most Houston residents have on-site well and septic systems for wastewater disposal. The majority of commercial properties have access to natural gas but many residential homes rely on heating oil, wood, and electricity for their primary space heating source instead of natural gas. As of 2016, gas lines extend down Hawk Lane to Houston High School and Middle School and from the west along King Arthur Drive.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The City of Houston's transportation system is primarily a network of local roads branching east and west from the Parks Highway, which operates as a backbone for the regional transportation network (see Figure 7). The Parks Highway connects Anchorage to interior Alaska, making it the main route for shipping freight, recreational tourism, and general traffic through the City of Houston.

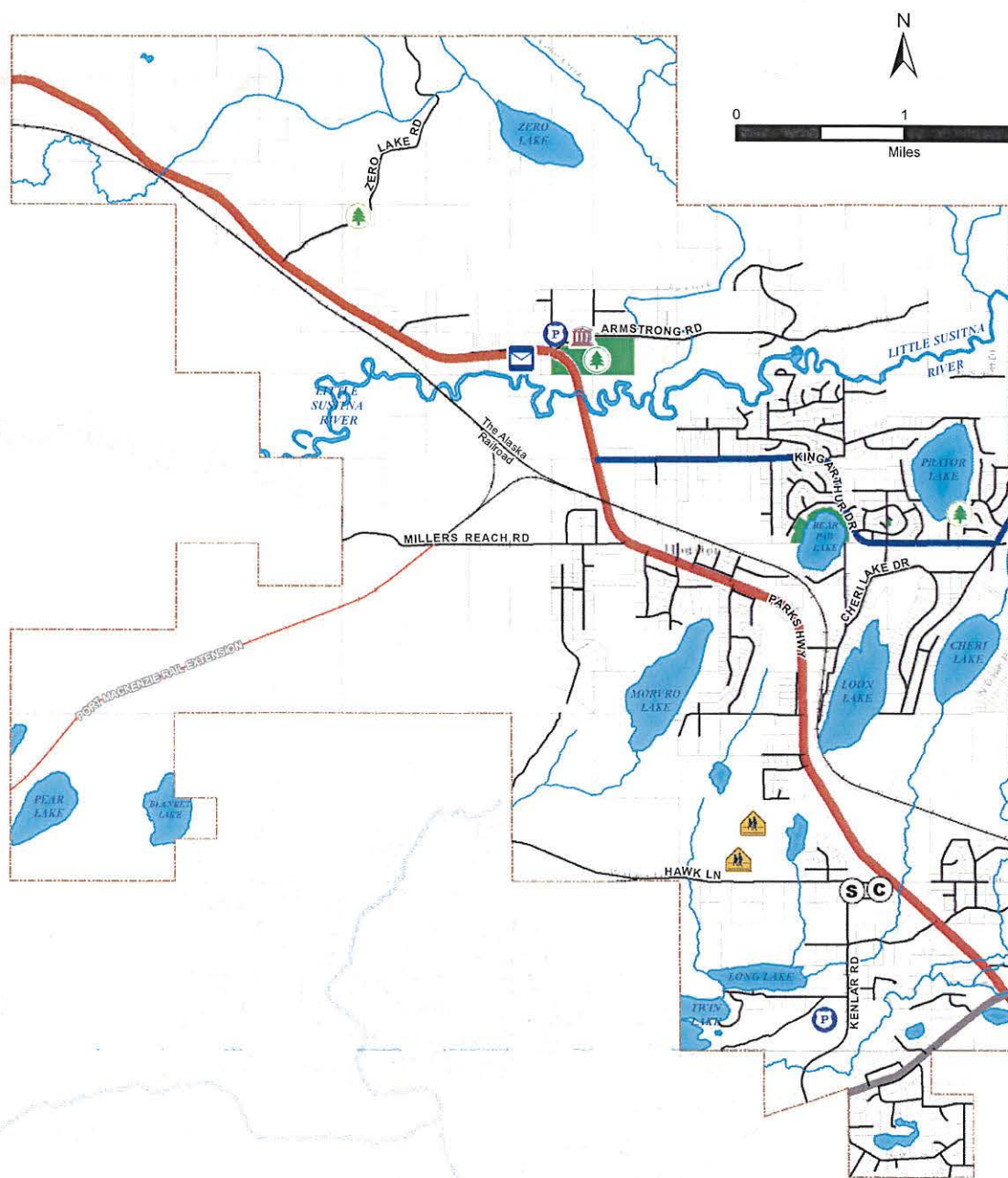
Freight is also transported along the Alaska Railroad, which generally parallels the Parks Highway corridor through the City of Houston's boundaries. A rail extension from the mainline in Houston to the port at Point MacKenzie is currently under construction, and will potentially increase the amount of future freight traffic traveling through Houston.

Most of Houston's existing local roads are unpaved with a gravel surface. Non-motorized transportation facilities in Houston include separated multi-use pathways along the Parks Highway, a multi-use pathway on the north side of Big Lake Road, and a designated Houston/ Willow Creek Sled Trailhead recreation area located off Zero Lake Road that provides access to Hatcher Pass. Unofficial ATV and snow machine pathways exist throughout the City.

Detailed information on the City of Houston's existing transportation system can be found in Chapter 7. Transportation Plan (page 61) of this Comprehensive Plan.



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LEGEND

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| City Boundary | Roads | City Hall | Community Center |
| Parcels | Interstate | Public Safety | Senior Center |
| Park | Minor Arterial | Post Office | Recreational |
| Railroad | Minor Collector | School | |
| Port MacKenzie Rail Extension (Partially Complete) | Local road | | |

CITY OF HOUSTON

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AND
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

JUNE 2016

FIGURE 7



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Comprehensive Plan

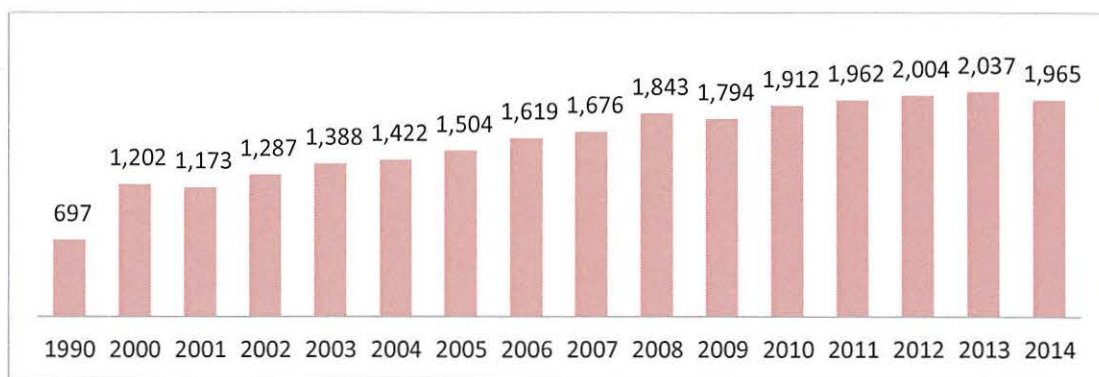
CHAPTER 3: DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW



POPULATION

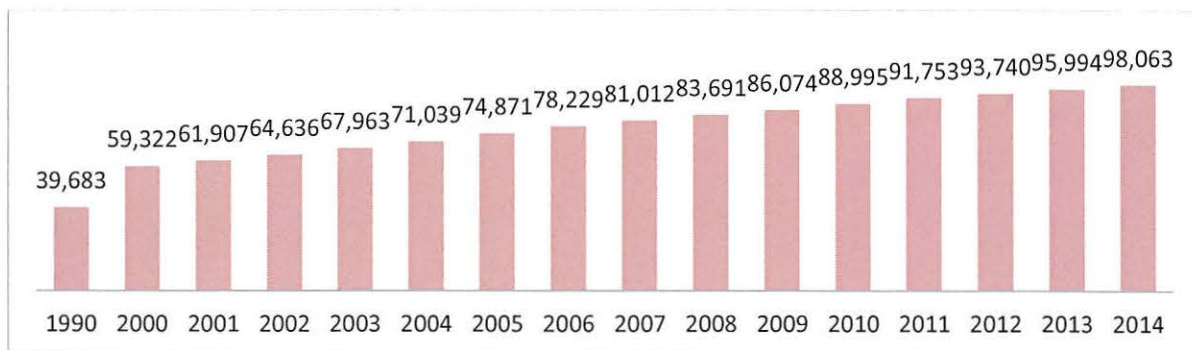
The City of Houston has experienced steady population growth over the past two decades. In 2014, Houston's population was estimated at 1,965 residents; nearly triple its 697 residents in 1990 (182 percent growth, see Figure 8). This rate of growth is higher than that of the entire Mat-Su Borough, which grew from 39,683 to 98,063 residents over the same time period (147 percent growth, see Figure 9). Part of this higher growth rate can be attributed to lower land costs, highway improvements that make commuting faster and safer, and the unique rural lifestyle Houston offers.

Figure 8 Houston Populations. 1990 and 2000-2014



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD)

Figure 9 Mat-Su Borough Population, 1990 and 2000-2014



Source: ADOLWD

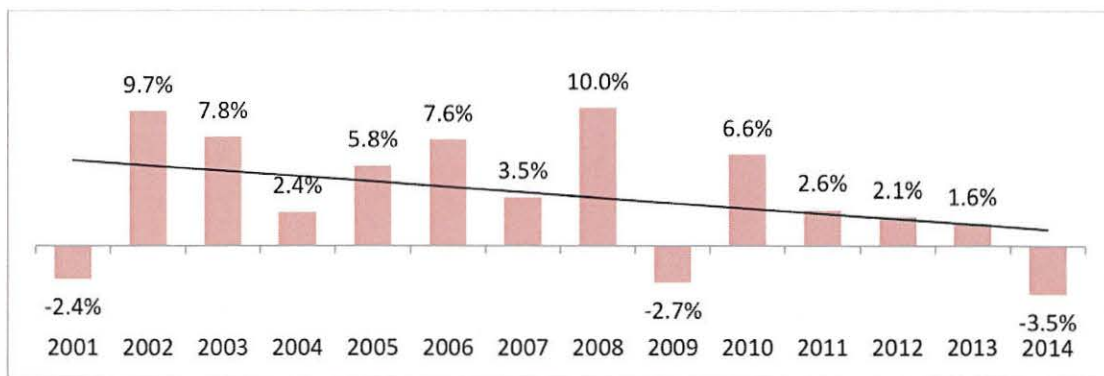
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CITY OF
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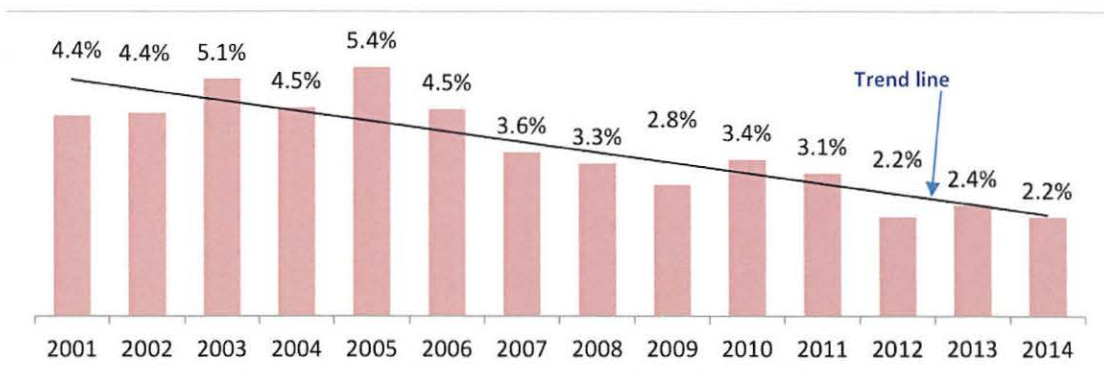
In recent years, population growth rates have slowed in both Houston and the Mat-Su Borough. As shown in Figure 10, Houston grew by 2.6% from 2010 to 2011, but experienced negative growth from 2013 and 2014. On average, Houston grew 0.7% annually since 2011. In comparison, the Borough's population grew 2.5% per year, on average, since 2011 (see Figure 11).

Figure 10 Houston Annual Population Growth Rate, 2001-2014



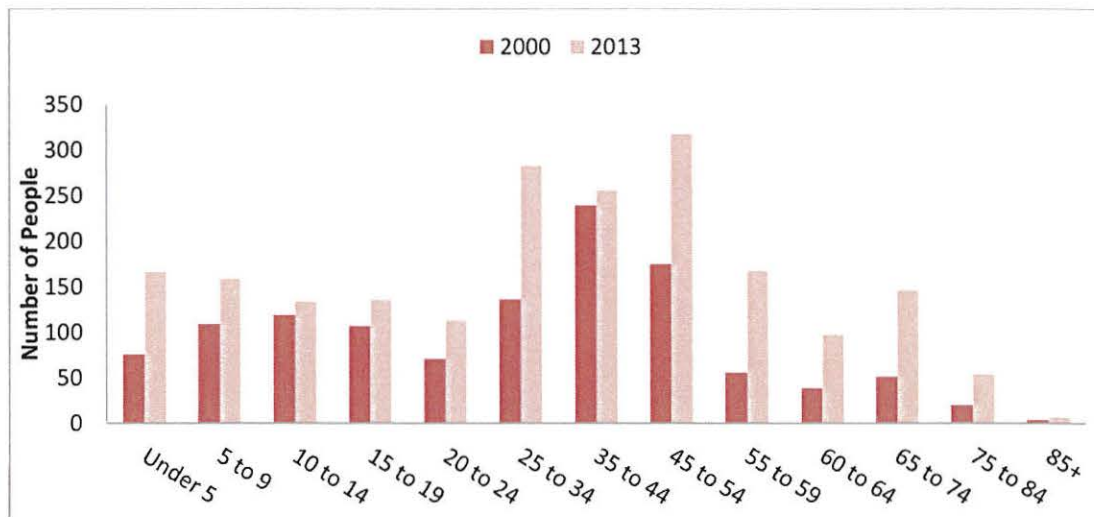
Source: ADOLWD

Figure 11 Mat-Su Borough Annual Population Growth Rate, 2001-2014



Source: ADOLWD

Figure 12 Houston Population by Age Category and Median Age, 2000 and 2013



MEDIAN AGE

The median age of Houston residents in 2013 was just over 36 years of age. That figure is slightly higher than the average of the Mat-Su Borough and the state of Alaska, which have median ages of 35 and 34 years respectively. The largest growth in population from 2000 to 2013 occurred in the age categories ranging from 25 to 34 and 45 to 54 (see Figure 12). This trend might be attributed to Houston's affordable land and housing, which attracts younger families into the area.

ETHNICITY AND COMMUNITY MAKE UP

The majority of Houston's residents, 87%, self-identify as White. About 4% of Houston residents identify themselves as American Indian and Alaska Native and the remaining 9% of Houston residents identify as multi-racial. These categories reflect the five year average distribution from 2009-2012, according to the US Census and American Community Survey.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

According to the US Census and American Community Survey (ACS), approximately 90% of Houston's population had a high school degree or higher with 17% holding a bachelor's degree or higher. Educational attainment has increased since the 1990s. This change might have to do with improvements in the availability of educational facilities. Houston Middle School and Houston High School are located in separate buildings within Houston. Most elementary school age students currently bus to the nearby elementary schools, namely Big Lake Elementary and Willow Elementary School.

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City of Houston	2000	2008-2012	2008-2012 Margin of Error
Median Household Income	\$39,615	\$59,583	+/- \$11,475
Households with Public Assistance	58	101	+/- 39
Households in SNAP	-	118	+/- 38
Per Capita Income	\$17,213	\$25,876	+/- \$3,318
Families Below Poverty Line	13.1%	11.6%	+/- 5.9%
Individuals Below Poverty Line	17.1%	15.8%	+/- 5.4%

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

ECONOMY

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The median household income in Houston is almost \$60,000, less than the roughly \$70,000 median in the Mat-Su Borough and Alaska. Per capita income averaged slightly more than \$25,000, less than the \$30,000 found in the Mat-Su Borough and \$32,000 for Alaska.

Approximately 12 percent of families and 16 percent of individuals in Houston live below the federal poverty line. According to 2014 Federal guidelines for Alaska, a household of four making less than \$29,440 or an individual with an income of less than \$14,350 is considered living in poverty. There are approximately 101 households that receive public assistance and 118 households utilize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

In 2012, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development estimated there were 768 employed residents (over age 16) living in Houston, with total annual wages of \$26.5 million. Most workers were employed in the private sector (85 percent), followed by local government (11 percent), and state government (4 percent). The top industries in terms of employment included Trade (retail and wholesale), Transportation and Utilities (22 percent), Education and Health Services (16 percent), and Construction (13 percent).

In addition to data compiled by the State of Alaska, the American Community Survey (ACS) offers insight into employment in Houston. According to its data, there were 782 residents over the age of 16 employed, and 166 unemployed.

The unemployment rate is estimated to be 18 percent. Private wage and salary workers made up 80 percent of employed, followed by government workers (19 percent) and self-employed workers (7 percent).

Employment within the City of Houston is currently limited, with most opportunities in retail. The majority of employed residents travel outside the city limits to reach their workplace.

HOUSTON BUSINESSES

An estimated 19,000 vehicles per day travel on the Parks Highway through the City of Houston. This number tends to be higher in the summer and on the weekends. A number of businesses are sustained by this traffic as a percentage of these travelers stop for a meal, to rent a room, or purchase fireworks. The largest concentration of businesses selling fireworks in Alaska is located in Houston.

At this time, no large grocery store is located in Houston. Residents typically will go to Wasilla or Big Lake for their shopping needs. Medical services are limited in Houston with a few small clinics offering primary care services. The closest hospital is Mat-Su Regional Medical Center located in Wasilla, where there are also a full suite of dental, chiropractic, and other health services.

The summer brings an influx of anglers fishing the nearby Little Susitna River. Alaska Fish and Game estimated 4,538 anglers fished a total of 10,115 days in 2012 in the Little Susitna River. At least one guiding service is located in Houston and a range of other local businesses rely on these anglers who purchase ice, meals, and refreshments. Float trips on the Little Susitna River frequently start at the Parks Highway Bridge.

During the winter, proximity to Hatcher Pass and Nancy Lake Recreation Area attracts enthusiasts wanting to snowmachine, ski, ice fish, dog-mush, or enjoy other winter activities. Compared to the summer, traffic through the community is much less in the winter but local businesses are able to attract some customers.



HOUSTON EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS, 2000 AND 2008-2012 FIVE YEAR AVERAGE

	2000 (Number Employed)	2008-2012 (Number Employed)	2008-2012 Margin of Error
Population 16 years and older	881	1,487	+/-145
In labor force	549	948	+/-129
Employed	452	782	+/-114
Unemployed	97	166	+/-62
Unemployment – civilian labor force (%)	17.7	17.5	+/-5.8%
Not in labor force	332	539	+/-91
Class of worker			
Private wage and salary	325	579	+/-103
Government	70	152	+/-54
Self-employed	57	51	+/-23
Unpaid family worker	-	0	+/-10
Industry			
Retail trade	78	92	+/-32
Educational, health and social services	60	169	+/-51
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	52	96	+/-44
Construction	50	87	+/-34
Agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing, mining	49	70	+/-40
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	34	87	+/-44
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	25	57	+/-32
Public administration	22	66	+/-38
Wholesale trade	19	10	+/-11
Manufacturing	15	21	+/-22
Information	13	7	+/-9
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	8	0	+/-10
Other services	27	20	+/-16

Source: ADOWL and U.S. Census American Community Survey

HOUSING IN HOUSTON

According to Mat-Su Borough and City of Houston data, there are 999 housing units in Houston. Single-family detached units make up 85 percent (846 units) of all housing units, with the remaining composed of 62 multi-family dwellings, 8 duplexes, and 85 mobile homes (see table to right).

This estimate is corroborated by the American Community Survey's 2009-2013 5-year estimate of 991 housing units in Houston. Of these units 72 percent (or 716 units) are considered occupied; and, of these units, 78 percent (561 units or 56 percent of all housing units) are owner-occupied.

According to the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment Household Survey conducted in November 2014, approximately 35 percent of local property owners do not reside in Houston. Presuming these nonresidents have a dwelling on their property, this would suggest approximately 350 homes in Houston are used as vacation/recreation properties (or otherwise used only occasionally).

Housing data for Houston from the American Community Survey (2009-2013 5-year estimates) are provided in the table to the right. The data suggests approximately 28 percent of housing units are unoccupied. The majority of housing units (55 percent) were built since 1990, with construction peaking between 2000 and 2009 (32.3 percent of the housing units).

The median value of an owner-occupied unit in Houston is estimated at \$177,300 (+/- \$20,161 margin of error, see Table 8). Almost a third (30 percent) of these units are estimated to be valued at less than \$100,000.

	Unit Count	Percent Units of Total
Total Housing Units	991	100%
Single-family Detached	846	85%
Mobile Home	85	9%
Multi-Family	62	6%
Duplex	8	1%

Source: City of Houston, MSB. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding

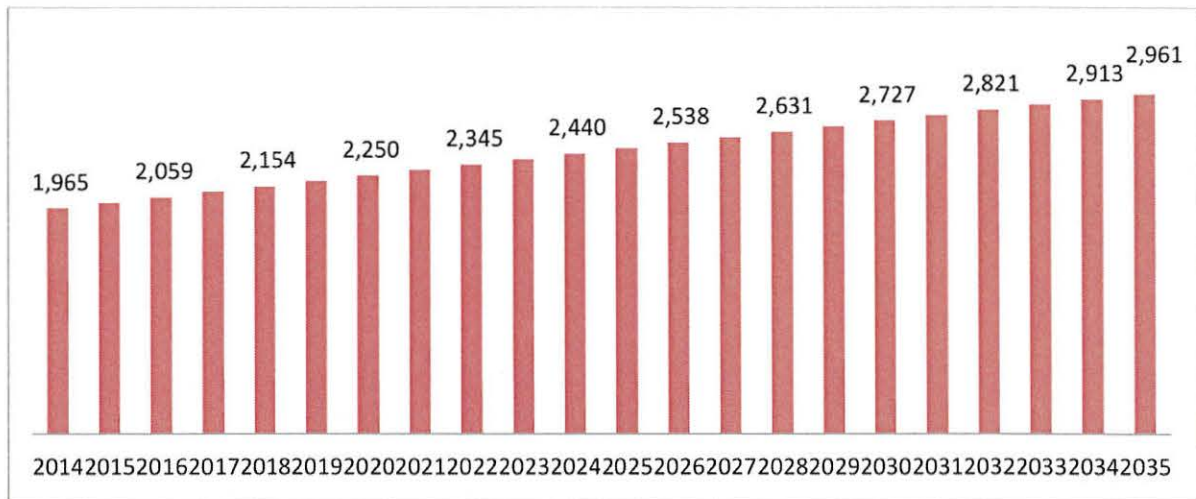
	Unit Count	Margin of Error	Percent Units of Total
Total Housing Units	991	+/- 36	100%
Occupied Housing Units	716	+/- 50	72.3%
Vacant Housing Units	275	+/- 51	27.7%
Homeowner vacancy rate	5.7%	+/- 2.9%	-
Rental Vacancy rate	9.9%	+/- 6.9%	-

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimate

	Housing Unit Count	Margin of Error	Percent of Total
Owner-Occupied Units	561	+/- 47	100%
Less than \$50,000	92	+/-33	16.4%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	77	+/-28	13.7%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	47	+/-22	8.4%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	120	+/-40	21.4%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	143	+/-41	25.5%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	70	+/-28	12.5%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	12	+/-15	2.1%
\$1,000,000 or more	0	+/-9	0.0%
Median (dollars)	\$177,300	+/- \$20,161	-

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimate

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FUTURE CONDITIONS AND LAND USE NEEDS

POPULATION GROWTH AND PROJECTIONS

Population growth in the Mat-Su is projected to slow from the current annual growth rate of slightly more than 3.6% to less than 2% by 2035. Since Houston is tied to the Mat-Su economy and has comparable demographics, it is projected that Houston's population growth will reflect that of the larger Mat-Su, growing approximately 2% over the current period to 2035. In determining this growth rate, three different growth scenarios were considered: low, medium, and high growth rate projections. The City of Houston chose to write this Comprehensive Plan Revision and Land Use Plan using the population projections of the high growth rate scenario. Planning for a high growth rate allows goals, objectives, policies and strategies to be set in place prior to an unexpected growth occurrence.

The High growth scenario assumes Houston matches the broader Mat-Su estimates for population growth as project by Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD). Under this scenario, ADOLWD estimates that Houston's population will grow by 996 persons between 2014 and 2035. With this growth rate, Houston is projected to grow to about 3,000 residents in 2035, which is an increase of around 50% from current population levels (see Figure 13 and adjacent table).

Population projections for Houston are based on extending past trends into the future. This methodology differs from a forecast, which would account for economic and other factors with the potential to affect population change. Forces that may affect population growth in Houston over the next 20 years include the following:

- Economic conditions in Alaska - including factors such as oil prices, gas line development, and other events in the oil and gas industry (responsible for about a third of Alaska's economy). In general, increases in economic activity are accompanied by increases in population. Conversely, if economic activity contracts, population growth tends to slow or decline.
- Economic conditions in Anchorage - might affect Mat-Su's role as a "bedroom" community (a third of the Mat-Su Borough's labor force is employed in Anchorage). Job growth in Anchorage can have population effects in the Mat-Su Borough.
- Local (Mat-Su) economic conditions - To the extent the local economy grows (or declines) in response to local events, related or unrelated to statewide or national economic trends, Houston's population could be affected.
- The Condition of the U.S. economy - A weakening U.S. (Lower 48) economy can cause in-migration to Alaska, as the unemployed come to Alaska seeking work. Conversely, strong growth in the U.S. economy can lead to out-migration from Alaska.
- Housing costs - As long as housing prices are lower in the Mat-Su Borough compared to Anchorage and commuting costs remain stable, the Mat-Su Borough population will continue to have a large component of Anchorage workers and their households. A similar scenario has developed between Houston and Wasilla; with lower housing costs, some opt to live in Houston and commute to Wasilla (or Anchorage) for employment.
- Natural growth and other demographic trends - Birth and death rates, aging of the population, and other demographic forces may also affect local population trends.

It is beyond the scope of this Comprehensive Plan to consider all of these factors. However, statewide and local population projections, prepared by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD) can be used as the basis for Houston-specific projections.

ADOLWD periodically prepares long-term population forecasts for Alaska overall and for local areas. The most recent projections, published in April 2014, indicate slow growth (0.8 percent annually) over the next 25 years for the state overall. The Mat-Su Borough is expected to continue experiencing the fastest rates of growth, at 1.9 percent annually (see Table below).

Years	Births	Deaths	Net Migration	Population Change	Annual Growth Rate
2014-2017	1,400	506	1,469	2,363	2.37%
2017-2022	1,591	621	1,476	2,446	2.19%
2022-2027	1,782	755	1,455	2,482	2.00%
2027-2032	1,962	909	1,419	2,472	1.81%
2032-2035	2,128	1,072	1,359	2,415	1.62%

Note: Average annual numbers are rounded to whole numbers. Source: ADOLWD

Local Area	Percent Population Growth	Annual Growth Rate
Anchorage	35%	1.0%
Mat-Su Borough	77%	1.9%
Kenai Peninsula Borough	15%	0.5%
Fairbanks North Star Borough	32%	0.9%
City & Borough of Juneau	2%	0.1%
Statewide	26%	0.8%

Source: ADOLWD

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Houston Housing Demand Projections

Years	Low-Growth	Mid-Growth	High-Growth
2014	756	756	756
2017	772	791	811
2022	799	850	902
2027	828	909	994
2035	875	1,001	1,139
Growth 2014-2035	+119	+246	+383

Source: McDowell Group estimates

FUTURE HOUSING
DEMAND PROJECTIONS

According to Mat-Su Borough and City of Houston data, there are 999 housing units in Houston. Single-family detached units make up 85 percent (846 units) of all housing units, with the remaining composed of 62 multi-family dwellings, 8 duplexes, and 85 mobile homes. The current amount of land zoned for residential development is considered for the total 'build out' capacity. Using minimum lot sizes stated in the City of Houston Municipal Code, Title 10 Land Use Regulations and the Housing Needs Analysis conducted by the McDowell Group, the amount of potential housing units and type of housing can be determined.

Housing demand will grow, or decline, with changes in population. However, demographic trends can also have specific impacts on housing demand.

Demographic factors affecting future housing demand in Houston include:

- **Aging:** The aging of Houston's population will result in changes in household characteristics and housing preferences. For example, U.S. Census data for Anchorage suggests that householders younger than 34 years and older than 64 are more likely to live in rental or multifamily units, and householders between age 35 and 64 are more likely to live in owner-occupied single-family detached housing.
- **Household composition:** Houston may be impacted by similar state and national trends in decreasing household size over time due to aging of the householders and smaller families. For example, as householders age, fewer households include children under the age of 18.
- **Income Levels and Home Affordability:** Income levels also affect demand for different types of housing. For example, families with lower incomes may prefer higher density housing (such as duplex, two-family townhouse, and some types of multifamily housing) and are more likely to be renters. Data from the American Community Survey (2009-2013 5-year estimates) estimate that home prices in Houston are 22 percent lower than Wasilla. Houston owner-occupied have a \$177,300 median value compared to \$227,800 in Wasilla. Lower housing costs make Houston an attractive place to live, including commuters to Wasilla.

While many factors can impact housing demand, including increased demand for vacation and recreational properties, shifts in population are the main driving force. Using low, mid, and high population growth scenarios, we can estimate the number of housing units needed in Houston to accommodate new demand.

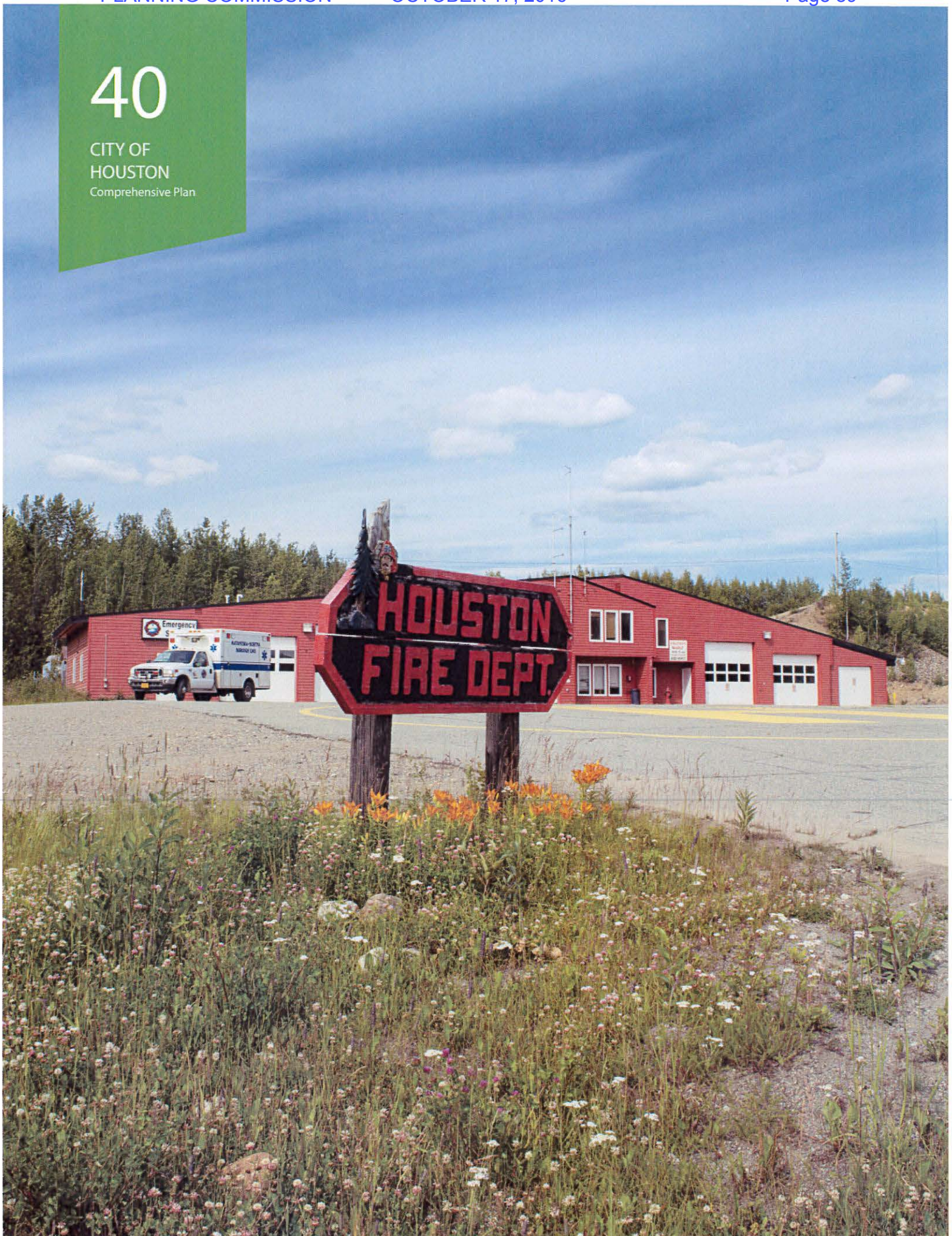
Under a high growth scenario, 383 new occupied housing units will be required (see table to left). While some of this demand can be met by conversion of vacant housing units (currently estimated at 5.7%), new housing development will be needed.

According to the City of Houston and Mat-Su Borough GIS data, a total of 4,742 acres within Houston are vacant, buildable, and zoned for residential development. Based on population projections, this amount of vacant, residentially zoned land suggests an ample amount is available to address future housing demand and residential development for single-family and multi-family homes in Houston by 2035.



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CHAPTER 4: COMMUNITY VALUES AND GOALS



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement is essential to a successful planning process. The City of Houston Comprehensive Plan Revision placed significant emphasis on meaningful public engagement to ensure the Plan meets the needs and expectations of the community. The Plan was developed with guidance from the Steering Committee made up of City of Houston Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council members. The Steering Committee met monthly beginning in June 2014 to work on the plan. Members were responsible for ensuring balanced representation of the community at each stage of the planning process; provided perspective and insight on information gathered, drafted policies, and to served as a sounding board for the residents of Houston.

Multiple methods of public involvement were used during the plan development process including a mailed Household Opinion Survey, two public workshops, stakeholder interviews, a project website, and appearances at local community events. Valuable feedback was provided and received throughout the process (complete summaries can be found in APPENDIX B, Public Involvement Summary). Dominant themes emerged and were used to update the goals in the following chapter. The feedback also helped create objectives, policies and strategies to achieve those goals for the Houston community. The public involvement process provided insight to what Houston residents see as assets in their community, challenges and constraints within it, opportunities for the future, and the shared values of Houston residents.

COMMUNITY ASSETS

RURAL LIFESTYLE

Houston's rural setting provides quick access to wilderness and allows for a tight-knit community. There is a lack of pollution and development along with ample privacy that attracted many Houston residents to the area. A "homestead spirit" unique to Houston prevails in the area as residents maintain a rural lifestyle while being within reasonable driving distance to shopping, services, and healthcare in the Mat-Su Borough and Anchorage.

LAND AVAILABILITY

There are significant amounts of developable land available in Houston. These properties are considered relatively inexpensive, for both residential and commercial use, when compared to other places in the Mat-Su Borough or Anchorage. This availability and cost factor may be an advantage in attracting more business into Houston.

PARKS HIGHWAY ACCESS

The Parks Highway bisecting the City of Houston can be a significant benefit to the community, even with noted growing congestion. The small number of businesses located along the highway benefit from the vehicles traveling the Parks daily. Potential exists for greater economic opportunity emerging along the highway as well as from the Alaska Rail Road Corporation's extension from the main line in Houston to Port MacKenzie.

LAKES AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Residents and visitors can engage in a variety of summer and winter activities on Houston's six larger lakes and the Little Susitna River, including fishing in the summer and winter, canoeing and rafting. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game annually stock four lakes with salmon and trout. The Little Susitna River runs through Houston City limits and is perhaps the most significant tourism asset in the area. Salmon and trout fishing, rafting, camping, and wildlife viewing make the Little Su a destination. Winter multi-use trails in Houston are frequented by dog mushers, cross-country skiers, and snowmachiners.



Houston Household Opinion Survey, 2015

Please indicate your level of agreement regarding the following statements about the community of Houston...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure/ Don't know
Houston is a good place for outdoor recreation.	30%	53%	6%	3%	9%
Houston is a good place to enjoy a rural lifestyle.	25	58	5	3	8
Houston could use more community planning.	33	35	10	6	16
Houston is a good place for people to live affordably.	13	57	14	7	10
Houston is family-friendly.	9	56	16	4	16
Houston is a safe place to live.	9	55	15	7	14
Houston could use more landscaping of public spaces.	23	26	22	12	16

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES

LOW POPULATION DENSITY

The low number of residents in the city may be a challenging factor when it comes to the addition of public facilities and services as well as attracting new businesses to Houston. The predicted benefit or customer base may not support the costs it takes to start or implement new commercial businesses or public services. The low population density and relatively large lot sizes are also a limitation to utility development, thereby making the rural setting of Houston a challenge.

LACK OF LOCAL AMENITIES

The lack of amenities, such as a gas station, grocery store, medical clinic, and public transportation can be a challenge faced by residents of Houston. Currently, residents must travel to Willow, Talkeetna, Big Lake, Wasilla and Anchorage for such services and amenities. The few amenities correlates to a lack of local employment opportunities, which is a challenge for community growth and development. The lack of amenities were also some of the strongest needs stated by residents and may be a deterrent for new families and business to establish in Houston.

LOCAL ROAD CONDITIONS

Many residents have identified a need to improve road conditions and maintenance and consider road standards an important city challenge needing to be addressed. A lack of access or well-maintained transportation systems may be a constraint for businesses looking to develop in the city as well as for residents who may struggle to travel safely to and from their homes and around the community.

UTILITY DEVELOPMENT

Many residents identify utility service extension, especially natural gas, as a community need. While the majority of commercial properties have access to natural gas; many residential homes rely on heating oil, wood, and electricity for their primary space heating source, which leads to higher heating costs. Costs for service extension to an individual property that is not currently serviced can be high. Therefore, the current energy costs may be a deterrent for new developments in Houston.

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OPPORTUNITIES

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Residents and stakeholders have identified the opportunity for Houston to become a destination for recreation and tourism based on its existing assets. Houston has a unique identity with which to better establish itself so that the community is recognized for more than its recreational trailheads. With access to the Little Susitna River and the Hatcher Pass area, an abundance of lakes, winter multi-use trails and its convenient location off the Parks Highway, there is potential for greater tourism development.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

If more local road improvements are made, such as increased road maintenance and paving, land without direct access to the Parks Highway may become more attractive for development. Better roadway conditions may also increase home values and allow for easier commutes. Multi-use pathways expansion, lighting improvements, and access to public transportation were also seen as beneficial improvements that would increase residents' quality of life.

Residents prefer a new road between Houston and Port MacKenzie. If built, it would support freight transportation and more efficiently connect Houston residents with a significant employer, the port. A new connection could also support economic development within Houston.

UTILITY EXPANSION

Improved access to natural gas could promote more business and residential growth by reducing energy costs.

TOWN CENTER DEVELOPMENT

Noting the proximity of the Little Susitna River, Houston could establish a destination point through the development of a town center offering community services, commercial businesses, and other amenities. This center would encourage community gathering and interaction, maintain Houston's character and family friendliness, and develop a center that may, as one stakeholder stated "make both sides of the river and railroad tracks feel like one community." Establishing a town center also encourages the preservation of the rural-residential character in other areas of Houston.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Large areas of vacant land provide opportunities for new development, including commercial and industrial developments. If consistent with community character, goals, and objectives defined by the community, this type of development is encouraged and could provide great economic benefit and employment opportunities for Houston.

The Alaska Railroad's extension from the mainline in Houston to Port MacKenzie may provide opportunities for development in Houston. These possibilities include an increase in the likelihood of manufacturing, mineral export, or transportation activity taking place in the city that could provide economic benefit and employment.





COMMUNITY VALUES

The following community values have been developed from information gathered at the Future's Community Visioning Workshop, responses to the Household Opinion Survey, and from Steering Committee members. The value statements represent issues, concerns, aspirations, and opinions of the majority of community members as they relate to the City of Houston.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

The community of Houston wants to develop as a destination for tourism and recreation; while maintaining a family friendly community that will encompass a future town center, designated trails and community facilities.

HOUSING:

The availability of housing in Houston should be appealing for a wide range of incomes, while providing all residents with opportunities for satisfactory, safe living.



TRANSPORTATION:

A need exists to increase safety, accessibility, and mobility through much of the city. The improvements would benefit all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users, while maintaining the community character.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES:

The City of Houston recognizes the need to expand its facilities and services in order to provide safe and satisfactory living for its residents, enhancing the city's autonomy, economy, and unique identity.



PLANNING:

As voiced by its residents, effective, implementable planning is a recognized need for successful growth, development, and overall health of the community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

While maintaining the current tax structure, the City of Houston aims to develop economically by capitalizing on its current amenities and natural resources; allowing commercial and industrial development as long as it aligns with the community character and will benefit city residents.

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CHAPTER 5: THE PLAN - COMMUNITY GUIDELINES FOR GROWTH



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VISION AND CHARGE

The community of Houston wants to develop as a destination for tourism and recreation, while maintaining a family friendly rural-residential community that will encompass a future town center, designated trails, and community facilities.

The Goals, Strategies and Policies of this chapter will help define the future growth and development of Houston for the 20 year life of this plan. They reflect the core values and future vision and aspirations of the community from the extensive community involvement effort during the plan development process.

GOALS describe in general terms a desired future condition that is consistent with community ideals and vision. Goals are typically timeless and have no specific date when they must be achieved.

OBJECTIVES are specific statements of particular ends as expressed in measurable terms that respond directly to Goals.

POLICIES are statements of principle or guidelines to direct actions in pursuit of Goals. **STRATEGIES** are specific means and actions of achieving and accomplishing each Objective.

STRATEGIES are specific means and actions of achieving and accomplishing each Objective.

GROWTH AND
ECONOMIC GOAL

To provide new opportunities for employment, community and commercial services and economic growth; allowing commercial and industrial development that is consistent with the community character to the benefit of Houston residents.

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage moderate economic growth which will provide a base in Houston adequate to foster employment opportunities with the City.
- Ensure that economic growth and development is consistent with the rural community character of Houston.
- Provide 10% increased local employment opportunities for residents by encouraging a balanced economic base.
- Encourage the development of local-serving and regional commercial enterprises to strengthen the community's economic base.

- Encourage continued growth of employment in the commercial core of Houston.
- Encourage the economically viable commercial tourism and recreation enterprises such as sports fisheries, campgrounds and year round recreational businesses.
- Encourage home-based businesses as forms of local economic development. They should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

POLICIES

- Encourage the development of recreational tourism in Houston.
- Encourage the development of industrial enterprises associated with the Alaska Railroad main line and the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension.

STRATEGIES

- Develop a Business Plan for attracting anchor businesses to locate in Houston. Strategies could include financing and tax incentives.
- Work with State of Alaska and Travel Alaska Tourism Organization to develop a Marketing Plan for increasing recreational tourism in Houston.





LAND USE GOAL

To develop and maintain a responsive land use plan that supports the goals and objectives of the community including economic, environmental, and social community character.

OBJECTIVES

- Preserve and enhance the identity of established community areas.
- Promote growth and land uses that are compatible with the rural residential character of Houston.
- Ensure an efficient pattern of development that reflects the needs of the community and is consistent with community character.
- Encourage the construction of safe, sound housing.
- Encourage land use patterns and development that connect new public and private investments.
- Encourage new civic and commercial activity to help jumpstart new private investments.

POLICIES

- Ensure that zoning and platting decisions are guided by this Plan, specifically its maps, goals, policies, and strategies.
- Ensure future regulatory changes and planning actions complete appropriate public processes as well as maintain and protect the unique community character.
- Provide a balanced distribution of land uses to meet Houston's current and future needs.

STRATEGIES

- Update land use regulations to promote flexibility for marijuana businesses to locate in Houston in appropriate zoning districts.
- Update land use regulations to provide buffer and protection for established residential areas from incompatible uses in adjacent zoning districts.

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PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE GOAL

To provide a wide range of year-round recreational opportunities for the community and its visitors.

OBJECTIVES

- Maintain existing trails, pathways, and recreational opportunities for area residents and visitors.
- Encourage the establishment of year-round recreational facilities.
- Develop and maintain neighborhood-scale recreational facilities and trail systems.
- Encourage Houston's recreation development as a tool for tourism and economic development.
- Maintain, supplement, and enhance new parks and open space for recreational use.

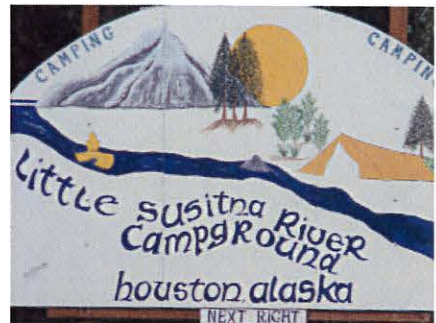
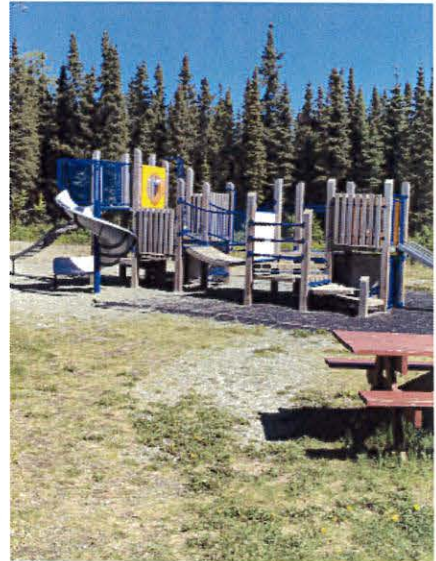
POLICIES

- Ensure that a range of recreational opportunities are available to residents of all ages, especially for Houston youth.

- If the opportunity exists, ensure that trails and parks are considered at the land development level to preserve access.

STRATEGIES

- Preserve and improve access to recreational opportunities, especially Houston's lakes and the Little Susitna River.
- Work with the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation to find projects that would qualify for community grants leveraged with volunteer participation.
- Work with the State Historic Preservation Office to ensure that trails are mapped and preserved.





ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL

To maintain and protect the quality of the natural environment, especially drinking water and surface water in Houston.

OBJECTIVES

- Protect drinking water quality for residents.
- Protect and preserve salmon habitat and the environmental health of rivers and streams.

POLICIES

- Through land use and other regulatory controls, protect environmentally important areas including streams, rivers and lakes.
- Ensure that setbacks and buffers in development areas are maintained to protect residential wells for potable water and for the environmental health of natural areas.

STRATEGIES

- Continue to work with the salmon restoration group to support its efforts on the Little Susitna River.
- Provide development setback standards in land use regulations to ensure that new development is protected from flooding and other environmental hazards and to protect natural areas from off-site pollution.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL

To provide a safe and secure community for residents and to provide quality community services that enhance and improve residents' quality of life.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide effective levels of fire and emergency response services to Houston residents and the surrounding areas.
- Improve utility access for local residents.
- Expand utilities to facilitate more intensive land development where appropriate.
- Encourage non-profits to continue to provide community and social activities for residents.

POLICIES

- Ensure the proper design and installation of on-site water and wastewater facilities to protect property owners and the environment.
- Ensure that adequate school facilities are available when and where they are needed.
- Encourage learning of community residents through formal and informal educational opportunities.

STRATEGIES

- Coordinate citizen awareness and implementation of wildfire mitigation with Matanuska Susitna Borough and state forestry service programs.
- Explore raising revenue through a variety of taxes which could be used to finance utility expansion. Such financial possibilities could include bonding with the Alaska Municipal Bond Bank.
- Secure state funding to support utility expansion and development.
- Partner with tribal organizations for shared costs to expand utilities.
- Explore the feasibility of improvement districts that will help finance future utility expansion.
- Work with Mid-Valley Senior's Center and the Homesteader's Community Center to continue to be of community service to residents.
- Continue to work with the MSB School District to update student enrollment trends and projections.
- Coordinate with the MSB School District to determine site selection, capital improvements, and school bond measures for timely school facilities.

- Address school site selection and acquisition in the review of proposed development plans.
- Support a new elementary school to serve Houston.





TRANSPORTATION GOAL

To provide a safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation system that meets the needs of Houston residents and visitors.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide safe access to the Parks Highway and connecting road system.
- Ensure freight goods movement from the port to interior Alaska through Houston is safe and efficient.
- Encourage the development of alternate routes through Houston to serve goods and services movement from Port McKenzie to interior Alaska.
- Improve and expand non-motorized transportation facilities where possible.
- Expand system connectivity and emergency access.

- Provide additional traffic crossings across the Little Susitna River to promote public safety and convenience.

POLICIES

- Freight routes should be safe, effective, and minimize impacts on established neighborhoods.
- Support regional transportation developments that comply with the goals, objectives, and policies in this plan and that support positive development within Houston.

STRATEGIES

- Support the development of an alternative route to the Parks Highway from Port McKenzie to Houston parallel to the Point McKenzie railroad extension.

- Support the development of a Hawk Lane bike path.
- Work with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities on Parks Highway planning, routing, and improvements by means of a Parks Highway Corridor Plan.

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CHAPTER 6: LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan identifies general land use classifications and the land use plan maps graphically illustrate the location and extent of each land use category in Houston. The land use plan map is a visual representation of long-term policies and is not a detailed blueprint for future development. Nor is the land use plan map a zoning map which establishes specific land uses on a lot by lot basis. The land use plan map, in concert with the Community Growth Guidelines, provides a policy guide and a legal basis for future zoning changes and other development decisions.



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RELATIONSHIP TO HOUSTON'S MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 10 LAND USE REGULATIONS AND ZONING MAP

The City of Houston's Title 10 Land Use Regulations establishes rules regarding development and are applied as zoning districts in the Official Zoning Map. That map shows zoning district boundaries within the City of Houston's boundaries. Future amendments to Title 10 regulations, zoning changes, and other land use decisions are intended to conform to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Plan Map.

This plan makes policy recommendations for current and future land uses based on existing land use patterns and known development plans proposed by large landowners. Title 10 Land Use regulations implement the proposed land use designations through zoning districts.

AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan is dynamic and may change as the community changes. Proposed amendments to the land use plan map may be reviewed concurrently with new development proposals. Amendments will require that conflicts between the proposal and the maps be resolved by examining the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies Chapter for guidance. Map amendments and changes are Comprehensive Plan amendments and should be consistent with the Plan's Goals, Objectives, and Strategies to meet future community projected growth.

LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The Land Use Plan Map identifies different land use classifications to illustrate the location and extent of land use categories throughout Houston. The land use classification define the building intensity (density) for each area, based on existing, planned, and projected future development, population and employment.

Each land use classification includes a generalized description of the predominant uses, the intensity of each use, the essential physical characteristics of development, and locational criteria, where appropriate. The locational criteria should be applied in combination to each other and not necessarily individually nor should all criteria be achieved in each location.



RESIDENTIAL CLASSIFICATIONS

The residential classification identifies areas that are developed for residential purposes and are expected to remain residential for the 20 year horizon of the Houston Comprehensive Plan. The residential classifications also identify vacant land best suited for future residential development. The ranges of residential densities are generalized descriptions of the type of development appropriate for a broadly defined area. They are based on area-wide densities rather than specific densities for specific parcels.

The land use plan map depicts an intended overall distribution of population and housing units for contiguous areas of Houston. The land use plan map is not intended to be applied directly to determine the number of housing units permitted per lot or development site. Title 10 Land Use Regulations and Official Zoning Map will determine the allowed number of housing units on each lot or development area. The type of low density large lot residential development in Houston results from a combination of preferred lifestyle, lack of public infrastructure, such as public water and sewer and other public utilities, and distance from major urban centers.

RESIDENTIAL 5: 1 DWELLING UNIT PER 5 ACRE (DUA)

The Residential 5 classification provides for low-density single family and rural agricultural residences served by private wells and on-site septic systems. The predominant use consists of a detached house on lots of 5 acres or larger suited for agricultural uses.

RESIDENTIAL 2.5: 1 DWELLING UNIT PER 2.5 ACRE (DUA)

The Residential 2.5 classification provides for low-density single family and rural agricultural residences served by private wells and on-site septic systems. The predominant use consists of a detached house on lots of 2.5 acres or larger suited for agricultural uses.

RESIDENTIAL 1: 2 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE (DUA)

The Residential 1 classification provides for large-lot single family and 2 family residences served by private wells and on-site septic systems. The predominant use consists of detached house on lots of one acre or larger.

LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

- Areas with an established large-lot rural development pattern;
- Vacant areas adjacent to established large-lot, rural development;
- Areas without public water and wastewater;
- Areas where environmental constraints preclude an intense site development;
- Access is from low traffic volume local streets.
- Direct access from the Parks Highway is discouraged for new development.

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CITY OF
HOUSTON
Comprehensive Plan**RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY:
3 OR MORE DWELLINGS
PER ACRE**

The Residential Multi-Family 3 or more dwellings per acre classification provides for a range of single and multi-family housing neighborhoods that offer a diversity of housing choices. Residential uses include duplexes, townhouses and low to medium density multi-family. The intended overall density is greater than 3 dwelling units per gross acre. If located within neighborhoods that includes nearby single family homes, the physical scale and appearance and street orientation of multi-family housing developments should be compatible.

LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

- Areas with a mix of single family and multi-family housing;
- Areas immediately adjacent to existing multi-family development;
- Areas without water and wastewater;
- Areas where environmental constraints preclude an intense site development; and
- Access is from low traffic volume local streets.

**NON-RESIDENTIAL
CLASSIFICATIONS****COMMERCIAL CORE – NEW**

The Commercial Core classification is suitable for a wide range of retail and service uses. They include more intense commercial uses primarily for retail and service uses intended to meet the needs of highway users and local residents. This designation is also suitable for a broad range of professional businesses clustered in areas such as a shopping center that may be anchored by one or more large retail establishments. The Commercial Core Classification is also intended for lands that will be best suited for commercial core uses in the future.

LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

- Existing commercially developed area near the Big Lake Road and Parks Highway intersection; and
- Areas with access onto Big Lake Road within the City of Houston boundaries.

**COMMERCIAL MIXED
USE - NEW**

The Commercial Mixed Classification provides flexibility for areas that are developed for commercial purposes that also have residential uses and are expected to remain commercial mixed use in the future. This designation is to identify key areas along a highway corridor which are highly visible or transitional in nature. Development in this area should occur in a manner that does not disrupt the function of the highway system. The Commercial Mixed Use Classification is also intended for lands that will be best suited for commercial mixed uses in the future.

This Comprehensive Plan supports and recommends a concentration of commercial uses at strategic locations where safe and compatible access are optimized. Commercial mixed use designations are currently clustered in nodes along the Parks Highway and along the eastside of the Parks Highway, north of the Little Susitna River recreation area and boat launch.

LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

- Existing commercially mixed use developed area along the Parks Highway north of Big Lake intersection; and
- Areas with safe and convenient access off a side street from the Parks Highway.

**TOWN CENTER/CIVIC
CENTER – NEW**

The Town Center classification provides the focal point of civic, commercial, and recreation activity for Houston, integrating community serving retail, public services, and civic facilities. The town center allows and encourages community events close to the civic center of Houston, adding life and vitality to the center.

LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

- Existing commercially developed area near City Hall and Little Susitna Recreational Area; and
- Areas near the existing Fire Hall on Armstrong Road.



PARK AND NATURAL RESOURCE

The Parks and Open Space classification provides for active and passive recreation, conservation of natural areas, and trail corridors connecting to neighborhoods. Uses include neighborhood, community, regional and natural, open space use, greenbelts, and special purpose facilities. Such facilities might be developed recreational areas including sports complexes or interpretive centers that support parks and recreational functions. Park uses designated on the Land Use Plan Map are generally existing or known planned areas. As new open space and park use areas are acquired the Land Use Plan Map should be updated.

LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

- Areas designated or dedicated as park use or under management for parks and recreation uses with the City of Houston;
- Areas designated as open space or natural resource use area; and
- City or Borough owned lands of high natural value or environmentally sensitive and not suitable for development.

INDUSTRIAL

The Industrial classification describes and provides areas of existing and future industrial development. This designation is for areas already substantially developed for industrial use for the duration of the 20 year Plan.

The classification also applies to vacant land that is best suited to industrial development in the future. Limitations on industrial activities should apply near residential areas.

LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

- Areas with an established primarily industrial development pattern;
- Areas large enough for more intense industrial uses;
- Areas with access to truck routes without the need to travel through local or neighborhood streets and incompatible uses; and
- Areas with rail access to reduce total truck traffic volumes.

COMMUNITY FACILITY

The Community Facility classification is for developed active public and institutional use areas and undeveloped areas designated for future public and institutional use. Schools, community centers, fire stations, senior and cultural centers, cemeteries, and other public utility facilities designated on the Land Use Plan map are existing or known planned facilities. As new facilities are planned and developed, the Land Use Plan Map should be updated to reflect these changes.

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TRANSPORTATION FACILITY - NEW

The Transportation Facility classification applies to areas with existing or known planned public facilities that are directly related to transportation by rail or air. This classification includes the Alaska Railroad land holdings and railroad utility corridors including the Port Mackenzie rail extension and roadway corridor, as carried forward from the 1982 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan.



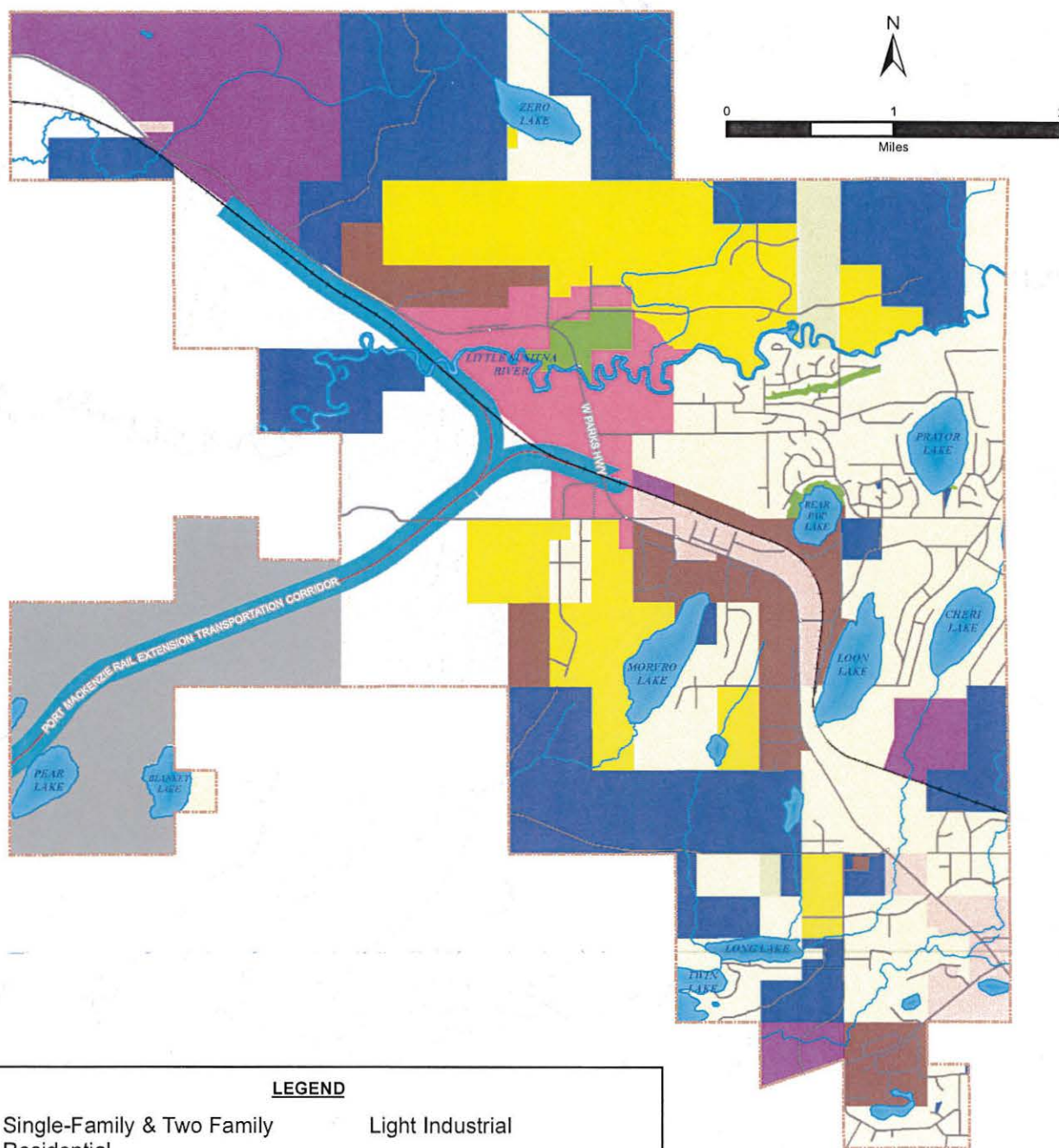
DEVELOPMENT RESERVE

The Development Reserve classification is applied to areas that are generally suitable for development but whose location and lack of facilities and lack of projected demand make near-term and intermediate term development uncertain. Residential large-lot development is allowed by right but a planning process with a proposed rezoning to an active zoning district should occur prior to development.



MAJOR ROADS AND STREETS

The Land Use Plan Map illustrates major roads using a black line symbol as a visual geographic reference. The Transportation Plan Map in coordination with the MSB's Long-Range Transportation Plan designates the existing and future transportation network.



LEGEND

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Single-Family & Two Family Residential | Light Industrial |
| Low Density Residential/Agricultural | Heavy Industrial |
| Residential/Agricultural | Transportation Facility |
| Multi-Family Residential | Public Lands and Institutions |
| Commercial/Mixed Use | Parks and Recreation |
| Town Center | Development Reserve |

CITY OF HOUSTON

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AND
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

LAND USE PLAN

JUNE 2016

FIGURE 14

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CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORTATION PLAN



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STATUS OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

THE PARKS HIGHWAY

The City of Houston is approximately 7.5 miles west along the Parks Highway from the City limits of Wasilla, approximately 50 road miles north of Anchorage, and approximately 300 miles south along the Parks Highway from the city limits of Fairbanks, Alaska. The Parks Highway is part of the Federal Highway's interstate road network. The eastern edge of the city limits of Houston included the intersection of Big Lake Road, with the first commercialized mile of Big Lake Road lying within the jurisdiction of Houston.

The Parks Highway is a 2-lane, undivided facility with 12 foot lanes, 8 foot paved shoulders and a 200 foot wide right-of-way measured from the highway centerline. Within Houston there are periodic passing lane sections for the northbound and southbound lanes, as well as a center two-way left turn lane. The Parks Highway's primary function is to serve statewide mobility for travel and freight transportation through the city limits of Houston for passage to Fairbanks and interior Alaska. Within the national network, the Parks Highway is the primary link between Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB), and interior Alaska. Anchorage is the commercial hub of the state, and therefore freight and materials shipped via road to interior Alaska by road must pass through Houston on the Parks Highway. The Parks Highway is also a key element of the Houston road network, serving local traffic throughout the City of Houston.

The Parks Highway is an interstate highway classified as a Rural Interstate by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), and is Route 3 of the National Highway System (NHS). As part of the NHS it has the function of providing mobility on a statewide level, in addition to its secondary function of local area service. The Parks Highway is owned by the State of Alaska and maintained by the DOT&PF.



CITY OF HOUSTON ROAD NETWORK LAYOUT

The City of Houston's road network branches east and west from the Parks Highway, which operates as a backbone for the regional network. The Parks Highway is the only arterial level roadway within the city limits. The remaining roads are either local roads providing access to the surrounding lots or collector roads that provide access to and from the Parks Highway.

A majority of the parcels within the city limits of Houston access the Parks Highway within the city limits of Houston. Alternative access out of the city is available to the west via Kiowa Street which leads to Big Lake and King Arthur Drive to the east which accesses the Meadow Lakes Loop and Pittman Road areas. Additionally, Big Lake Road leads west into Big Lake. There are currently no signalized intersections within the city, but one is proposed by the DOT&PF for the intersection of Big Lake Road and the Parks Highway.

ROAD FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

A functional classification system is a method of identifying the intended use of a road or corridor. It is an important planning level tool to facilitate clear communication about road networks between different agencies, designers, and the public. The function of a road typically falls somewhere between the conflicting purposes of mobility (high speed mobility through a region) and access (lower speed movements with frequent turns to adjacent parcels).

The DOT&PF manages road networks that fall within the City of Houston. Both the DOT&PF and the Mat-Su Borough individually identified functional classifications for roads that they own and maintain or that are adjacent to their roadways. See Figure 15, MSB Functional Classification System.

ROAD SURFACE CONDITIONS

There are approximately 45 miles of road within the Houston residential road network, not including the Parks Highway and Big Lake Road. Of these 45 miles of road, 90% (40 miles) of the roads are unpaved with a gravel surface. The remaining 5 miles of paved roadway account for most of the collector road network as defined by the MSB.

The paved road network includes all or segments of the following roads:

- Cheri Lake Drive
- Hawk Lane
- King Arthur Drive
- Miller's Reach Road
- Wasey Way
- White Rabbit Drive

Armstrong Road is identified by the MSB as a collector road and is currently unpaved beyond the first quarter mile. The first quarter mile of Armstrong Road serves the Little Susitna River Camp Ground, and the public safety building for Houston which houses one of two Fire Halls serving the north part of Houston. City Hall is also accessed from Armstrong Road.

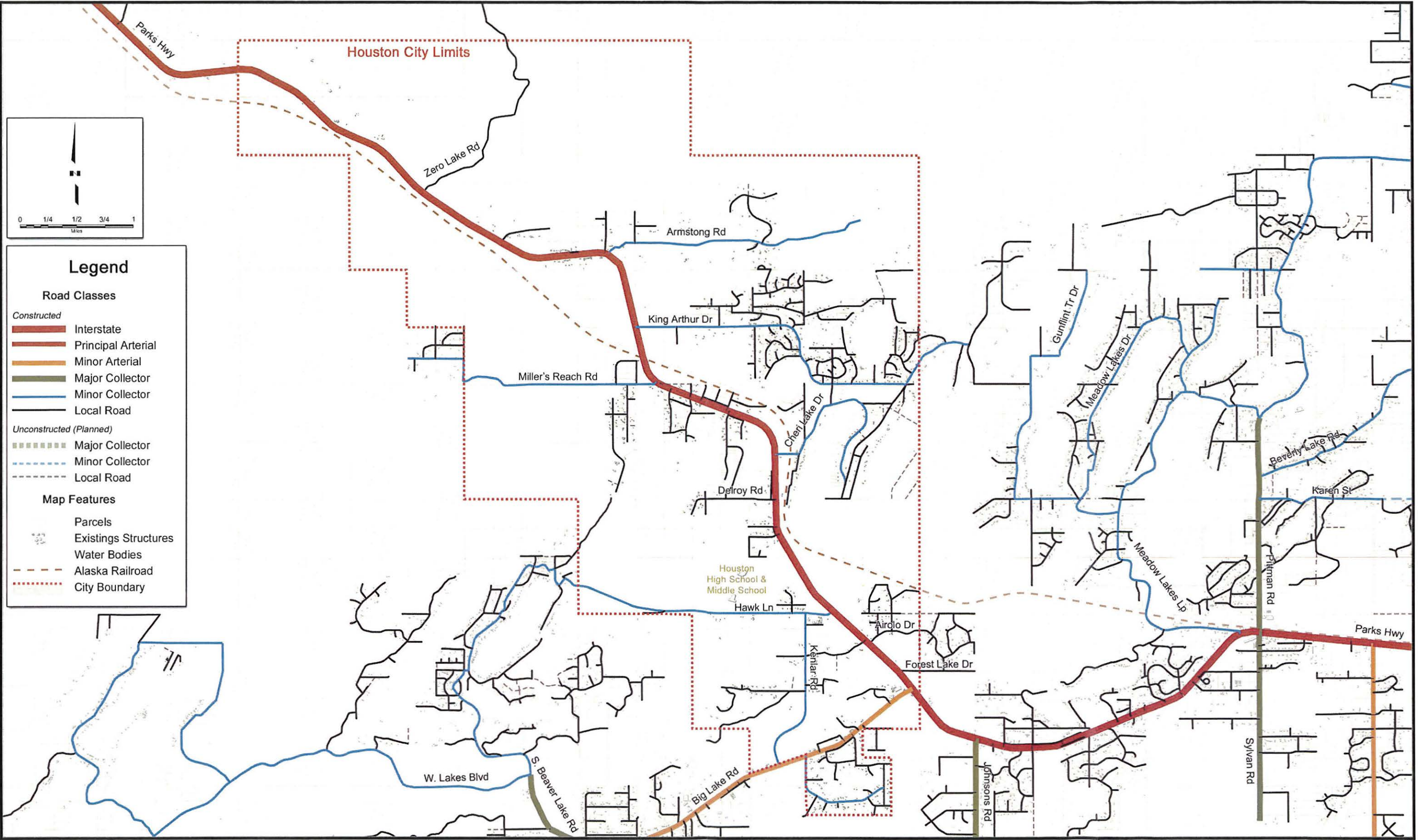
ROAD OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The road network in Houston is comprised of roads owned by the City, the DOT&PF as well as some roads qualifying for ownership and funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Maintenance of the Parks Highway is done by DOT&PF but roadway ownership and responsibilities of all other roads fall under the City of Houston's Public Works Department.

ALASKA RAILROAD

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) generally parallels the Parks Highway corridor throughout the limits of the City of Houston. To the southeast the railroad is on the north side of the highway. The Parks Highway crosses the railroad at a separated grade crossing at approximately milepost 56.5. The separated grade crossing includes a rail bridge that proceeds over the Parks Highway. On the northwest end of the city the rail corridor is on the south side of the highway.

A rail extension from the mainline in Houston to the port at Point MacKenzie is currently under construction. A "Y" junction at the mainline south of the Little Susitna River and the rail spur continuation southwest through the industrial zoned land in Houston has been built.



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PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS AND NON-MOTORIZED USE

There is a separated pedestrian pathway on the south side of the Parks Highway that begins east of the Houston city limits and ends at Mile Post 58 within Houston. There is a second pathway on the north side of the Parks Highway that begins at the intersection of the Parks Highway and Cheri Lake Road and continues west beyond the city limits.

There is an established recreation area with a trailhead located at mile 59 of the Parks Highway off of Zero Lake Road. The Houston/Willow Creek Sled Trail provides access to Hatcher Pass recreation area year round and the Zero Lake Trailhead has parking for approximately 60 vehicles and trailers and provides restroom facilities.

The majority of trails in Houston are informal and are used for non-motorized and motorized use year-round, including snow machines, ATVs, dog sleds, bikers, pedestrians, and skiers.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Valley Mover provides public transit between the Mat-Su Valley and Anchorage with routes operating Monday–Friday multiple times a day. Valley Mover has two pick-up and drop-

off locations within the City of Houston: one at the commercial center at Big Lake Road and the recently added Gorilla Fireworks parking lot location.

Mat-Su Community Transit (MASCOT) provides minimal services to residents in Houston. Two busses run a Meadow Lakes/Big Lake to Wasilla route Monday through Friday. The northernmost scheduled bus stop, or Big Lake route cutoff, is at the NAPA Auto Parts and commercial strip mall at the intersection of Big Lake Road and the Parks Highway which is serviced by one bus. MASCOT does provide "Route Deviation" bus service, at an additional fare, which allows for requested additional pickup and drop-off locations depending upon proximity to the route and time requested.

At this time Valley Mover and MASCOT do not have any short or long term plans to expand their services in Houston. Funding and ridership are the determining factors for major changes to the availability public transportation.

FREIGHT

The Parks Highway serves as a main transportation corridor for commercial freight from the greater Anchorage and Mat-Su area to Interior Alaska. According to the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in 2013 commercial vehicle traffic made up an average of 16% of annual daily traffic along the Parks Highway through Willow. Peak commercial vehicle counts were greater than 22% of total traffic in September and October (Central Region 2013 Traffic Volume Report, DOT&PF). Considering the low number of freight and commercial destinations between Wasilla and north of Willow, it is reasonable to assume the commercial vehicle traffic recorded on the Parks Highway at Willow is a close reflection of freight traffic on the Parks Highway through the City of Houston.

The Alaska Railroad is the other leading mode for freight transportation. Opportunities for increased freight activity to the Port MacKenzie rail extension are anticipated in Houston due to the "Y" connection to the mainline. Improvement to the Parks Highway from Wasilla to Fairbanks may decrease travel times and continued development of Interior Alaska and the Borough may lead to increased traffic on the Parks Highway and increased use of the railroad.



RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS, AREA PROJECTS AND STUDIES

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MSB LRTP)

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Long Range Transportation Plan (MSB LRTP) was completed in 2007 and is currently undergoing an update to create a transportation planning vision to year 2035. The adopted LRTP is part of the Borough-wide Comprehensive Plan which all adopted area and community comprehensive plans are a part of, including the adopted 2003 amended City of Houston Comprehensive Plan. The MSB LRTP identifies transportation goals and objectives which reflect the Borough-wide interests and desires for the future transportation system. The overall purpose and goal of the MSB LRTP is to develop an integrated roadway network that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods within the central area.

Specific goals identified in the 2007 MSB LRTP relate directly to the City of Houston and its transportation and economic goals, as identified in this Comprehensive Plan. These goals and objectives from the MSB LRTP include:

- Provide a transportation system that enhances the local economy and quality of life;
 - Minimize neighborhood through-traffic movements;
 - Promote positive and attractive design of transportation facilities;
 - Develop a multi-modal transportation network; and
 - Encourage the paving of roads and the increased use of dust control materials;
- Develop an integrated roadway network that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods;
 - Minimizing travel time delays and congestion;
 - Minimize the number of access points on collector and arterial roads to maximize safety and road capacity; and
 - Protect the integrity and level of service on arterial and higher designated roads;

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- Protect the through traffic function of highways and arterials;
- Provide a multi-modal transportation system that is safe, effective and meets the needs of all residents;
- Provide for the travel needs of mobility limited residents (young, old, low income, disabled);
 - Support the continued operation and expansion of local public transportation;
- And develop and operate a rail system to benefit Mat-Su's population and economy;
 - Extend a rail connection from the Alaska Railroad main line to Point MacKenzie; and
 - Continue to support economic development of communities along existing and future Alaska Railroad lines.

The MSB LRTP identifies anticipated future projects based on population growth, development, and the existing transportation system's capacities. This information is used to model and forecast estimated future traffic volumes throughout the borough road network. The completed 2007 LRTP extends through the planning year 2025. Assuming residential growth continues in the borough outside of Wasilla and Palmer, proposed future roads were identified with the recommendation that they be improved or completed when the nearby areas they serve are built out. Most of the identified improvements are also included in the Borough's Official Streets and Highways Plan (OS&HP).

The identified recommendations and improvements in the Houston area are mainly for the road system south of King Arthur Drive, where higher density population growth and travel is likely to occur.

Skyview Drive, east of Cheri Lake in Houston and south of Lake Lalen in Meadow Lakes, is a collector-level street recommended to be extended generally west and south of Cheri and Loon Lakes to the Parks Highway, providing a connection to Anthony Road (page 4-24, 2007 MSB LRTP). Big Lake Road from the Parks Highway to Northshore Drive is anticipated to need

expansion from a 2-lane minor arterial to a 4-lane arterial by 2025 based on predicted increases in daily traffic volumes (page 4-14, 2007 MSB LRTP).

Rural area roads are not included in the transportation modeling process. Typically the need for new or improved rural roads is based on providing access to new neighborhoods and a second connection to larger developed areas for emergency access and convenience. Recommendations for rural road improvements in the LRTP are based on needs identified in Mat-Su community adopted comprehensive plans. The City of Houston's 1999 adopted plan stressed the need for emergency access routes and combination fire breaks.

Proposed emergency access routes and staging areas affecting the City of Houston include providing a connection between Millers Reach Road and the Beaver Lake area and connecting roads north of the Little Susitna River from Armstrong Road to Edgerton Parks Road.





ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES PARKS HIGHWAY VISION, 2006

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities developed a vision for the Parks Highway in 2006. The purpose of the Parks Highway Visioning Document is to establish, in general terms, the Department's future vision of the highway which will provide guidance to the decisions about forthcoming highway projects and is intended to serve as the conceptual basis for more detailed local and Department planning efforts in the future.

Overall the vision for the Parks Highway is as follows:

"A high degree of mobility for through trips while accommodating local access and slower travelers should be provided in a manner that is highly compatible with the communities and the environment along the corridor. The highway should be free-flowing with enough capacity and appropriate design standards to safely support travel at highway speeds. The long-term vision is for the highway to be upgraded to include freeway-style design characteristics, such as controlled access and interchanges at major connections. Local travel, within communities along the corridor, will be improved by developing local access road systems."

Using 2030 traffic projections and identified safety and economic needs, general future improvements for the Parks Highway from the Big Lake Junction through Willow were identified. Generally the recommendation is to upgrade this section of the Highway to four lanes with access roads in selected locations. The frontage and access roads may be connected to the highway via interchanges or at-grade signalized intersections in the interim.

Good access management is especially important in Houston where private land exists adjacent to the highway and development pressure has been increasing (Parks Highway Visioning Document, page ES-2). *"Future highway corridor planning efforts should evaluate, on a segment-by-segment basis, how to provide access to adjacent lands, and this should be the basis for an access management plan for the Parks Highway corridor."*

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Projected traffic volumes were developed based on historical traffic trends, historical and projected population trends, past design designations, and regional travel models (see Travel Demand Modeling to follow). Average annual daily traffic volumes from the year 2000 were taken as current or existing volumes of traffic along the Parks Highway and used to predict anticipated traffic volumes in the year 2030. The Parks Highway segment from Big Lake Road to Willow is projected to be carrying 8,000 vehicles per day by 2030.

Through this comprehensive planning process, new traffic projections were calculated using updated data in the Travel Demand Model (see following page) for a horizon year of 2035. The new data predicts average annual daily traffic volumes up to three times as much as the 2006 Parks Highway Visioning Document predicted through the Houston segment of the Parks Highway. This increase is significant in terms of highway planning and suggests improvements to the Parks Highway are needed in the near future.

DOT&PF's Parks Highway Visioning Document also notes that if the Wasilla bypass is built, the need for Parks Highway expansion to four lanes through Houston could be needed sooner, due to increases in growth in Houston and Willow and decreased travel time to Wasilla and Anchorage.

Development of Port MacKenzie is anticipated with or without the construction of the Knik Arm Bridge, according to the Visioning Document.

"Ultimately, a new connection to the Parks Highway from the Knik Arm Crossing may be constructed.... The cities of Wasilla and Houston have zoning. Estimates about the timeframe for this connection range from 10 to 30 years. Most of the land for the route [highway corridor number 7 which follows the existing road alignment from the Parks through Big Lake Road down Burma Road, Ayrshire, and Point MacKenzie Roads] is still in public ownership. The road could intersect the Parks Highway near Millers Reach Road in Houston. This was the most cost effective of the routes studied in 1992. ARRC also may use this corridor. If this route becomes a reality, it could make a bypass at Houston a necessity, put Willow at an easy commuting distance of Anchorage, and increase the number of visitors to the south side of Denali National Park and other tourist and recreational attractions in the Susitna Valley."

The visioning document states the recommendation for a possible bypass at Houston becomes stronger if a Port-to-Parks roadway connection is built through Houston. The use of interchanges is strongly supported throughout the Visioning Document

and therefore a Houston Bypass appears as a viable option. Otherwise good access management, the use of frontage roads, climbing and passing lanes, and widening to four lanes is predicted to adequately meet future traffic needs.

The Parks Highway is anticipated to expand to four lanes in 2030. There is enough roadside development, existing and anticipated, to warrant frontage roads in some sections of Houston. Construction of the Knik Arm Crossing could alter the traffic projections and change the long term needs of the Parks Highway through Houston. If constructed, the growth and traffic patterns within the borough south of the Parks Highway could change significantly, which may reduce the need for some highway improvements. That is because the provision of this alternate access route may increase the traffic volumes in other sections of the highway.



TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

The Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) regularly updates and maintains a regional Travel Demand Model (TDM) which includes the Mat-Su Borough areas as well as the greater Anchorage metropolitan area.

In an effort to establish appropriate transportation goals, objectives, and policies, the average annual daily traffic (AADT) volumes have been projected for 2035 by AMATS using the Travel Demand Model (TDM). The TDM includes all planned and funded transportation projects to date (April 2015). The model used in this analysis was developed by the ADOT&PF in conjunction with the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) and the Matanuska Susitna Borough. The extents of the model are the entire network of the MSB and MOA from north of Willow all the way to Girdwood and east as far as the community of Sutton on the Glen Highway. This model is the same one used to analyze the traffic impacts of the Knik Arm bridge project as well as the Highway-to-Highway project in downtown Anchorage, and various Wasilla Bypass alternative corridors.

The model generates traffic volumes based on socio-economic background data such as population, income level, employment in various work sectors, school enrollment, as well as a number of special generators such as hotels and airports. The results of the model were used as a baseline for some the recommendations to follow. Figure 16 presents a diagram of the City of Houston with several key 2035 AADTs taken from the TDM.

KNIK ARM BRIDGE

The Knik Arm Crossing is a proposed project to construct a toll bridge over Cook Inlet connecting downtown Anchorage to the Point MacKenzie area and provide an alternative route to the Mat-Su Borough. Project management was transferred from the state created Knik Arm Bridge & Toll Authority to the State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) in 2014. Eleven years earlier the State Legislature decided to seriously pursue the development of the bridge following a 1984 Draft Environmental Impact Statement by the DOT&PF.

To date, more than \$72.9 million in federal money has been spent on the Environmental Impact Statement and other preliminary work including right-of-way acquisitions. Full funding, through a loan with the federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), has not been acquired. The Knik Arm Bridge project will also need future funding grants from the state of Alaska to pursue limited right of way requirements.

The Knik Arm Bridge project is included in the AMATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan and regional Travel Demand Model as a constructed project by 2035. Construction of the Knik Arm Bridge could have impacts on traffic volumes experienced by the City of Houston in the future, but growth and increases in traffic along the Parks Highway especially is anticipated to still increase to levels where highway improvements would be recommended.

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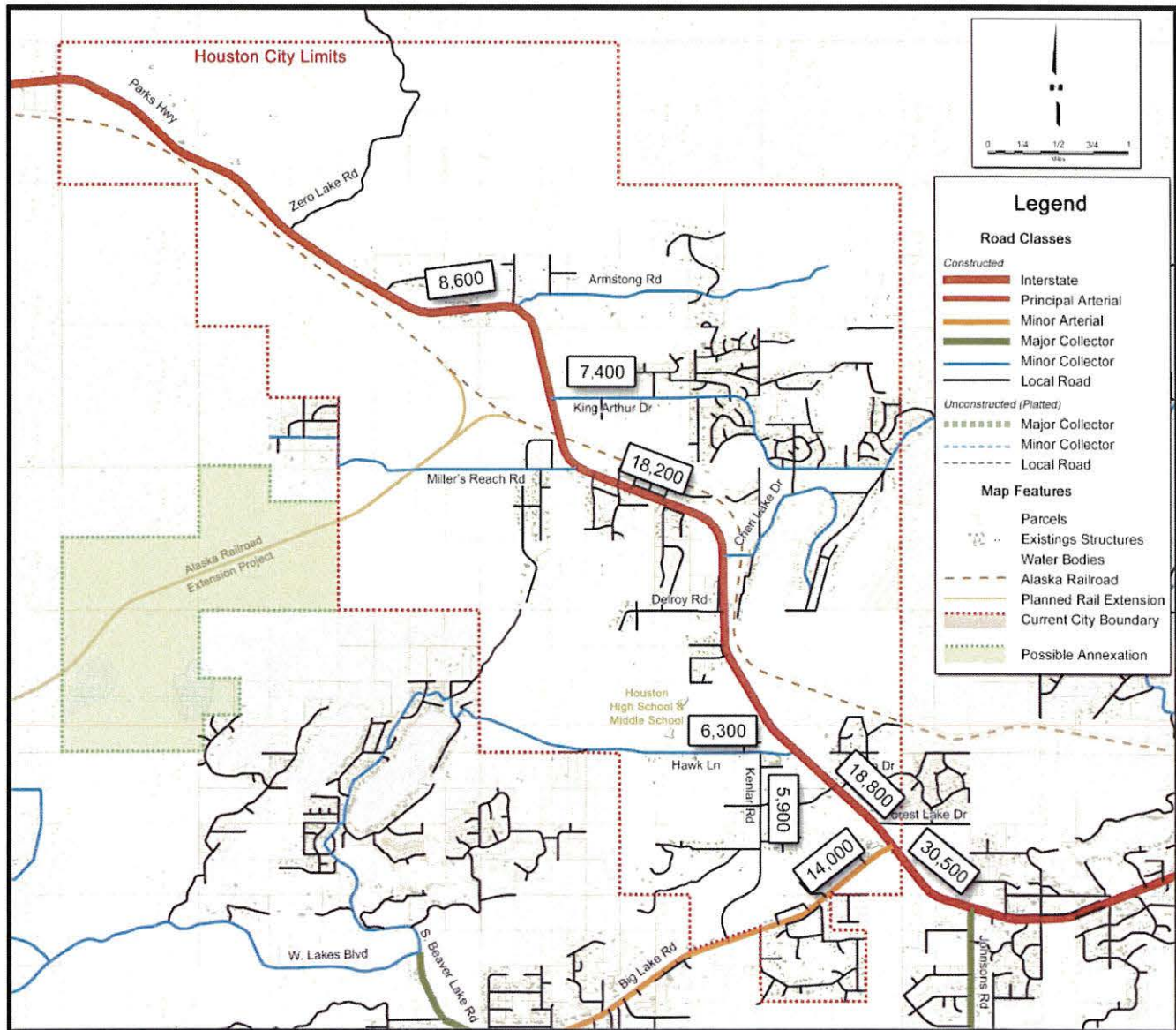
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Figure 16. Projected 2035 Traffic Demand Volumes from ADOT&PF Travel Demand Model

RECOMMENDATIONS

All recommendations identified in this Transportation Plan element of the City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan support the following community values regarding transportation:

There is a need to increase safety, accessibility, and mobility through much of the city with improvements benefiting all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users, while maintaining the community character.

The objectives, policies, and strategies identified to achieve the overall Transportation Goal were developed from the community's core values and identified in Chapter 5: Community Guidelines for Growth.

The following Transportation Plan Recommendations coincide with these goals and provide general traffic-related observations and recommendations for the City of Houston based on the analysis of existing conditions, other plans, and the projects generation by the ADOT&PF's Travel Demand Model.

THE PARKS HIGHWAY

The Parks Highway represents the backbone of the City of Houston's transportation infrastructure, not only for inter-community travel but also for access to outside services and employment centers. It is also of regional and statewide significance and therefore has a major impact on the residents of the City of Houston. Following are major Parks Highway recommendations.

BYPASS

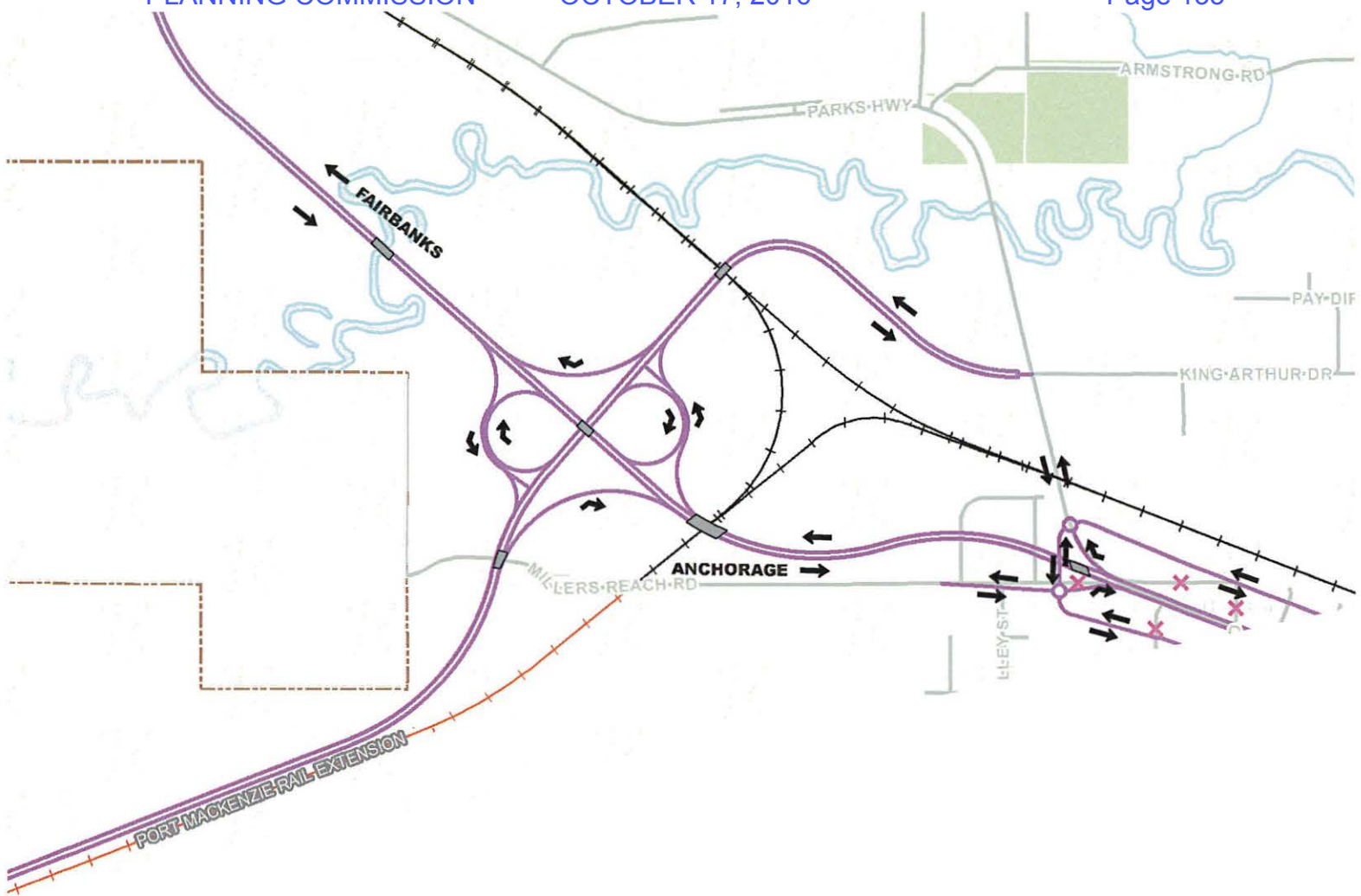
A Parks Highway bypass has been envisioned since at least the early 1980's. The bypass would occur between Mile 56 and Mile 60, and would parallel the Alaska Railroad tracks on the south or west side. This bypass would be integrated with the "Port-to-Parks" highway discussed later. A grade separated interchange would be constructed to facilitate uninterrupted traffic flow along the Parks Highway and (mostly) free flowing turning movements towards the port and town center. Several bridges would be required to cross the railroad tracks, the Little Susitna River, and existing roadways. This recommended project will benefit the community as follows:

TOWN CENTER DEVELOPMENT

Shifting higher-volume through traffic to the bypass will provide opportunities for a cohesive town center around major community assets, such as the Little Susitna River and existing businesses. However, relocating the highway away from existing businesses could have a negative impact in the form of fewer customers. This result could be mitigated with signage directing travelers to the town center businesses, as well as strategic on/off ramps at the existing Parks Highway at either end of the bypass. The development of streetside or other public parking venues in the Town Center is encouraged.

EFFICIENT AND SAFE FREIGHT MOVEMENT

Through traffic traveling on the bypass would do so at a higher speed (greater than 55 mph) without the inherent safety risks presented by multiple driveways/intersections. Also, depending on the final alignment of the bypass, up to three horizontal curves could be eliminated or flattened significantly.



INTERCHANGE

With the construction of the "Port-to-Parks" highway, Houston will be the site of a major highway convergence. In order to provide safe and efficient access, a grade separated interchange is envisioned in the undeveloped land bordered by the Little Susitna River on the north, railroad tracks to the east and south, and the city boundary to the west.

A partial cloverleaf was initially recommended, even though an eventual project will need to complete a detailed evaluation of available interchange types. The Parks Highway would be elevated, with bridges spanning new frontage roads near Millers Reach Road, the Port MacKenzie Rail Link, Little Susitna River, and the railroad mainline. Areas north of the railroad tracks would be linked to the interchange with a new road, including a grade separated railroad crossing.

Main access to the Parks Highway would be through the interchange, particularly for any traffic going south to Wasilla or beyond from the Houston Town Center area. Frontage roads and access management could be utilized at the south end of the bypass to consolidate and route access to and from the freeway. In addition, northbound 'old' Parks Highway travel would merge with the freeway at the north end of the bypass. Similarly, southbound freeway traffic would be allowed to exit onto the 'old' Parks Highway.

CONGESTION MANAGEMENT

Future capacity issues north of Big Lake Road are documented in both the Borough's 2007 LRTP (Figure 4-3 & 4-4) and the draft CIA (Appendix C, Section 4). These future traffic projections are in part influenced by projects such as the Knik Arm Bridge and Wasilla Bypass Road. Should the anticipated increases in traffic prove to be correct (more than double by 2035), the Parks Highway will need to be upgraded to a 4-lane divided highway between Big Lake Road and the northern boundary of Houston (and beyond).

This recommended project will benefit the project as follows:

- Efficient and Safe Freight Movement

Reducing congestion by adding lanes can reduce conflicts between slower moving trucks and faster moving cars. It also eliminates the need for passing vehicles to move into the opposing lane, increasing safety for all motorists. Finally, a divided highway, similar to what is currently being designed/constructed between Miles 44 and 52, has the potential to greatly reduce severe crashes, such as head-on collisions.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Access management will likely become a growing concern as traffic volumes on the Parks Highway continue to increase. The Travel Demand Model (TDM) indicates that the majority of growth on the Parks Highway would be local to Houston, rather than being related to pass-through traffic continuing north toward Fairbanks. This likely development suggests that there will be a higher percentage of turning traffic on and off the highway.

One method of accommodating this increase in turning traffic is to encourage turns at safe, logical locations throughout the corridor. This means limiting the number of intersections with the Parks Highway and relocating trips to consolidated intersections through the use of parallel connections and frontage roads. Specifically, frontage roads are recommended in the existing commercial zone near Armstrong Road where linked parking lots currently operate as a de facto frontage road. A bypass, as discussed earlier, would also eliminate conflicts along this section of the Parks Highway.

If the traffic volumes do increase to the level indicated in the 2035 TDM, a 4-lane divided highway would likely be necessary with access points at

a minimum of half mile increments. It is recommended that the City of Houston plan for these access points and encourage development patterns that would reduce the impact and cost of construction for a 4-lane divided highway.

The following access points to the Parks Highway have been identified for consolidation/rerouting or realignment:

1. W Larae Rd/Airolo Dr: Align intersections
2. Corn St: Close Highway access and route to Hawk Ln or Delroy Rd
3. Debra Jean Ln: Close Highway access and route to Hawk Ln or Delroy Rd
4. N Dana Ct to Railroad undercrossing: Close Highway access and provide frontage roads connecting to the repurposed Parks Highway (after the construction of the bypass). Highway access would be via the interchange for northbound traffic and a series of intersections for southbound traffic.

Strategic access control is necessary to preserve efficient movement along the Parks Highway and reduce conflict points.



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PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

In connection with the consolidation of turning traffic, consideration should also be made concerning the desired location for pedestrian crossings of the Parks Highway. As residential development continues to grow north of the Parks Highway, along King Arthur Road and Armstrong Road, commercial development is expected to increase adjacent to the highway. The major commercial developments are currently on the south side of the highway, and new commercial development is likely to expand from this established location. This development creates a conflict as pedestrians make home based commercial trips which require crossing the Parks Highway.

Safer crossings could be encouraged through construction and proper maintenance of surrounding trail networks which would direct the flow of walking, biking, and motorized pedestrians to reduce speed areas of the Parks Highway or to access points that might be signalized in the future.

FREIGHT AND INDUSTRY

It is a goal of the City of Houston to develop economically. Fostering this type of growth, especially industrial development, requires a solid transportation network for moving freight in and out of the industrial zones. The City of Houston has several tracts of Industry zoned land without all-weather roads for freight access. Following are major freight related recommendations.

PORT TO PARKS

Also known as the "Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor", the "Port to Parks" project seeks to construct a more direct highway link between the growing Port MacKenzie and the Parks Highway. Several routes have been studied in the past; including some with impacts to City of Houston lands. It is recommended that an alignment paralleling the north side of the newly constructed railroad link be selected. A "Port to Parks" road through the City of Houston would benefit the community as follows:

- Industrial Development

The recently annexed Knikatnu, Inc. land is zoned heavy industry, but is currently without surface access. A Port to Parks alignment paralleling the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension would provide flexible freight access to a portion of these lands, making it more attractive for businesses to invest. The utility grid will require upgrades to accommodate a growing industry. Providing road access to industrial areas is compatible with the City of Houston's objectives to foster employment opportunities and encourage regional commercial enterprises.

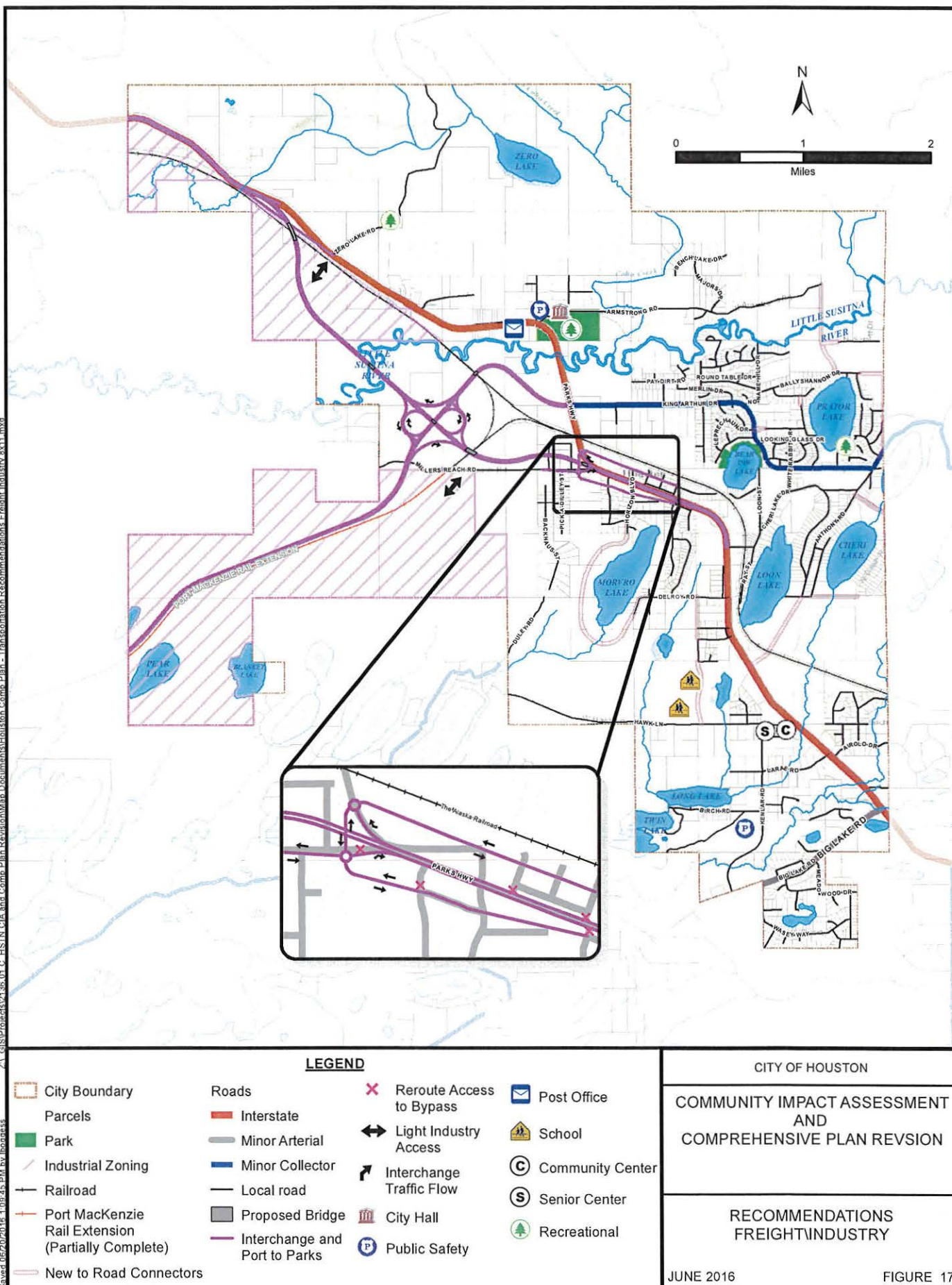
- Freight from Port to Interior Alaska

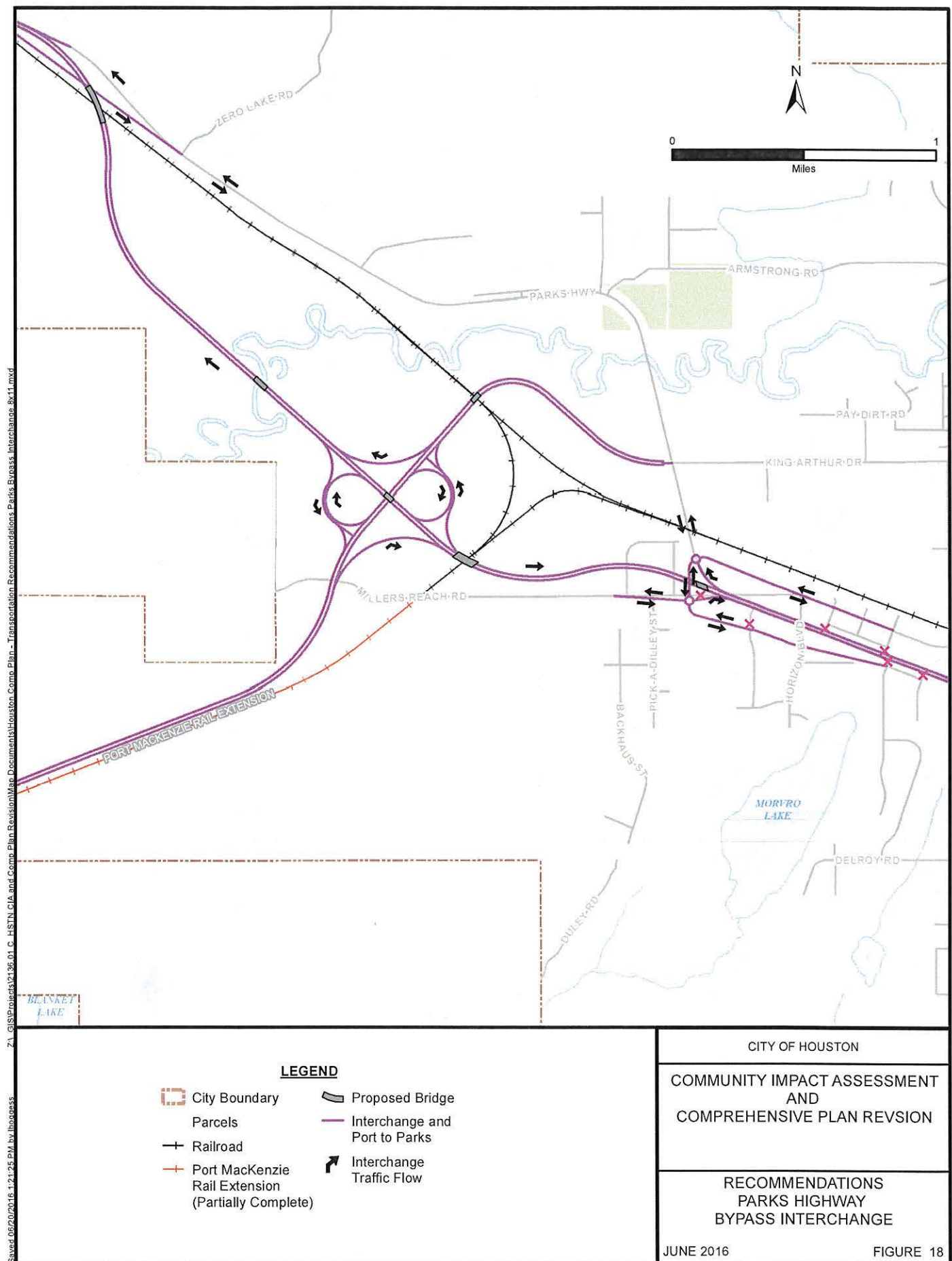
As operations at Port MacKenzie increase, so will the demand for multimodal access. The "Port to Parks" roadway provides an alternative to the railroad, which is preferred for smaller quantities of goods.

- Light Industry Access

Several tracts of land within the City of Houston's boundary are zoned as "LI", Light Industrial. The majority of this zoning district is not currently connected to the road system, particularly in the northwest portion of the city. In order to attract industrial development, roadways into these districts are recommended. This recommendation includes improvements to existing roadways, such as paving Miller's Reach Road.

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LOCAL ROAD NETWORK

If the Parks Highway is considered the backbone of Houston's transportation network, then the local road network makes up the remainder of the skeleton. Residents have identified a need to improve the local road network, from upgrading the surface to providing new connections. Following are recommendations pertaining to the local road network.

- Neighborhood Connectivity

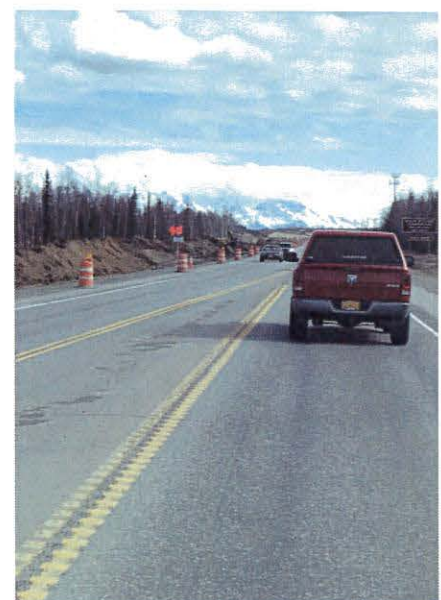
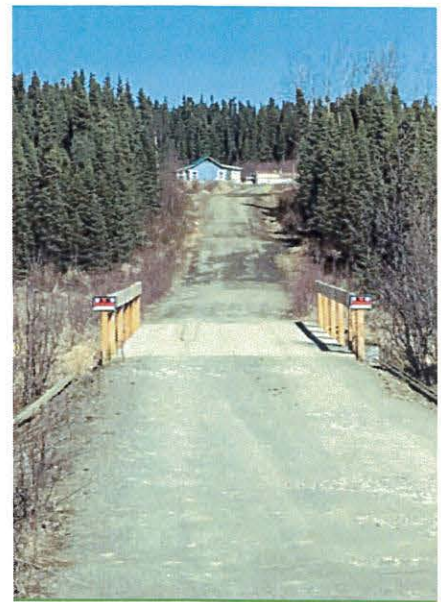
Many of Houston's local roadways lack adequate connectivity, meaning they dead-end or terminate at a lower classification roadway often leaving entire neighborhoods with only one ingress/egress. Not only is this problematic from an emergency response standpoint, but also tends to increase travel time and shifts traffic to lower classification roadways.

Recommended projects include:

1. West of Parks Highway: A secondary road link to the Beaver Lake area; access around the south side of Morvro Lake; and access to the Middle and High Schools from Delroy Road.
2. East of Parks Highway: Alternate Cheri Lake access; access to the east side of Cheri Lake; completion of a loop around Prator Lake; and a new bridge over the Little Susitna River to connect Armstrong Road to the Prator Lake area.

These projects are in alignment with the City's values, goals, and guidelines for growth as follows:

- Connectivity/Emergency Access
The recommended projects provide alternate access for use during emergency situations as well as better circulation amidst the local road network (meaning less backtracking).
- Promote rural residential growth
Providing new road connections opens up buildable lands for development, attracting people looking for the rural lifestyle.



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FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Current traffic volumes on roads outside the Parks Highway corridor are at the level of local roads regardless of their planned functional classification. Although several roads are currently classified as "Minor Collectors" by the Borough, they have not yet matured to the point where this function is critical to maintain. Volume projections indicate that in the future, a properly designed and well maintained collector road network will be essential.

ROAD SURFACE CONDITIONS

Only approximately 10% of Houston's roadways feature a paved surface. Recent projects, such as upgrades to Hawk Lane, represent a move in the right direction to pave all collector roadways. It is recommended that existing collectors, as well as any proposed ones, receive a paved surface. This paving will benefit the community as follows:

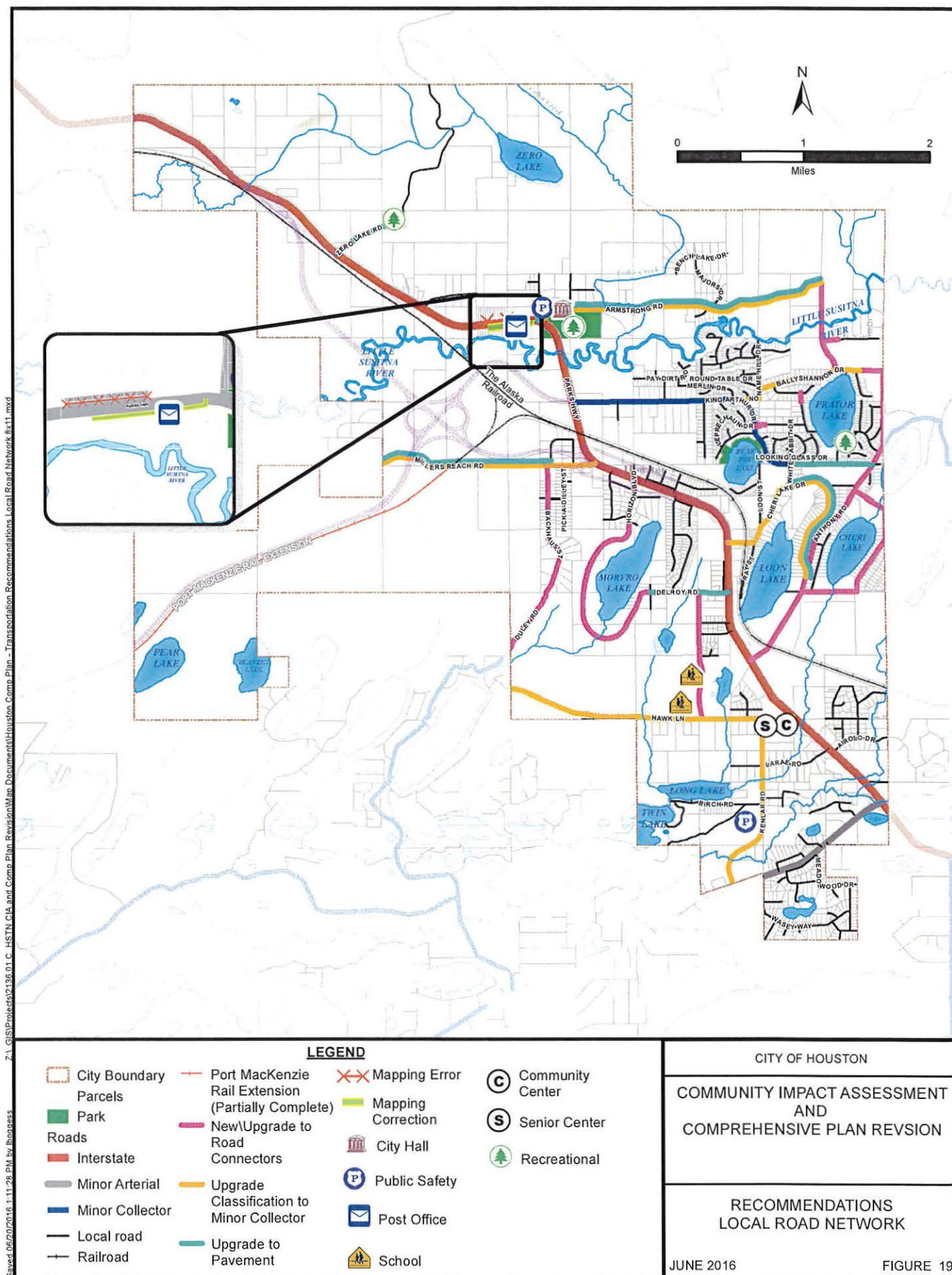
- Quality of Life

Improving roadway conditions will allow for easier commutes, shift maintenance funds to other priorities, and possibly raise home values. Roadside properties will enjoy the dust-free environment, adding to the enjoyment of outdoor activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The "minor collector" road network in the City of Houston should be preserved.
- Property driveways should access local roads when possible instead of collector roads to accommodate possible future turn lanes.
- Local roads accessing on opposite sides of a collector should be aligned directly across from each other to eliminate offset intersections.
- Consideration should be made to possible future right-of-way needs around minor collectors in case these roads ever need to be widened for turn lanes or pathways, particularly in areas around intersections.
- The frontage road paralleling the Parks Highway near the commercial core is located on the south side, not the north side as shown on the Borough's mapping.





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NON-MOTORIZED USERS

Separated paved pathways exist along the Parks Highway and Big Lake Road. In addition, many less formal trails dot the landscape, used for hiking, cross country skiing, dog mushing, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Existing formal pathways should remain and additional pathways be constructed along Hawk Lane (between the Parks Highway and the Middle/High Schools). The Hawk Lane pathway should be extended from the school campus to Big Beaver Lake and connect with the Big Lake community trail system.
- Construct a formal pathway along Kenlar Road connecting the Hawk Lane pathway with the existing pathway adjacent to Big Lake Road.
- Construct a formal pathway along King Arthur Drive with connection to the existing pathway along the Parks Highway.
- Several segments of the Parks Highway feature a single pathway only. The missing links shall be constructed to provide continuous pathways on both sides along the entire Parks Highway, including the proposed bypass and the existing bridge over the Little Susitna River.

- A formal pathway along the Little Susitna River in the vicinity of the proposed Town Center would be a welcome addition for anyone wanting to use the recreation facilities.
- In all new construction and upgrade projects for interstate, arterial and collector roads, provision must be made to include adjacent pathways wherever feasible.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES (ATVS, SNOWMACHINES)

City of Houston Municipal Code allows for the operation of off-road vehicles, including ATVs and snow machines on City streets and rights-of-way. It is evident by the vast number of informal ATV trails that this mode of transportation is widely used.

However, this causes several conflicts. First, informal trails have a tendency to migrate outside the ROW and onto private property. Secondly, repeated use during inclement weather can cause widespread rutting, which leads to unsightly roadside conditions. Lastly, uncontrolled trails can cause safety concerns at roadway intersections and create dust/visibility hazards.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Adopt a policy to incorporate off-road vehicle facilities including stabilized shoulders, flat-bottom gravel surfaced ditches, trail/road intersection considerations in the construction/ reconstruction of roadways within the City boundaries.

- Another alternative would be to provide designated ATV trails between major ATV destinations, such as frequently visited lakes.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

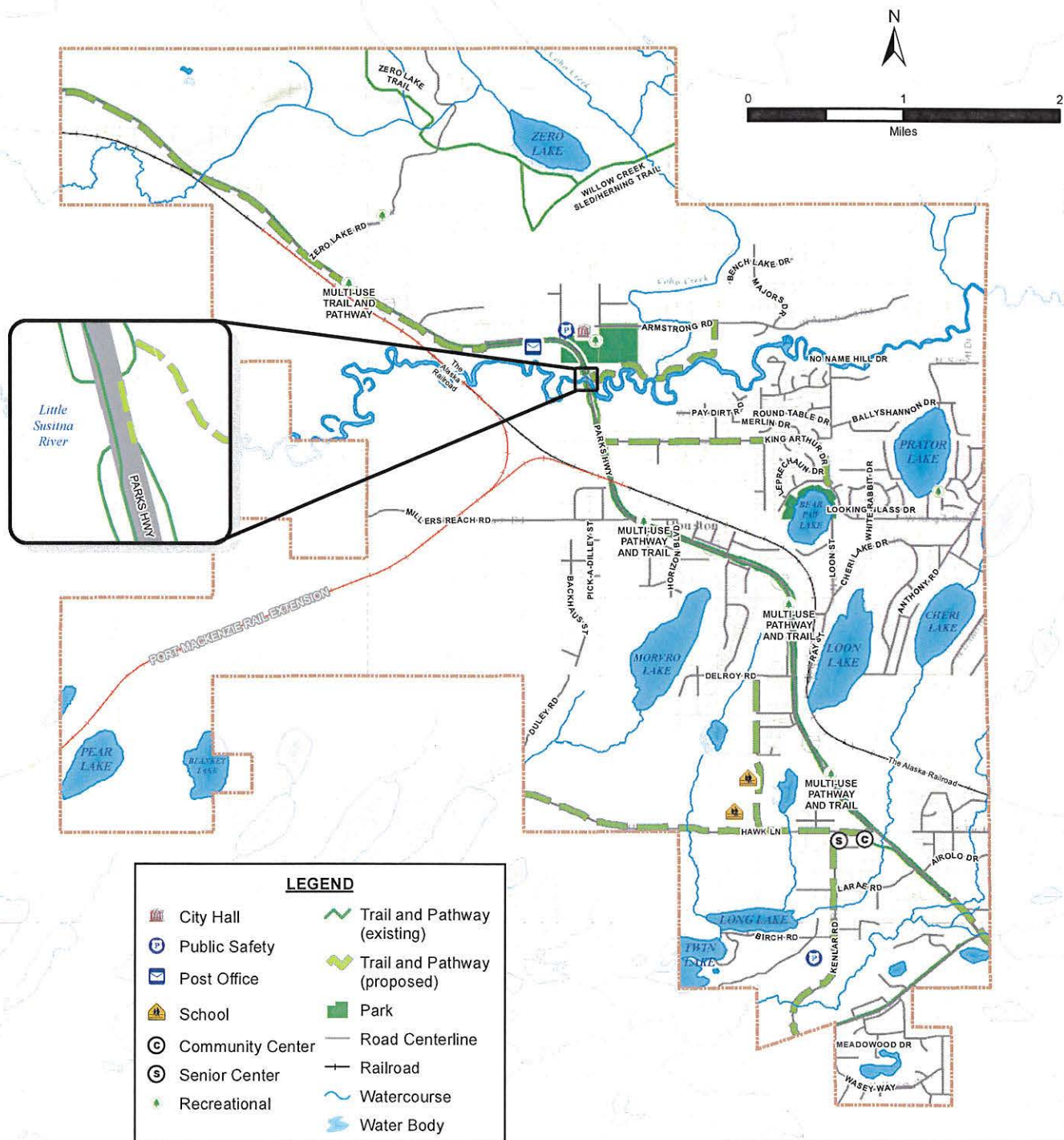
Existing bus service extends into Houston only near the southern boundary. Planning for a potential future commuter rail corridor and possible locations for intermodal stations, including Houston and Willow, is currently in pre-development with the MSB.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Expand the bus service to other parts of Houston could be included in this plan should the community agree to a need.
- Consider the Senior Center on Hawk Lane as a potential candidate for future bus service.
- Site a formal, city owned Park-and-Ride lot for folks wanting to use the bus or carpool to commute to Wasilla or Anchorage.
- Support the development of a multi-agency coordinated plan for an Anchorage to MSB commuter rail corridor that meets Houston's future needs.



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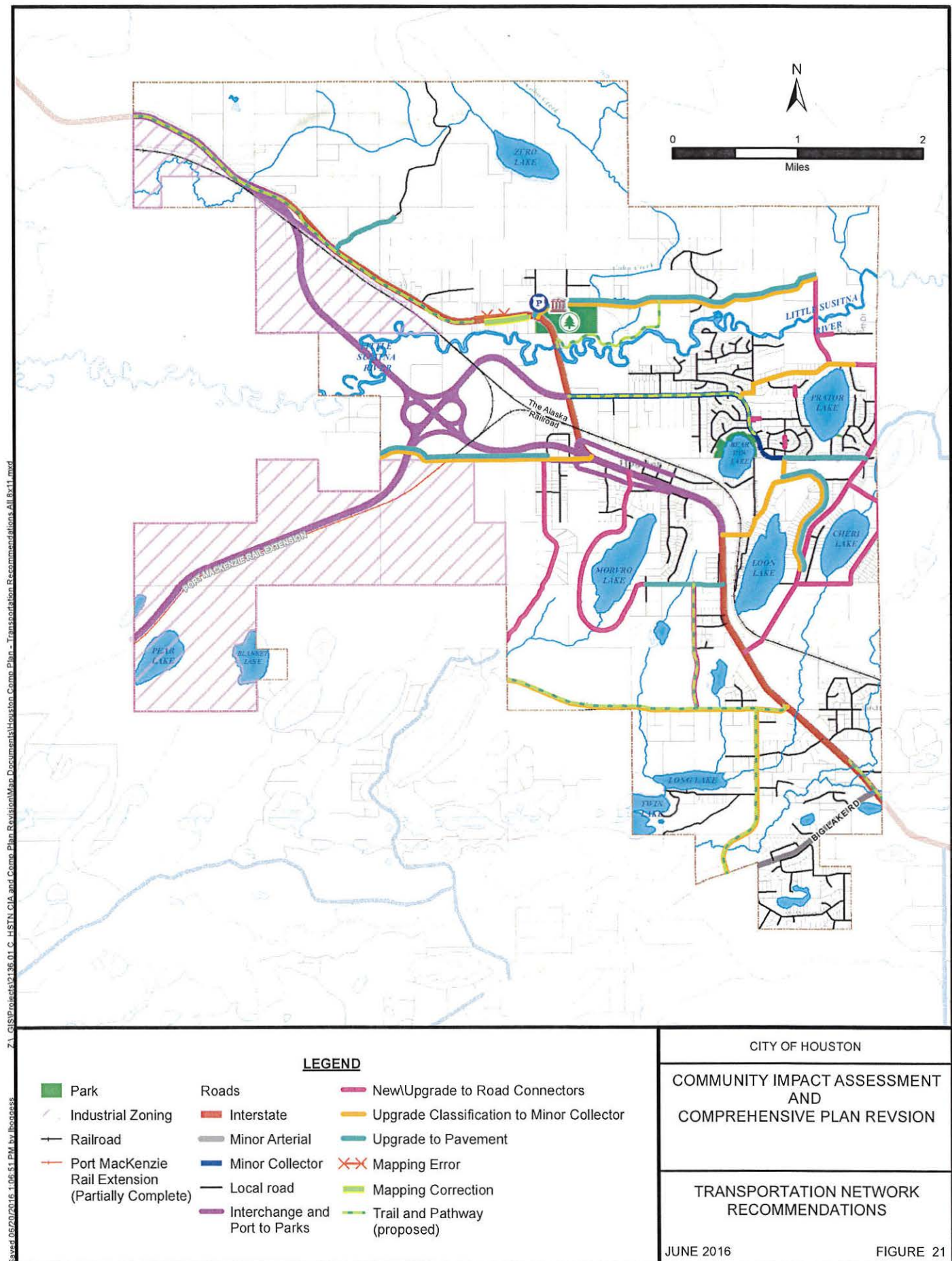
CITY OF HOUSTON

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AND
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

RECOMMENDATIONS
NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

JUNE 2016

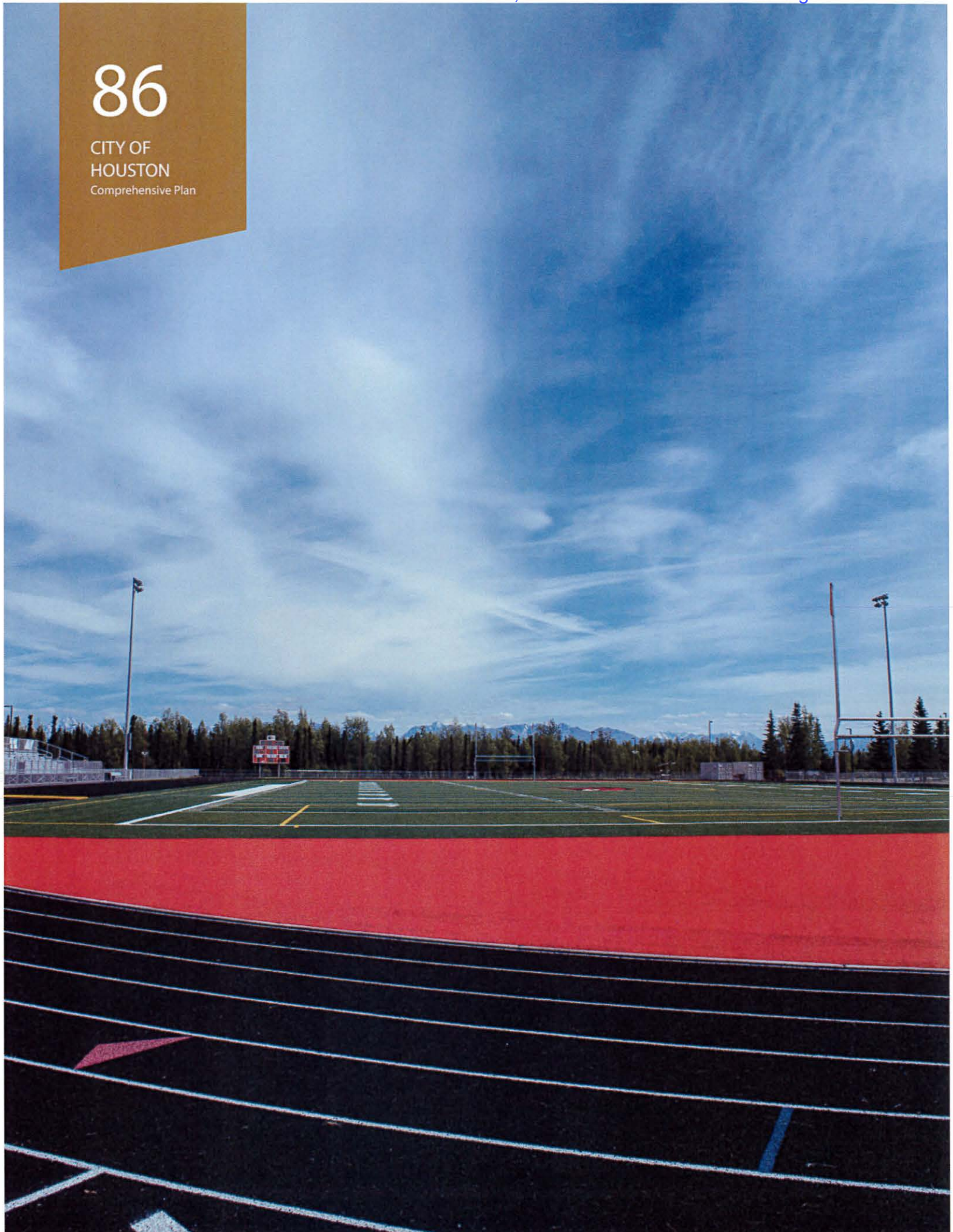
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CHAPTER 8: IMPLEMENTATION



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OVERVIEW

The following implementation section describes the steps necessary to actualize the preferred alternative identified in this Comprehensive Plan. Implementation mechanisms for the Comprehensive Plan include regulatory controls, such as zoning, platting, and development standards from Title 10 Land Use Regulations and functional plans, such as the MSB Long Range Transportation Plan.

Timeframes are approximate and based on the information, knowledge and priorities of the Community and the City's ability to acquire funding over the 20 year horizon. As priorities change or funding becomes available, priorities may shift and change timeframes and should be reevaluated in response to changes in economic conditions, permit and regulatory requirements, and statewide economic climate.





COMMUNITY DESIGN STANDARDS

The community's desire for a more attractive built environment that is also compatible with a semi-rural and rural lifestyle and limited regulations should be balanced with broad design standards in the following areas:

- Streets and roadways;
- Landscaping;
- Public Facilities; and
- Residential development.

REGULATORY CONTROLS - TITLE 10 LAND USE REGULATIONS

The Comprehensive Plan will be implemented through site development standards as set forth in zoning and land use regulations in City of Houston's Municipal Code, Title 10.

FUNDING STRATEGIES

Funding development of park and recreation facilities can be challenging, especially with projected budget shortfalls identified for the State of Alaska and its communities beginning in 2016. National, state, local, public, and private funding sources are likely to be required to advance the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan. Funding sources available to implement these elements of this Comprehensive Plan are anticipated to be: Public-Private Partnerships, state and federal grants for community and transportation projects, city budget, and Capital Improvements Programs.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

The City of Houston and the Mat-Su Borough uses the Capital Improvement Program as an essential planning and budgeting instrument to identify desired public facilities and capital improvements over a six year cycle. Annual Capital Improvement

Program priorities provide funding, cost and time frames for identified projects and are a useful mechanism to ensure long-term investment for a variety of project scales and types that can be funded by State grants.

ALASKA STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (STIP)

The STIP is the state's four-year program for transportation system preservation and development. Interstate, state and some local highways, bridges, and public transportation are eligible to be included in the STIP. It covers all system improvements for which partial or full federal funding is approved. The City of Houston and the Mat-Su Borough use the STIP for planning and coordination with ADOT&PF, especially for changes to the Parks Highway.

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PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (3P)

Implementation of the Houston Comprehensive Plan may require funding from non-governmental funding sources, or with assistance from volunteers, grants, or other programs and partnerships. Significant community development initiatives can be made possible by building local support in collaboration with community partners, such as tribal organizations with access to funding for development of transportation infrastructure and economic development through factories and assembly facilities that can employ local residents.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES:

Funding for parks, trails and recreation tourism can be through the project nomination level with the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation.

FEDERAL FUNDING

National programs for improving communities through non-motorized infrastructure improvements exist and may provide funding opportunities for components of the Comprehensive Plan.

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS (BIA)

Where opportunities arise, federal BIA funding for roadways on tribal lands should be explored to provide improvements that will be mutually beneficial to the City of Houston and to tribal entities as well as provide economic expansion through local employment.

FHWA

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act signed into law in December 2015 includes the consolidation of the Surface Transportation Program and Transportation Alternatives Program into a single, Surface Transportation Program Block Grant, increasing flexibility for state and local governments to administer funds. Details about how the Block Grant Program will be administered in Alaska are not yet available, but funds are likely to be made available for a variety of projects based on previous allocations of federal funds by the State.



IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

IMMEDIATE TIME FRAME (0-6 MONTHS)

Priority	Action Item	Proposed Implementers
1	Plan Adoption	Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC), City Council, COH Staff
2	Initiate Parks Highway Corridor Plan MP 52-62	DOT&PF, City of Houston, City Council
3	Coordinate an updated Zoning Map with MSB.	COH, PZC, MSB.
4	Review and develop Marijuana Business policies for consideration in appropriate zoning districts for economic development and commercial business diversity.	COH, PZC, City Council.

SHORT TERM (1-5 YEARS)

Priority	Action Item	Proposed Implementers
1	Rezone areawide for implementation of Comprehensive Plan policies and to correct inconsistent zoning districts.	COH, PZC, City Council
2	Update Title 10 Land Use Regulations to reflect Adopted Plan.	COH, PZC, City Council
3	Update Title 10 Land Use Regulations to include design standards for landscaping and setbacks.	COH, PZC, City Council
4	Develop an Overlay District for the Town Center/Civic Center to encourage development of small shops, restaurants, art galleries, and a Riverwalk adjacent to the Little Susitna River.	COH, PZC, City Council, Houston Chamber of Commerce.
5	Explore BIA funding for road improvements on tribal lands for pilot projects.	COH, City Council, PZC, Knikatu, Inc.
6	Determine the feasibility of developing a LED Assembly factory in Houston.	COH, City Council, PZC, Knikatu, Inc.
7	Explore the feasibility of a Natural Gas Power Plant in Houston to support railbelt energy distribution.	COH, City Council, Houston Chamber of Commerce, MSB.
8	Market and brand Houston as a summer and winter recreation destination through brochures and trails maps.	COH, Houston Chamber of Commerce, MSB Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation.
9	Explore the feasibility of an Improvement District to fund the expansion of utilities to jumpstart growth.	COH, City Council, MSB.
10	Determine the feasibility of a wastewater treatment facility in Houston.	COH, MSB.
11	Continue fish restoration projects on the Little Susitna River for return of salmon to improve riparian ecology and to provide recreational benefits.	COH, Knik Tribal Council, Community Groups and Volunteers.
12	Explore partnerships to encourage Industrial Greenhouses as a source of local food and economic development.	COH, City Council, Houston Chamber of Commerce, MSB.
13	During development, ensure the trail system is preserved by obtaining trail easements where possible.	COH, MSB.

MID-RANGE (5-10 YEARS)

Priority	Action Item	Proposed Implementers
1	Prepare a small area plan for a Riverwalk in the Town Center at City Hall and Little Susitna Campground.	COH, PZC, City Council
2	Evaluate the feasibility of intermodal transfer facility at new ARRC extension	COH, ARRC, City Council
3	Evaluate the feasibility of a Parks Highway Bypass corridor through a highway engineering design study project to implement the transportation element.	COH, DOT, MSB.
4	Develop a marketing plan to attract a Grocery Store chain to Houston.	COH, City Council, Houston Chamber of Commerce.
5	Prepare a site selection for a new elementary school to ensure that adequate land is set aside in an appropriate location for future anticipated school enrollment projections.	COH, MSB School District, MSB, PZC, City Council.

LONG-RANGE (10-20 YEARS)

Priority	Action	Proposed Implementers
1	Evaluate the feasibility and funding of a Port to Parks roadway corridor parallel to the new ARRC extension.	COH, DOT&PF, MSB
2	Reevaluate the Comprehensive Plan at the 10 year mark or when a new Census is available to ensure Planning Assumptions are still relevant.	COH, PZC, City Council, MSB
3	Determine the feasibility of material sites of gravel or other mining/mineral resources to support the construction industry and boost economic development.	COH, City Council, Houston Chamber of Commerce, MSB.

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Appendix A. Existing Conditions Report

Appendix A - MSB Historic Volume Counts

Appendix B - Houston Road Inventory

Appendix B. Public Involvement Summary

Appendix C. Houston Household Opinion Survey Report

Appendix D. Community Impact Assessment and Appendices

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Appendix B - Economic Development Opportunities: Perspectives of Community Stakeholders

Appendix C - Traffic Impacts of Major Planning Projects

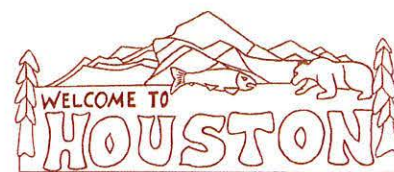
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Appendix F. City of Houston Planning & Zoning Commission Resolution

Appendix G. City of Houston City Council Adoption Ordinance

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- APPENDIX C. Household Opinion Survey Report
- APPENDIX D. Community Impact Assessment and Appendices
- APPENDIX E. Land Use Assessment
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APPENDIX A. EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT



DRAFT Existing Conditions Report & Community Profile

City of Houston Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision

Prepared by R&M Consultants, Inc. for the City of Houston

August 2014

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Appendix B - Houston Road Inventory

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Contracting Agency

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History and Background

According to the State of Alaska's Community and Regional Affairs database, Houston, Alaska's origins began with natural resource development. Houston traces its roots back to the Herning Trail (now Willow Creek Sled Trail) for freighting supplies to the Willow Creek Mining District. "Houston" was named after Tennessee Congressman Houston and the first listing of it on a blueprint map was in 1917 on an Alaska Railroad map as "Houston Siding." Several coal mines were developed in the area during 1917-18 and a railroad spur was constructed to the Janios & Athens coal mine, which supplied coal to Anchorage and the LaTouche Mining Company in Prince William Sound. Houston coal was used extensively by the U.S. Navy up through World War II, when the mines shut down. In the mid-1920s, the Heaven brothers operated a mink farm at mile 59.6. In 1953-54, gravel roads and power lines were extended west of Wasilla, and Houston was quickly settled. In 1966, Houston incorporated as a third-class city; it was reclassified as a second-class city in 1973. In 1998, tests were conducted into the availability, quantity, and quality of natural gas and found huge deposits of coal-bed methane, but the wells were capped due to local restrictions and a lack of marketing.

Location and Geography

Houston is located within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough near the junction of the Little Susitna River and Mile 57.2 of the Parks Highway, 18 miles northwest of Wasilla and 57 road miles north of Anchorage. Houston's city limits encompass 23 square miles, ranging from Mile 61 of the Parks Highway at the northern boundary to Mile 52 at the southern boundary. The commercial and residential development along the first mile of Big Lake Road lies within the Houston city limits. Houston is located near the western edge of the most populous portion of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The Alaska Railroad traverses the Parks Highway within the city limits.

Full air service is available at Anchorage International Airport. Other local air service is available at Mat-Su's small airports. A local seaplane base exists on Morvro Lake.

Climate

January temperatures range from -33 to 33 °F; July temperatures range from 42 to 83 °F. The average annual rainfall is 15 inches, mostly from mid-July to early September, with 45 inches of snow. Winds are frequently lower than the Palmer/Wasilla area, with daily averages ranging from 0 to 6 mph.

Physical Characteristics

Soils

Soils in Houston generally range from well-drained, well-sorted gravel to hydric wetland soils. A number of small lakes dot the central and southern portions of the community limits and are bordered by glacial moraines consisting of non-sorted glacial till. In general, soils located south of the Little Susitna River and east of the Parks Highway are well drained sand and gravels of pitted outwash, and till material. Larger intermittent areas of poorly drained soils and peat bogs occur to the west of the Parks Highway.

The northern topography is characterized by rolling hills and perched silty areas; these soils are fine grained and poorly draining. Development within the area is sparse with only a few gravel pits cut in glacial moraine and esker/kame complexes. Soils in the central portion of Houston are suitable for cultivated crops agricultural development.

Soils in the central portion of Houston are suitable for agriculture. Portions of these areas are presently zoned for low density residential and agricultural use.

Topography

Houston is situated at 244 feet above sea level. The topography of Houston is generally developable; only a small portion of the total land area contains slopes in excess of 25 percent. Topography is variable with the elevation generally rising from south to north within the city limits. The northeastern portion of the City is on an elevated plateau that marks the beginning of the Talkeetna Mountain foothills. The topography south of the Little Susitna River is undulating with numerous lakes and glacial moraines. The western portion of the community is relatively flat and generally developable.

Vegetation

The vegetation within the Houston area is comprised of three broad vegetation categories: bottomland spruce-poplar forest, lowland spruce-hardwood forest, and low brush bog.

Vegetation types within these broad categories also vary. The bottomland spruce-poplar forest includes mixed forest, cottonwood, alder and willow. The lowland spruce-hardwood forest includes the birch forest found in the Houston area.

Vegetation species found in bottomland spruce-poplar forest includes white spruce, balsam poplar, black cottonwood, paper birch, quaking aspen, and black spruce. Typical understory include alder, willow, rose, labrador tea, several berry bushes, grasses, ferns and moss. These vegetation types are found on level to nearly level terrain - the cottonwood, alder and willow invade the flood plains and grow rapidly. These species are replaced by white spruce and aspen on some sites.

The lowland spruce-hardwood forest is dense to open lowland forest which includes pure stands of black spruce. It usually occurs in areas of shallow peat, glacial deposits, outwash plains and on north-facing slopes. The predominant vegetation species include black spruce, white spruce, paper birch, quaking aspen, balsam poplar and black cottonwood, with an understory of willow, dwarf arctic birch, and several berry bushes.

Low brush bog and muskeg areas are dominated by dwarf shrubs over mats of sedges, mosses and lichens. This vegetation type is found in wet, flat basins where conditions are too moist for tree growth. Dominant species include black spruce, Labrador tea, bog cranberry, willow, dwarf arctic birch, crowberry, and bog rosemary. A wide variety of grasses, mosses and lichen are also found in these regions.

Waterbodies

Approximately 1.20 square miles, or 5%, of Houston consists of surface waters. The most notable is the Little Susitna River which crosses the Parks Highway in the middle of the community. This river originates in the Talkeetna Mountains in Hatcher Pass and flows southwest ultimately into Cook Inlet. The Little Susitna River, Coho Creek, and a number of contributing unnamed streams are listed in the Anadromous Waters Catalog.

Several popular lakes exist within the City limits including Zero Lake, Bear Paw Lake, Prator Lake, Frog Lake, Cheri Lake, Loon Lake and Maruro Lake.

According to the Alaska's Final 2010 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring Report (July 15, 2010), there are no designated "Impaired Waterbodies" within the city of Huston.

Wetlands

A number of riverine, lacustrine, and palustrine wetlands are present within Houston. Most wetlands are riparian buffers along the Little Susitna River, Coho Creek and surrounding ponds. Several other wetlands are present in low laying areas between Zero Lake and the Little Susitna River.

Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) completed a Flood Insurance Study and remapped the Special Flood Hazard Areas for the MSB, inclusive of Houston. The MSB adopted the new floodplain mapping in Ordinance 11-018 on February 15, 2011. The flood insurance rate maps (FIRM) are now available in digital format from either the FEMA or MSB borough websites. The map panels that apply to Houston are: 7138E, 7139E, 7143E, 7144E, 7163E, 8001E, 8002E, 8006E, 8007E, and 8010E. The primary floodplain surrounds the Little Susitna River. A floodplain development permit from the MSB is required prior to building or development within a federally designated flood hazard area.

Fish and Wildlife

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Little Susitna River provides habitat for all five species of Pacific salmon: king (Chinook), silver (coho), chum (dog), pink (humpy), and red (sockeye) – as well as rainbow trout, dolly varden, and arctic char. Coho Creek contains rearing juvenile chinook and coho salmon. Prator, Loon and Bear Paw Lakes are stalked with rainbow trout, with several other fish species present.

Many species of birds occur in the Houston area. All birds in the area, with the exception of grouse and ptarmigan, are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Threatened and Endangered Species

As of November 2012, no federally listed or proposed species or designated or proposed critical habit under the jurisdiction of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service occur in the Houston area. No new species have been added to the applicable federal lists.

Hazardous Waste and Contaminated Sites

There are five documented contaminated sites within the city of Houston according to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) – Division of Spill Prevention and Response Contaminated Sites Program Database. Four of the five sites have achieved “Cleanup Complete” status, including sites at the Houston Fire Hall, two Alaska Railroad sites, and the City of Houston Landfill near MP 59 of the Parks Highway. Although the City of Houston’s Landfill is no longer listed as a contaminated site, it is listed in DEC Brownfields Database as of 4/28/2005. One site remains “Open” and is located at a private residence on Meadowood Drive (*a stove was stolen from inside the residence, causing 175 gallons of fuel to spill inside the home and migrate into the soil below the home*). The open site was actively being monitored as of the last entry in the DEC database on 3/16/2011. Additionally, the potential for undocumented contamination always exists.

Historic Properties and Cultural Resources

According to the National Register of Historic Places (NR) maintained by the National Park Service and available to the public, there are no NR listed sites within the City of Houston. While there are no listed sites within city limits, there are likely eligible sites present. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough established a Historic Preservation Commission by Ordinance of the Assembly in April 1982. The Commission is certified to carry out the purposes of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and will aid in identification, evaluation, registration and protection of sites within the Borough.

Agriculture

There are several areas within the City of Houston zoned as Low Density Residential Agricultural District (RA-5) and as Residential/Agricultural District (RA-2.5). Neither of these areas has been taken advantage of by any large-scale farms, but small homestead farms do exist. There is undeveloped potential for agriculture in Houston. Farming in other parts of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough has been very productive, including large farms in Knik and Palmer. Based on known soil data, soils present in parts of Houston are likely similar to those farmed in Knik approximately 15 miles to the southwest. The short growing season and long daylight hours are ideal for producing certain cold weather crops. Potatoes are the most common, but other fruits and vegetables including broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, greens, onions, raspberries, peas and many others are grown. Many World Records for largest vegetable are held by farmers of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough including records for largest beet root, broccoli, cabbage, cantaloupe, carrot, celery, kale, kohlrabi, rutabaga, and turnip.

Popular demand for locally farmed produce has been increasing in recent years. The Houston Farmers Market is held at the Meadowood Mall on Big Lake Road from late-May through September on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. This is one of about 15 different weekly farmers markets held within the Matanuska-Susitna and Anchorage Boroughs.

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Agriculture launched a statewide "Alaska Grown" agricultural products certification program in 1986. The program was designed to highlight and promote farm products in the marketplace and the "Alaska Grown" logo now appears not only on certified products, but also clothing and merchandise. The campaign has been highly successful in encouraging pride in and loyalty to Alaska grown products. The program has been extended to include a Restaurant Rewards Program, any enrolled food service will be reimbursed 20% for buying Alaska Grown Specialty Crops from Alaska Grown members. Funding for the program comes from the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant for the reimbursement of specialty crops. There are currently no certified "Alaska Grown" producers in Houston; there are 87 in the South Central region of Alaska.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Like most of Alaska, parks and outdoor recreational facilities is essential to the quality of community for Houston residents and visitors. The Little Susitna River provides outdoor recreation in the form of camping, boating, and fishing. The Little Susitna Campground is located on the east side of the Parks Highway at Mile 57.3. The campground is open 24 hours a day between Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends; the facility includes a day use area, pavilion, play grounds, camp sites equipped with fire pits and trash cans, rest rooms, two public water wells, and RV facilities. The City of Houston maintains a Public Use Facility opposite this campground and provides additional access to the Little Susitna River.

The Riverside Camper Park is located in the core of Houston adjacent along the Parks Highway and adjacent to the Little Susitna River. This park provides shower and laundry facilities, electricity and a grocery store.

The Houston/Willow Creek Sled Trailhead recreation area is located at mile 59 of the Parks Highway off Zero Lake Road. This recreation area provides parking for approximately 60 vehicles with trailers and provides rest room facilities and trailhead access to the Hatcher Pass recreation area.



The Alaska Department of Fish and Game stocks four local lakes with various fish species for recreational purposes. Bearpaw Lake is stocked with rainbow trout and coho salmon; Loon and Morvro Lakes are stocked with rainbow trout, and Prator Lake is stocked with arctic char.

Most trails within the community are informal and do not have clearly dedicated public access. These trails are utilized as transportation corridors for snow machines, ATVs, dog sleds, bikers, horses, pedestrians, and skiers. The Haessler-Norris Trail System consists of 20 trails of various distances; the published map was created for the Willow Dog Musers Association in April 2011.

The Hatcher Pass/Independence Mine, Big Lake, the Susitna Flats State Game Refuge, the Mat-Su Visitor's Center, and Nancy Lake Recreation Areas are all located near the community of Houston and offer various recreational opportunities to local residents as well as regional, out of state, and international tourists.

Community and Culture

Houston is a rural-residential community that has experienced consistent growth over the past several decades. Houston's proximity to the commercial center of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and its abundance of available land makes it a strategic location for residential, commercial and industrial development. Houston's "Lakes District" includes popular recreation sites such as the Little Su Campground, Long Lake, Cheri Lake, Prator Lake, Loon Lake, Woody Lake, Zero Lake, Bear Paw Lake, and Birch Lake. Community events such as the Pike Derby is held during the winter months, and Founder's Day, a community celebration, boasts live entertainment, vendors, activities for kids, and a fireworks display in mid-August. Trails for hiking and ATVs crisscross most of Houston and are popular in the winter months for dog sledders and snowmachiners. During the summer months, a water trail is popular in the Nancy Lakes region.



Community Centers, Services and Libraries

The Homesteaders Community Center, located just west of Mile 53.5 of the Parks Highway on Community Drive, has been providing a meeting place and fellowship for area residents since its inception in 1957. The nonprofit organization consists of over 50 members and membership is open to any resident for a minimal yearly fee. The group organized social gatherings, holiday parties and bingo (which is the organization's main source of funding). The building is also rented out for functions. Amenities include ball



fields, a 24 by 34 foot main hall, kitchen facilities, restrooms, and a storage area. The building is also made available for Mid-Valley Seniors, Inc. for meal service and for local Boy Scouts of America meetings.

Mid-Valley Seniors, Inc. is a nonprofit organization founded in 1983. The association provides fellowship and a nutritional program to member seniors in Big Lake, Houston, Meadow Lakes, and Willow areas. In 1987, the Mid-Valley Senior Center opened in Houston, which includes a cafeteria, recreation room, and office.

There are no public libraries in Houston, although the Mat-Su Borough does have libraries in neighboring communities. There are libraries available to students at the Houston High School and Middle School. Libraries are located in Big Lake, Sutton, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek and Willow.

The Big Lake Country Club, founded in 2000, is a 24-hour services provider for developmentally delayed and emotionally challenged adults. The main campus is located in Houston and provides daily support, monitoring and supervision for adults in need. Amenities include a fenced and secure facility, group home and cabins, a game room, kitchen and meals, and a horse facility for therapeutic horseback riding.

Public Safety Facilities and Services

The City of Houston Emergency Services building is located at MP 57.3 of the Parks Highway. The building houses the Houston Fire Department and Police Department. The police facilities are presently unstaffed due to budget cuts. Local law enforcement is being handled by the Alaska State Troopers. In case of emergencies, the community is serviced by 911 and residents can call troopers in non-emergencies. According to the Mat-Su Borough Emergency Operations Plan (May 2010), the community has an active volunteer fire department with approximately 18 staff which also provide emergency medical services. The City has one fire engine, two tankers and one rescue truck.

Land Use

Currently there are 3,275 acres of developed land, making up 23% of the total 14, 175 acres of land area of Houston. Approximately 10, 900 acres or 77% of total land is undeveloped. Figure 1 graphically depicts existing land use including vacant land. Table 2 summarizes the vacant land suitability by type of land use.

Table 1. Vacant Land Suitability by Subarea

Land Use	Area (acres)	% Of Total
Churches	2	0.01%
Commercial – Heavy	12	0.08%
Commercial – Light	32	0.23%
Communications	10	0.07%
Duplex - 2Family	11	0.08%
Education – Public	241	1.70%
Mobile Home	97	0.68%
Mobile Home Parks	1	0.01%
Multi Family	12	0.08%
Public	18	0.13%
Public Safety	93	0.66%
Recreation	3	0.02%
Residential	2435	17.18%
Residential Garage	261	1.84%
Residential W/ Commercial Use	10	0.07%
Transient Lodging	11	0.08%
Vacant	10926	77.08%
Total	14,175	100%

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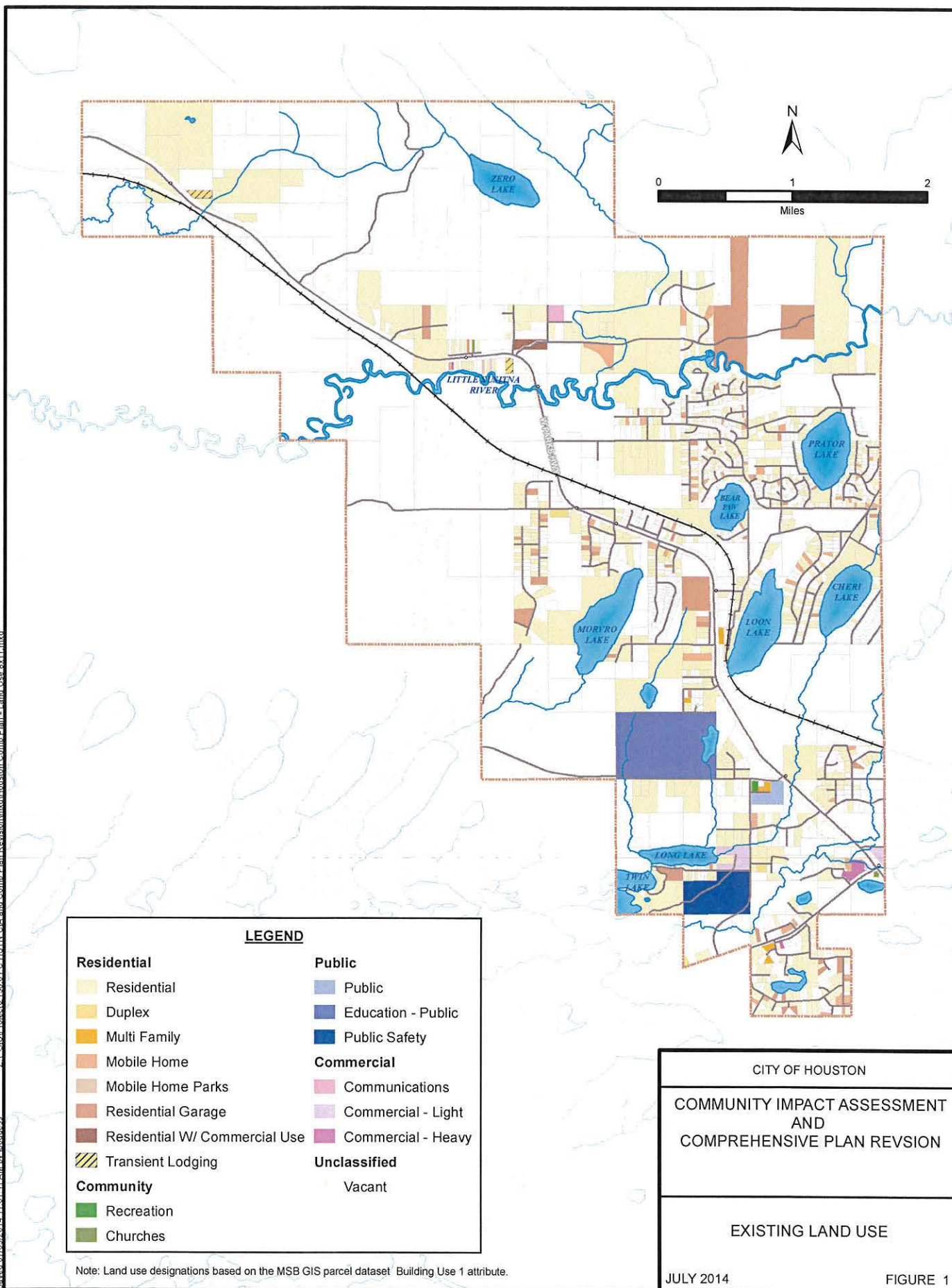


Table 2 below summarizes the type of land use by housing type as a percentage of total land area.

Table 2. Land Use by Housing Type

Land Use	Area (acres)	% Of Total
Residential - 2F Duplex	11	0.39%
Mobile Home	97	3.43%
Mobile Home Parks	1	0.04%
Residential (MF) Multi Family	12	0.42%
Residential (SF)	2435	86.13%
Residential Garage	261	9.23%
Residential W/ Commercial Use	10	0.35%
Total	2827	100%

Zoning Districts

The City of Houston has 11 distinct Zoning Districts that implement the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Districts are a part of the City of Houston's Chapter 10 Municipal Land Use Regulations. Table 3 Existing Zoning Districts summarizes the City of Houston's zoning districts and their intent as a baseline for the Comprehensive Plan revision.

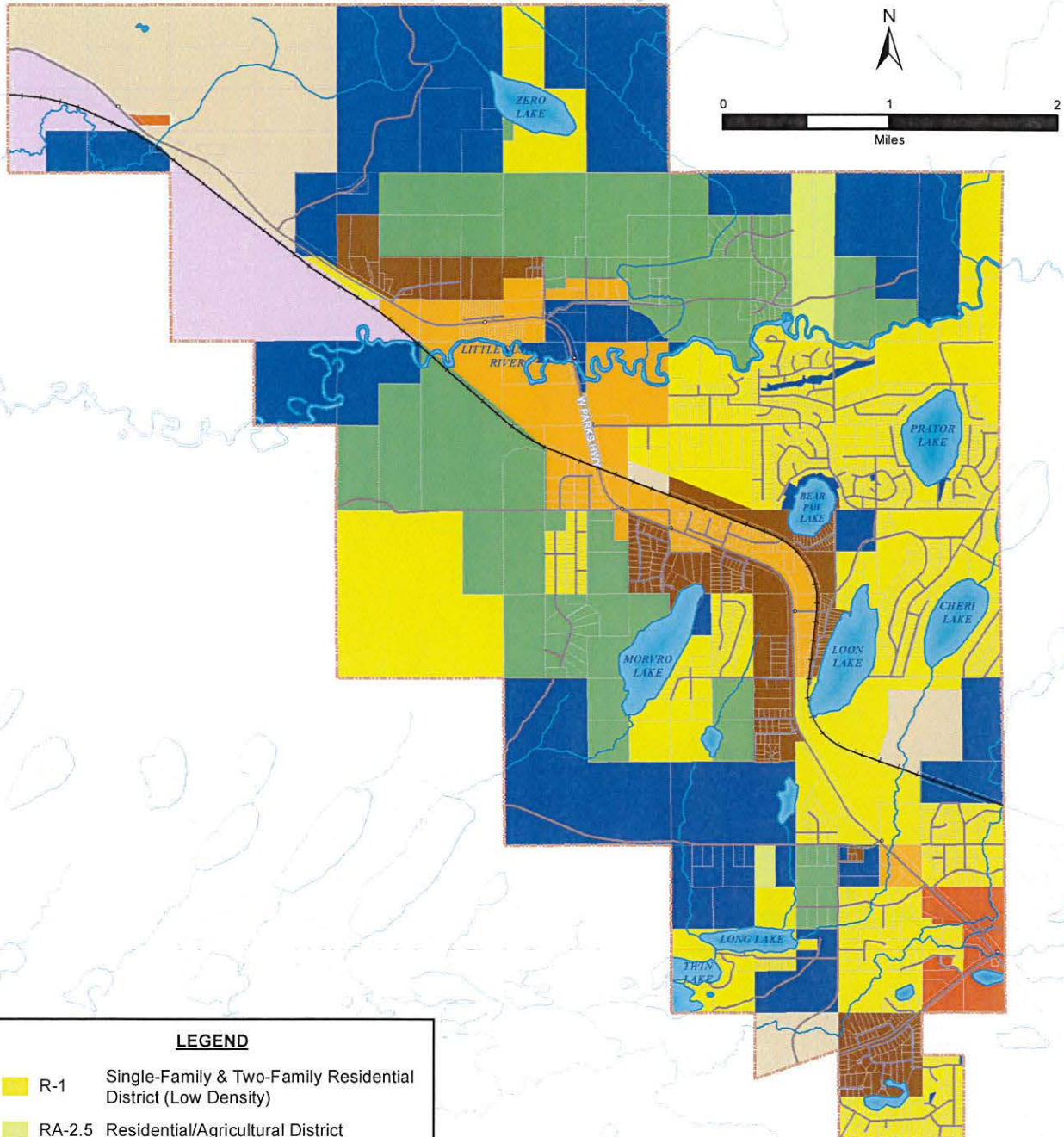
Table 3. Existing Zoning Districts

Zoning District	Zoning Designations	Intent
PLI	Public Lands and Institutions	Significant open lands and public park and recreation facilities and major public and institutional uses, including governmental office and public facilities.
R-1	Single-Family and Two-Family Residential District (low density)	Provide for low density, rural residential development with single-family and two-family dwellings and to provide for such community services and facilities that would serve the area populations while preserving the character of existing residential areas within the City of Houston.
MFR	Multifamily Residential District (medium density)	Allow these increased densities only where it is feasible to provide an increased level of community services, such as a community sewage disposal system or a community water system. This district is intended to act as a buffer area between the existing low density, rural residential areas of the community and the proposed higher intensity uses along the highways and near major intersections.
RA-2.5	Residential/Agriculture District	Provide for a low-density rural/agriculture single-family district identical to RA-5 in terms of permitted uses and structures, the only change being that lot sizes as small as two and one-half acres are allowed herein. The RA-2.5 district is intended to be located in areas either suited to agricultural uses and intended to be set aside for such uses on a long-term basis, or in areas where development trends and physical features indicate the appropriateness of a very low intensity of residential development. This small lot size may be justified when consistent with existing development and residential densities in the vicinity.
RA-5	Low-Density Residential Agricultural District	Provide for a very low-density rural/agriculture single-family district. The RA-5 district is intended to be located in areas either suited for agricultural uses and intended to be set aside for such uses on a long-term basis, or in areas where development trends and physical features indicate the appropriateness of a very

		low intensity of residential development. This larger lot size should be applied in such areas unless existing development and residential densities justify the two-and-one-half-acre minimum lot size allowed in the RA-2.5 district.
NC	Neighborhood Commercial District	Allow for the provision of goods and services on a retail basis within R-1, MFR, RA-2.5 and RA-5 districts in order to provide occupants of these residential districts with the convenience of neighborhood shopping. The NC neighborhood commercial district is intended to apply only to areas which are isolated from other commercial zones, are located on collector streets rather than local roads, but to which there is easy access for the surrounding residential district. This district is intended to be small and compact in design.
C	Commercial District	Provide a broad range of goods and services to meet the needs of the population of the City as well as the traveling public utilizing the Parks Highway.
LI	Light Industrial District	Provide area for light industrial uses, especially transportation related uses associated with the Parks Highway and the railroad corridor. Uses are intended to be low intensity industrial uses, and are not intended to have manufacturing or other uses which produce noise, smoke, glare, or other characteristics that could be detected from off site.
HI	Heavy Industrial District	Intended for industrial development, including heavy manufacturing, shipping terminals, natural resource extraction and other processes or operations which involve one or more of the following: employs large numbers of workers, heavy truck traffic, significant environmental effects or large-volume public water or sewer service or storage of hazardous materials under a conditional use permit. Commercial and retail uses are generally not allowed in the HI district.
H	Holding District	Certain undeveloped areas have yet to establish a clear land use trend. Because of a number of potential conflicting characteristics that may affect land use, the development plans for these areas deserve special attention. It is the intent of this district to designate those areas where future land use and development may be determined by a number of external factors which cannot be predicted at this time. provides for flexibility in land use regulations in areas where planning has been done, but where development trends will be established in the future. Development of these areas will be sensitive; it will affect immediate surrounding areas and the community as a whole by establishing

		<p>long-term development trends. The areas designated "holding district" are areas in transition that will respond to changing community characteristics. As definite development trends are established through the procedures set forth in this district, the community should consider amending the designation of the holding district areas to more definitive land use districts.</p>
PH	Parks Highway District	<p>Encourage a moderate level of growth which will provide an economic base in Houston adequate to allow provisions of employment opportunities in the area and to avoid becoming dependent upon external governmental or economic factors and activities. It is also intended to maintain the qualities that make the George Parks Highway corridor an attractive community entry and community center. These qualities include buildings set back from the street, predominance of trees and other vegetation and building sizes and styles that reflect Houston's history and natural setting. It is intended to encourage this area to support a mixture of residential and commercial activities.</p>

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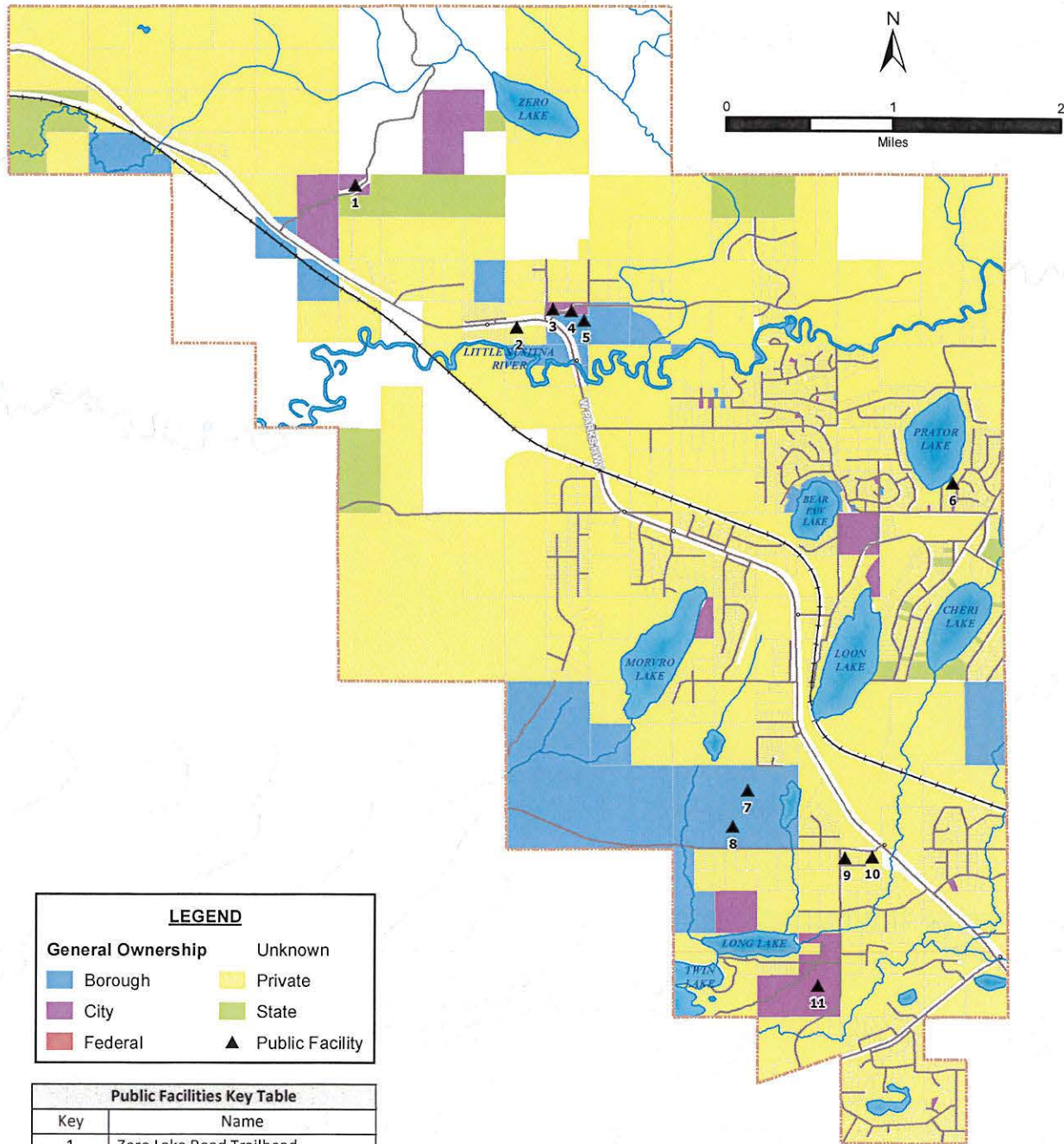
LEGEND	
 R-1	Single-Family & Two-Family Residential District (Low Density)
 RA-2.5	Residential/Agricultural District
 RA-5	Low Density Residential Agricultural District
 MFR	Multi-Family Residential District (Medium Density)
 C	Commercial
 LI	Light Industrial District
 PLI	Public Lands and Institutions
 H	Holding District
 PH	Parks Highway District

CITY OF HOUSTON
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION
EXISTING ZONING
JULY 2014 FIGURE 2

Land Ownership

Existing land ownership is depicted in Figure 3 and includes the landownership status for all parcels within the City of Houston's limits. The City of Houston owns approximately 422 acres. The majority of parcels is privately owned at 9068 acres and includes holdings from private residents, commercial and industrial businesses, and Native Corporations. Other large tract land owners include the Mat-Su Borough at 1206 acres. The State of Alaska owns 479 acres of land. Several large tracts of land have missing or inconclusive data that will need additional research.

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CITY OF HOUSTON

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AND
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

EXISTING
LAND OWNERSHIP

JULY 2014

FIGURE 3

Community Demographic Profile

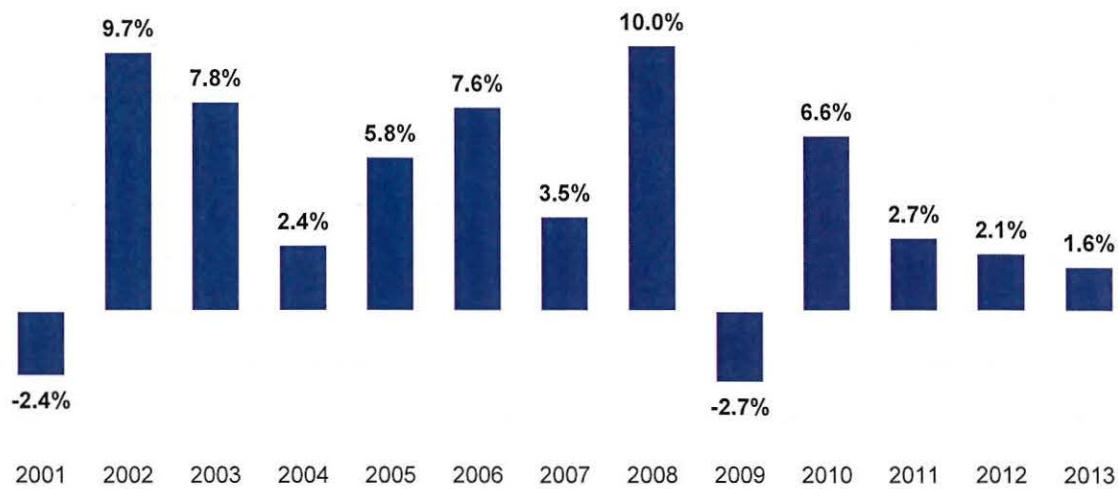
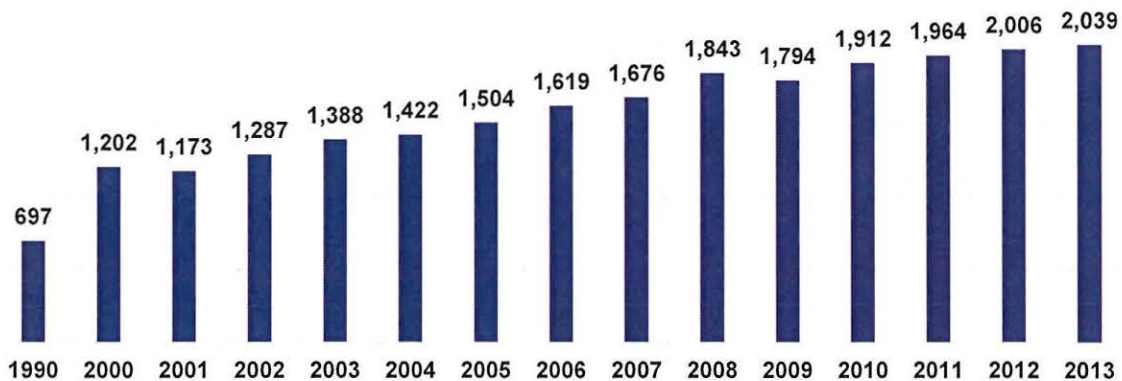
The following socioeconomic profile of Houston depicts population demographics, household characteristics, and labor force data to give a current overview of the town. Data was collected from several sources. Statewide, borough, and community population estimates, median age, age categories, and worker characteristics are from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD). School enrollment data are from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (ADEED). All other data are from a combination of the U.S. Census Bureau and the American Community Survey (ACS). Data from the U.S. Census Bureau includes data from the 2000 and 2010 decennial censuses. Household characteristics include median household income, household and family size, poverty level, and housing units; and labor force data include number of workers, worker class, industry employment, and educational attainment. Alaska Business Licenses from the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economics Development (DCCED) was examined understand the types of businesses active in Houston.

The quality of data falls drastically for a community the size of Houston. With a population slightly over 2,000, socioeconomic data from the sample-based ACS for Houston is accompanied with an elevated margin of error. These margins are reported when available to assist in understanding the uncertainty inherent in these data.

Population Trends and Projections

Houston has experienced steady population increase over the past two decades. In 2013, Houston's estimated population was 2,039 residents; nearly triple its 697 residents in 1990. In comparison, the entire Mat-Su grew from 39,600 to more than 96,000 over the same period.

Houston is expected to match the broader Mat-Su in terms of population growth. ADOLWD projects population growth in the Mt-Su to slow from the current annual growth rate of slightly more than 3.6 percent over to less than 2 percent by 2035. Because of Houston's strong ties to the Mat-Su economy and similar demographics McDowell Group projects Houston's population growing at a similar rate—approximately 2 percent over the current period to 2035. This would result in Houston growing to slightly more than 3,100 residents in 2035, an increase of around 50 percent from current population levels.

Figure 4. Annual Population Growth Rate, Houston, 2001-2013**Figure 5. Houston Population, 1990 and 200-2013**

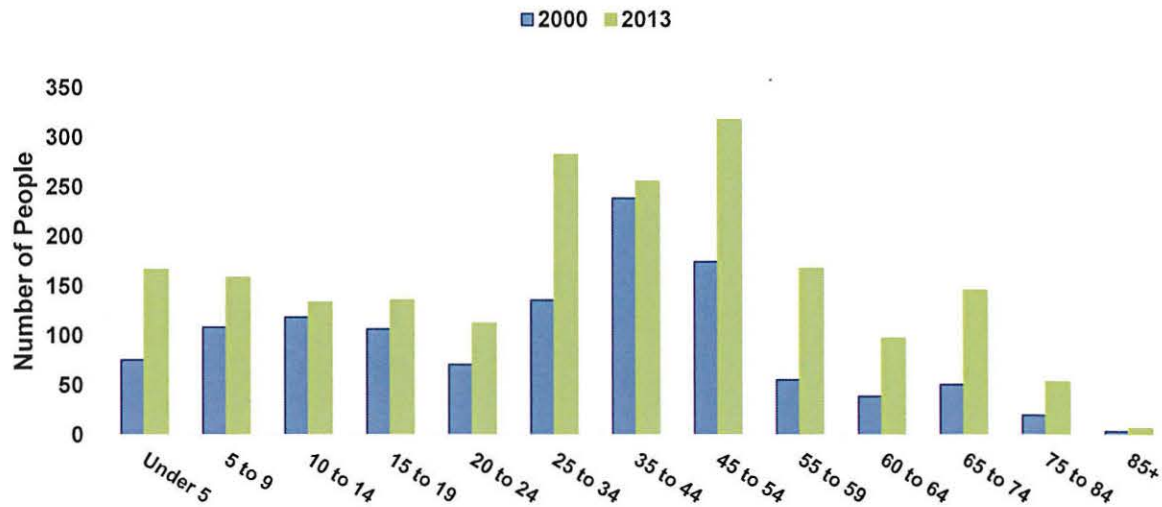
AGE GROUPS AND MEDIAN AGE

The median age of Houston residents in 2013 was just over 36 years, slightly higher than both the Alaska and Mat-Su Borough median age of 34 years and 35 years, respectively. The following table indicates that the fastest population growth rates over the past 13 years have been in the older age cohorts.

Table 4. Houston Population by Age Category and Median Age, 2000, 2010, and 2013

Age Category	2000	2010	2013
Under 5 years	76	157	167
5 to 9 years	109	125	159
10 to 14 years	119	144	134
15 to 19 years	107	154	136
20 to 24 years	71	125	113
25 to 34 years	136	241	283
35 to 44 years	239	252	256
45 to 54 years	175	343	318
55 to 59 years	56	120	168
60 to 64 years	39	87	98
65 to 74 years	51	122	146
75 to 84 years	20	36	54
85+ years	4	6	7
Median Age	34.1 years	35.4 years	36.1 years

Figure 6. Houston Population by Age Category and Median Age, 2000 and 2013



Race

Approximately 87 percent of Houston's population self-identifies as White. This compares to Alaska overall at 67 percent and Mat-Su Borough's 85 percent. More than 9 percent of Houston residents identify themselves as being multi-racial. American Indian and Alaska Native is the third largest group at 4 percent.

Table 5. Houston Race Categories, 2000, 2010, and 2008-2012 Five-Year Average

Race	2000	2010	2008-2012	2008-2012 Margin of Error
White	84%	82%	87%	+/-4%
Two or more races	6	8	9	+/-3
American Indian and Alaska Native	8	7	4	+/-2
Black or African American	<1	<1	<1	+/-<1
Asian	<1	<1	0	+/-1
Pacific Islander	<1	<1	0	+/-1
Other	<1	<1	<1	+/-1

Note: Due to rounding, some columns may not add to 100 percent.

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey.

School Enrollment

According to the ACS, from 2008-2012 an average of 465 students at all levels (preschool, Kindergarten, elementary, high school, and college) were enrolled in school. Comparing this with the 351 students identified in 2000, all levels of school enrollment has risen 32 percent over this period.

**Table 6. Houston School Enrollment (Preschool through College),
Population Age 3 Years and Over, 2000 and 2008-2012 Five-Year Average**

	2000	2008-2012	2008-2012 Margin of Error
Preschool	9	21	+/-18
Kindergarten	21	7	+/-8
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	198	219	+/-84
High school (grades 9-12)	94	141	+/-49
College or graduate school	29	77	+/-36
Population 3+ years enrolled in school	351	465	+/-102

Two schools are located in separate buildings in Houston's city limits—Houston Middle School and Houston High School.

The current practice for elementary school age students is to bus them to nearby elementary schools, namely Big Lake Elementary and Willow Elementary School. In 1992, it was determined to be financially advantageous for the City of Houston if the Mat-Su Borough School District built an elementary school serving the larger regional student population. The City has retained the land and its designation as a future site for an elementary school.

The table below outlines enrollment for Big Lake Elementary, Willow Elementary School, Houston Middle School, and Houston High School. It should be noted that similar to how elementary-aged students attend schools outside of Houston, middle and high school-aged students from outside of Houston attend Houston Middle School and Houston High School. Therefore, the totals below do not reflect the number of school age children that only live in Houston.

Table 7. Big Lake Elementary, Willow Elementary School, Houston Middle School, and Houston High School Enrollment and Schools Personnel Count, 2013-2014 School Year

	Students	School Personnel
Big Lake Elementary	439	52
Willow Elementary School	130	24
Houston Middle School	388	32
Houston High School	381	34

Source: ADEED, Matsu Borough.

Household Income

The median household income in Houston is almost \$60,000, less than the roughly \$70,000 median in the Mat-Su Borough and Alaska. Per capita income averaged slightly more than \$25,000, less than the \$30,000 found in the Mat-Su Borough and \$32,000 for Alaska.

Approximately 12 percent of families and 16 percent of individuals in Houston live below the federal poverty line. According to 2014 Federal guidelines for Alaska, a household of four making less than \$29,440 or an individual with an income of less than \$14,350 are considered living in poverty. There are approximately 101 households that receive public assistance and 118 households utilize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Table 8. Houston Household and Family Income Indicators, 2000 and 2008-2012 Five-Year Average

	2000	2008-2012	2008-2012 Margin of Error
Median household income	\$39,615	\$59,583	+/- \$11,475
Households with public assistance	58	101	+/- 39
Households in SNAP	-	118	+/- 38
Per capita income	\$17,213	\$25,876	+/- \$3,318
Families below poverty line (%)	13.1	11.6	+/- 5.9
Individuals below poverty line (%)	17.1	15.8	+/- 5.4

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey.

Employment Trends and Educational Attainment

In 2012, ADOLWD estimated there were 768 employed residents (over age 16) in Houston, with total annual wages of \$26.5 million. Most workers were employed in the private sector (85 percent), followed by local government (11 percent), and state government (4 percent).

The top three industries in terms of employment included Trade (retail and wholesale), Transportation, and Utilities (22 percent), Education and Health Services (16 percent), and Construction (13 percent).

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Table 9. Houston Worker Characteristics, 2012

	2012
Residents 16 years and over	1,435
Residents employed	768
Total wages	\$26,502,620
Sectors employed in...	
Private	655
Local government	82
State government	31
Industries employed in...	
Trades, transportation, and utilities	167
Education and health services	125
Construction	96
Local government	82
Leisure and hospitality	70
Natural resources and mining	67
Professional and business services	63
State government	31
Manufacturing	23
Financial activities	15
Information	7
Other	22

Source: ADOLWD.

In addition to data compiled by the State of Alaska, the ACS offers insight into employment in Houston. According to these data, there were 782 residents over age 16 employed, and 166 unemployed. The unemployment rate is estimated to be 18 percent. Private wage and salary workers made up 80 percent of employed, followed by government workers (19 percent) and self-employed workers (7 percent). The industries with the highest level of employment were Retail Trade (17 percent), Educational, Health and Social Services (13 percent), Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services (11 percent); and Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing, and Mining (11 percent).

Table 10. Houston Employment Indicators, 2000 and 2008-2012 Five-Year Average

	2000 (Number)	2008-2012 (Number)	2008-2012 Margin of Error (Number)
Population 16 years and older	881	1,487	+/-145
In labor force	549	948	+/-129
Employed	452	782	+/-114
Unemployed	97	166	+/-62
Unemployment - civilian labor force (%)	17.7	17.5	+/-5.8%
Not in labor force	332	539	+/-91
Class of worker			
Private wage and salary	325	579	+/-103
Government	70	152	+/-54
Self-employed	57	51	+/-23
Unpaid family worker	-	0	+/-10
Industry			
Retail trade	78	92	+/-32
Educational, health and social services	60	169	+/-51
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	52	96	+/-44
Construction	50	87	+/-34
Agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing, mining	49	70	+/-40
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	34	87	+/-44
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	25	57	+/-32
Public administration	22	66	+/-38

	2000 (Number)	2008-2012 (Number)	2008-2012 Margin of Error (Number)
Wholesale trade	19	10	+/-11
Manufacturing	15	21	+/-22
Information	13	7	+/-9
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	8	0	+/-10
Other services	27	20	+/-16

Approximately 90 percent of the Houston population had a high school degree or higher, while 17 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. Overall, educational attainment has increased since 2000.

Table 11. Houston Educational Attainment, Population 25 Years and Over, 2000 and 2008-2012 Five-Year Average

	2000	2008-2012	2008-2012 Margin of Error
High school, no diploma	16%	11%	+/-5%
High school diploma or GED	43	36	+/-6
Some college	26	31	+/-5
Associate's degree	6	5	+/-2
Bachelor's degree	8	9	+/-4
Graduate or professional degree	2	8	+/-4

Note: Columns may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey.

Houston Businesses

There are 82 business licenses that list their physical address in Houston and are considered active. When filing for a business license, a company determines the NAICS code that best fits with the service they plan to offer.¹ While not completely accurate, this classification system offers some insight into the structure of a local private sector economy. A more detailed account of these businesses can be found in the Appendix.

¹ The North America Industrial Classification System (NAICS) is a taxonomy that categorizes businesses by sector of activity.

Table 12. Composition of Houston Businesses, 2014

2 Digit NAICS Code	Description	Number of Houston Businesses
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1
23	Construction	11
31	Manufacturing	4
42	Trade	15
48	Transportation and Warehousing	5
53	Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	5
54	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	5
56	Administrative, Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	6
61	Educational Services	1
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	3
71	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	5
72	Accommodation and Food Services	4
81	Services	17
TOTAL		82

¹ The North America Industrial Classification System (NAICS) is a taxonomy that categorizes businesses by sector of activity.

An estimated 19,000 vehicles per day travel through the city of Houston on the Parks Highway. This number tends to be higher in the summer and on the weekends. A number of businesses are sustained by this traffic as a percentage of these travelers stop for a meal, to rent a room, or purchase fireworks. The largest concentration of businesses selling fireworks in Alaska is located in Houston.

At this time, no large grocery store is located in Houston. Residents typically will go to Wasilla or Big Lake for their shopping needs. Medical services are limited in Houston with a few small clinics offering primary care services. The closest hospital is Mat-Su Regional Medical Center located in Wasilla, where there are also a full suite of dental, chiropractic, and other health services.

The summer brings an influx of anglers fishing the nearby Little Susitna River. Alaska Fish and Game estimated 4,538 anglers fished a total of 10,115 days in 2012 in the Little Susitna River. At least one guiding service is located in Houston and a range of other local businesses rely on these anglers who purchase ice, meals, and refreshments. Float trips on the Little Susitna River frequently start at the Parks Highway Bridge.

During the winter, proximity to Hatcher Pass and Nancy Lake Recreation Area attracts enthusiasts wanting to snowmachine, ski, ice fish, dog-mush, or conduct other winter activities. Compared to the summer, traffic through the community is much less in the winter but local businesses are able to attract some customers.

City Services

The City of Houston offers fire and limited police services. The Houston Emergency Services building houses both the Houston Fire Department and Houston Police Department. At this time, no local police are active and law enforcement is handled by the Alaska State Troopers.

Table 13. Houston Fire Department Response Information, 2007-2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Call Volume	77	111	235	261	329
Average Response Time in Minutes	8:56	6:57	4:49	2:52	2:57
Percent of Response Under 2 Minutes	22	32	32	56	58
Percent of Response Under 8 Minutes	53	69	85	93	93

Source: Houston Fire Department

The closest public libraries are located in Willow and Big Lake.

Housing Trends, Characteristics and Future Housing Needs

As population has increased in Houston, the number of housing units (single-housing units, apartments, duplexes, etc.) has risen. In 2012, an estimated 732 units were occupied with 245 vacant. Houston has a large number of relatively new housing units with 32 percent built after 2000. This is a reflection of the steady population growth the community has experienced and the availability of land to develop.

More than 50 percent of housing units are heated with fuel oil and 20 percent rely on wood as their primary heat source. Median rent in the community is \$869; an amount less than the greater Mat-Su.

Table 14. Houston Housing Indicators, 2000, 2010, and 2008-2012 Five-Year Average

	2000	2010	2008-2012	2008-2012 Margin of Error
Total housing units	581	973	977	+/-36
Occupied housing units	445	731	732	+/-47
Owner-occupied	356	538	573	+/-53
Renter-occupied	89	193	159	+/-43
Vacant housing units	136	242	245	+/-41
Homeowner vacancy rate (%)	1.4	4.2	6.4	+/-3.5
Rental vacancy rate (%)	11.0	10.6	7.2	+/-7.8
Median value owner-occupied units	\$91,400	-	\$177,000	+/- \$19,724

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey.

Composition of Houston Business Licenses

Table 15. Composition of Houston Businesses, 2014

6 Digit NAICS Code	Description	Number of Houston Businesses
113310	LOGGING	1
236115	NEW SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION (EXCEPT OPERATIVE BUILDERS)	2
236220	COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	1
238130	FRAMING CONTRACTORS	3
238160	ROOFING CONTRACTORS	1
238210	ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS AND OTHER WIRING INSTALLATION CONTRACTORS	1
238310	DRYWALL AND INSULATION CONTRACTORS	2
238350	FINISH CARPENTRY CONTRACTORS	1

311942	SPICE AND EXTRACT MANUFACTURING	1
321113	SAWMILLS	2
339914	COSTUME JEWELRY AND NOVELTY MANUFACTURING	1
423110	AUTOMOBILE AND OTHER MOTOR VEHICLE MERCHANT WHOLESALERS	1
423330	ROOFING, SIDING, AND INSULATION MATERIAL MERCHANT WHOLESALERS	1
	PIECE GOODS, NOTIONS, AND OTHER DRY GOODS MERCHANT	
424310	WHOLESALERS	1
441210	RECREATIONAL VEHICLE DEALERS	1
444220	NURSERY, GARDEN CENTER, AND FARM SUPPLY STORES	1
445110	SUPERMARKETS AND OTHER GROCERY (EXCEPT CONVENIENCE) STORES	1
451211	BOOK STORES	1
453220	GIFT, NOVELTY, AND SOUVENIR STORES	1
453998	ALL OTHER MISCELLANEOUS STORE RETAILERS (EXCEPT TOBACCO STORES)	7
454113	MAIL-ORDER HOUSES	1
484110	GENERAL FREIGHT TRUCKING, LOCAL	1
484220	SPECIALIZED FREIGHT (EXCEPT USED GOODS) TRUCKING, LOCAL	1
485310	TAXI SERVICE	1
488999	ALL OTHER SUPPORT ACTIVITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION	1
493110	GENERAL WAREHOUSING AND STORAGE	1
531110	LESSORS OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS AND DWELLINGS	3
531390	OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATED TO REAL ESTATE	2
541310	ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES	1
541340	DRAFTING SERVICES	1
541690	OTHER SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL CONSULTING SERVICES	1
541990	ALL OTHER PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND TECHNICAL SERVICES	2
561499	ALL OTHER BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES	1
561720	JANITORIAL SERVICES	1
561790	OTHER SERVICES TO BUILDINGS AND DWELLINGS	3
562111	SOLID WASTE COLLECTION	1
611430	PROFESSIONAL AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT TRAINING	1
621610	HOME HEALTH CARE SERVICES	2
623311	CONTINUING CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES	1
711510	INDEPENDENT ARTISTS, WRITERS, AND PERFORMERS	2
713990	ALL OTHER AMUSEMENT AND RECREATION INDUSTRIES	3
721211	RV (RECREATIONAL VEHICLE) PARKS AND CAMPGROUNDS	1
722110	FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS	4
811111	GENERAL AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR	1
811121	AUTOMOTIVE BODY, PAINT, AND INTERIOR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE	1
811198	ALL OTHER AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE	1
811411	HOME AND GARDEN EQUIPMENT REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE	1
811420	REUPHOLSTERY AND FURNITURE REPAIR	1
811490	OTHER PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE	1
812112	BEAUTY SALONS	2
812199	OTHER PERSONAL CARE SERVICES	1
812910	PET CARE (EXCEPT VETERINARY) SERVICES	1

812990	ALL OTHER PERSONAL SERVICES INCLUDING HANDYMAN	6
813110	RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS	1
813312	ENVIRONMENT, CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE ORGANIZATIONS	1

Transportation Network

This section summarizes the existing transportation network conditions within the City of Houston. The City of Houston is approximately 7.5 miles west along the Parks Highway from the City limits of Wasilla, and approximately 220 driving miles south along the Parks Highway from the city limits of Fairbanks Alaska. The Parks Highway is part of the Federal Highway's interstate road network. The eastern edge of the city limits of Houston contains the intersection of Big Lake Road, and the first commercialized mile of Big Lake Road is within the jurisdiction of Houston.

The Parks Highway

The Parks Highway's primary function is to serve statewide mobility for travel and freight transportation through the city limits of Houston for passage to Fairbanks and interior Alaska. Within the national network, the Parks Highway is the primary link between Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB), and interior Alaska. Anchorage is the commercial hub of the state, and therefore freight and materials shipped to interior Alaska by road must pass through the city of Houston on the Parks Highway. The Parks Highway is also a key element of the Houston Road network, serving local traffic throughout the City of Houston.

Classification and Function

The Parks Highway is an interstate highway classified as a Rural Interstate by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), and is Route 3 of the National Highway System (NHS). As part of the NHS it has the function of providing mobility on a statewide level, in addition to its secondary function of local area service. The Parks Highway is owned by the State of Alaska and maintained by the ADOT&PF.

Lane Configuration

The Parks Highway is a 2-lane, undivided facility with 12 foot lanes and 8 foot paved shoulders. Within Houston there are periodic passing lane sections for the northbound and southbound lanes, as well as a center two-way left turn lane (CTWLTL). Figure 7 shows the location of the changes in lane configuration.

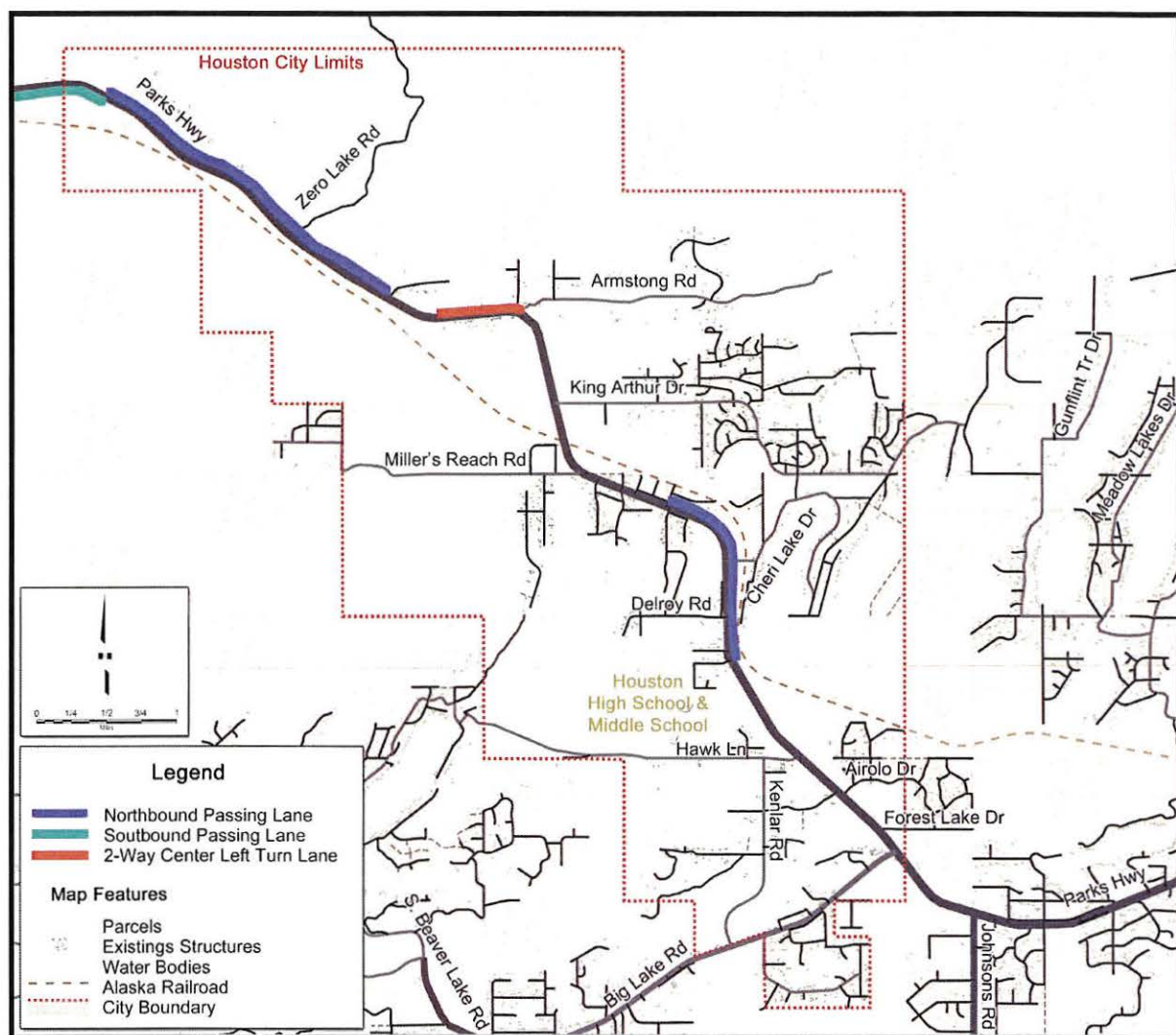
The intersection of The Parks Highway and Big Lake Road is a T-Intersection. The Parks Highway approaches have both a southbound right turn lane and a northbound left turn lane, in addition to their single through lanes. Big Lake Road has a left turn lane, and a separate right turn lane. The right turn lane off of Big Lake Road onto the Parks Highway enters its own added southbound

lane that continues south out of Houston's city limits and merges with the through lane at Johnson's Road.

The intersection of the Parks Highway and Cheri Lake Road has both a northbound right turn lane and a south bound left turn lane onto Cheri Lake Road.

The northbound approach to the intersection of Armstrong Road develops a left turn lane within the median which services access to a frontage road leading to various storefronts parallel to the Parks Highway. North of this intersection is the start of the 3,000 foot long CTWLTL shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Parks Highway Lane Configurations



City of Houston Road Network Layout

The City of Houston's road network branches east and west from the Parks Highway, which operates as a backbone for the regional network. The Parks Highway is the only arterial level roadway within the city limits. The remaining roads are either local roads providing access to the surrounding lots, or collector roads that provide access to and from the Parks Highway.

A majority of the parcels within the city limits of Houston access the Parks Highway within the city limits of Houston. Alternative access out of the city is available to the west via Kiowa Street which leads to Big Lake and King Arthur Drive to the east which accesses the Meadow Lakes Loop and Pittman Road areas. Additionally, Big Lake Road leads west into Big Lake.

There are currently no signalized intersections within the city.

Little Susitna River

The Parks Highway crosses the Little Susitna River at approximately MP 57. On the south side of the river crossing there is a parking area on either side of the Parks Highway. This parking area provides river access and connects to the separated pathways that are on both sides of the Parks Highway. The parking areas provide ten marked parking spaces per side with additional pull offs for RVs and trailer equipped trucks. Figure 8 shows a map of the Little Susitna River crossing and the nearby parking area.

Figure 8. Alaska Railroad Separated Grade Crossing of the Parks Highway

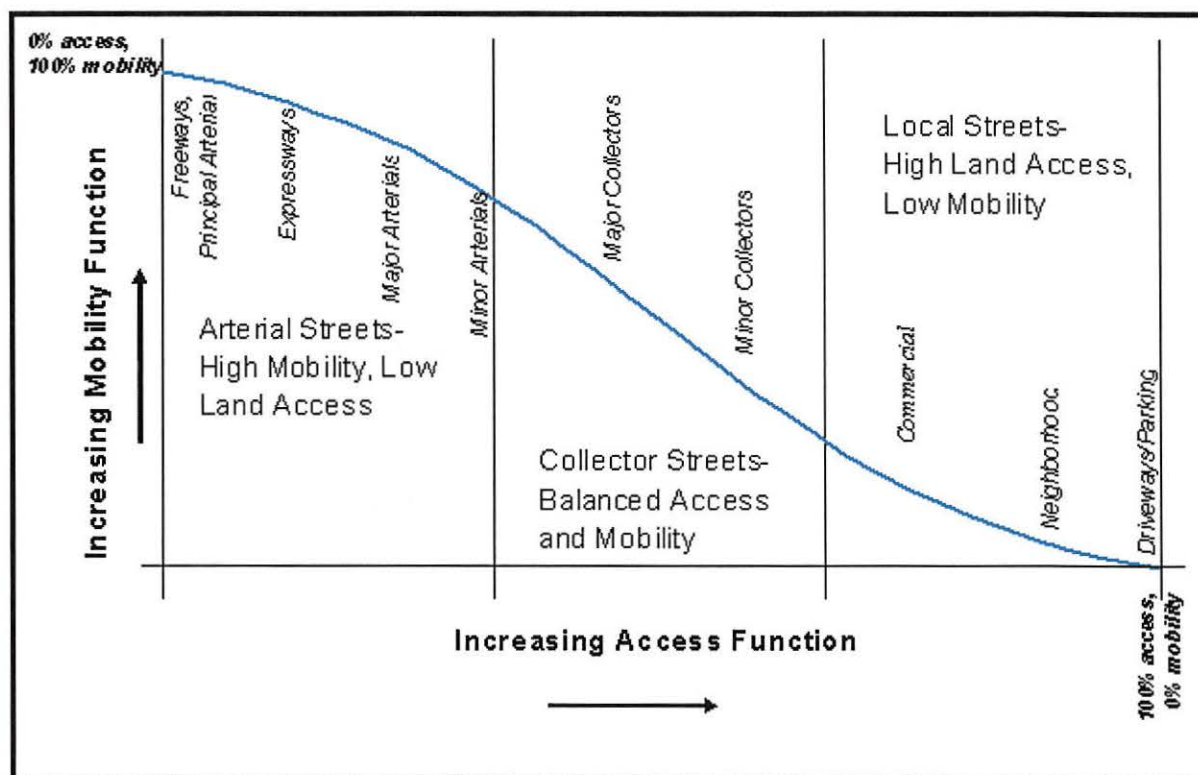


Road Functional Classifications

A functional classification system is a method of identifying the intended use of a road or corridor. It is an important planning level tool to facilitate clear communication about road networks between different agencies, designers and the public.

The function of a road typically falls somewhere between the conflicting purposes of mobility (high speed mobility through a region) and access (lower speed movements with frequent turns to adjacent parcels). Figure 9, illustrates the mobility and access balance for each functional class.

Figure 9. Functional Classification: Mobility and Access Relationship

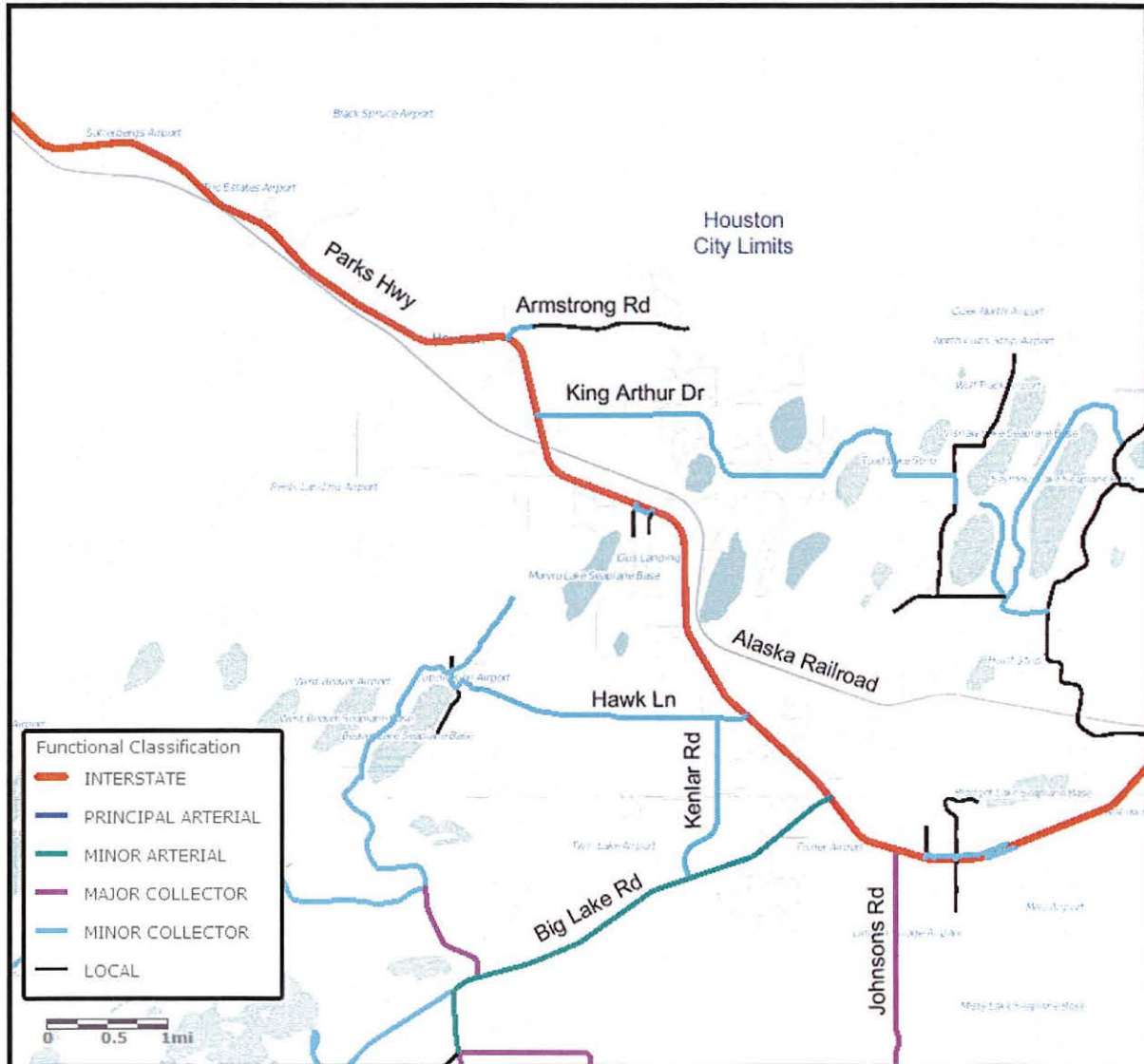


Both ADOT&PF and the MSB manage road networks that fall within the City of Houston. Each of these agencies individually identifies functional classifications for roads that they own and maintain or that are adjacent to their roadways.

ADOT&PF Classifications

ADOT&PF publishes functional classifications in a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database. The current system was updated as part of a 2011 Functional Classification Update project following the 2010 census. Figure 10 shows the functional classifications identified in the 2011 study by ADOT&PF.

Figure 10. ADOT&PF Functional Classification System



Source: ADOT&PF 2011 Functional Classification System Update GIS viewer

MSB Classifications

The Borough maintains a database of roads within the MSB which includes functional classification definitions. A current study of this database is in the process of reapplying functional classification criteria to update the definition of road classes on the collector and local road level. Figure 11 shows the functional classifications currently identified in the MSB system.

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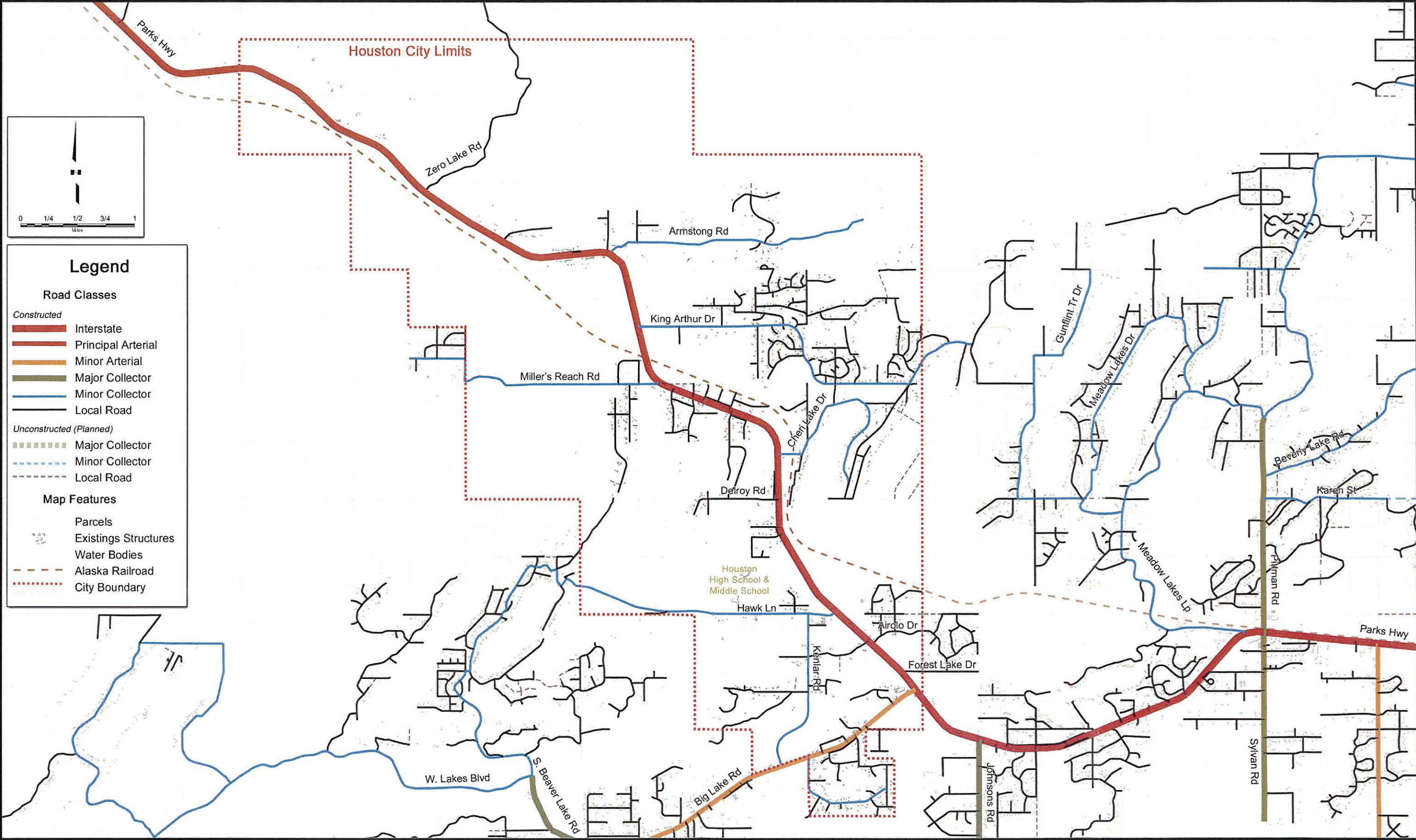


Figure 11. MSB Functional Classification System

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Traffic Volumes

Historical traffic volume estimates on road segments within the limits of Houston are collected by both the ADOT&PF and the MSB, for different roads depending on ownership. These agencies each count traffic in the summer months and then convert the data into an estimated average annual daily traffic (AADT) value.

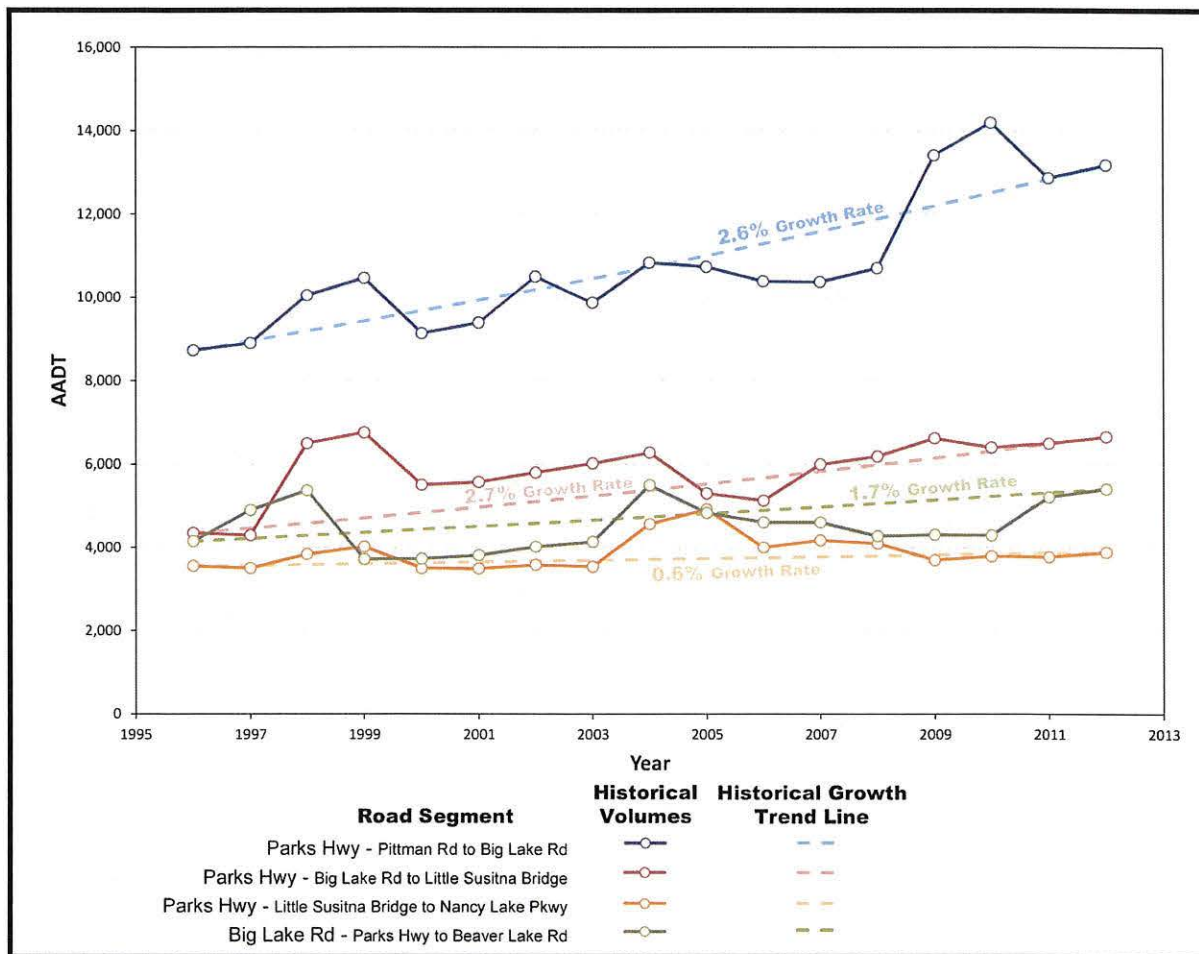
DOT&PF Volume Counts

Historical AADTs as shown in Figure 12, presents data showing the calculated growth rate history between the oldest recorded AADTs (1996) and the most recent (2012).

Note that, historically, the Parks Highway traffic volumes are almost evenly split between Big Lake Road and the Parks Highway, as traffic proceeds north in the direction of Houston. However, the growth on the Parks Highway heading into Houston and beyond is significantly greater than the growth on Big Lake Road.

MSB Volume Counts

Traffic levels on several major cross streets within the city of Houston have been observed by the MSB and published in annual reports. However, due to staff and funding every link is not counted every year. Estimated AADT for observed years, per road can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 12. Historical AADTs

Road Surface Conditions

There are approximately 45 miles of road within the Houston residential road network, not including the Parks Highway and Big Lake Road. Of these 45 miles of road, 90% (40 miles) of the roads are unpaved with a 3" gravel surface. The remaining 5 miles of paved roadway account for most of the collector road network as defined by the MSB.

The paved road network includes all, or segments of the following roads:

- Cheri Lake Drive
- Hawk Lane
- King Arthur Drive
- Miller's Reach Road
- Wasey Way

- White Rabbit Drive

Armstrong Road is identified by the MSB as a collector road and is currently unpaved beyond the first quarter mile. The first quarter mile of Armstrong Road serves the Little Susitna River Camp Ground, and the public safety building for Houston which houses both the city Police and Fire Departments. City Hall is also accessed from Armstrong Road.

Alaska Railroad

The Alaska Railroad generally parallels the Parks Highway corridor throughout the limits of the City of Houston. To the southeast the railroad is on the north side of the highway. The Parks Highway crosses the railroad at a separated grade crossing at approximately milepost 56.5. The separated grade crossing includes a rail bridge that proceeds over the Parks Highway. On the northwest end of the city the rail corridor is on the south side of the highway. Figure 12 shows the separated grade rail crossing of the Parks Highway.

There is an at-grade crossing of the railroad on Cheri Lake Drive approximately 750 feet east of the intersection of Cheri Lake Drive and the Parks Highway. This crossing is equipped with gates, crossbucks, advanced warning flashers, and stop bars. There are no other crossings of the Alaska Railroad within the limits of Houston. Figure 13 shows the current configuration of the at-grade crossing of Cheri Lake Drive and the Alaska Railroad.

Figure 13. Alaska Railroad Separated Grade Crossing of the Parks Highway



Figure 14. Cheri Lake Drive at-grade Railroad Crossing



Speed Limits

The Parks Hwy and Big Lake Rd are currently posted at 55 mph, with a reduction to 45 mph in a 1.25 mile section of the Parks Hwy. This section of road begins just south of the parking area at the Little Susitna Bridge and continues northbound until MP 58, just beyond the CTWLTL section.

Hawk Lane, King Arthur Drive, and Kenlar Road are all posted at 35mph. All other roads within the City of Houston are posted at 25mph.

Pedestrian Pathways

There is a separated pedestrian pathway on the south side of the Parks Highway that begins east of the Houston city limits and ends at mp 58 within Houston. There is a second pathway on the north side of the Parks Highway that begins at the intersection of the Parks Highway and Cheri Lake Road and continues west beyond the city limits.

Road Inventory

The road inventory for all named roads within the City of Houston can be found in Appendix B.

APPENDIX A

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Parks Highway (CDS Route 170000)																	
Segment	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Pittman Road to Big Lake Road	8,730	8,900	10,050	10,470	9,138	9,390	10,503	9,871	10,842	10,742	10,393	10,380	10,710	13,415	14,199	12,870	13,180
Big Lake Road to Little Susitna River Bridge	4,350	4,300	6,501	6,760	5,504	5,573	5,800	6,020	6,280	5,300	5,130	5,997	6,190	6,624	6,402	6,500	6,660
Little Susitna River Bridge to Nancy Lake Parkway	3,550	3,500	3,840	4,020	3,498	3,490	3,580	3,540	4,568	4,918	4,003	4,180	4,100	3,695	3,790	3,770	3,885

Source: Alaska Department of Transportation Volume Reports
Historical Traffic Volume Counts: Parks Highway

Big Lake Road (CDS Route 170073)																	
Segment	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Parks Hwy to Beaver Lake Rd	4,154	4,900	5,375	3,719	3,730	3,810	4,019	4,140	5,502	4,836	4,610	4,610	4,278	4,310	4,300	5,218	5,410

Source: Alaska Department of Transportation Volume Reports
Historical Traffic Volume Counts: Big Lake Road

Airolo Drive															
Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
AADT	107	113						309	284		302			286	

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Volume Reports

Table 1 - Historical Traffic Volume Counts: Airolo Drive

Forest Lake Drive															
Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
AADT	162	179				244	257		311		394				

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Volume Reports

Table 2 - Historical Traffic Volume Counts: Forest Lake Drive

Hawk Lane															
Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
AADT		792												831	

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Volume Reports

Table 3 - Historical Traffic Volume Counts: Hawk Lane

Kenlar Road															
Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
AADT		262					399								

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Volume Reports

Table 4 - Historical Traffic Volume Counts: Kenlar Road

King Arthur Drive															
Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
AADT	569	584						674				720	636		654

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Volume Reports

Historical Traffic Volume Counts: King Arthur Drive

Miller's Reach Road															
Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
AADT														329	488

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Volume Reports

Table 5 - Historical Traffic Volume Counts: Miller's Reach Road

Wasey Way															
Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
AADT	277	273					343		389		396				

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Volume Reports

Historical Traffic Volume Counts: Wasey Way

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APPENDIX B

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Road Name	MSB Route Number	ADOT&PF Route Number	Length (mi)	Speed Limit	MSB Functional Class	ADOT&PF Functional Class
Big Lake Road	4804	170073	1.18	55 mph	Minor Arterial	Minor Arterial
Parks Hwy	2132	170000	5.42	45 - 55 mph	Interstate	Interstate
Adrian Place	41		0.14	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Airolo Drive	50		0.46	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Anastasia Avenue	99		0.80	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Anning Drive	3856		0.12	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Anthony Road	111		1.16	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Armstrong Road	125		1.51	25 mph	Minor Collector	Minor Collector, Local Road
Aspen Cove Drive	135		0.19	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Backhaus Street	4596		0.86	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Ballyshannon Drive	170		0.84	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Bench Lake Drive	226		0.50	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Birch Harbor Road	269		0.36	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Birch Road	271		0.76	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Birchwood Lane	276		0.45	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Black Knight Drive	283		0.23	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Brian Circle	357		0.09	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Britt Avenue	4594		0.06	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Brittany Drive	4691		0.20	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Brittany Lou Avenue	4595		0.19	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Bruce Way	379		0.28	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Bryan Street	384		0.19	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Calonder Way	4603		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Cannon Drive	434		0.26	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Castle Drive	479		0.16	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Cattail Circle	490		0.08	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road

Road Name	MSB Route Number	ADOT&PF Route Number	Length (mi)	Speed Limit	MSB Functional Class	ADOT&PF Functional Class
Cheri Lake Drive	4773		1.78	25 mph	Minor Collector	Local Road
Cheshire Circle	524		0.03	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Claudia Court	570		0.09	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Claudia Road	571		0.38	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Cole Circle	5444		0.15	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Commerce Street	3504		0.09	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Commercial Park Drive	3858		0.19	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Corn Street	3505		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Dana Court	706	170147	0.15	25 mph	Local Road	Minor Collector
Dawn Road	726		0.48	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Debra Jean Lane	731		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Delroy Road	741		0.80	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Denlow Drive	753		0.24	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Derrick Avenue	4400		0.24	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Diana Way	764		0.06	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Dodge Drive	780		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Donnybrook Drive	797		0.40	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Drawbridge Circle	819		0.07	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Duke Drive	830		0.21	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Duley Road	3530		0.53	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Durado Drive	835	170102	0.14	25 mph	Local Road	Minor Collector
Dutchess Circle	836		0.13	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Easy Street	865		0.31	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Elf Circle	889		0.04	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Emerald Isle Circle	902		0.08	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Enchanted Circle	908		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road

Road Name	MSB Route Number	ADOT&PF Route Number	Length (mi)	Speed Limit	MSB Functional Class	ADOT&PF Functional Class
Friar Tuck Circle	1062		0.13	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Frog Circle	5016		0.07	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Gallagher Circle	3825		0.14	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Gaunt Lane	1091	170105	0.23	25 mph	Local Road	Minor Collector
Gina Circle	1112		0.04	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Hawk Lane	4190	170109	2.25	35 mph	Minor Collector	Minor Collector
Heath Drive	1246		0.42	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Hidden Drive	1278		0.26	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Hobbit Road	1300		0.11	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Horizon Boulevard	1323		0.37	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Horizon Way	1325		0.20	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Hubner Circle	5962		0.06	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Janet Road	1401		0.22	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Jeffrey Lane	1411		0.19	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Jerry Circle	1420		0.08	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
John Circle	4881		0.03	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Johnathon Circle	5409		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Kar Drive	1464		0.11	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Karami Lane	1465		0.30	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Karen Avenue	1467		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Kathy Lane	1482		0.09	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Kenlar Road	1496	170145	1.42	35 mph	Minor Collector	Minor Collector
King Arthur Circle	1522		0.03	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
King Arthur Drive	4772	170108	2.91	35 mph	Minor Collector	Minor Collector
King David Street	5428		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
King John Drive	1526		0.19	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road

Road Name	MSB Route Number	ADOT&PF Route Number	Length (mi)	Speed Limit	MSB Functional Class	ADOT&PF Functional Class
Kreja Circle	5261		0.12	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Lake Horizon Circle	1586		0.07	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Lakeway Loop	4775		0.34	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Larae Road	1578		0.54	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Leprechaun Drive	1654		0.32	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Little John Drive	1688		0.74	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Little Meadow Creek Road	4690		0.37	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Little Millers Road	6375		0.13	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Longbow Circle	1717		0.09	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Looking Glass Drive	1723		0.68	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Loon Boulevard	4557		0.35	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Loon Street	1728		0.44	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Louise Lane	1739		0.19	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Mad Hatter Street	1771		0.07	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Maid Marian Drive	1776		0.12	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Majors Drive	1781		0.65	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Marginal Access Road	4771		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Marian Circle	1802		0.03	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Meadowood Drive	1869		0.58	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Melissa Circle	1878		0.06	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Merlin Drive	1887		0.54	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Meti Avenue	4593		0.06	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Mid Valley Way	4506		0.13	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Miller Circle	6376		0.03	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Miller's Reach Road	1909		1.50	25 mph	Minor Collector	Local Road
Miller'S Ridge Road	6103		0.08	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road

Road Name	MSB Route Number	ADOT&PF Route Number	Length (mi)	Speed Limit	MSB Functional Class	ADOT&PF Functional Class
Moat Circle	1921		0.05	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Nichols Drive	2009		0.21	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
No Name Hill Drive	4632		0.24	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Nottingham Circle	2048		0.08	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
O'Keefe Court	4624		0.04	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
O'Megan Circle	5461		0.12	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
One Horse Lane	5628		0.22	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Owlhaven Drive	2104		0.08	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Pay Dirt Road	2146		0.25	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Pepper Street	3506		0.17	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Phyllis Lane	2177		0.16	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Pick-A-Dilley Street	4586		0.48	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Pinecrest Circle	2187		0.09	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Prince Charming Drive	2236		0.28	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Princess Circle	2238		0.11	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Princess Kylie Drive	6326		0.28	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Queen Of Drive	2272		0.09	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Railside Drive	3857		0.39	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Rainbow Circle	2279		0.13	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Rainee Street	2287		0.17	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Ray Street	2307		0.33	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Rel Street	2330		0.13	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Rex Street	2340		0.10	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Rippy Road	2365		0.13	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Robin Hood Drive	2383		0.22	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Ross Street	2417		0.10	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road

Road Name	MSB Route Number	ADOT&PF Route Number	Length (mi)	Speed Limit	MSB Functional Class	ADOT&PF Functional Class
Round Table Drive	2419		0.55	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Schutt Drive	4995		0.44	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Sherwood Forest Park Circle	4880		0.03	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Sluice Box Drive	2578		0.06	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Spruce Haven Drive	2673		0.20	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Spruce Street	5001		0.03	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Squire Drive	2679		0.22	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Stetson Circle	4382		0.05	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Susan Lane	2746		0.07	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Susitna Way	2756		0.12	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Swingle Road	3533		0.23	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Tara Street	4398		0.21	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Tea Party Drive	2802		0.12	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Telsitna Street	4063		0.34	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Twiddle Dee Circle	2911		0.06	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Valois Drive	2944		0.24	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Wasey Circle	4909		0.14	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Wasey Way	3000		1.00	25 mph	Minor Collector	Local Road
Westen Drive	3046		0.31	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
White Knight Drive	3056		0.54	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
White Rabbit Circle	3057		0.03	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
White Rabbit Drive	5011		0.47	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
White Stag Circle	3058		0.11	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Wild Rose Drive	3216		0.13	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Wilderness Court	3069		0.10	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Wilhelm Street	3077		0.41	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road

Road Name	MSB Route Number	ADOT&PF Route Number	Length (mi)	Speed Limit	MSB Functional Class	ADOT&PF Functional Class
Wilson Road	3553		0.19	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Winfield Way	3109		0.27	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Winterhaven Drive	3113		0.36	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Wonderland Circle	3132		0.07	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Wonderland Drive	3133		0.40	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Woody Lake Drive	4774		0.60	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Yellow Cub Drive	3763		0.13	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road
Zero Lake Road	4879		0.42	25 mph	Local Road	Local Road

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APPENDIX B. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY


R&M CONSULTANTS, INC.

 9101 Vanguard Drive • Anchorage, AK 99507 • 907.522.1707
 3504 Industrial Avenue #102 • Fairbanks, AK 99701 • 907.452.5270
 9737 Mud Bay Road #301 • Ketchikan, AK 99901 • 907.220.9424

Meeting Record

Project Number: 2136.01 (R&M)

Project Title: City of Houston CIA and Comprehensive Plan Revision

Subject: Future's Workshop and Open House #1

Author: Taryn Oleson

Site Visit Location: City of Houston Fire Station

Meeting Date: Thursday, September 18, 2014

Distribution Date: September 3, 2014

Attendees:

Van Le, AICP	Planning & Public Involvement Coordinator	R&M Consultants, Inc.
Taryn Oleson	Public Involvement Coordinator	R&M Consultants, Inc.
Kristi McLean	CIA Lead	R&M Consultants, Inc.
Virgie Thompson	Mayor	City of Houston
Len Anderson	Steering Committee	City of Houston
Ron Jones	Steering Committee	City of Houston
Christopher Johnson	Steering Committee	City of Houston
Rebecca Rein	Steering Committee	City of Houston
Gina Jorgensen	Steering Committee	City of Houston
Lance Wilson	Steering Committee	City of Houston
Donna Logan	Economist	McDowell Group
Allen Kemplen, AICP-CTP	Mat-Su Area Planner	AK State DOT

35 attendees signed in on the sign in sheet, including some project team members and Steering Committee members. At least two additional residences who were in attendance did not sign in.

The objective of this open house was to "Establish a Community Vision to be used as a guiding principle for the Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan." The use of a Future's Workshop is considered to be best practices for community visioning, as a way to begin a Comprehensive Plan Update. This visioning session was successful in gauging

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community ideals and ideal futures, but a single vision statement was not generated in consensus by the resident attendees.

The meeting started at 4:30 PM at the Houston Fire Station.

As attendees entered the Future's Workshop, they were greeted and asked to fill out the sign in sheet. A City of Houston Fact Sheet was available as a handout, agendas were posted throughout the meeting space, and cookies and refreshments were served.

In the truck bay, half the space was used for display of the following maps: three historic maps from the 1979 Plan, existing zoning, existing land use, existing land use by zoning, existing land ownership, and the project area (City of Houston boundaries). Also on display were three posters showing aspects of the City of Houston's history, including the planning timeline and photographs of community members and events. Attendees were encouraged to examine the displays so as to better understand their City's past and present conditions.

At 5:00 PM all attendees were gathered into the main room and seated at seven small tables of 4-7 people for the small breakout session entitled "Creating ideal futures". Each table was hosted by a pre-designated facilitator and had at least 5 blank City of Houston Mind Maps which were used as a tool for note-taking and idea generation. Van Le and Taryn Oleson presented the purpose of the meeting and the small group task.

Over the next hour and fifteen minutes, small groups discussed what the City of Houston should be like 20 years from now. The small group session was not limited in scope and all relevant ideas were recorded in each group by the facilitator. Instructions were provided to the facilitators three days prior to the meeting, and again during the meeting, which included suggested questions to consider posing if conversation stified. The small group session was scheduled to be last about a half hour, but was allowed to continue due to highly active participation by the attendees.

At 5:50 PM pizza was delivered and served. Small groups continued to work through the meal until Van and Taryn cut the conversation to reconvene as a large group for the second session.

Tasked with finding "Common Ground on the Future," small groups took turns sharing an emerging theme developed by the group. Each theme was then recorded on one of six large City of Houston Mind Map, which Van and Taryn were writing on at the front of the room. Five of the six Mind Maps had pre-determined categorical titles: Transportation, Housing, Community Character, Community Facilities and Services, and Economic Development. The sixth Mind Map was given the title 'Planning' after multiple themes were presented within this category. Though overall successful, groups struggled to prioritize themes, ideas, or aspects of the future they felt were most important. It was also difficult for groups to limit their turn to sharing to only one of those items on their list at a time.

Establishing consensus was the overarching goal of the whole group session. While there was discussion and disagreement on specifics of certain contributed themes, the overall intent of the theme was agreed upon more often than not.

All Mind Maps, produced by both small group and whole group sessions, were collected and are available in hard copy and digital formats.

The Future's workshop concluded at 7:30 PM.

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Draft Summary Statements have been developed by Taryn Oleson of R&M post-workshop from the whole group Mind Maps and are as follows;

- **Transportation:** There is a need to increase safety, accessibility, and mobility through much of the City and improvements shall be beneficial to all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized uses such as dog sleds, while maintaining community character.
- **Housing:** Housing in the City of Houston should be available to a wide range of incomes, while providing opportunities for satisfactory, safe living for all residents, including the elderly.
- **Planning:** Effective, implementable planning is a recognized need for successful growth, development, and overall health of the community, as defined by its residents.
- **Community Character:** To be developed by Steering Committee
- **Economic Development:** While maintaining the current tax structure, the City of Houston aims to develop economically by capitalizing on its current amenities and natural resources; allowing commercial and light industrial development as long as it aligns with the community character and will be to the benefit of City residents.
- **Community Facilities and Services:** The City of Houston recognizes the need to expand its facilities and services in order to provide safe and satisfactory living for its residents, while enhancing the City's autonomy, economy, and unique identity.

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City of Houston at a Glance

Demographics

- Rural-residential community experiencing consistent growth;
- 2013 estimated population of 2,039 residents
- Median age is 36; older age groups experiencing the fastest growth rate
- Estimated growth rate of 2% - population of 3,100+ residents in 2035
- Median household income almost \$60,000;
- About 12% of families and 16% of individuals are below federal poverty line

Economic Development

- 82 active business licenses have physical addresses in City
- Top three business types; Services, Trade, and Construction
- Private sector employment is 85% with Trade (retail and wholesale), Transportation and Utilities, and Education and Health services being the top employment industries
- Unemployment rate is about 18%

Education

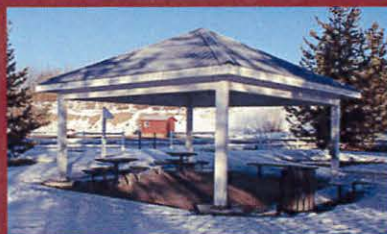
- Houston High school of the Mat-Su Borough School District
- Land designated for a future elementary school
- Approximately 90% of residents has a high school

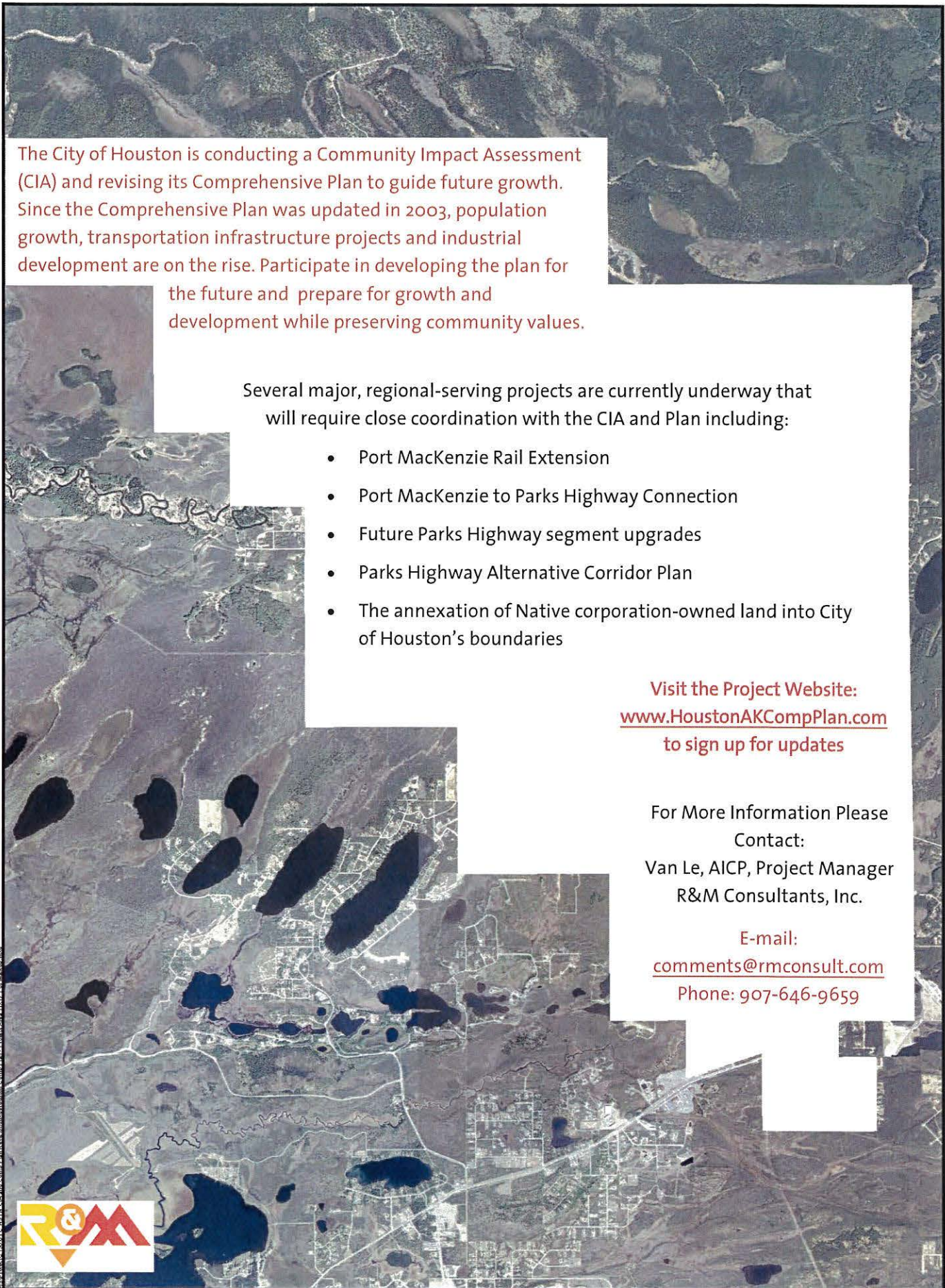
Land Use

- City limits encompass 23 square miles
- 77% of land is vacant - 18% is residential
- Minor homestead agricultural activity but several areas are zoned for mixed agriculture (RA-)
- Major Parks and Recreation facilities; Little Susitna Campground, Riverside Camper Park, Houston/Willow Creek Sled Trailhead rec. area, and Haessler-Norris Trail System

Community Services

- City Fire Department, law enforcement by Alaska State Troopers
- Homesteaders Community Center and Mid-Valley Senior, Inc. provide fellowship and services
- No large grocery store or medical facilities exist within the City; Wasilla and Big Lake are the closest providers





The City of Houston is conducting a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) and revising its Comprehensive Plan to guide future growth. Since the Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2003, population growth, transportation infrastructure projects and industrial development are on the rise. Participate in developing the plan for the future and prepare for growth and development while preserving community values.

Several major, regional-serving projects are currently underway that will require close coordination with the CIA and Plan including:

- Port MacKenzie Rail Extension
- Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Connection
- Future Parks Highway segment upgrades
- Parks Highway Alternative Corridor Plan
- The annexation of Native corporation-owned land into City of Houston's boundaries

Visit the Project Website:
www.HoustonAKCompPlan.com
to sign up for updates

For More Information Please
Contact:
Van Le, AICP, Project Manager
R&M Consultants, Inc.

E-mail:
comments@rmconsult.com
Phone: 907-646-9659



City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

Whole Group Session – Sharing common themes and findings

Community Character:

- Houston as a destination for tourism and recreation
- Have a unique identity or theme for us to be recognized by- distinguish Houston Alaska from the rest of the country and state
- Preservation of residential character – keeping “Houston Houston” with larger parcels for housing and minimal light pollution and noise
- Own a recreational identity; more than just trail heads
- Design standards for development
- Establish a Town Center keeping to the Houston feel
- Preservation of existing trails and ecology
- Involving community in the development and construction of community facilities
- Maintaining the quiet dark character – open for growth but keep it rural
- Community needs to be proactive
- Family friendly
- Make both sides of the river and railroad tracks feel like one community
- Wide reaching community government and development- increased involvement

Transportation:

- Train station in the City
- More connectivity – more emergency access
- Town center that is accessible and multiuse
- Multiuse pathways
- Better signage
- Main road be protected – increased vegetation
- Maintain multiuse trails
- Improved lighting and roadways
- Eventually expand availability of utilities and services
- Safety on the Parks corridor
- Development of King Arthur Rd.
- Hawk lane bike path – improvement of pedestrian safety via pathways and lighting

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

- Industrial development along the rail lanes- light industrial
- Increase vegetative buffers in roadways
- Main artery needs proper planning for controlled access and the expansion of the Parks highway and the secondary roadways – *proper planning for corridor*
- *Port to Parks*
- Bus stop marker, signage, and lighting
- Park and ride with Valley-movers throughout Mat-Su and Anchorage Bowl

Planning

- More staffing for City, Fire department should not be responsible for all emergency and police services
- Evolve into a 1st class city
- Corridor study
- Planning land use (one comment on no zoning restrictions)
- Water resource planning –special attention to the flood planes
- Development suitability study
- MSB build out- match with community growth
- Program to reduce junk cars
- Transfer centers
- Incentive for people to come here – education, recreation facilities, design
- Encourage subdivision with more high income development

Housing

- Incentivize Dr. and medical facilities to move here
 - Assisted care facilities
- Plan for multi-family and senior housing with the aging population
- Conveniences for high end houses for a higher tax base – designate areas for high end housing

Community Facilities and Services

- Education – elementary school

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

- Town Center with; pedestrian friendly facilities, landscaping, panels and walk theme, restaurants, mixed use, near river or railroad, building codes (Form based codes)
- Youth summer programs
- Opportunities for post-secondary education/carter school
- Public safety; EMS expansion, year round water flow for fire
- Flood control response planning
- Community watch
- Recreation; trails, multiuse, designated facilities for recreation (rinks, pools, ball courts), preservation of natural areas, facility maintenance for motorized and non-motorized users including horses and dogs
- Animal shelter
- Utility expansion dependent on road alignment ; natural gas, coal, alternative energy
- Recreation destination; use Little Su for business services (tourism)
- Cemetery
- Veterinary clinic
- Daycare
- Business districts; planned, designed, and built
- Pharmacy
- Dentist
- Medical facilities
- Assisted care facilities
- Gas station and goods services
- Grocery store or food shops

Economic Development

- Keep tax base
- Local jobs
- Riverwalk
- Community identity for economic development (using it to draw in visitors and residents)
- Centralized for recreation for Hatcher Pass, Deskha, etc. – capitalize on natural location
- Facilities at King Arthur; Laundromat, shower, gym, meeting place
- Daycare
- Natural resource development; coal mines, power plant, city owned utility

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June 4, 2015 Community Impact Assessment & Comp. Plan Review Open House 2 – CIA

Project: City of Houston Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision

Project No: R&M 2136.01

Purpose: Open House for public to review and comment on draft CIA findings

Date: Thursday, June 4th, 2015

Time: 4:30PM – 6:30PM

Location: City of Houston Fire Station

Meeting Attendance: 28 members of the public and Steering Committee member were present

Project Team in Attendance:

R&M Consultants

Van Le, AICP Project Manager

Taryn Oleson Planner & PI Coordinator

Kristi McLean Environmental Specialist, CIA Lead

City of Houston Steering Committee Members

Mayor Virgie Thompson

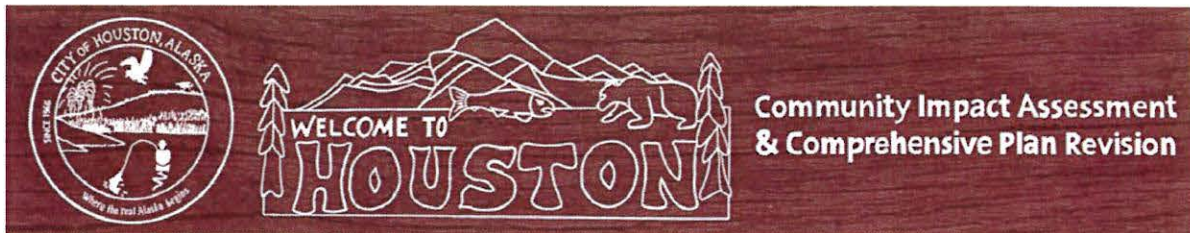
Lance Wilson, Deputy Mayor

Len Anderson, Chair Steering Committee

Ron Jones

Chris Johnson

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MEETING SUMMARY

As the public entered the Fire Station, they were greeted by a member of the R&M project team who provided a brief explanation on what the CIA is and the purpose of the open house. Attendees signed in, picked up a Fact Sheet on the transportation alternatives assessed in the CIA, and helped themselves to snacks and refreshments. In the truck hull of the Fire Station a variety of boards were on display.

The maps on display were the focus of the open house. Three graphics on large 34x44" boards depicted the potential impacts identified in the CIA to this point. Each graphic showed impacts for one of three impact categories; Transportation, Land Use, and Economic impacts. Impacts were shown geographically on a map of the City of Houston. In addition to the three main boards, a copy of each graphic was printed on the same large size paper and placed on tables for attendees to write directly on. See Attachment A. Supporting the three City of Houston CIA graphics were maps of the existing conditions within Houston, including zoning, land use, land use by zoning. A board showing the Transportation Plan map from the adopted City of Houston 1982 Comprehensive Plan was also on display for reference.

Members of the public were encouraged to read the three CIA maps and provide any comments, concerns, or opinions regarding the information shared. Markers and pens were provided on each table with a CIA map on it and any feedback provided by attendees could be written directly on the map. Comment forms were provided throughout the Open House space to allow written comments to be recorded.

Members of the project team and the Steering Committee engaged in conversations with the public about the process and the goals of performing a CIA. Generally, the public in attendance concurred with the impacts identified. Little new information emerged during the open house; most discussion focused around the opportunities that could emerge due to some of the impacts identified. The Economic Impacts map yielded discussion around the potential development that could occur around the new Port-MacKenzie Rail Extension, including zoning the new areas for industrial development and Knikatu Inc developing an LED Assembly Facility south of Millers Reach Road. The information and opinions gathered on the impacts identified in the CIA will be incorporated into the CIA report.

Additional comments not directly related to the CIA impacts were largely related to the development of parks and establishment of more services and amenities, such as a gas station and grocery store, in the area. This information will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan Revision effort.

The public was made aware of the open house through direct postcard mailings, an e-notification reminder, and information posted to both the project website as well as the City of Houston's website. The draft CIA will be made available for review by the public via the project website once it has been approved for release by the Steering Committee.



Community Impact Assessment INFO SHEET

What is a CIA and why is the City of Houston conducting one?

A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is an evaluation of potential impacts transportation projects could have on the community of Houston. Each project analyzed has the potential to impact the socioeconomics, physical environment, and future growth and development in Houston. The CIA will serve as a planning tool and reference for the City and the Mat-Su Borough by ensuring the needs, opinions, vision and goals of the community are acknowledged and documented to help guide compatible growth and development within and around Houston. The CIA is being conducted concurrently in support of the City's Comprehensive Plan Update.

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS ANALYZED

Parks Highway Upgrade MP 44-52 Phase 3 Pittman Road to Big Lake Road

PLANNED - AKDOT&PF

- Proposed signalized intersection at Parks Hwy and Big Lake Road and at S. Johnson Road in Wasilla
- Pedestrian improvements include realignment of the pathway along Parks Hwy and Big Lake Rd; a pedestrian island and crosswalk at the intersection of Big Lake Rd and Parks Hwy
- Proposed four-lane divided Hwy from MP 44 in Wasilla returning to a two-lane Hwy after Forrest Lake Drive in Houston
- Proposed lighting at the intersection of Big Lake Road and the Parks Hwy; along the Parks Hwy
- Proposed access and driveway consolidation
- Construction planned for 2017-2018

Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

PLANNED AND IN CONSTRUCTION - ARRC & MSB

- 32-mile extension of the ARRC system to connect Port MacKenzie to the mainline along Parks Hwy
- Extension passes Houston Lake Loop Trail and Horseshoe Lake with connection to the mainline north of Miller's Reach Road
- Grade-separated crossings planned at officially recognized trails and roads
- No support facilities planned as part of the extension

Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor

CONCEPTUAL PROJECT

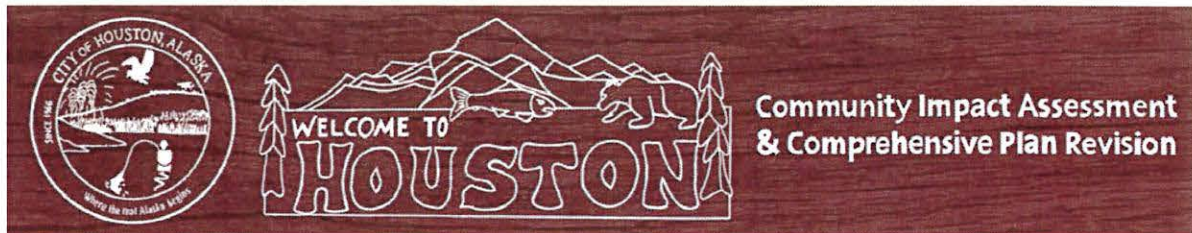
- Road alignment reflects concept shown in the adopted 1982 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan Map
- Road alignment parallels the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension alignment
- Conceptual corridor is 800' wide centered on the Rail Extension alignment, designed for a 2-lane 65 mph Hwy
- Anticipated primary use for freight and truck traffic to and from the Port

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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PLANNER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR: TARYN OLESON | R&M Consultants, Inc. | Comments@RMConsult.com | 907.646.9645

VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE: WWW.HOUSTONAKCOMPLAN.COM



**May 5, 2016 Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision:
Open House #3 – Draft Comprehensive Plan Review**

Project: City of Houston Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision

Purpose: Open House for public to review and comment on Draft Comprehensive Plan

Date: Thursday May 5th, 2016

Time: 5:00 PM- 7:00 PM

Location: City of Houston Fire Station

Meeting Attendance: 14 members of the public and Steering Committee member were present

Outreach: The public was made aware of the open house through postcards distributed at frequented locations throughout the City, an e-mailed invitation, and information posted to both the project website as well as the City of Houston's website. The Draft Comprehensive Plan Revision is available for public review on the project website.

Project Team in Attendance:

R&M Consultants

Van Le, AICP	Project Manager
Taryn Oleson	Planner & PI Coordinator
Lance DeBernardi, PE	Senior Transportation Engineer

City of Houston Steering Committee Members

Mayor Virgie Thompson

Lance Wilson, Deputy Mayor

Len Anderson, Chair Steering Committee

Ron Jones

Chris Johnson

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MEETING SUMMARY

As the public entered the Fire Station, they were greeted by a member of the R&M project team who provided a brief explanation on the purpose of the open house and the materials on the table. Attendees signed in, picked up a Comprehensive Plan Summary Handout, a copy of the draft Comprehensive Plan and helped themselves to snacks and refreshments. Draft Comprehensive Plan boards were on display on easels in the truck bay of the Fire Station.

The maps on display were the focus of the open house. Four maps highlighted the significant changes proposed in the Draft Comprehensive Plan Revision. The maps included:

- Draft Land Use Plan Map
- Draft transportation recommendations for Freight and Industry, Local Road Network, and Parks Highway.
- Four boards of proposed improvements
- Copies of the graphics were printed on the same large size paper and places on tables for attendees to write comments on. See Attachment A.

Supporting the four draft Comprehensive Plan Revision graphics were maps of the existing zoning and land use conditions within Houston as well as the Transportation Plan map from the adopted City of Houston 1982 Comprehensive Plan was for reference.

Members of the public were encouraged to examine the maps, specifically on the proposed Land Use Plan and Transportation Plan Maps, and provide any comments, concerns, or opinions regarding the information shared. Markers and pens were provided on each table with comment forms and a copy of a transportation plan map on it. Attendees could provide feedback by written directly on the map or filling out a comment form. Comment forms were also provided at the sign-in table as well as throughout the Open House space.

Members of the project team and the Steering Committee engaged in conversations with the public about the process, goals of the Revision, and the Land Use Plan and Transportation recommendations.



Public Comments

The most discussed topics included the proposed Parks Highway Bypass and interchange with a future Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway, specifically how that would affect the development of Houston's economy and future Town Center. A resident and local business owner provided comments about two major items for further consideration in the Draft Comprehensive Plan:

- **Proposed Parks Highway bypass:** *A bypass to foster development of a Town Center may not work because Houston is dependent on Parks Highway travelers to support local businesses. A bypass will not ensure that travelers keep going to Wasilla or Willow instead of stopping even though the plan is to allow the Town Center to develop before the bypass is built in the next 20+ years.*
- **Parks Highway Design:** *Would like the Comprehensive Plan Revision to include a policy that will require DOT to build the Parks Highway into a 5 lane with center turn lane, with direct access to properties adjacent to the Parks Highway, versus a 4 lane divided highway with consolidated access. Gas station companies such as Tesoro are considering building a station in Houston near the Big Lake intersection or what is being called the future Commercial Center, and consolidated access on a divided highway will remove this potential.*

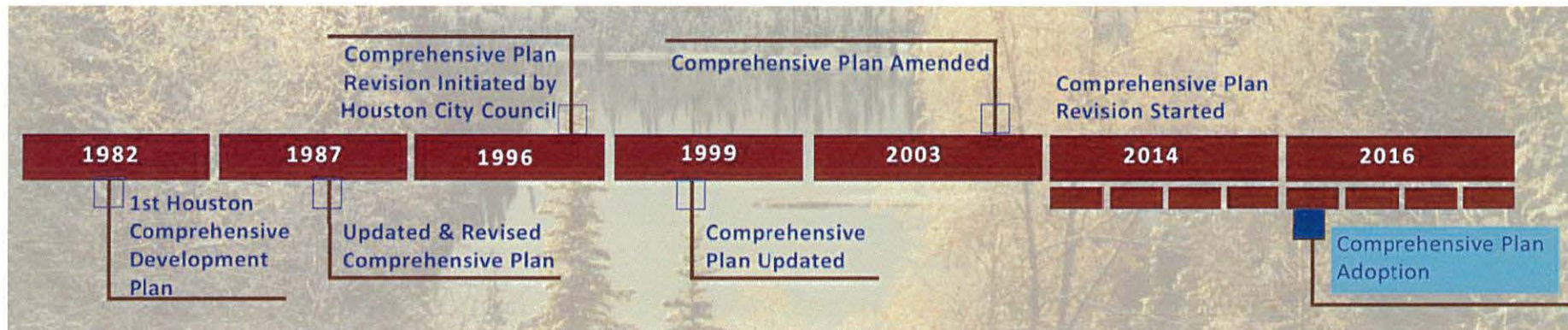
The Steering Committee and Project Team will take the comments into consideration at the next Steering Committee meeting and may edit the Draft Comprehensive Plan accordingly.

Attachments:

- Draft Comprehensive Plan Info Sheet
- Draft Comprehensive Plan Open House Comment Form
- Postcard Open House Notice



What is a Comprehensive Plan and why is the City of Houston revising its Plan?



A Comprehensive Plan is a community's blueprint for future growth, development and change. Houston's Comprehensive Plan will serve as a planning tool and reference for the City and the Mat-Su Borough by ensuring the needs, opinions, vision and goals of the community are acknowledged and well documented to help guide compatible growth and development within and around Houston.

This Draft Plan is based on updated census, population and land use data. This Plan is an articulation of the community's core values based on a community wide survey and business and community stakeholder interviews conducted in 2015 and two public workshops in 2014 and 2015.

The Draft City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan revision reflects the goals, objectives and policies for Houston to govern future land uses and a desired future for the next 20 years through the year 2035.

The Draft Comprehensive Plan is available on the project website: www.HoustonAKCompPlan.com



Land Use Recommendations Summary

(See Land Use Plan Map)

New Land Use Districts

- Town Center/Civic Center (*City Hall & Little Su Campground*)
- Commercial Core (*Parks Hwy & Big Lake Intersection*)
- Commercial Mixed Use (*North of Parks Hwy & Big Lake Intersection*)
- Transportation Facility (*Parks Highway & ARRC*)
- Development Reserve
- Parks and Natural Resource

New Zoning Districts

- Town Center
- Development Reserve (formerly Holding District)
- Parks and Natural Resource

Transportation Recommendations Summary

(See Transportation Plan Maps)

Parks Highway Bypass

- Facilitates the development and growth of a Town Center at City Hall and the Little Su Campground area
- Provides efficient and safe freight movement
- Access management & consolidation for Parks Highway movement

Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor

- Road alignment parallels the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension alignment & reflects concept in Adopted 1982 City of Houston Transportation Plan Map

Parks Highway/Port McKenzie Interchange

- Connects Parks Highway, Proposed Parks Highway Bypass and future Port to Parks corridor

Local Roads Network

- Improved neighborhood connectivity
- Improved emergency response and access

APPENDIX C.
HOUSTON HOUSEHOLD
OPINION SURVEY REPORT

City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment: Household Survey Results

Prepared for:



Prepared by:



February 2015

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Executive Summary

The City of Houston contracted with R&M Consultants to help update its Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment. As part of this effort, R&M Consultants' subcontractor, McDowell Group, an Alaska research and consulting firm, conducted a mail survey (with an online option) of both City of Houston residents and nonresident property owners. The purpose of the survey was to gather input from City residents and property owners on a variety of comprehensive planning issues, such as transportation and recreation needs. The survey also asked residents about environmental issues, economic development, city services, and other aspects of their community. Key findings are summarized below.

Quality of Life

Respondents rated quality of life in Houston an average of 6.9 on a scale of one-to-ten (with 10 being "high"). Just over four in ten respondents (42 percent) said their quality of life was high (rating of 8, 9, or 10 combined).

- More than eight of ten respondents (83 percent) agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that Houston is a good place to live with respect to outdoor recreation and enjoying a rural lifestyle.
- More than two-thirds of respondents (68 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that Houston could use more community planning.
- Houston residents were more likely to agree or strongly agree that Houston is a safe place to live compared to nonresident property owners, 64 percent versus 39 percent. Approximately two respondents in ten disagreed or strongly disagreed that Houston is safe (22 percent).

Transportation-Related Projects

Improved roads and road maintenance are the most widely held transportation concerns in Houston and are considered very important by 62 percent of respondents.

- Younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to rate a new road between Houston and Port MacKenzie very important (38 percent versus 23 percent), and more of them said a Hawk Lane bike path is very important (41 percent versus 24 percent).

Recreation-Related Projects

The top recreation issues for most respondents are creation of recreation programs for youth and maintenance of existing trails and pathways, which both were rated important or very important by 76 percent of respondents.

Houston residents were more likely than nonresident property owners to:

- Rate the creation of recreation programs for youth very important (33 percent versus 24 percent).
- Rate the creation or expansion of an indoor recreation facility very important (32 percent versus 22 percent).

- Rate more motorized trails and pathways very important (36 versus 17 percent).
- Rate non-motorized trails and pathways not important (40 percent versus 27 percent).

Support for Environmental-Related Issues

When asked about their level of support for three environmental-related issues, more than two-thirds of respondents (69 percent) said they are very supportive of protecting drinking water quality, while 29 percent are very supportive of stricter enforcement of flood plan development regulations, and 27 percent are very supportive of stricter regulation of land near rivers, lakes, and streams.

Economic Development Initiatives

When asked the importance of seven economic development initiatives, more than half of respondents (52 percent) said supporting extension of utility services is very important, followed by recruiting new business (42 percent), and supporting natural resource development (35 percent).

- Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks, attracting more tourism, developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River, developing a “town center” with pedestrian-friendly facilities, and recruiting new business all have somewhat less support among residents than among nonresident property owners.

City Services

Eight in ten respondents said continuing to provide fire and emergency services and road maintenance are very important, while 43 percent and 36 percent respectively rated community planning and animal control and shelter very important. All four services were considered very important by more than one-third of respondents.

- Residents were more likely to rate nearly all of the city services very important compared to nonresidents, with the exception of animal control and shelter.

Willingness to Pay for New or Improved City Services or Facilities

Approximately one-third of respondents said they are very willing to pay for improved city fire and emergency response and improved road maintenance through increased property taxes. Only 6 percent of respondents were very willing to pay for cemetery development and maintenance, and 58 percent were not willing to pay for this service at all.

- Men were more likely than women to say they are not willing to pay for city services through increased taxes.

Land Use Regulation

Four in ten respondents said there is just enough regulation of private-property land use, two in ten said there is too much regulation, and an equal number said there is too little regulation.

- Men were more likely to say there is too much private property regulation compared to women, 26 percent versus 11 percent.

Respondent Demographics

- Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) lived in Houston at least nine months during the past year. The average number of years a Houston resident respondent had lived in the community was 13.3 years.
- Only 4 percent of the Houston residents who responded are renters.
- Fifty-nine percent of respondents were male, and 41 percent were female. The average age of all respondents was 56.7 years.
- Average Houston resident household size for all respondents was 2.6 people. The average number of children in Houston households with children was 2.1 children.
- The median annual household income for all respondents was \$63,000.

Methodology

The City of Houston contracted with R&M Consultants to update its Comprehensive Plan (completed in 1999 and amended in 2003), as well as conduct a Community Impact Assessment. As part of that process, R&M Consultants subcontracted with McDowell Group, an Alaska research and consulting firm, to conduct a community household survey. The purpose of the survey was to gather opinions of Houston property owners (including non-Houston residents) and residents about the city's priorities for the next 20 years. The survey enhances community engagement and survey results will inform the planning process.

McDowell Group met with the City of Houston Comprehensive Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision Steering Committee in August and October committee meetings to discuss survey content, as well as review of and pre-test the survey instrument. McDowell Group also attended the September 18 "Future's Workshop" held in Houston to hear community concerns and issues that were also considered for incorporation into the survey design.

On November 7, 2014, a postcard was mailed to 1,651 Houston resident households (including renters and home owners), and property owners. The purpose of the postcard was to provide advance notice of the survey. There were 209 returned post cards with bad addresses. These addresses were removed from the sample (new total of 1,442). The survey was mailed on November 12, 2014. Households were given the option to complete the survey by mail or go online to a secure website, enter their assigned password, and complete the survey. On November 21, another postcard was mailed to thank residents who had completed the survey and encourage those that had not to do so at their earliest convenience. On December 5, a second survey was sent to 1,259 nonrespondents of the first survey mailing. Responses were accepted until January 15, 2015. A total of 365 surveys were completed for a response rate of 25.3 percent.

A self-reported survey has the potential for self-selection bias. While the survey results may be representative, if this was a statistically random survey (such as a telephone administered survey), all responses would have a potential margin of error at the 95 percent confidence interval of +/-5.0 percent. In addition to reporting totals for all questions, this report identifies potentially statistically significant differences in responses for the following major subgroups:

- **Residency** – Residents of Houston and individuals who own property in Houston but whose primary residence is elsewhere (termed "nonresidents").
- **Age** – For sub-group analysis by age groups, "young" respondents are defined as those who indicated they were under 35 years old, "middle age" respondents are defined as 35 to 54 years old, and "older" respondents are defined as those who are 55+ years old.
- **Gender** – Male and female.

A total of 170 respondents (47 percent) provided verbatim responses to an open-ended statement, *"Please feel free to comment about any other planning issues you feel are important for the City of Houston to consider as it develops its new Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment."* These comments are sorted by general theme and are found under separate cover, *Appendix – Verbatim Comments*.

Residency Status

Residency

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) lived in Houston at least nine months during the past year.

Did you live in Houston for more than 9 months in the past year?

	All Responses n=357	Houston Residents n=233	Nonresident Property Owners n=124
Yes	65%	100%	-
No	35	-	100%

Houston Resident Length in Community

Houston resident respondents were evenly distributed by length of residency and lived an average of 13.3 years in Houston.

How many years have you lived Houston?

n=228	Houston Residents
1 to 5 years	24%
6 to 10 years	32
11 to 20 years	23
21+ years	21
Average (Years)	13.3 years

Home Ownership

Only 4 percent of the Houston resident respondents are renters.¹

Do you own or rent your Houston residence or property?

n=228	Houston Residents
Own	94%
Rent	4
Some other arrangement	3

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

¹ In comparison, the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2009-2013 Five-Year Average for Houston was 17 percent rental units of all housing units.

Of the nonresident property owners, 94 percent said they do not rent their Houston property to others.

Do you rent your Houston property to others?

n=113 Nonresident Property Owners	
Yes	6%
No	94

Perceptions of Community Life

Rating of Quality of Life

All respondents were asked to rate their quality of life in Houston on a scale from 1 (very poor) to 10 (very good). Eighteen percent of respondents chose to not answer the question because they did not live in Houston. Of the remaining respondents, four in ten respondents (42 percent) reported their quality of life as high (8, 9, 10 combined), and 51 percent rated it medium (4, 5, 6, 7 combined). Only 7 percent of respondents said their quality of life is low (1, 2, 3 combined). The average response for quality of life was 6.9.

Young respondents were more likely to rate their quality of life as high (52 percent 8, 9, 10 combined) compared to middle age (39 percent 8, 9, 10 combined) and older respondents (41 percent 8, 9, 10 combined).

Quality of Life Rating (1 to 10)

n=344	Percent of Total
High rating (8, 9, 10 combined)	42%
10 – Very good	16%
9	9
8	18
Medium rating (4, 5, 6, 7 combined)	51%
7	20%
6	11
5	15
4	4
Low rating (1, 2, 3 combined)	7%
3	2%
2	4
1 – Poor	1
Average rating	6.9

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Level of Agreement with Statements about Community Life

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Houston is a good place to live with respect to outdoor recreation (83 percent) and enjoying a rural lifestyle (83 percent). Approximately two in ten disagreed or strongly disagreed that Houston is affordable (21 percent), safe (22 percent), or family friendly (20 percent), however.

More than two-thirds (68 percent) agreed or strongly agreed Houston could use more community planning, and 49 percent agreed or strongly agreed the community could use more landscaping of public spaces.

Please indicate your level of agreement regarding the following statements about the community of Houston...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure/ Don't know
Houston is a good place for outdoor recreation.	30%	53%	6%	3%	9%
Houston is a good place to enjoy a rural lifestyle.	25	58	5	3	8
Houston could use more community planning.	33	35	10	6	16
Houston is a good place for people to live affordably.	13	57	14	7	10
Houston is family-friendly.	9	56	16	4	16
Houston is a safe place to live.	9	55	15	7	14
Houston could use more landscaping of public spaces.	23	26	22	12	16

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

There were several statistically significant differences between Houston residents and nonresident property owners on the above statements about community life.

- Houston residents were *more* likely to agree Houston is a safe place to live compared to nonresident property owners (64 percent versus 39 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to disagree Houston is family-friendly than nonresidents (21 percent versus 7 percent, respectively).
 - Likewise, young respondents were *more* likely to disagree Houston is family-friendly (31 percent) compared to middle age and older respondents (both 15 percent).
- Residents were *more* likely to strongly agree Houston is a good place to enjoy a rural lifestyle compared to nonresidents (30 percent versus 18 percent, respectively).

- Residents were *more* likely to disagree and strongly disagree Houston is a good place for people to live affordably (17 and 9 percent, respectively), compared to nonresidents (6 and 1 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to agree and strongly agree Houston could use more community planning (37 and 40 percent, respectively), compared to nonresidents (24 and 25 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to agree Houston could use more landscaping of public spaces than nonresidents (30 percent versus 20 percent, respectively).

Transportation Issues

Level of Importance

Of the nine transportation issues presented in the survey, more respondents considered improved road maintenance very important (62 percent) than any other. Paved roads (38 percent) and more road lighting (36 percent) received the next highest percentages of “very important” ratings. All nine issues were considered very important by at least 20 percent of respondents.

Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support each of the following transportation-related projects...

	Very Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/Don't know
Improved road maintenance	62%	27%	5%	6%
More paved roads	38	33	23	6
Improved lighting on road	36	34	23	7
New road between Houston and Port Mackenzie	28	30	30	13
Development of a Hawk Lane bike path	26	29	32	12
Improved street/road signage	25	42	25	8
Public transportation (bus service) between Houston and other parts of the Mat-Su Borough	24	35	31	10
New Alaska Railroad depot/train stop	23	35	30	12
Development of a “Park and Ride” lot for commuters	22	36	32	11

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

Many of the statistically significant differences between Houston residents and nonresident property owners were related to Houston’s roads. The “very important” percentages of the various road issues for residents and nonresidents are as follows:

- Improved road maintenance: 70 percent of residents versus 48 percent of nonresidents.
- More paved roads: 45 percent of residents versus 26 percent of nonresidents.
- Improved road lighting: 38 percent of residents versus 29 percent of nonresidents.

Residents were *more* likely to consider improved street/road signage as not important compared to nonresidents (29 percent versus 19 percent, respectively). Other differences between residents and nonresidents include the following:

- Residents were *more* likely to say public transportation between Houston and the Mat-Su Borough is very important or somewhat important (27 and 38 percent, respectively), compared to nonresidents (16 and 28 percent, respectively).
 - However, residents were *more* likely to say a new Alaska Railroad depot/train stop is not important compared to nonresidents (33 percent versus 23 percent, respectively).
 - Residents also were *more* likely to say development of a “Park and Ride” lot for commuters is not important compared to nonresidents (37 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to say development of a Hawk Lane bike path is very important compared to nonresidents (30 percent versus 19 percent, respectively).

OTHER DIFFERENCES

Men were *more* likely than women to say various transportation-related issues were not important. The “not important” percentages of men and women are shown below:

- Improved road lighting: 28 percent not important for men versus 16 percent for women.
- Public transportation between Houston and the Mat-Su Borough: 38 percent of men versus 23 percent of women.
- New Alaska Railroad depot/train station: 34 percent of men versus 23 percent of women.
- Development of Hawk Lane bike path: 40 percent of men versus 22 percent of women.
 - Women were *more* likely to rate a Hawk Lane bike path very important compared to men: 36 percent versus 20 percent, respectively.

There were also statistically significant differences among age groups:

- Young and middle age respondents were *more* likely to rate a new road between Houston and Port MacKenzie as very important compared to older respondents (38 and 34 percent, respectively, versus 23 percent).
- Young respondents were *more* likely to rate the development of a Hawk Lane bike path very important compared to older respondents (41 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Young respondents were *more* likely to rate more paved roads not important (38 percent) compared to middle age and older respondents (both 21 percent).
- Young respondents were *more* likely to rate improved road/street signage not important (48 percent) compared to middle age (27 percent) and older respondents (22 percent).

Highest Transportation-Related Priority

When respondents were asked to identify the single most important priority among the transportation issues listed, improved road maintenance again rose to the top, with 37 percent of respondents saying it is most important. More paved roads and a new road between Houston and Port MacKenzie were considered most important among those on the list by 15 percent and 12 percent of respondents, respectively.

**Of the transportation-related projects listed, which one should be
the most important priority for the City?**

n=335	Percent of Total
Improved road maintenance	37%
More paved roads	15
New road between Houston and Port MacKenzie	12
Improved lighting on road	7
Public transportation (bus service) between Houston and other parts of the Mat-Su Borough	7
Development of a Hawk Lane bike path	6
New Alaska Railroad depot/train stop	4
Development of a "Park and Ride" lot for commuters	3
Improved street/road signage	1
Unsure/Don't know	10

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Answers given for "the most important transportation project" did not vary significantly by subgroups.

Recreation Issues

Level of Importance

Respondents were asked the importance of seven recreation-related projects/issues in Houston. The percentage of “very important” ratings for the top five recreation issues are all similar (within the statistical margin of error). Combining “very important” and “somewhat important” categories suggests the top issues for recreation are creation of recreation programs for youth and maintenance of existing trails and pathways, which both had a combined rating of 76 percent.

Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support each of the following recreation-related projects...

	Very Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/ Don't know
Creation of recreation programs for youth	30%	46%	17%	8%
Maintenance of existing trails and pathways	29	47	16	7
More motorized trails and pathways	29	33	30	8
Creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities, such as an ice rink, swimming pool, or running track	29	32	31	7
Improved public access to lakes	27	43	23	6
More non-motorized trails and pathways	22	34	35	9
Creation of new parks with playground	19	44	30	7

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

The following are the statistically significant differences between Houston resident respondents and nonresident property owners on recreation-related issues.

- Residents were *more* likely to rate the creation of recreation programs for youth as very important compared to nonresidents (33 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Residents were also *more* likely to rate the creation or expansion of an indoor recreation facility very important compared to nonresidents (32 percent versus 22 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to rate the maintenance of existing of trails and pathways not important compared to nonresidents (19 percent versus 12 percent, respectively).
 - However, residents were *more* likely to rate more motorized trails and pathways as very important compared to nonresidents (36 and 17 percent, respectively), and they were *more* likely to rate non-motorized trails and pathways not important (40 percent and 27 percent, respectively).

OTHER DIFFERENCES

- Female respondents were *more* likely to rate the creation of new parks with playgrounds very important compared to men (25 percent versus 14 percent, respectively).
- Women were *more* likely to rate maintenance of existing trails and pathways very important compared to men (37 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Men were *more* likely to say more non-motorized trails and pathways were not important compared to women (44 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Middle age respondents were *more* likely to say more motorized trails and pathways were very important compared to older respondents (39 percent versus 25 percent, respectively).
- Young respondents were *more* likely to rate the expansion of indoor recreation facilities very important compared to older respondents (45 percent versus 26 percent, respectively).

Highest Recreation-Related Priority

The four top issues for “most important priority” among the recreation issues listed were creation of recreation youth programs (16 percent), improved public access to lakes (16 percent), creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities (15 percent), and more motorized trails and pathways (14 percent).

Of the recreation-related projects listed, which one should be the most important priority for the City?

n=335	Percent of Total
Creation of recreation programs for youth	16%
Improved public access to lakes	16
Creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities, such as an ice rink, swimming pool, or running track	15
More motorized trails and pathways	14
Maintenance of existing trails and pathways	11
More non-motorized trails and pathways	9
Creation of new parks with playground	7
Unsure/Don't know	13

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

Residents were *more* likely than nonresidents to say more motorized trails and pathways and the creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities are the most important recreation projects, 18 percent resident versus 8 percent nonresident for trails and pathways, and 17 percent resident versus 10 percent nonresident for indoor facilities. There was no statistically significant difference between residents and nonresidents in their responses to the other recreation options.

Environmental Issues

Level of Support

Respondents were asked about their support of three environmental-related issues. More than two-thirds of respondents (69 percent) were very supportive of the protection of drinking water quality, more than twice the “very supportive” percentages for stricter enforcement of flood plain development regulations (29 percent) and stricter regulation of land near rivers, lakes, and streams (27 percent).

Please indicate how supportive you are for the City of Houston to strengthen each of the following environmental-related issues...

	Very supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not supportive	Unsure/ Don't know
Protection of drinking water quality	69%	20%	6%	5%
Stricter enforcement of flood plain development regulations	29	36	25	11
Stricter regulation of land near rivers, lakes, and streams	27	37	27	9

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

With respect to environmental issues,

- More residents were very supportive of the protection of drinking water quality than nonresident property owners (78 percent versus 52 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to be very supportive of flood plain development regulations compared to nonresidents (33 percent versus 21 percent, respectively).

OTHER DIFFERENCES

- More men said they were not supportive of stricter regulation of land near water sources than women (33 percent versus 19 percent, respectively), and stricter enforcement of flood plain development (29 percent versus 19 percent, respectively).
- More women were very supportive of drinking water quality compared to men (76 percent versus 66 percent, respectively).

Economic Development Initiatives

Level of Importance

When asked the importance of seven economic development initiatives, more than half of respondents (52 percent) said supporting extension of utility services is very important, followed by recruiting new business (42 percent), and supporting natural resource development (35 percent). All issues were considered very important by at least one-quarter of respondents; however, developing a “town center,” developing a tourism attraction, attracting more tourism, and attracting more industrial development were all described as not important by more than one-quarter of respondents as well.

Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support new development or expansion in each of the following areas of economic development...

	Very Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/ Don't know
Supporting extension of utility services	52%	30%	12%	6%
Recruiting new business	42	40	13	5
Supporting natural resources development in the area	35	34	22	8
Developing a “town center” with pedestrian-friendly facilities	31	33	28	8
Developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River	29	33	31	8
Attracting more tourism development	27	39	29	6
Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks	26	39	26	9

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

Residents are *more* likely to rate several of the economic development issues not important compared to nonresidents:

- Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks: 31 percent of residents versus 17 percent of nonresidents rated it not important.
- Attracting more tourism development: 35 percent of residents versus 16 percent of nonresidents rated it not important.
- Developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River: 36 percent of residents versus 21 percent of nonresidents.

- Developing a “town center” with pedestrian-friendly facilities: 32 percent of residents versus 20 percent of nonresidents.
- Recruiting new business: 15 percent of residents versus 8 percent of nonresidents.

Residents are *more* likely to say the extension of utility services is very important compared to nonresidents, 55 percent of residents compared to 44 percent of nonresidents.

OTHER DIFFERENCES

- Young respondents were *more* likely to say recruiting new business is very important compared to middle age and older respondents (62 percent versus 44 and 38 percent, respectively).
- Young respondents were *more* likely to say supporting natural resource development is very important compared to older respondents (56 percent versus 31 percent).
- Middle age respondents were *more* likely to say supporting the extension of utility services is very important compared to older respondents (64 percent and 46 percent, respectively).
- Male respondents were *more* likely than women to say attracting more tourism development is not important (32 percent versus 23 percent, respectively) and developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River is not important (35 percent versus 22 percent, respectively).

Highest Economic Development Priority

When asked to identify the single most important priority among the economic development initiatives, 30 percent of respondents said supporting extension of utility services is most important. Recruiting new businesses and developing a “town center” followed, with 16 percent and 12 percent of respondents respectively.

Of the economic development projects listed, which one should be the most important priority for the City?

n=345	Percent of Total
Supporting extension of utility services	30%
Recruiting new business	16
Developing a “town center” with pedestrian-friendly facilities	12
Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks	10
Supporting natural resources development in the area	9
Developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River	6
Attracting more tourism development	6
Unsure/Don’t Know	12

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

- Residents were more likely than nonresidents to say supporting extension of utility services is the most important economic development initiative (34 percent versus 21 percent, respectively).

There was no other statistically significant difference in responses between residents and nonresidents, or by age or gender.

City Services

Level of Importance

When asked the importance of four city services, eight in ten respondents said continuing to provide fire and emergency services and road maintenance are very important (80 percent and 79 percent, respectively). All four services were considered very important by more than one-third of respondents.

Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to continue providing the following services...

	Very Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/ Don't know
Fire and emergency services	80%	16%	1%	4%
Road maintenance	79	16	2	4
Community planning	43	38	12	7
Animal control and shelter	36	38	20	6

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

Residents were *more* likely to rate nearly all of the city services very important compared to nonresidents. The "very important" percentages of residents and nonresidents are shown below for the various services:

- Road maintenance: 84 percent of residents rated it *very important* versus 67 percent of nonresidents.
- Fire and emergency services: 84 percent of residents versus 72 percent of nonresidents.
- Community planning: 46 percent of residents versus 36 percent of nonresidents.

On the remaining city service, residents were *more* likely to consider animal control and shelter not important compared to nonresidents (22 percent versus 13 percent, respectively).

- Male respondents were also *more* likely to consider animal control and shelter as not important compared to female respondents (26 percent versus 10 percent, respectively).

Willingness to Pay for City Services or Facilities

Approximately one-third of respondents said they were very willing to pay for improved city fire and emergency response (35 percent) and improved road maintenance (34 percent) through increased property taxes. Only 6 percent of respondents were very willing to pay for cemetery development and maintenance, and 58 percent were not willing to pay for this service at all.

Please indicate how willing you are to pay for the following suggested new or improved City of Houston services or facilities through increased property taxes...

	Very willing	Somewhat willing	Not willing	Unsure/ Don't know
Improved city fire and emergency services	35%	44%	17%	4%
Improved road maintenance	34	40	21	5
Funding of Public Safety Officers	26	29	40	6
Cemetery development and maintenance	6	24	58	12

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

Residents were *more* likely to say they are not willing to pay for funding for public safety officers through increased property taxes than nonresidents (45 percent versus 30 percent, respectively), and not willing to pay for cemetery development and maintenance (63 percent versus 48 percent, respectively).

OTHER DIFFERENCES

Men were *more* likely than women to say they are not willing to pay for all the city services through increased taxes. The "*not willing*" percentages of male respondents and female respondents are shown below:

- Funding of public safety officers: 46 percent of men said they are not willing versus 31 percent of women.
- Improved city fire and emergency services: 22 percent of men versus 9 percent of women.
 - *Conversely*, women were *more* likely to say they are very willing to pay for this improved fire and emergency services than men (43 percent versus 31 percent, respectively).
- Cemetery development and maintenance: 63 percent of men versus 50 percent of women.
- Improved road maintenance: 24 percent of men versus 17 percent of women.
 - *Conversely*, women were *more* likely to say they are very willing to pay for improved road maintenance than men (41 percent versus 28 percent, respectively).

Solid Waste Fee

Respondents were evenly split between very willing (28 percent), somewhat willing (30 percent), and not willing (30 percent) to pay a fee for using a solid waste transfer station.

Please indicate how willing you are to pay a fee to drop off your garbage
at a solid waste transfer station in Houston...

n=345	Very willing	Somewhat willing	Not willing	Unsure/ Don't know
Solid waste drop off fee	28%	30%	30%	12%

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

Residents were *more* willing to pay a garbage drop off fee than nonresidents, 31 percent said they are very willing versus 22 percent, respectively.

Private Property Regulation

Perceptions on Land Use Regulations

Approximately four in ten respondents said there is just enough regulation of private-property land use, slightly more than two in ten said there is too much regulation, and about another two in ten said there is too little regulation. The remaining one-fifth of respondents were unsure/do not know.

In Houston, do you feel there is too much, too little, or just enough private property regulation?

n=356	Percent of Total
Too much regulation	21%
Too little regulation	19
Just enough regulation	41
Unsure/Don't Know	20

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

- Twenty-four percent of residents said there is too much regulation compared to 14 percent of nonresidents, while 45 percent of residents said there is just enough regulation compared to 33 percent of nonresidents.
- Men were *more* likely to say there is too much private property regulation compared to women (26 percent versus 11 percent).

Respondent Demographics

This section provides a demographic profile of survey respondents, including age, gender, household size and characteristics, and educational attainment. Demographic data is presented for the total sample, as well as for Houston residents and nonresident property owners.

Age and Gender

Fifty-nine percent of respondents were male, and 41 percent were female.² The average age of all respondents was 56.7 years. Houston resident respondents had an average age of 54.8 years, and the average age of nonresident property owners was 60.2 years.

Age and Gender

	All Responses	Houston Residents	Nonresident Property Owners
Age	n=343	n=223	n=114
Less than 25 years	1%	1%	1%
25 to 34 years	8	11	2
35 to 44 years	8	8	7
45 to 54 years	24	23	24
55 to 64 years	32	33	31
65+ years	28	24	36
Average age	56.7 years	54.8 years	60.2 years
Gender	n=356	n=229	n=121
Male	59%	59%	59%
Female	41	41	41

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

² In comparison, the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2009-2013 Five-Year Average gender breakout for Houston was 51 percent male and 49 percent female.

Houston Resident Household Characteristics

Average household size for Houston resident respondents was 2.6 people.³ For households with children under age 18, the average number of children in the household was 2.1.

Household Size and Children in the Houston Household

	Houston Residents
Household Size	n=223
0	0%
1	17
2	47
3	12
4+	22
Average household size	2.6 people
Children in Household**	n=229
0	69%
1	12
2	9
3	5
4+	3
Average # children for households with children	2.1 children
Average # children for all households	0.6 children

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

³ In comparison, the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2009-2013 Five-Year Average average household size for Houston was 2.61 (+/-0.35).

Household Income

The median household income for all respondents was \$63,000, and that did not vary among residents and nonresidents.⁴

Annual Household Income (Self-Reported)

	All Responses n=312	Houston Residents n=207	Nonresident Property Owners n=100
Less than \$15,000	7%	7%	6%
\$15,001 to \$25,000	8	9	6
\$25,001 to \$35,000	9	12	4
\$35,001 to \$50,000	13	15	8
\$50,001 to \$75,000	23	21	27
\$75,001 to \$100,000	17	17	17
Over \$100,000	23	18	32
Median household income	\$63,000	\$63,000	\$63,000

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Educational Attainment

The educational attainment of Houston resident respondents and nonresident property-owner respondents are similar in most respects. Nonresident property owners were slightly more likely to have a bachelor's degree than Houston residents (29 percent versus 18 percent, respectively).

Educational Attainment

	All Responses n=352	Houston Residents n=228	Nonresident Property Owners n=119
Less than high school degree	3%	3%	3%
High school diploma/GED	16	18	13
Vocational/technical certificate	9	11	6
Some college	28	28	28
Associate's degree	9	10	7
Bachelor's degree	22	18	29
Master's degree	12	11	12
Doctorate	1	1	3

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

⁴ In comparison, the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2009-2013 Five-Year Average median household income for Houston was \$51,974 (+/- \$8,656).

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APPENDIX D. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT & APPENDICES



**Community Impact Assessment
& Comprehensive Plan Revision**

City of Houston

Community Impact Assessment

Final Report

Prepared by R&M Consultants, Inc. for the City of Houston

October, 2015

DRAFT

CITY OF HOUSTON COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Houston is conducting a Community Impact Assessment in conjunction to the update of the city's Comprehensive Plan. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough wrote the city's Comprehensive Plan in 1999 and its amendment in 2003, and this is the first Community Impact Assessment (CIA) and Comprehensive Plan revision conducted by the City of Houston. Recent increases in population growth, demand for services, as well as major transportation infrastructure projects underway within or adjacent to the City of Houston have prompted the City to prepare and plan for the opportunities for change in the community's infrastructure, economy, and development. The following CIA will assist the planning process by analyzing potential impacts major transportation projects may have on the City of Houston and its quality of life. The evaluation will allow the city and its residents to prepare for positive impacts and mitigate any negative potential impacts within their community and assist Houston in maintaining its unique community character.

The process used to develop the CIA is based on the process defined in the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) "Community Impact Assessment; A Quick Reference for Transportation." The study area assessed is the City of Houston as defined by its existing boundaries, including the newly annexed Knikatu Inc. land. A community profile and the existing conditions report on Houston are used as a baseline for considering impacts. Analysis of the relationship between the proposed transportation projects and the City of Houston consists of identifying and investigating impacts through eleven impact categories.

Categories used to assess impacts of the transportation projects include:

- social and psychological aspects;
- physical aspects;
- visual environment;
- land use;
- economic conditions;
- traffic and circulation;
- mobility and access;
- provision of public services;
- safety, displacement; and
- environmental justice.

Each category is assessed for direct (temporary and long-term), indirect, and cumulative impacts for each alternative and community goals and values identified through various public involvement outreach methods, including open houses and interviews, were considered whenever possible.

Four transportation alternatives are assessed in this CIA including a No Build Alternative. The No Build scenario, Alternative One in the CIA, is evaluated for the direct and indirect impacts that are incurred without action or development and serves as a standard with which to compare impacts of action alternatives to. The second project assessed is the Parks Highway Milepost 44-52

Upgrade. While the majority of the proposed upgrades are occurring outside City boundaries, the terminus of the project is at Big Lake Road where an intersection traffic light is proposed, is within City boundaries and has the potential to impact land use, traffic and circulation, economic conditions and more within Houston.

Alternative three in the CIA is the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension. Segments of the rail extension are currently in the construction phase and will connect Port MacKenzie to the ARRC mainline north of Miller's Reach Road in Houston upon its completion. Newly annexed Knikatu Inc. land into Houston is crossed by the rail extension. Currently, the ARRC does not intend to develop any additional facilities in Houston other than the rail line, though it was expressed by ARRC that the idea of a loading facility would be entertained if private development initiated the establishment of such a facility. The fourth alternative analyzed in this CIA is a Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor. This alternative is conceptual but has been considered since the planning phases of the Port MacKenzie rail extension. The roadway corridor analyzed parallels the rail extension and is based on historical studies supporting the rail extensions development and the City of Houston's 1982 Transportation Plan Map.

The transportation alternatives were chosen for assessment based on their potential to have significant impacts on the City of Houston, both positive and negative. After analyzing each alternative using the FHWA based methodology, minimal to null impacts were identified at large for the City of Houston. The Rail Extension and the conceptual roadway corridor from Port MacKenzie to the Parks Highway would have minimal impacts for the City of Houston. This is largely because the rail extension and roadway corridor would be constructed on currently vacant land, resulting in minimal change. Additional facilities supporting economic growth and development are not a part of the rail extension. Services and amenities necessary for the local economy to benefit from increased traffic along the Parks Highway as a result of the Port-to-Parks roadway are not yet established. While the Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade is proposed to improve travel time throughout that corridor, it does not have any cumulative impacts to the land use or development within Houston, according to FHWA guidelines. Significant adverse impacts were not identified for any of the alternatives.

Despite a lack of short-term direct impacts, members of the community and identified stakeholders believe the City of Houston is poised for expansion and has the right attributes to turn the community into a place that would attract residents, new business, and visitors. While the alternatives assessed may not directly produce a significant change in the community, the long-term cumulative impacts have the potential to be significant. Changes in land use and traffic volumes may encourage new business development, bring more residents and the Rail Extension could provide a more attractive market for industrial and natural resource development. Houston is becoming a key connection point for material goods as well as people traveling between Interior and Southcentral Alaska and that provides greater growth potential for the City. If new developments or information emerge pertaining to the alternatives assessed in this CIA, additional analysis will be conducted in order to provide the most reasonably to-date analysis on anticipated impacts for the City of Houston.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Houston is conducting a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) to evaluate potential effects transportation projects could have on the community of Houston and its quality of life. The CIA will serve as a planning tool and reference for the City of Houston and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough by ensuring the needs, opinions, vision, and goals of the community are acknowledged and well documented to help guide compatible growth and development within and around Houston.

Transportation projects, hereafter referred to as alternatives, assessed in this CIA are: the Parks Highway Milepost (MP) 44-52 Upgrade project, the planned rail extension from Port Mackenzie to the existing Alaska Railroad mainline at Houston, and a conceptual roadway connection from Point MacKenzie Road to the Parks Highway at Houston.

Houston is a growing rural residential community which has developed around the Parks Highway, a National Highway Systems Highway bisecting the community. Each alternative has the potential to significantly impact the socioeconomics, physical environment, and future growth and development of Houston. The CIA will identify potential impacts and recommend mitigation to impacts that conflict with the needs and goals of the community. The documented findings will provide usable information for future development decisions-making processes that will help the community maintain its high quality rural residential living environment, and provide a useful tool for accommodating orderly growth.

1.1 Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan

In conjunction to the CIA, the City of Houston is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan and is conducting a Parks Highway Corridor Study in partnership with the Alaska Department of Transportation. Comprehensive Plans are a tool to plan for future growth, development, and constant change within a community. This CIA will support an effective comprehensive plan by providing city decision makers with information on potential positive and negative impacts major transportation projects could have on the city, assisting the development of effective policies that reflect the community's best interests.

Houston's natural resources provide countless recreational opportunities and attractions. Houston is defined by its rural-residential character and its abundance of available land, popular recreation sites within its "Lakes District", and proximity to the Mat-Su commercial center. There is potential for residential, commercial, and industrial development within Houston and residents are requesting an increase in services and amenities. Planning for development that aligns with the community's rural-residential character and improves residents' quality of life is the goal of the Comprehensive Plan update and the CIA.

1.2 Process Used in this Study

The process used to develop the City of Houston's Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is based on the process defined in the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) "Community Impact Assessment; A Quick Reference for Transportation". Generally, the process consists of defining the project area, developing a community profile of existing conditions, identifying alternatives, analyzing the impacts for each alternative, identifying solutions for any adverse impacts and documenting the findings.

Transportation alternatives were identified through research of current and planned major transportation infrastructure projects within or around Houston. They were selected for analysis based on their potential to have significant impacts on Houston and their proximity to the city. Impacts analyzed include changes in:

- social and psychological characteristics of the community;
- physical aspects;
- visual environment;
- land use;
- economic conditions;
- mobility;
- access;
- traffic and circulation;
- provision of public services; and
- safety.

The CIA will also analyze any environmental justice (EO 12898) concerns and the potential displacement of residents, businesses or facilities. Environmental justice is the fair and equal treatment and meaningful involvement of all peoples regardless of whom they are or where they come from with respect to development, implementation, and enforcement of policies, laws and regulations.

The public plays a crucial role throughout the process by serving as a dynamic source of information. Public involvement for the CIA included meetings with the City of Houston CIA and Comprehensive Plan Revision Steering Committee, public meetings and open houses, newsletters, and a project website. Interviews were conducted as part of the economic analysis for the CIA and Comprehensive Plan Revision and key stakeholders were actively involved in the assessment review process. *See Appendix A for Public Involvement materials.*

1.3 Study Area

The area of study for the Community Impact Assessment is the City of Houston as defined by its existing boundaries, from milepost 52 of the Parks Highway to milepost 62, and includes the newly annexed 1,555 acres of Knikattu, Inc. land. See Figure 1 City of Houston. The annexation was approved by the Local Boundary Commission on April 15, 2015.

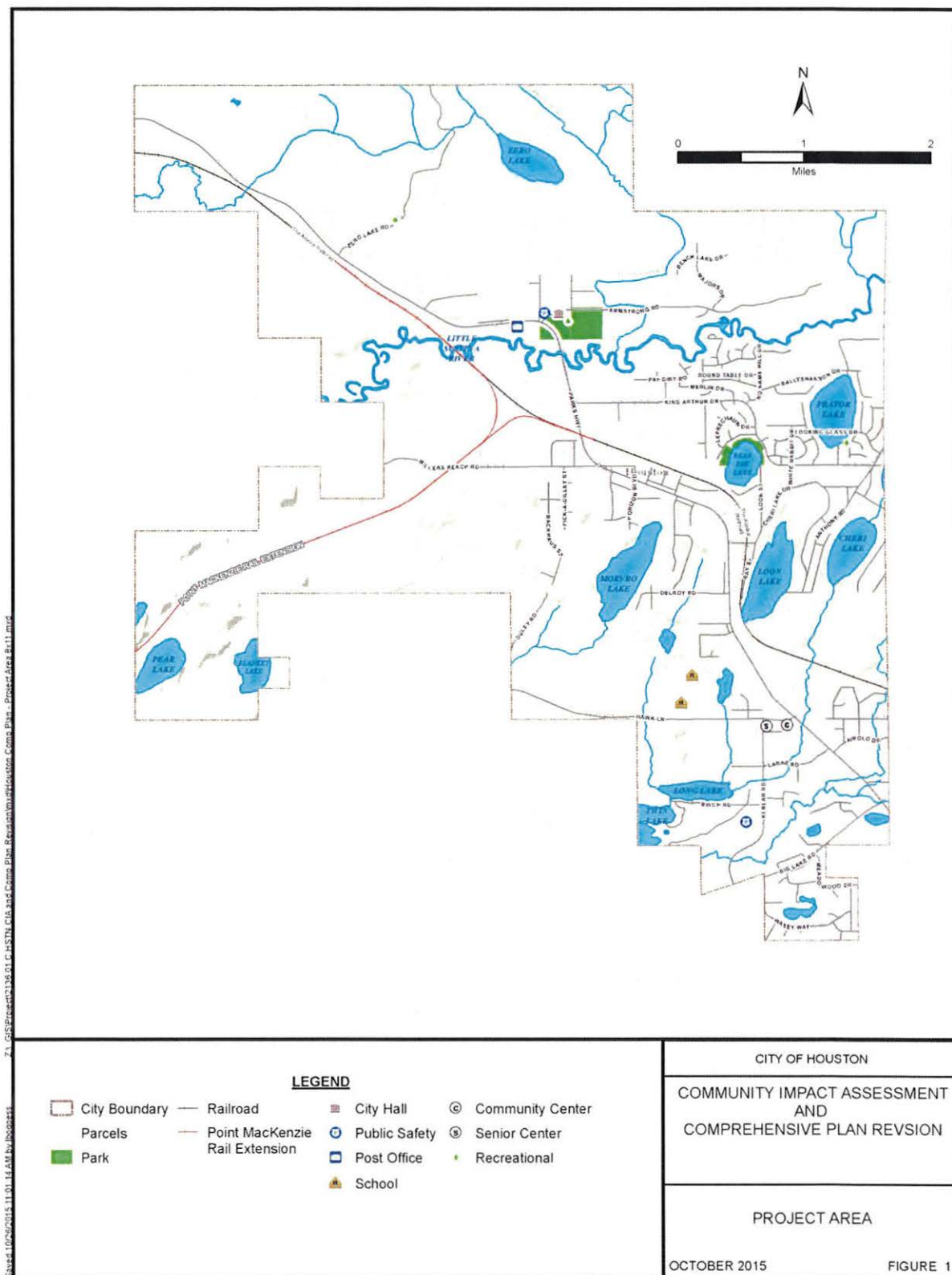


Figure 1 Study Area

2. COMMUNITY PROFILE

The community profile establishes an understanding of the City of Houston's history, existing conditions, anticipated conditions, and of the values residents of the community hold. An understanding of these community elements provides the basis for determining potential affects any given transportation action may have on the City of Houston.

2.1 Community History and Background

Houston, Alaska was first listed on a 1917 blueprint Alaska Railroad map as "Houston Siding," named after Tennessee Congressman William Cannon Houston. The City's origins began with natural resource development and the Herning Trail (now Willow Creek Sled Trail) for freighting supplies to the Willow Creek Mining District, according to the State of Alaska's Community and Regional Affairs database. Several coal mines were developed in the area in 1917-1918 and a railroad spur was constructed that supplied coal to Anchorage and the LaTouche Mining Company in Prince William Sound. The coal from Houston was heavily mined through World War II, after which the mine operations shut down. In 1953-1954 gravel roads and power lines were extended west of Wasilla, and Houston quickly settled. Houston incorporated as a third-class city in 1966 and was reclassified in 1973 to a second-class city.

2.2 Physical Environment

Soils

Soils in Houston generally range from well-drained, well-sorted gravel to hydric wetland soils. A number of small lakes dot the central and southern portions of the community limits and are bordered by glacial moraines consisting of non-sorted glacial till. In general, soils located south of the Little Susitna River and east of the Parks Highway are well drained sand and gravels of pitted outwash and till material. Larger intermittent areas of poorly drained soils and peat bogs occur to the west of the Parks Highway.

The northern topography is characterized by rolling hills and perched silty areas. These soils are fine grained and poorly draining. Development within the area is sparse with only a few gravel pits cut in glacial moraine and esker/kame complexes

Soils in the central portion of Houston are suitable for cultivated crops and agricultural development. Portions of these areas are presently zoned for low density residential and agricultural use.

Waterbodies

Approximately 864 acres, or 5%, of Houston consists of surface waters. The most notable is the Little Susitna River which crosses the Parks Highway in the middle of the community. This river originates in the Talkeetna Mountains in Hatcher Pass and flows southwest ultimately into Cook Inlet. The Little Susitna River, Coho Creek, and a number of contributing unnamed streams are listed in the Anadromous Waters Catalog.

Several popular lakes exist within the City limits including Zero Lake, Bear Paw Lake, Prator Lake, Frog Lake, Cheri Lake, Loon Lake and Morvro Lake. Bear Paw, Prator, Morvro, and Loon Lake are stocked annually with various fish species.

According to "Alaska's Final 2010 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring Report" (July 15, 2010), there are no designated "Impaired Waterbodies" within the city of Houston.

Wetlands

A number of riverine, lacustrine, and palustrine wetlands are present within Houston. Most wetlands are riparian buffers along the Little Susitna River, Coho Creek and surrounding ponds. Several other wetlands are present in low lying areas between Zero Lake and the Little Susitna River.

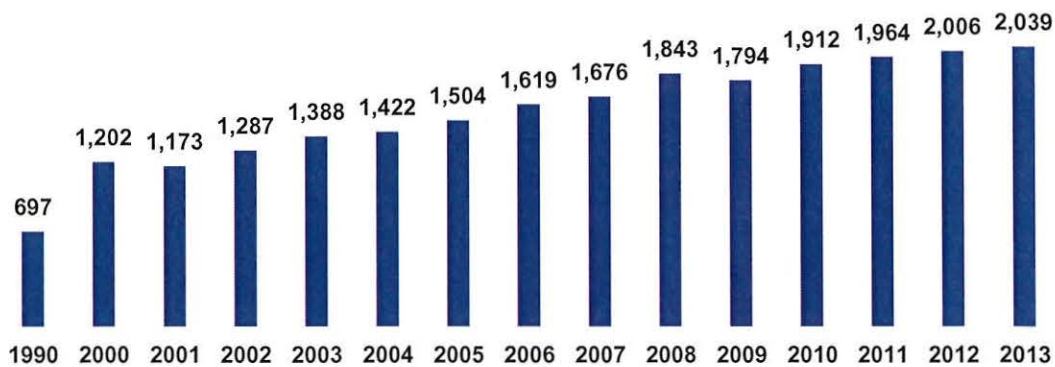
Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) completed a Flood Insurance Study and remapped the Special Flood Hazard Areas for the Mat-Su Borough. The Borough adopted the new floodplain mapping in 2011. The primary floodplain surrounds the Little Susitna River. A floodplain development permit from the Borough is required prior to building or development within a federally designated flood hazard area.

2.3 Population and Demographics

Trends in Population Growth and Demographics:

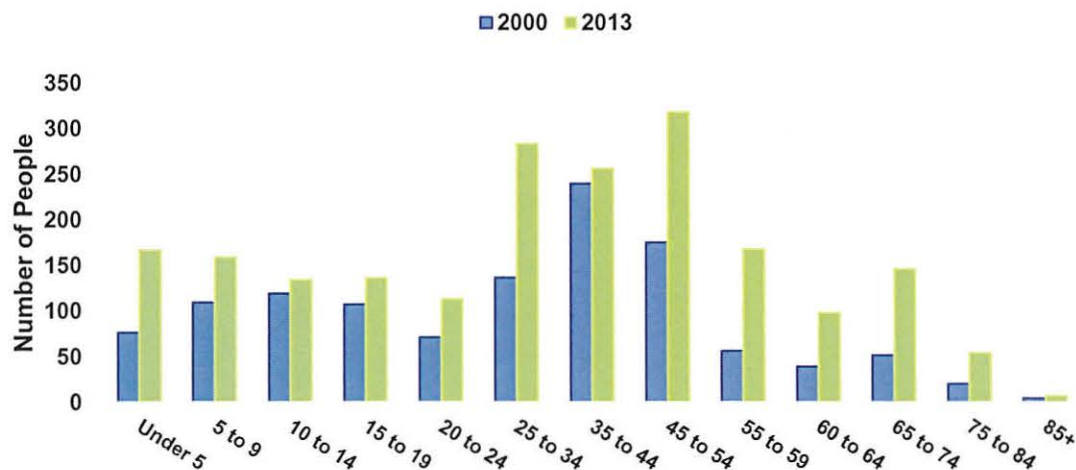
Houston has experienced steady population growth over the past two decades; its 2013 population of 2,039 is almost triple that of 1990 which had 697 residents (see figure 2). This growth rate is higher than that of the entire Mat- Su Borough, which grew 2.4 times in size from 1990 to 2013.

Figure 2. Houston Population, 1990 and 2000-2013

Population growth in the Mat-Su is projected to slow from the current annual growth rate of 3.6% to less than 2% by the year 2035. Since Houston is tied to the Mat-Su economy and has comparable demographics, McDowell Group projects that Houston's population growth will reflect that of the larger Mat-Su, growing approximately 2% over the current period to 2035. With this growth rate, the City of Houston would grow by about 50% of its current population level to slightly more than 3,100 residents in 2035.

Age

The median age of Houston residents in 2013 was just over 36 years of age. This is slightly higher than the average age for the Mat-Su Borough and Alaska, which have median ages of 35 and 34 years respectively. The majority of the population growth has occurred in the older age cohorts.

Figure 3. Houston Population by Age Category and Median Age, 2000 and 2013

Race

The majority of Houston's residents, 87%, self-identify as White. About 4% of Houston residents identify themselves as American Indian and Alaska Native and the remaining 9% of Houston residents identify as multi-racial. These categories reflect the five year average distribution from 2009-2012.

Household Income

The median household income in the City of Houston is almost \$60,000, which is about \$10,000 less than the median household income in the Mat-Su Borough and the state. Per capita income averaged slightly more than \$25,000, less than the \$30,000 found in the Mat-Su Borough and \$32,000 for Alaska.

Approximately 12 percent of families and 16 percent of individuals in Houston live below the federal poverty line. According to 2014 Federal guidelines for Alaska, a household of four making less than \$29,440 or an individual with an income of less than \$14,350 are considered living in poverty. There are approximately 101 households that receive public assistance and 118 households utilize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Educational Attainment

Availability of Facilities: Two schools are located in separate buildings within Houston: Houston Middle School and Houston High School. Elementary school age students currently take a bus to the nearby elementary schools, namely Big Lake Elementary and Willow Elementary School.

According to the U.S. Census and American Community Survey, approximately 90% of Houston's population had a high school degree or higher with 17% holding a bachelor's degree or higher. Educational attainment has increased since the 1990s, see Table 1.

The Household Opinion Survey conducted by the McDowell Group for the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and CIA in 2014 suggests that 18% of Houston residents have a bachelor's degree.

Table 1. Houston Educational Attainment, Population 25 Years and Over, 2000 and 2008-2012 Five- Year Average

	2000	2008-2012	2008-2012 Margin of Error
High school, no diploma	16%	11%	+/-5%
High school diploma or GED		36	+/-6
Some college		31	+/-5
Associate's degree		5	+/-2
Bachelor's degree		9	+/-4
Graduate or professional degree		8	+/-4

City of Houston Community Impact Assessment

Note: Columns may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.
Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey.

Employment

In 2012, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD) estimated there were 768 residents over age 16 employed in Houston, with total annual wages of \$26.5 million. Most workers were employed in the private sector (85 percent), followed by local government (11 percent), and state government (4 percent). The top four industries in terms of employment included Trade (retail and wholesale), Transportation and Utilities (22 percent), Education and Health Services (16 percent), and Construction (13 percent).

In addition to data compiled by the State of Alaska, the American Community Survey offers insight into employment in Houston. According to these data, 782 residents over age 16 were employed and 166 unemployed. The unemployment rate is estimated to be 18 percent. Private wage and salary workers made up 80 percent of employed, followed by government workers (19 percent) and self-employed workers (7 percent). The industries with the highest level of employment were Retail Trade (17 percent), Educational, Health and Social Services (13 percent), Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services (11 percent); and Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing, and Mining (11 percent). Many residents are employed outside of Houston.

Disabled Groups

According to the American Community Survey, about 12% of the civilian population in the Mat-Su Borough is estimated to have a disability. It is assumed that Houston generally reflects the greater Mat-Su in this trend. Services for disabled groups are extremely limited with the City with most persons receiving care in Wasilla or Anchorage.

Alaska Native Entities

Knikatu, Inc. and Cook Inlet Region, Inc. are adjacent land owners to the City of Houston. Some properties owned by CIRI and Knikatu are within the City of Houston boundaries and the roadways on those properties are managed and owned by the City but are listed within the BIA TTP inventory.

2.4 Economics

Economic Base

The economic base for the City of Houston is made up of local tax revenues including sales tax, property tax, and motor vehicle tax, licenses and permits, service fees, and income from outside sources. Collectively the City of Houston has an annual budget of less than one million dollars. Houston's largest expenses are for road service and maintenance and providing fire services.

Seasonal tourism and travel along the Parks Highway provides increased revenue opportunities for the City of Houston. Increasing recreational tourism has been identified as a method of establishing a larger economic base, along with commercial and industrial development along transportation corridors.

Taxes

The City of Houston generates income from local sales taxes, property taxes, and motor vehicle taxes. The current sales tax rate is 2% and the City has budgeted for anticipated revenue of \$151,500 in sales tax for the fiscal year 2015. Property taxes are anticipated to provide \$361,607 in income to the City for the same fiscal year. Overall, the tax base in Houston is proposed to provide \$526,007 in revenues to the City. Residents have stated that an appeal of Houston is its affordable property values; allowing first time homeowners and young families the opportunity to invest.

Houston Businesses

There are 82 business licenses that list their physical address in Houston and are considered active. When filing for a business license, a company determines the North American Industrial Classification System code that best fits with the service they plan to offer. While not completely accurate, this classification system offers some insight into the structure of a local private sector economy. See Table 2 for the composition of businesses in Houston by business type.

Table 2. Composition of Houston Businesses, 2014

2 Digit NAICS Code	Description	Number of Houston Businesses
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1
23	Construction	11
31	Manufacturing	4
42	Trade	15
48	Transportation and Warehousing	5
53	Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	5
54	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	5
56	Administrative, Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	6
61	Educational Services	1
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	3
71	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	5
72	Accommodation and Food Services	4
81	Services	17
TOTAL		82

The North America Industrial Classification System (NAICS) is a taxonomy that categorizes businesses by sector of activity.

During the summer months, traffic through Houston tends to increase. A number of businesses are sustained by this traffic because some travelers stopped to eat a meal, to rent RV space, or purchase fireworks. The City of Houston has the largest concentration of businesses selling fireworks in Alaska. The Little Susitna River is an attraction for anglers as well as river adventurers during the summer months.

At this time, there is no grocery store in Houston: typically residents will travel to Wasilla or Big Lake for their shopping needs. No medical clinics or facilities are in operation within Houston. The closest hospital is Mat-Su Regional Medical Center in Wasilla, along with a full suite of dental, chiropractic and other health services. Currently no gas stations exist within the Houston City limits.

2.5 Physical and Social Community Characteristics

Community Values and Issues (from the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Update, Futures Workshop, Household Opinion Survey and Existing Conditions Report)

The City of Houston is a rural-residential community. Its abundance of available land, popular recreation sites within the "Lakes District" of Houston, and proximity to the commercial center of the Mat-Su Borough has made it a desirable area which has experienced consistent growth. There is potential for residential, commercial, and industrial development within Houston and residents are open to limited development of amenities to enhance their quality of life as long as the city maintains the rural-residential character and preserves the recreational opportunities and ecology within Houston. Finding a balance between development for amenities such as a medical facility, pharmacy, daycare provider, or grocery store and maintaining the current community character is a top priority for the City moving forward.

The City of Houston values its unique identity, independence, rural and recreational lifestyle, affordability, and family-friendliness.

Community Goals (from the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Update)

The goals and objectives of the community play a vital role in assessing the impacts of each alternative. The goals and objectives of the community, as stated in the amended City of Houston Comprehensive Plan (Mat-Su Borough 2003), are as follows:

Primary Goal:

To maintain the high quality residential living environment that currently exists in Houston and to continue to take advantage of the characteristics of the community's rural setting. The community should work toward encouraging a moderate level of growth which will provide an economic

base in Houston adequate to allow provision of employment opportunities in the area and to avoid becoming dependent upon external governmental or economic factors and activities.

Economic Goal:

To help develop a broadly-based economy that is responsive to the requirements of the community by providing opportunities for employment, commercial service and economic growth while maintaining an economical, aesthetically high standard of living not in conflict with established residential, commercial and industrial development goals.

Land Use Goal:

To develop a realistic and responsive land-use plan for Houston, based upon the goals and objectives of the community as well as the economic, environmental and social characteristics of the area.

Recreational Goal:

To provide a broad spectrum of recreational opportunities for all segments of the community and for visitors who come to the community for recreational purposes, while at the same time develop and maintain a neighborhood-scale recreational facilities system.

Governmental Organization Goals:

To assure that the local, borough, state and federal government agencies with jurisdiction in and around Houston are directed in a positive, creative and responsive manner when providing governmental services and facilities needed by the residents of Houston, as well as to ensure responsiveness to public concerns by providing for citizen participation in the planning process at all levels of government.

Environmental Goal:

To work actively toward ensuring that the natural environment of Houston, including but not limited to air and water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and natural vegetation, is enhanced and maintained by encouraging land uses and development that are consistent with the natural characteristics of the community.

Public Services Goal:

To take whatever actions are necessary to provide or encourage the provision of a broad variety of community services within the community on a quality rather than a quantity basis that will improve and enhance the already desirable living environment.

Historic Properties and Cultural Resources

According to the National Register of Historic Places (NR) maintained by the National Park Service and available to the public, there are no NR listed sites within the City of Houston. While there are no listed sites within city limits, there could be eligible sites present. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough established a Historic Preservation Commission by Ordinance of the Assembly in April 1982. The Commission is certified to carry out the purposes of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and will aid in identification, evaluation, registration and protection of sites within the Borough.

Public Services

The City of Houston offers fire and road services. The Houston Emergency Services building houses the Fire Department, see Table 3 for response times of the Houston Fire Department. The City is in the process of constructing a new Fire Station 9-2 to support the function of the existing Interim Fire Station 9-2. At this time, no local police are active and law enforcement is handled by the Alaska State Troopers. The closest public libraries are located in Willow and Big Lake.

Table 3. Houston Fire Department Response Information 2007-2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Call Volume	77	111	235	261	329
Average Response Time in Minutes	8:56	6:57	4:49	2:52	2:57
Percent of Response Under 2 Minutes	22	32	32	56	58
Percent of Response Under 8 Minutes	53	69	85	93	93

Source: Houston Fire Department

Public educational facilities within Houston include Houston High School and Houston Middle School. Currently elementary students attend schools in Big Lake or Willow.

Community Facilities

The Homesteaders Community Center provides a meeting place for the public and fellowship for area residents. The nonprofit organization, which started the Community Center in 1957, has over 50 members and is open to anyone in the community. The group organized social gatherings and holiday parties and also rents out the center for functions. The building is made available for the Mid-Valley Seniors, Inc. which provides fellowship, nutritional programs, and meal services to member seniors in the Big Lake, Houston, Meadow Lakes, and Willow areas.

There are no public libraries in Houston, but there are libraries available to students at the Houston High School and Middle School. The Big Lake Country Club, founded in 2000, is a 24 hour services provider for developmentally delayed and emotionally challenged adults. The Country Club's main campus is in Houston and provides daily support, monitoring, and supervision for adults in need.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

The Little Susitna River provides outdoor recreation in the form of camping, boating, and fishing. On the east side of the Parks Highway, the City of Houston operates the Little Susitna Campground which is open 24 hours a day from Memorial Day to Labor Day weekends. The Campground provides a day use area, pavilion, playgrounds, defined camp sports, fire pits, restrooms, trash disposal and an RV pump station. The City also maintains a public day-use facility on the west side of the Parks Highway with access to the Little Susitna River that includes a

parking area suitable for boat trailers, restrooms and trash receptacles. The Riverside Camper Park is located in the core of Houston, adjacent to the Parks Highway and the Little Susitna River. This Camper Park provides shower and laundry facilities, electricity and a small concession store.

The Houston/Willow Creek Sled Trailhead and recreation area is located at mile 59 of the Parks Highway off Zero Lake Road, providing both day-use and overnight spaces for approximately 60 vehicles or RVs with trailers, picnic tables, BBQ grills, restrooms and trash disposal. There are permanent map signs for two trailheads that lead into Hatcher Pass recreation area.

Five local lakes are stocked with various fish species for recreational purposes, providing even more opportunity for anglers to enjoy Houston. Most trails within the community are informal and do not have clearly dedicated public access. Trails are utilized as transportation corridors for snow machines, ATVs, dog sleds, bikers, horses, pedestrians, and skiers. The Haessler-Norris Trail System is made up of 20 trails of various distances and a published map of this trail system was created for the Willow Dog Mushers Association in 2011.

The Hatcher Pass/Independence Mine, Big Lake, the Susitna Flats State Game Refuge, the Mat-Su Visitor's Center, and Nancy Lake Recreation Areas are all located near the community of Houston and offer various recreational opportunities to local residents as well as regional, out of state, and international tourists.

Infrastructure

There is no public utility system within Houston. Most homes and businesses have private wells and septic systems and some residents do not have indoor plumbing. Electricity is available through Matanuska Electric Association in most of Houston. Natural gas is available in several areas of the City, including areas as far northwest as the north end of Prator Lake on Ballyshannon Drive, but has been identified by residents of Houston as a service they would like to see expanded. Increased accessibility to internet services has been identified by residents as well.

Transportation

The Parks Highway runs through the City of Houston from the southeast boundary to the northwest, bisecting the community. The Parks Highway serves statewide mobility for travel and freight transportation through the city limits of Houston for passage to Fairbanks and interior Alaska. The Alaska Railroad main line also runs through Houston in a route similar to the Parks Highway corridor.

The City of Houston's road network contains about 45 miles of road branching east and west from the Parks Highway, which operates as a backbone for the regional network. The Parks Highway is the only arterial level roadway within the city limits. The remaining roads are either local roads providing access to the surrounding lots or collector roads that provide access to and from the Parks Highway. The majority of roadway network in Houston has a gravel surface with only 10% of the roadways (mainly collector roads) being paved.

A majority of the parcels within the city limits of Houston access the Parks Highway within the city limits of Houston. Alternative access out of the city is available to the west via Kiowa Street which leads to Big Lake and King Arthur Drive to the east which accesses the Meadow Lakes Loop and Pittman Road areas. Additionally, Big Lake Road leads west into Big Lake. There are currently no signalized intersections within the city.

Public transportation services are limited in Houston to a single stop at Gorilla Fireworks for commuters heading south to Wasilla or on to Anchorage. This service began in August of 2014.

Land Use

Currently there are about 3,275 acres of developed land, making up 20% of the total 16,210 acres of land area of Houston. Approximately 12,961 acres or 80% of total land is undeveloped. Figure 4 graphically depicts existing land use including vacant land. The majority of Houston's land is privately owned and other large tract land owners include the City of Houston, the Mat-Su Borough and the State of Alaska. The Alaska Rail Road's rail line, including the Rail Extension from Port MacKenzie to Houston, will be using approximately 161 acres in the City of Houston once the Extension is constructed. This acreage does not include any support facilities such as maintenance buildings or access roads which may be built.

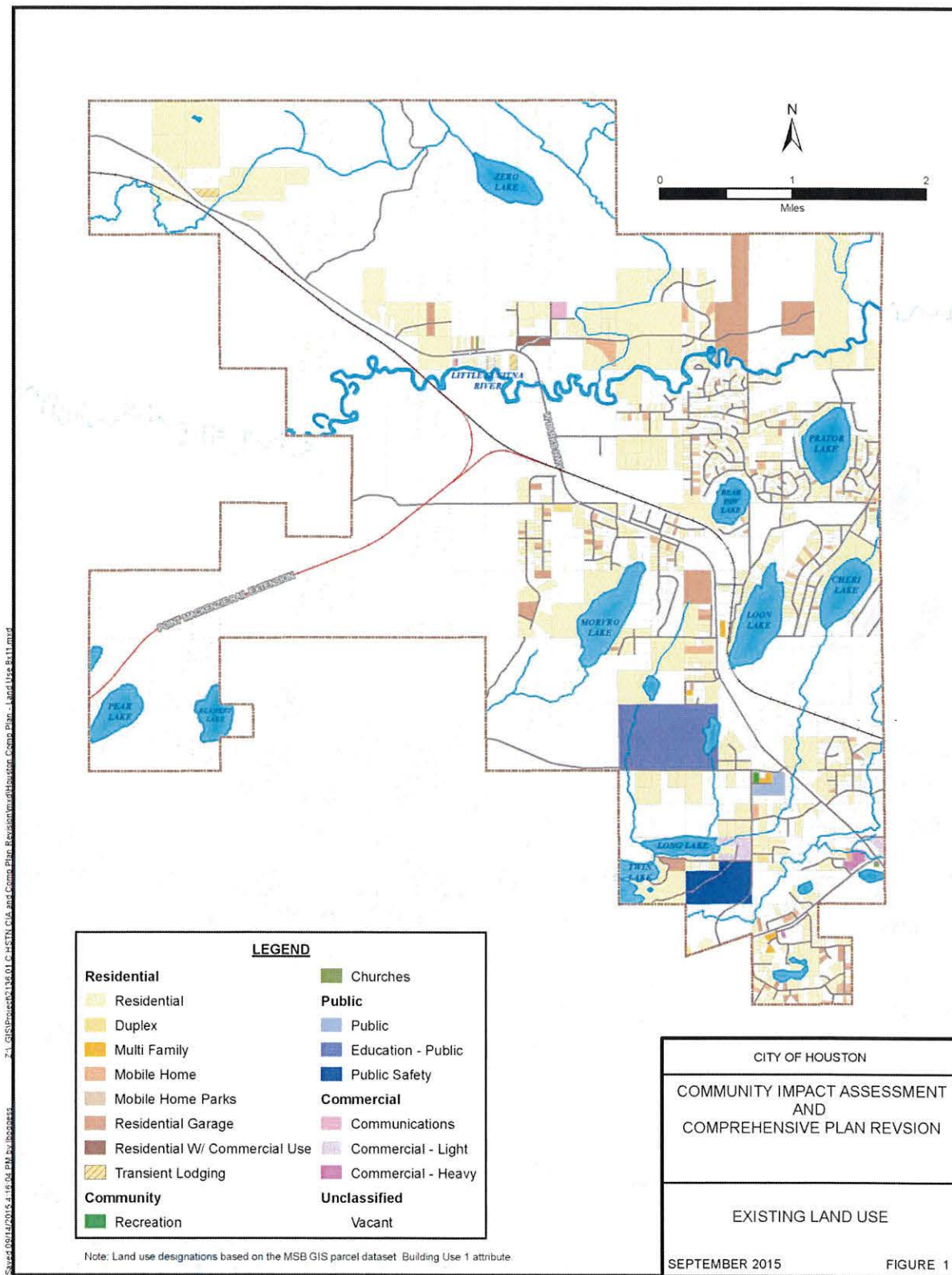


Figure 4. Current Land Use

Zoning Districts

The City of Houston has 11 distinct Zoning Districts that implement the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Districts are a part of the City of Houston's Municipal Land Use Regulations. Table 4 Existing Zoning Districts summarizes the City of Houston's zoning districts and their intent as a baseline for the Comprehensive Plan revision. Figure 5 shows the existing zoning for the City of Houston.

Table 4. Existing Zoning Districts

Zoning District	Zoning Designations
PLI	Public Lands and Institutions
R-1	Single-Family and Two-Family Residential District (low density)
MFR	Multifamily Residential District (medium density)
RA-2.5	Residential/Agriculture District
RA-5	Low-Density Residential Agricultural District
NC	Neighborhood Commercial District
C	Commercial District
LI	Light Industrial District
HI	Heavy Industrial District
H	Holding District
PH	Parks Highway District

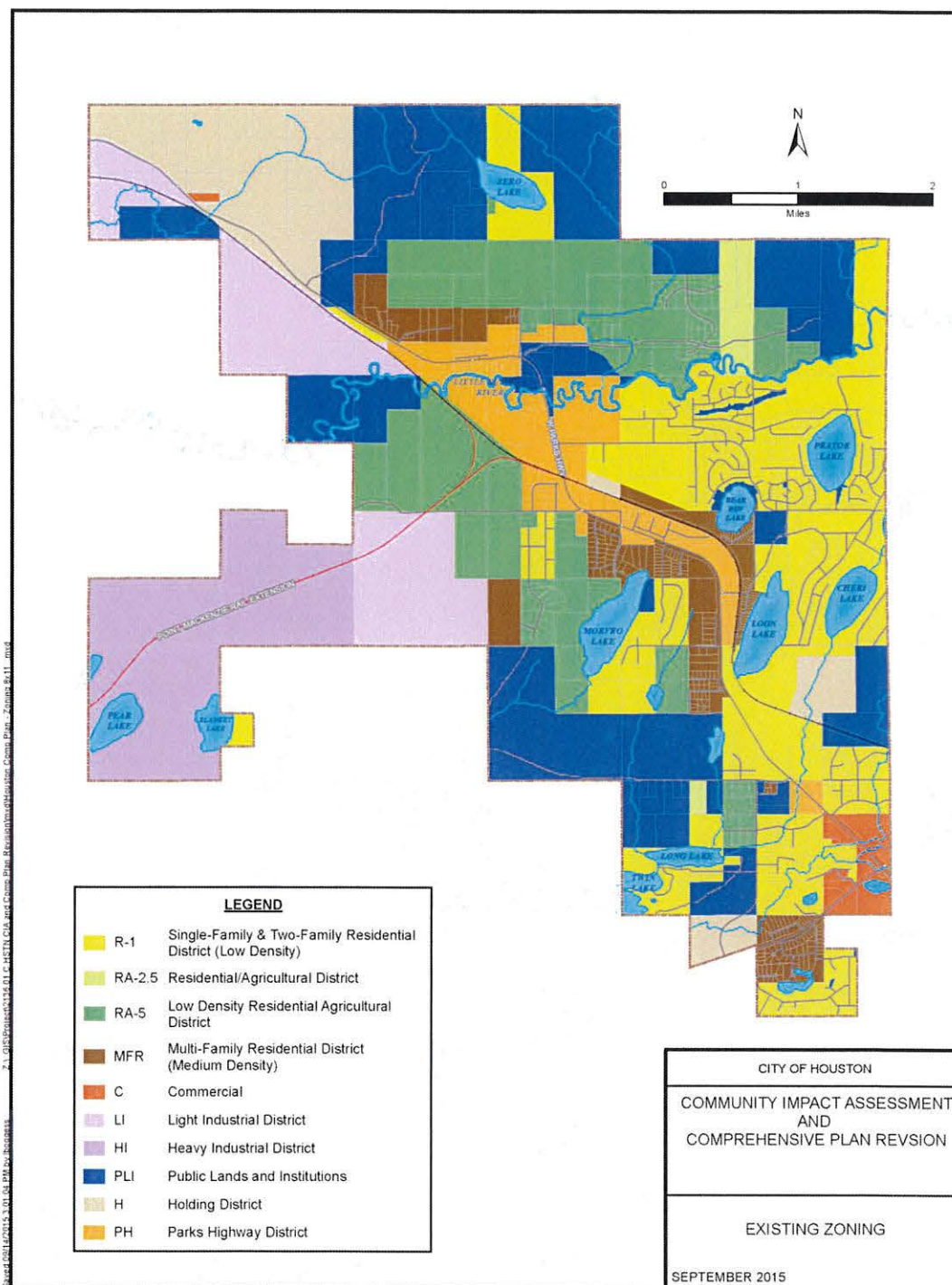


Figure 5. Current Zoning

2.6 Planned and Neighboring Community Development

Planned and Approved Future Development

The City of Houston recently received approval to have a 1,555-acre (2.4 sq. mi.) undeveloped, unincorporated parcel of land owned by Knikatu Inc., a Wasilla-based Alaska Native village corporation, annexed into the City of Houston. The parcel adjoins other Knikatu land that is within the existing City of Houston boundaries and road access is from Houston. Currently there are roads which are included in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) inventory and are owned by the City of Houston. The City of Houston is in the process of designing and constructing a new Fire Station 9-2 to be located at 12176 W. Birch Road to replace the current interim Fire Station 9-2. The new station is intended to be safe, efficient, and provide a comfortable environment for emergency responders to work, train and stay.

Neighboring Community Activities

Wasilla is experiencing growth comparable to that of Houston and is continuing to develop along the Parks Highway. Roadways are being upgraded throughout the commercial district and safety improvements to the Parks Highway have been an Alaska DOT&PF priority for the area. The Alaska DOT&PF are working in partnership with the City of Wasilla and the Mat-Su Borough to conduct a study identifying alternative Parks Highway routes to move through traffic around Wasilla instead of through the City's core. The City of Wasilla is also working to implement the *Wasilla Downtown Area Plan* and is currently going through the approval process for the proposed Downtown Overlay District.

Big Lake is currently petitioning the Local Boundary Commission to incorporate into a second class city. In 2014, Big Lake completed a Community Impact Assessment which considered impacts to Big Lake that could result from different highway routes connecting the Port MacKenzie to the Parks Highway, at full build out of Port MacKenzie.

3. TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

The following transportation projects or plans are being assessed through the City of Houston's Community Impact Assessment. The alternatives have been chosen for the assessment based on their location within or adjacent to the City of Houston boundaries and the potential impacts that could occur to the community if or when these alternatives are implemented.

3.1 Alternative 1: No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative assesses the existing conditions within the community and the potential impacts no development or action will have for the City of Houston. By performing an impact analysis on the anticipated future without a major transportation action, a baseline is established to which impact analyses of other alternatives can adequately be compared. Although a No Build scenario is not a possible alternative for the community at this time due to proposed project already underway or in construction, the No Build alternative provides an informative summary of baseline conditions associated with no development.

3.2 Alternative 2: Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade (Lucus Road through Big Lake Road)

The Parks Highway, from Lucas Road to Big Lake road is being upgraded by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to improve safety and congestion along the roadway. The project has been phased into three segments, the third of which begins at Pittman Road and ends at Big Lake Road, where the City of Houston boundary is, see [Figure 6 Parks Highway Upgrade MP 44-54 Lucas Road to Big Lake Road](#).

Phase 3 is currently moving towards Final Design and Right of Way acquisitions, with construction anticipated for 2017-2018. All information on the project is sourced from the 2013 Design Plans made publically available. Proposed improvements for Phase 3, Pittman Road to Big Lake Road include:

- Stop light controlled intersection with the Parks Highway at Big Lake Road including a crosswalk and pedestrian island;
- Four-lane divided highway which returns to a two-lane highway after Forest Lake Drive;
- New lighting is proposed down a portion of Big Lake Road and on the Parks Highway;
- Pedestrian pathway is to be realigned along the Parks Hwy and Big Lake Road;
- Driveway consolidation throughout project corridor;
- Stoplight controlled intersection at the Parks Highway and S Johnson Road (outside of Houston city limits);
- Add a S Johnsons Frontage road (outside of Houston city limits);
- Continue Winter Way west towards the Parks Highway (outside of Houston city limits); and
- Extend Margin Way to Spring Drive (outside of Houston city limits).

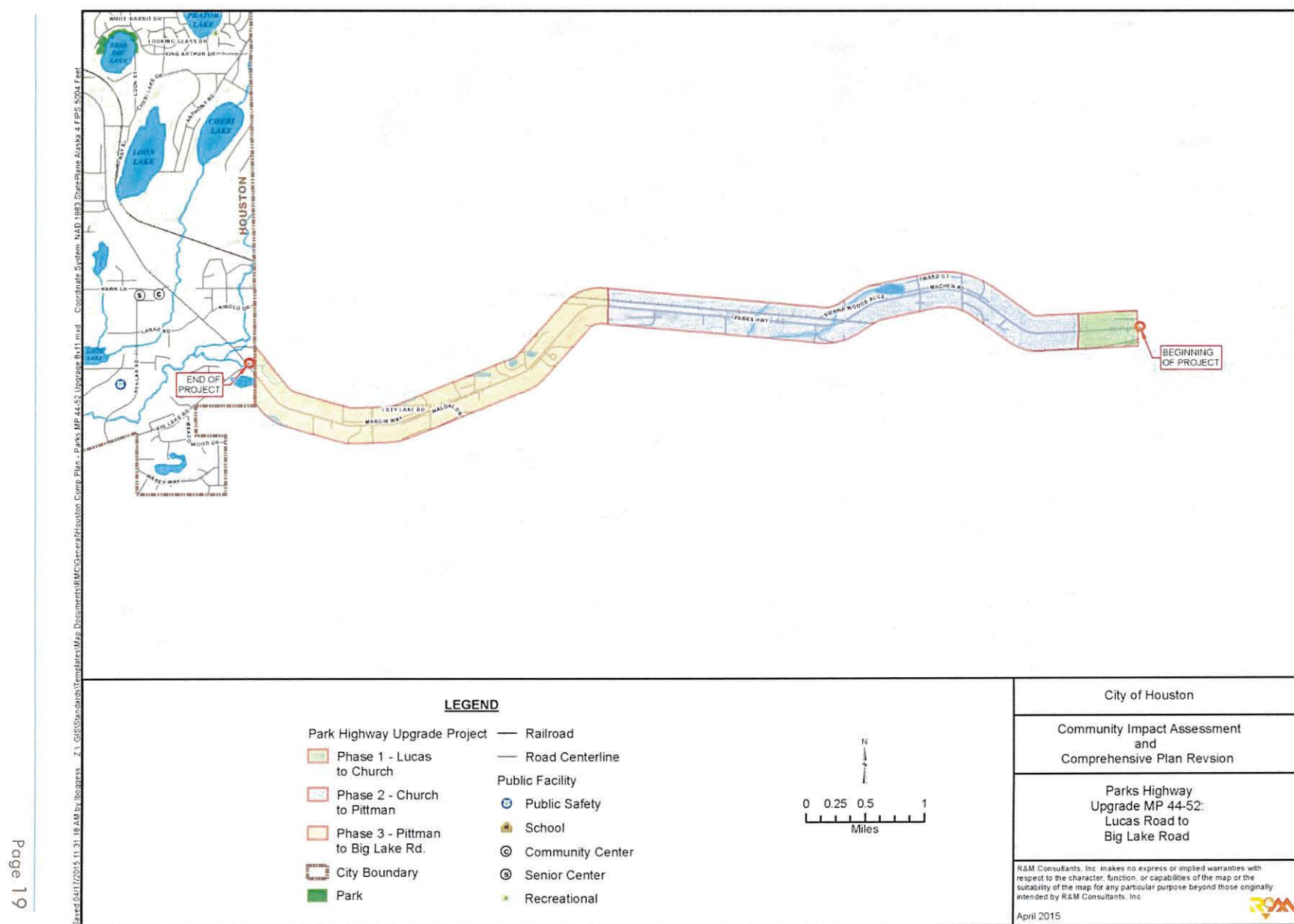


Figure 6. Parks Highway Upgrade MP 44-52 Project Area

3.3 Alternative 3: Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

The Port Mackenzie Rail Extension is a 32-mile extension of the ARRC system that travels from the Port facility north and connects to the mainline in the City of Houston. The Rail Extension will connect with ARRC mainline north of Miller's Reach Road, cross Miller's Reach Road and continue southwest through the annexed area of Knikatu Inc. land, see [Figure 7](#). The Matanuska-Susitna Borough is the co-manager of the rail extension and the operator of Port MacKenzie. Port MacKenzie is a deep-water port with the capacity to handle bulk commodities and is closer to Interior Alaska than the Port of Anchorage. The rail extension will provide for more efficient movement of freight that is currently moved by a combination of rail and truck and has the potential to make the development of Interior Alaska's natural resources more economically feasible.

The Port MacKenzie Rail Extension route was developed from the 2003 Matanuska-Susitna Borough Rail Corridor Study, the 2007 Port MacKenzie Rail Corridor Study, and the 2011 Environmental Impact Statement which recommended the proposed route for the Rail Extension.

Construction of the Extension began in 2013 and in 2014 the embankment was complete and rail was installed for Section 6 of the Extension, from Miller's Reach Road to the ARRC mainline, see [Figure 8](#). Segment 5 of the Rail Extension, beginning north of Muleshoe Lake and connecting to Segment 6 at Miller's Reach Road, passes Houston Lake Loop Trail, Horseshoe Lake and a private access road. This segment is fully funded and embankment construction is anticipated to be completed in the fall of 2015.

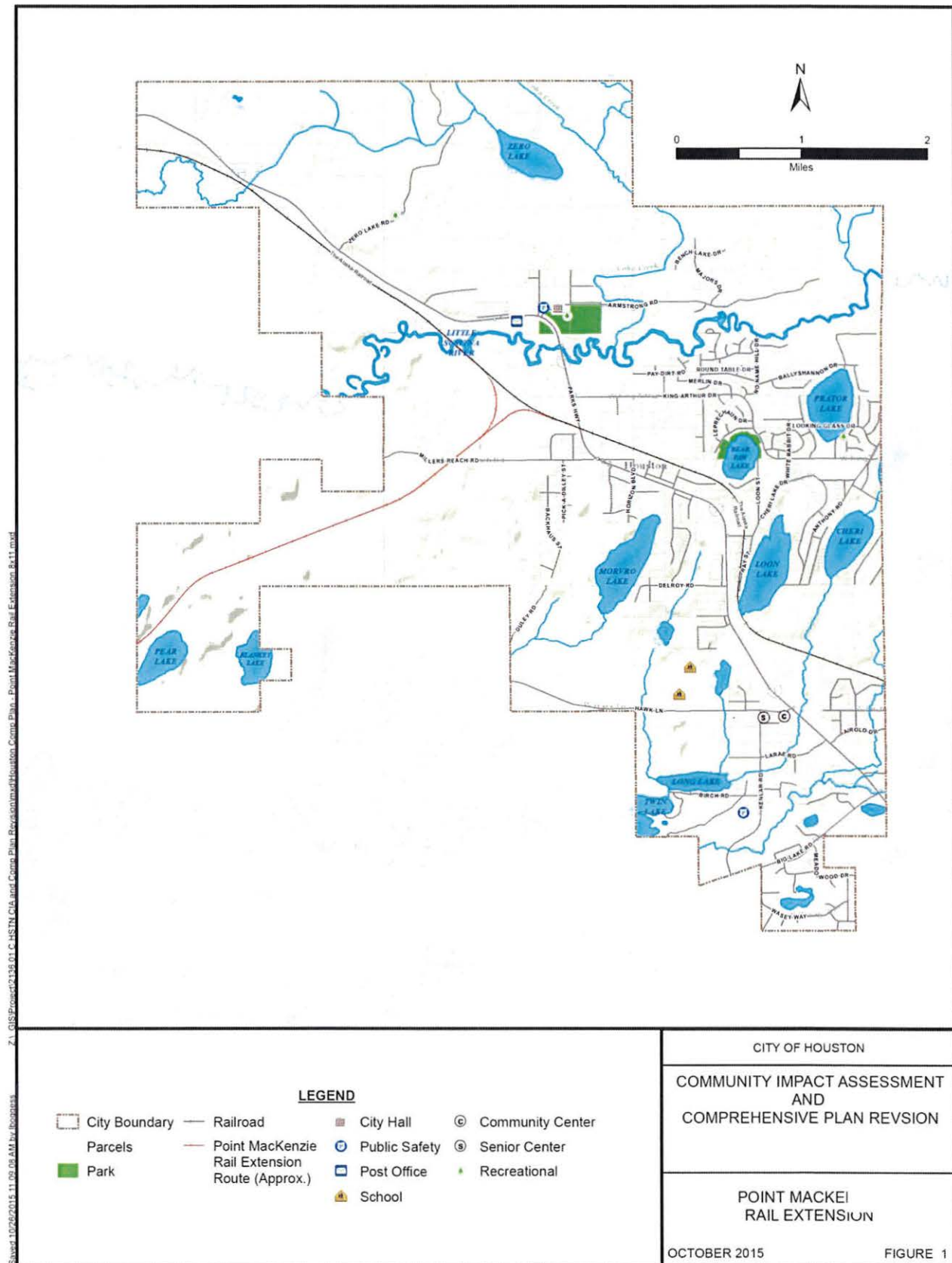


Figure 7. Port MacKenzie Rail Extension in Houston

City of Houston Community Impact Assessment

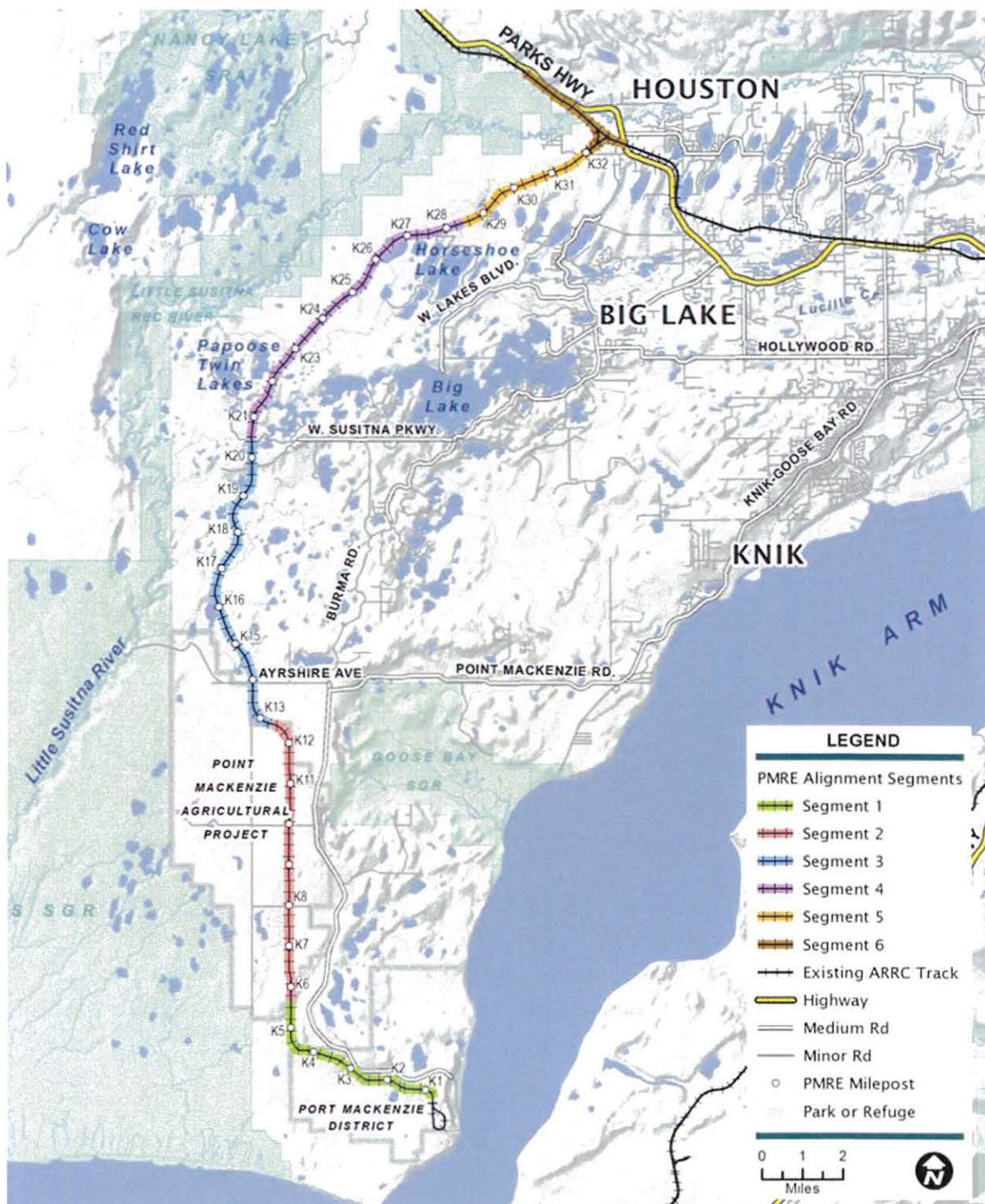


Figure 8. Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project, sourced from portmacrail.com

3.4 Alternative 4: Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor

Introduction and Background

Port MacKenzie is a growing facility and economic asset to the Mat-Su Borough, Anchorage Municipality, and the state of Alaska. Surface transportation access is essential for the port's success and a rail line extension from Point MacKenzie to the Alaska Railroad's (ARR) mainline is being developed. The rail extension's terminus with the ARR mainline is in the City of Houston. A roadway corridor from Port MacKenzie to the Parks Highway has not yet been decided and the City of Houston's CIA will assess a roadway alternative included in past corridor studies which falls within city boundaries.

Sources of historical routes for the Port to Parks Roadway Alternatives include:

- Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Long Range Transportation Plan 2007 Update
- Port MacKenzie Rail Corridor Study (ARRC 2007)
- Matanuska-Susitna Borough Rail Corridor Study (Tryck Nyman Hayes, 2003)
- City of Houston Comprehensive Plan
- 2010 Big Lake Community Council Transportation Projects Location Map

The 2003 Rail Corridor Study analyzed corridors for a new roadway and railway. The study recommended Corridor 3 for the railway, which terminated in Willow, and Corridor 7 for the roadway, which terminated at the Parks Highway via South Big Lake Road, see [Figure 9](#). For the description of the study area and route options analyzed, see pages 9-17 of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Rail Corridor Study 2003, prepared by Tryck Nyman Hayes, Inc.

Corridor 3 (rail) to Willow was recommended for the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension but the alternatives developed in 2007 Rail Corridor Study recommended a Houston South route. The 2007 Houston South route is currently being developed as the ARRC Rail Extension. The Rail Extension has begun construction but some segments of the project have not been established due to pending easements and additional funding (see [Figure 8](#)).

In 2014 the community of Big Lake completed a Community Impact Assessment analyzing possible route alternatives for the Port to Parks roadway connection. The 2014 Big Lake Assessment routes are similar to the corridor alternatives studied in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Rail Corridor Study (2003) that studied roadway and railway corridor alternatives. The Big Lake CIA chose an alternative which used Knik Goose Bay Road as a connecting point to the Parks Highway as the baseline alternative in its study for comparisons because that was the route previously studied by DOT&PF in 2007.

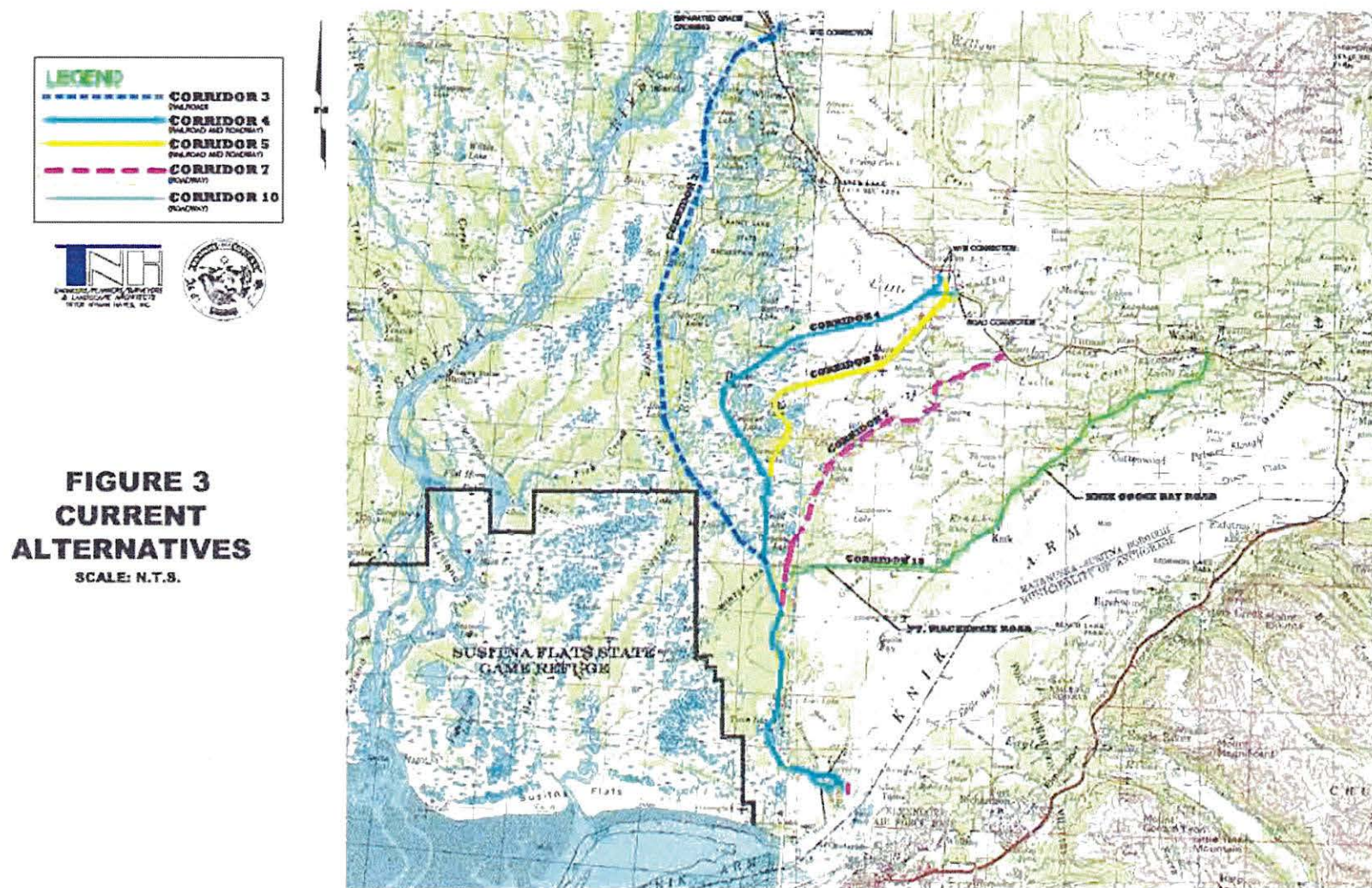


Figure 9. 2003 Rail Corridor Study Alternatives

Highway Corridors to be assessed in the City of Houston's CIA

The City of Houston's CIA will analyze a roadway corridor route, adjusted to known transportation projects, based on the 2003 Rail Corridor Study and the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension, see Figure 10. The Port to Parks roadway alternative also includes the elements shown on the Transportation Element Map in the City of Houston's Comprehensive Development Plan in 1982 (see Figure 11), excluding the Parks Highway Bypass. The Parks Highway Corridor Bypass shown in the 1982 Transportation Plan Map will not be included in the Port to Parks Roadway Corridor assessment, but will be a part of the Parks Highway Corridor Study that will occur in concurrence with this effort.

The City of Houston's CIA will assess a roadway route following the determined Port MacKenzie Rail Extension from Point MacKenzie to Houston. This route was reflected in Alternative 2 of the Big Lake CIA. The roadway alternative, which would parallel the rail line, incorporates the route elements shown in the City of Houston's 1982 Transportation Element Map. The road section is planned and modeled as a two-lane undivided road with a design speed of 65 mph in accordance with assumptions in the 2003 and 2007 planning studies. The City of Houston recently annexed 1,500 acres of Knikatu, Inc. land into the City and zoned the properties to accommodate railroad reliant development at the request of the landowner. This roadway alternative would pass through that land. Houston could be impacted by the development of the rail extension and by the potential development of the roadway corridor which connects to the Parks Highway within its boundaries. As the ARRC constructs the rail extension, right-of-way will be established making a parallel roadway a logical choice for the Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway roadway corridor.

The City of Houston's CIA is not assessing the other corridors analyzed in the Big Lake CIA because they are outside of the determined study area and the impacts to wetlands and existing trail networks make them unreasonable for further study. The development of Alternative 7 of the 2003 Rail Corridor Study and comparable Alternative 3 of the Big Lake CIA, which uses Big Lake Road as the connection to the Parks Highway, would have little impacts upon the City of Houston as this roadway currently exists. The only anticipated change is the project travel on this roadway which will be included in this CIA through the traffic analysis.

City of Houston Community Impact Assessment

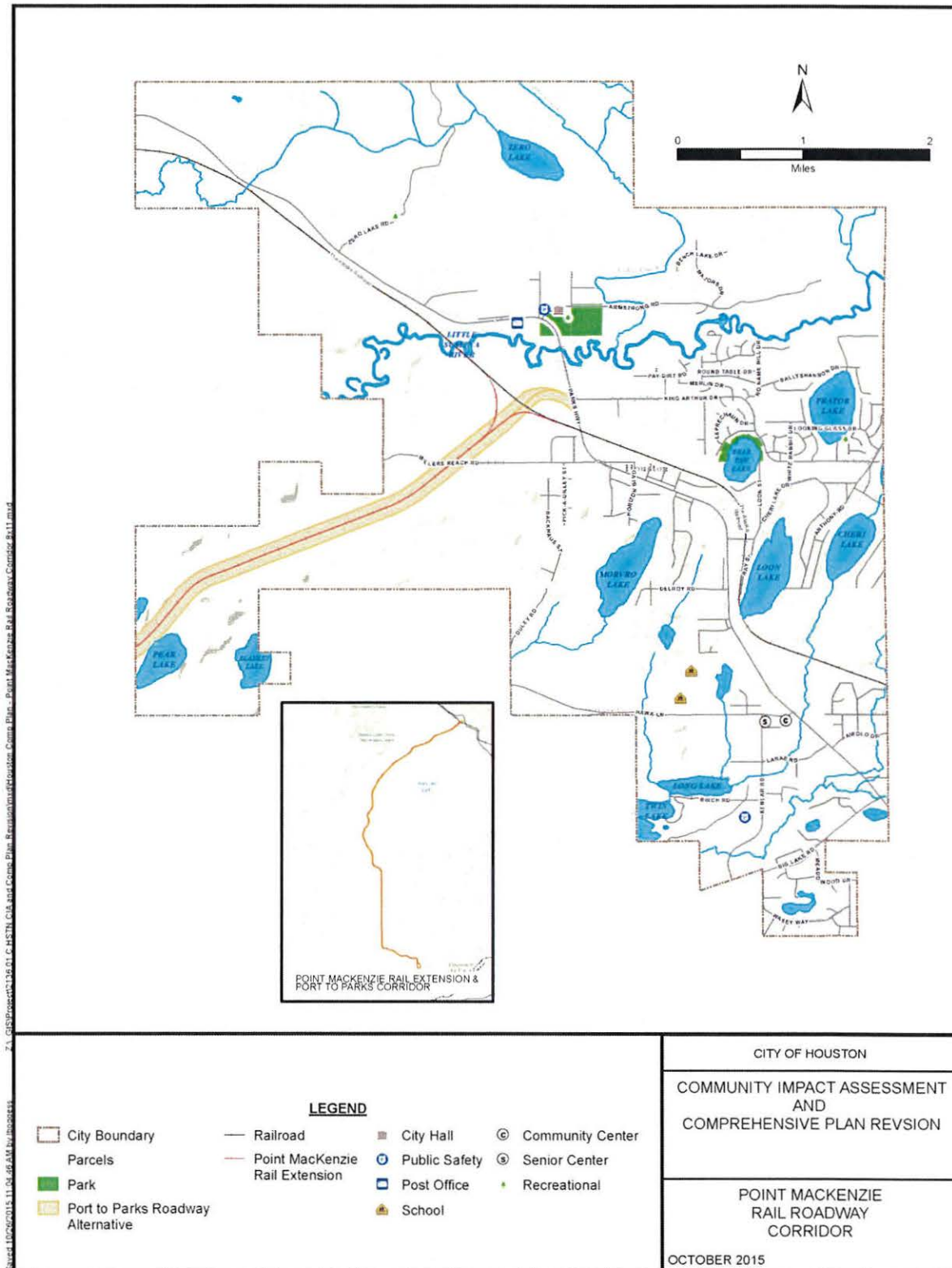


Figure 10. Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor

City of Houston 1982 Plan Map

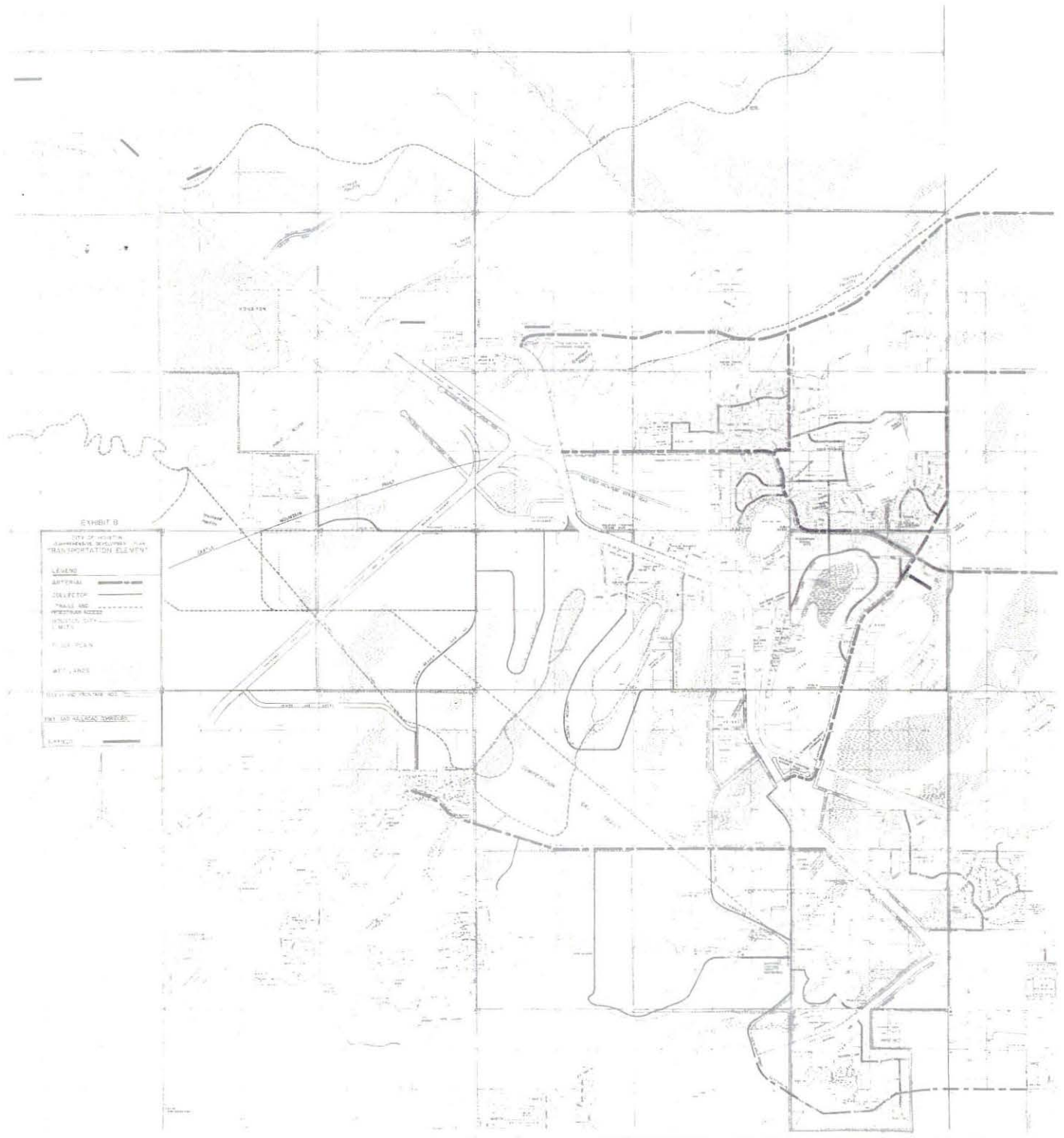


Figure 11. City of Houston 1982 Transportation Plan Map

4. ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The Alternatives Analysis Section of this document will explore and document the relationship between the proposed transportation projects and the City of Houston. This section will identify and investigate impacts of the proposed transportation projects through ten different impact categories.

Community impact assessment, like the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, includes analysis of direct (temporary and long-term), indirect and cumulative impacts per 40 CFR §§ 1508.7 and 1508.8. The community impact assessment is an integral part of the transportation development process and combined with other relevant environmental studies help shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts will be addressed for each impact category.

4.1 The No Build Alternative

The positive and negative impacts of a no-build alternative have also been assessed and presented in this section. The No Build Alternative analyzed in this section is technically not feasible as portions of both the Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade and the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension are in the final design or preliminary construction phase. However, for purposes of this Community Impact Assessment, a No Build scenario is evaluated for direct and indirect impacts to capture the types of positive and negative impacts that are incurred without action or development.

4.2 Impact Categories

Ten impact categories identified in the FHWA Community Impact Assessment reference guide (FHWA 1996) were included in this study, see Table 5 below.

Table 5. Impact Categories Used in Alternatives Assessment

Social and Psychological Aspects	Mobility and Access
Physical Aspects	Provision of Public Services
Visual Environment	Safety
Land Use	Displacement
Economic Conditions	Environmental Justice

This CIA will also be assessing Traffic and Circulation impacts in the alternative assessments. Each impact category has been assessed for direct (temporary and long-term), indirect and cumulative impacts for each alternative including a no-build alternative. Both positive and negative impacts have been included. Community goals and values identified through public involvement and community outreach were considered whenever possible.

4.3 Assessing Impact Categories

A comprehensive approach identified and investigated anticipated project impacts. Relevant data gathered during the existing conditions identification process supports the analysis of the potential project impacts on the community of Houston. As the following sections outline, the potential impacts are based on the likelihood, severity, scale, and length of the impacts. Impact determinations are based on community input, best professional judgment, and by analyzing impacts upon other communities with similarities of size and/or location. Data gathering techniques included research, modeling, mapping, interviews with community stakeholders, public involvement, and household surveys. This methodology assessed the potential impacts for the three build and one no build alternatives to Houston. The FHWA guide provides the framework for identifying effects within each impact category.

1. Social and Psychological Aspects

Impacts examined include changes in population or the redistribution of the population, if the alternative would isolate certain people and if the project could cause a change in community values. This section also considers community cohesion and interaction and assess if the alternative would impact social relationships and patterns or alter the quality of life perceived by residents of the community.

2. Physical Aspects

Assessing impacts on physical aspects includes the examination of noise or vibration, walls, barriers or fencing, or other physical intrusions such as an increase in dust or odor that would result from the transportation alternative.

3. Visual Environment

Impacts are assessed for this category based on the aesthetics of the community and if there will be a change in the character of those aesthetics. It also considers the alternative's compatibility with community plans, goals and design standards.

4. Land Use

Impacts to land use include any changes in land use patterns such as loss of agricultural land use areas, changes in areas open for development and changes in density of an area. Land use assessment also considers the consistency of the alternative with local land use plans and zoning.

5. Economic Impacts Analysis

Impacts to economic conditions include the alternative's ability to encourage or discourage businesses to move to the area, the relocation of businesses within the community or to move outside the area, the visibility of businesses, alterations in the tax base or property values, and short term effects such as economic changers like job creation and loss during construction activities.

Working closely with the City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision Steering Committee, McDowell Group developed a list of contacts that represented a cross-section of business and community groups and interests related to Houston, including tribal organizations, nonprofits, business leaders, school district officials, utility representatives, and others and conducted interviews with those identified. See *Appendix B Economic Development Opportunities: Perspectives of Community Stakeholders*. An interview protocol was designed and adjusted to best capture the interests, experience, and expertise of individual stakeholders. They were asked about the potential of various infrastructure and business opportunities to create employment, generate city revenue, improve community assets, and how Houston's vision responds to growth and change.

Further analysis will be conducted as more information on conceptual projects and events become available.

6. Traffic and Circulation Impacts

Kinney Engineering projected average annual daily traffic (AADT) volumes for the horizon year 2035 using an area travel demand model (TDM), which includes all current planned and funded transportation projects. The models used in this analysis were developed by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in conjunction with the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) and the Matanuska Susitna Borough (MSB). The extents of the model include the entire network of the MSB and MOA from north of Willow all the way to Girdwood and east as far as the community of Sutton on the Glenn Highway. This model has been used to analyze the traffic impacts of the proposed Knik Arm bridge project as well as the Highway-to-Highway project in downtown Anchorage and various Wasilla Bypass alternative corridors.

The model generates traffic volumes based on socio-economic background data, such as population, income level, employment in various work sectors, and school enrollment, as well as a number of special generators such as hotels and airports. The results of the model were used as a baseline for recommendations and for judging project impacts. Since this baseline includes all current planned and funded transportation projects, excluding the Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor, the model's traffic volumes can be considered cumulative. See *Appendix C Traffic Impacts of Major Planning Projects*

7. Mobility and Access

Assessing impacts to mobility and access include examination of pedestrian and bicycle access and how the alternative affects non-motorized access to destinations such as businesses, public services and schools. It also considers shifts in traffic, public transportation, and vehicular access and parking.

8. Provision of Public Services

Impacts to the provision of public services include changes in the use of public facilities, displacement of public facilities, or the introduction to new facilities.

9. Traffic Safety

Impacts to safety are assessed by the ability of the proposed action to affect the likelihood of accidents for non-motorized and motorized travel, changes in the nature and frequency of crime in the community, as well as changes in emergency response time.

4.4 Public Involvement

Throughout the CIA and Comprehensive Plan Revision process, numerous outreach and public involvement activities were conducted. Feedback and input from Houston residents is essential for a complete comprehensive plan or CIA. Public Involvement techniques used to support the CIA and Comprehensive Plan Update include:

- Steering Committee – Community members serving as the planning advisory committee to the CIA and comprehensive plan revision process.
- Project Website
- E-newsletter updates
- Open Houses and Workshop
- Household Opinion Survey sent to all residents and property owners
- Stakeholder interviews

A CIA specific Open House was held on June 4th, 2015. Members of the public reviewed three graphics depicting the impacts identified in the CIA. Each graphic showed the impacts identified for the alternatives assessed for one of three impact categories: Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Impacts. Copies of each graphic were on tables for members of the public to write their feedback directly onto. Attendees were asked to provide the project team with any information they felt was missing from the impact analysis and if there were additional impacts they foresaw that were not shown on the maps (See Figures 13, 14, and 15).

After the CIA Open House, the project website and Steering Committee meetings continued to support the development of the final CIA and public feedback on the CIA was accepted at any time during the process. The summary of the CIA Open House can be found in [Appendix A](#).

4.5 Regulatory Framework

Several laws, regulations and Executive Orders apply to the CIA process; these include the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice), Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, and The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

4.6 Direct Impacts (Temporary and Long-term)

NEPA defines direct effects as those caused by the action and occur at the same time and place. Direct impacts to each impact category will be assessed for each alternative including the no-

build alternative. Assessment will include both positive and negative temporary and long-term impacts.

4.7 Indirect Impacts

NEPA defines indirect effects as those caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth-related effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and other related effects.

4.8 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are the impacts that result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of the agency or parties responsible for the action (40 CFR 1508.7). Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively substantial actions occurring over a period of time within the potentially affected area.

For the purpose of the cumulative impacts analysis, the following projects will be considered:

- Any identifiable existing infrastructure
- All projects in the final design or construction phase including:
 - Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade (Lucas Road to Big Lake Road)
 - Port MacKenzie Rail Extension
- Projects in the conceptual or preliminary design phase:
 - Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor

5. ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

This section summarized the socioeconomic impacts for the alternatives studied in the CIA.

5.1 Alternative 1: No Build Alternative

NEPA requires the comparison of impacts associated with proposed alternatives against anticipated effects of the No Build scenario. Thus the No Build Alternative serves as a baseline to compare the impacts of the proposed or anticipated alternatives. Although the No Build Alternative is not a possible option at this time with portions of proposed projects already underway, this brief impacts analysis provides an informative summary of baseline conditions and the often overlooked positive and negative impacts associated with no development.

Social and Psychological Aspects, Displacement, Environmental Justice

The No Build Alternative would have minimal impacts on the social and psychological aspects of the community structure. Without the construction of new transportation projects, the City of Houston would not incur the typical positive and negative impacts associated with such projects. Population would likely not increase as transportation in and out of the community would not be altered under the No-Build. Without a notable increase in population, community characteristics such as cohesion and interaction, social values, and quality of life would also remain the same. There would be no direct or indirect impacts to neighborhoods as the No Build Alternative does not require residential, business, or farm displacement. The No Build Alternative complies with executive order 12898 regarding Environmental Justice, as this alternative would not result in a disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effect on minority and low-income populations.

Physical Aspects

There would be no new impacts to the physical aspects of the community structure. No sound barriers or walls are currently needed within the community as there would be no elevation in noise sources or receivers. Other physical changes such as dust, odor, or shadow effect are not anticipated.

Visual Environment

There would be no new impacts to the visual and aesthetic character of the community.

Land Use

Under the No Build alternative, there would be no direct or indirect impacts to current land-use patterns such as loss of farmland or density of development. The community has been developing community goals to guide future planning efforts (see Community Profile, Physical and Social Community Characteristics). Although the No Build Alternative would not prohibit the achievement of Houston's Primary Goal, it would not facilitate a "moderate level of growth." As a result, the

No Build alternative does not comply with the community's established goals and therefore could have negative impacts on the community.

Economic Impacts Analysis

The No Build Alternative would have minimal to no impacts on the economic condition in the City of Houston. Assuming the steady population growth the City has been experiencing continues, proportional increases in the tax base are expected.

Mobility and Access

There would be no impact to mobility and access within the City of Houston. Pedestrian and bicycle access and facilities would not be improved upon or negatively affected by development. Public transportation services and facilities as well as vehicular access would not be affected under the No Build Alternative.

Traffic and Circulation Impacts

There would be minor impacts to traffic and circulation under the No Build alternative. There will be continued increase in traffic volumes in relation to the community's steady population increase. Traffic counts recorded by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) and the Matanuska Susitna Borough from 1997 to 2012 reflect a growth trend in traffic volumes of 2.6% along the Parks Highway from Pittman Road to Big Lake Road, a 2.7% increase in volume on the Parks Highway from Big Lake Road to Little Susitna Bridge, and a 0.6% increase from Little Susitna Bridge to Nancy Lake Parkway along the Parks Highway. Under the No Build alternative these trends are expected to continue.

Provision of Public Services

The population of Houston is such that public facilities such as schools and recreational facilities are not currently overcrowded. The No Build alternative would therefore not have an effect on public facilities within the community.

Safety

The No Build alternative would not consider new transportation projects and the associated safety concerns with new road and railway corridors.

5.2 Alternative 2: Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade

Social and Psychological Aspects, Displacement, Environmental Justice

Direct and Indirect Impacts

This alternative would have negligible impacts on the social and psychological aspects of the community structure as the proposed road upgrades would occur primarily outside Houston's city limits. This alternative improves an existing highway facility and is not anticipated to result in a notable increase in population, or community characteristics such as cohesion and interaction; social values, and quality of life are also not anticipated to be negatively impacted by this alternative. There would be no direct or indirect impacts to neighborhoods, as this alternative does not require residential, business, or farm displacement. This alternative is consistent with EO 12898 Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations. As is documented in this section, this alternative would have no high and adverse impact to any impact category; therefore no disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations are expected. Potential impacts from the alternative would have the same social effects regardless of race or income level; therefore minority or low-income populations would not be disproportionately affected, see Community Profile, Population and Demographics.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would have no adverse cumulative social and psychological impacts or result in cumulative effects to minority or low-income populations when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Physical Aspects

Direct and Indirect Impacts

This alternative would have minimal impacts to the physical aspects of the community structure. A new traffic signal would be installed at the intersection of the Parks Highway with Big Lake Road which could have minor noise, dust, or odor associated with idling traffic at this intersection. The impacts are anticipated to be minor as the project will upgrade the condition of the roadway and make safety and traffic efficiency improvements without projected increases in traffic volumes.

Cumulative Impacts

The minor direct and indirect impacts would only result in temporary, highly localized effects to air quality and the noise environment of Houston; therefore the cumulative impacts resulting from previous, current, and other reasonably foreseeable projects would not be significant.

Visual Environment

Direct and Indirect Impacts

The Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade would have minor impacts to the visual and aesthetic character of the community. The new signalized intersection would be the first within the community of Houston and some residents may find this addition an adverse visual effect. Although this alternative has the potential for minor visual effects, the location is near the city limits at a heavily trafficked intersection where such modern traffic signals are appropriate.

Cumulative Impacts

The incremental contribution to cumulative visual effects from this alternative would be negligible. The proposed new infrastructure would be consistent with the existing highway corridor and would not contribute to new effects when considering other past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions.

Land Use**Direct and Indirect Impacts**

Proposed improvements associated with this project would result in minor land use impacts. The intersection improvements will require temporary and permanent right-of-way acquisitions and/or easements from private property owners to accommodate cut/fill slopes. Changes at the intersection may require the reconfiguration and possible realignment of parking and vehicular access on adjacent properties. Direct or indirect impacts to farmland or density of development are not anticipated. This alternative is consistent with the community's goals and plans.

Members of the public in attendance at the CIA Open House concurred with the anticipated land use impacts.

Cumulative Impacts

The Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade would have minor cumulative impacts on land use compatibility when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Economic Impacts Analysis**Direct and Indirect Impacts**

The Parks Highway Upgrade will have minimal impacts on the economic conditions in Houston. With the Parks Highway bisecting the City of Houston, its effect was a common theme heard throughout stakeholder interviews; most residents view the Parks Highway as a potential economic benefit, even with growing congestion. Significant increases in traffic in recent years, resulting in longer commute times to Wasilla or Anchorage, was noted by a few residents. This alternative is designed to alleviate some of that congestion. However, even with the economic potential residents see the Parks Highway having and the proposed traffic improvements to MP 44-52, there are no current plans for development along this section of the Parks Highway, resulting in minimal impacts to the existing conditions. See *Appendix B Economic Development Opportunities: Perspectives of Community Stakeholders*.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative will have minor direct and indirect impacts for Houston's economic condition, and there will be minor cumulative impacts considering the historic and current trends and reasonably foreseeable future actions. If speculated opportunities for development evolve into more concrete plans, the economic analysis will be updated.

Mobility and Access**Direct and Indirect Impacts**

There would be negligible impacts to mobility and access within the City of Houston. Pedestrian and bicycle access and facilities would not be improved upon or negatively affected by

development. However, a positive impact on mobility and access may be realized after construction of the Big Lake Road and Parks Highway intersection and associated pedestrian island and crosswalk. Potential impacts to vehicular traffic and safety for non-motorists is expanded upon below (Traffic and Circulation Impacts). Public transportation services and facilities as well as vehicular access would not be affected under this alternative.

Cumulative Impacts

The Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade would have no cumulative impacts on mobility and access within the community of Houston when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Traffic and Circulation Impacts

Direct and Indirect Impacts

The Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade will alleviate congestion by increasing estimated segment Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) capacity, resulting in faster and more consistent trips between Houston and the city of Wasilla. This could impact economic development in both communities. Additionally, the project would include frontage roads and additional intersection signals, which would also affect economic development along the corridor. Due to the scheduled completion date of this project, it is already included in the base traffic volume forecast for the horizon year 2035; see *Appendix C Traffic Impacts of Major Planning Projects*.

Cumulative Impacts

Likely effects of this alternative include an increase in the number of recreational trips to the City of Houston from Wasilla and surrounding communities; however, local traffic growth as a result of population increase is expected to continue at a steady pace. Increases in population growth and traffic through Houston may impact economic development and land use.

The Travel Demand Model projected traffic volumes for cumulative impacts as it included currently planned and future projects, including this alternative. One key impact and concern which arose from this analysis is the potential traffic volumes between Big Lake Road and King Arthur Road for the Future Planning year of 2035. The travel demand model used in this analysis indicates that the volumes north of Big Lake will grow to about 18,500 AADT in the future planning year. Currently these road segments carry 7,000 AADT. This increase is partial a result of the inclusion of a constructed Knik Arm Bridge and the Wasilla Bypass Road alternatives which would pull additional traffic from Anchorage and Wasilla to attractions in Houston and north on the Parks.

The approximate capacity of the Parks Highway through Houston is 16,500 AADT to achieve a level of service of "D", which is the limit of what is recommended by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. The projected volumes would be at or above this approximate capacity threshold, which suggests that if growth occurs in accordance with the TDM it will likely result in congestion on the Parks Highway between Big Lake Road and King Arthur Road.

Note that this scenario is currently taking place further east on the Parks Highway between Vine Street and Pittman Road, where the current road design and traffic volumes are similar to what is projected in 2035 between Big Lake Road and King Arthur. This indicates that if traffic growth

matches the modeled trends, there may possibly be issues of congestion and severe crashes similar to what is currently being seen in the Parks Highway MP 44-52 4-lane divided upgrade project. See *Appendix C Traffic Impacts of Major Planning Projects*

Provision of Public Services

Direct and Indirect Impacts

Public facilities such as schools and recreational facilities, are not currently at capacity or over capacity given the relatively low population of Houston. There are currently no public water or wastewater services in Houston and the Parks Highway Upgrade does not impact the demand for public utility services. The construction of the proposed new Fire Station 9-2 will not be impacted by this transportation alternative. The Parks Highway Upgrade would therefore not have an effect on public facility density within the community.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would have no cumulative impacts on public facilities within the community of Houston when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Safety

Direct and Indirect Impacts

The safety improvements associated with this alternative along with the new traffic signal and crossing facilities would have a direct positive impact on the safety of pedestrians, bicycles, and motorized traffic. With proper signal timing, emergency vehicles passing through this intersection may be able to respond quicker to emergencies resulting in additional positive impacts.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would not contribute cumulatively to safety impacts within the community of Houston when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

5.3 Alternative 3: Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

Social and Psychological Aspects, Displacement, Environmental Justice

Direct and Indirect Impacts

This alternative would have minor impacts on the social and psychological aspects of the community structure as the proposed railroad extension would traverse through previously undeveloped areas between two existing residential neighborhoods. The railroad addition could affect community characteristics such as cohesion and interaction, social values, and quality of life for rural residences in the vicinity. Direct impacts to neighborhoods are anticipated to be minor as this alternative does not require residential or business relocations within Houston's city limits. Displacement of farm land required for construction of this alternative are also considered to be minor given the availability of land allowing agricultural development outside of this project area, yet still within the community of Houston.

This alternative is consistent with Executive Order (EO) 12898 Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations. As is documented in this section, this alternative would have no high and adverse impact to any impact category; therefore no disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations are expected. Potential impacts from the alternative would have the same social effects regardless of race or income level; therefore, minority or low-income populations would not be disproportionately affected (refer to Population and Demographics Section).

Cumulative Impacts

For the City of Houston, the railroad extension would have a minor contribution to cumulative social and psychological impacts based on past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. This alternative would have no adverse cumulative effects to minority or low-income populations when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Physical Aspects

Direct and Indirect Impacts

This alternative would result in minor impacts to the physical aspects of the community. This alternative would have minor long and short-term noise and air quality (dust) impacts associated with increased train traffic at this new intersection. A sound barrier is not proposed as part of the railway connection as the noise analysis prepared to support the project specific EIS determined that noise and vibration impacts were not substantial enough to necessitate mitigation in the form of noise walls/barriers (EIS Source). No other physical intrusions or shadowing effects are anticipated. Temporary noise impacts during construction would be associated with the use of heavy construction equipment and potentially due to pile driving during the new rail bridge construction.

Cumulative Impacts

The minor direct and indirect impacts would not result in anything other than temporary, highly localized effects to air quality and the noise environment of Houston but would not constitute physical alterations to the community; therefore the cumulative impacts resulting from previous, current, and other reasonably foreseeable projects would not be significant.

Visual Environment

Direct and Indirect Impacts

This alternative would result in minor impacts to the visual environment of the community. The construction of a new rail track intersection within the city limits would constitute a visual change but the connection is to an existing rail track and would be compatible with current transportation based land use. This alternative does not include construction of any associated appurtenances, whistle stop locations, or railroad support facilities. The new railway bridge over the Little Susitna River has been constructed adjacent to the existing railway bridge to minimize visual impacts. This alternative would involve construction within previously undeveloped areas and could have minor visual impacts to existing recreational users (hikers, hunters, snow machining, etc.) at grade-separated crossings.

Cumulative Impacts

The minor or negligible direct and indirect impacts incurred by this project, would not incrementally contribute to cumulative visual effects when considering other past, present and reasonably foreseeable projects.

Land Use

The Rail Extension will be built on land that is currently unclassified vacant land near the connection to the ARRC mainline, zoned as RA-5 Low Density Residential Agricultural District, and will go through a privately owned vacant R-1 Single-Family and Two-family Residential District (Low Density) area before continuing south into Knikatnu, Inc. land annexed into the City of Houston.

Direct and Indirect Impacts

The 2011 EIS evaluated anticipated land use impacts for a number of potential alternative route and alignment combinations. A five mile radius from the proposed project Right-of-Way was evaluated for consistency with existing land use objectives. The segments passing through Houston city limits may incur the following land use impacts: "The need to acquire land within the proposed rail line ROW from existing land owners; the conversion of lands within the rail line ROW, including agricultural lands, to rail line use; and the restriction of access within the ROW without an ARRC entry permit." (Cite EIS). Given the small number of residential displacements, difficulty in identifying and providing comparable nearby housing would not be expected. In accordance with Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, ROW acquisitions and/or easements would not occur on any 4(f) resources identified within Houston (EIS). These resources would include public parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites. Construction of this alignment would provide opportunity for future moderate growth and economic development for the City and is therefore compatible with the community goals outlined in section 2.5 *Physical and Social Community Characteristics* as part of Houston's Comprehensive Plan Update. This alternative would incur moderate impacts to land use as most of the acreage required for this project will need to be acquired and converted.

Cumulative Impacts

The railroad extension would have a moderate contribution to cumulative land use impacts based on past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. Construction of this railroad extension directly contributes to the potential impacts associated with the Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway

roadway corridor (Alternative 4). Although the roadway corridor is still conceptual from a design perspective, the establishment and construction a road from the Port to the Parks has been included in community and borough planning documents for decades and would have potential impacts on land use (see section 3.4 Alternative 4: Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor).

Economic Impacts Analysis

Direct and Indirect Impacts

The Rail Extension is viewed by many in the community as an opportunity for Houston. This extension could decrease transportation costs between Southcentral and Interior Alaska, in turn encouraging development of natural resources and similar activities in the area. A 2007 report commissioned by the Mat-Su Borough that examined the benefits of a similar rail extension concluded:

The quantifiable benefits from the Port MacKenzie to Willow rail link with respect to resource development can be divided into the following two major categories:

- Benefits in the form of rail freight savings derived from the reduced haulage distances from natural resource production sites to tidewater at Port MacKenzie relative to the Ports of Anchorage, Whittier, and Seward.*
- Benefits to the Rail Belt communities in the form of enhanced economic diversification and economic development as a consequent of increases in natural resource production.*

Interviewees for this CIA study saw great potential in having the connection between the new and existing rail line located in Houston as the extension is viewed as a factor increasing the likelihood of manufacturing, resource export, or transportation activity taking place in Houston.

While many interviewees were optimistic about the long-term effects of the rail extension, ARRC indicated there are few marketable ideas in the short to near-term that would warrant additional investment. "There really needs to be a reason for us to build anything beyond just the new tracks," an ARRC representative said. "If it is clear a loading facility or other infrastructure is needed in the future, we will deal with that then. Until that happens, we see minimal impact on Houston and its economy." See *Appendix B Economic Development Opportunities: Perspectives of Community Stakeholders*.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would have minor impacts to the economic conditions in Houston given the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. If private sector development which would use the rail line, such as freight loading-off loading facility, expressed intent to establish in Houston, then cumulative economic impacts could be analyzed further.

At the public open house, there was discussion on the potential development that could occur around the new Port-MacKenzie Rail Extension, including zoning parts of the annexed area for industrial development and Knikatu Inc developing an LED Assembly Facility south of Millers Reach Road. This type of activity would prompt more long-term economic development. Based on discussions at the public meeting and the conducted interviews, the potential future economic impacts driven by the Rail Extension would align with the goals and opinions of the community, so long as this development allows the rest of the community to retain its rural residential character.

Mobility and AccessDirect and Indirect Impacts

Mobility and access would remain largely unchanged as a result of the railroad extension. There are no proposed pedestrian, commuter, or recreational aspects to this alternative; as such, potential positive impacts to public transportation and non-motorist access are not anticipated. As no support facilities are proposed, there are no anticipated parking impacts. Grade-separated crossings are proposed as needed to avoid negative impacts to vehicular access through Houston. ARRC does not propose to provide crossings for all unofficial trails and therefore the rail line would block some trails and associated recreational access to these areas. Anticipated adverse impacts to mobility and access are anticipated to be minor.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would have only minor direct and/or indirect land use impacts and would therefore not contribute to cumulative impacts on mobility and access within the community of Houston when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Traffic and Circulation ImpactsDirect and Indirect Impacts

The Alaska Railroad does not currently have any plans to construct facilities or base any operations at the new railroad junction in Houston. Therefore direct socioeconomic impacts and traffic impacts due to the rail line project alone are considered to be minimal and traffic and circulation would remain largely unchanged as a result of the Rail Extension. However, the ARR has expressed a willingness to accommodate loading facilities at the junction for private development. This may have a considerable impact on the percentage of trucks and freight in the local road network. Private development to support this type of activity is not foreseen in the near future. See *Appendix C Traffic Impacts of Major Planning Projects*. If economic conditions were to change, the rail junction could be considered for a loading site for material currently being driven by truck north from Big Lake to Fairbanks. Therefore, trips that currently exist from the travel lanes on the Parks Highway and Big Lake Road would now be turning in and out of a railroad access point at or near Millers Reach Road. Accommodations for these truck traffic maneuvers would include turn lane construction and providing adequate sight distance for trucks leaving the access road.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would have only minor impacts to traffic and circulation considering the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. This transportation alternative was included in the TDM for the horizon year 2035 and so is reflected in the baseline traffic volume projection discussed in the Alternative 2: Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade Traffic and Circulation analysis. See *Appendix B Traffic Impacts of Major Planning Projects*. If the ARR Extension were to serve loading facilities within Houston, land use, economic development, and the transportation network may be affected.

Provision of Public ServicesDirect and Indirect Impacts

Public facilities such as schools and recreational facilities are not currently at capacity or over capacity given the relatively low population of Houston. There are currently no public water or wastewater facilities in Houston and no public facilities are proposed for construction within Houston as part of the railway extension; therefore, an effect on public facility density within the community is not expected.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would have no cumulative impacts on public facilities within the community of Houston when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Safety

Direct and Indirect Impacts

Safety measures for this alternative have been incorporated into the design of the rail alignment and road/trail intersection lighting and signals. Most importantly, grade-separated crossings have been designed for roads and designated multi-use trails that intersect the new alignment. This alternative would have no direct or indirect impacts to criminal activity or emergency response within the community.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would not contribute cumulatively to safety impacts within the community of Houston when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

5.4 Alternative 4: Port Mackenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor

Social and Psychological Aspects, Displacement, Environmental Justice

Direct and Indirect Impacts

This alternative would have minor impacts on the social and psychological aspects of the community structure similar to the proposed railroad extension (Alternative 2). However, social impacts associated with construction of a new transportation corridor through previously undeveloped areas between two existing residential neighborhoods would have already been incurred under Alternative 2. Construction of the roadway corridor within the ARRC ROW would substantially reduce the degree of adverse effect on the community of Houston. The expansion of the transportation corridor to include a roadway within the vicinity of these rural residences could affect community characteristics such as cohesion and interaction, social values, and quality of life. Direct impacts to neighborhoods are anticipated to be minor as this alternative does not require residential or business relocations within Houston's city limits and construction would occur within an existing transportation corridor. Additional displacement of farm land required is not anticipated.

This alternative is consistent with EO 12898 Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations. As is documented in this section, this alternative would have no high and adverse impact to any impact category; therefore no disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effect on minority and low-income populations are to be expected. Potential impacts from the alternative would have the same social effects regardless of race or income level; therefore minority or low-income populations would not be disproportionately affected (refer to Population and Demographics Section).

Cumulative Impacts

Construction of this railroad extension directly contributes to the potential impacts associated with the railroad corridor (Alternative 2). For this alternative, the railroad extension would contribute to minor cumulative social and psychological impacts based on past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions.

This alternative would have no adverse cumulative effects to minority or low-income populations when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Physical Aspects

Direct and Indirect Impacts

This alternative would result in minor impacts to the physical character of the community associated with increased vehicular traffic along the road corridor. A sound barrier will likely not be proposed to mitigate the road corridor noise impacts as it was not required for the railroad extension. No other physical intrusions or shadowing effects would result from construction of the road corridor itself. Temporary and minor noise impacts associated with the use of heavy equipment and air quality (dust) impacts during construction are anticipated. Assuming the road will be paved, no long-term air-quality issues associated with dust are expected and no other physical intrusions have been identified.

Cumulative Impacts

The anticipated minor impacts could contribute to minor cumulative impacts resulting from previous, current, and other reasonably foreseeable projects. Construction of the roadway corridor would change the physical aspect of this transportation corridor when considering the past construction of the railroad extension and the likely development of commercial, residential, industrial or recreational facilities along the corridor.

Visual Environment

Direct and Indirect Impacts

This alternative would result in minor impacts to the visual environment of the community. The construction of a road paralleling the new rail track would constitute a visual change, but the initial construction of the rail track would incur a majority of these impacts to the visual setting. This alternative does not include construction of any associated appurtenances, whistle stop locations, or railroad support facilities or any other secondary development. The new road corridor is proposed within the ARR ROW to minimize social and environmental impacts in general, including visual. This alternative would involve construction within previously undeveloped areas and could have minor visual impacts to recreational users (hikers, hunters, snow machining, etc.).

Cumulative Impacts

The minor direct and indirect impacts incurred by this project could have a minor contribution to cumulative visual effects when considering other past, present and reasonably foreseeable projects. Construction of this roadway corridor would further change the visual setting of this previously undeveloped area of Houston. The potential for additional development is possible, but is not considered in this cumulative impacts assessment as there are currently no funded projects of this nature.

Land Use

Direct and Indirect Impacts

Anticipated land use impacts for a number of potential railroad alternative route and alignment combinations were identified in the Rail Extension's environmental document. The adverse impacts that were identified in the EIS would be directly related to construction of the railroad and acquiring the necessary ROW. As a result, associated direct and indirect land use impacts resulting from construction of the roadway within the ARR ROW would result in negligible impacts. Construction of this roadway would provide opportunity for future moderate growth and economic development for the City and is therefore compatible with the community goals, outlined in section 2.5 *Physical and Social Community Characteristics*, as part of Houston's Comprehensive Plan Update. The potential for moderate growth and development was reviewed by members of the public at the CIA Open House and encouraged the potential controlled moderate growth.

Cumulative Impacts

Construction of this railroad corridor directly contributes to the anticipated impacts incurred by the railroad extension project (Alternative 2). This alternative would incur minor cumulative impacts to land use when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future.

Economic Impacts Analysis

Direct and Indirect Impacts

The establishment of a roadway from Port MacKenzie to the Parks Highway in Houston would have minor impacts on the economic conditions in Houston. While more traffic may be traveling through the community, current lacks of services and amenities such as a gas station, grocery store, or other attractions limit the additional traffic's contribution to the local economy.

Cumulative Impacts

Because this alternative would only have minor direct and indirect impacts, cumulative impacts on the City's economic condition would also be minimal considering the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions within Houston. If plans for development (including natural resource development, natural gas expansion or transportation, or business development) became more concrete initiatives, then further economic analysis could be conducted.

Mobility and Access

Direct and Indirect Impacts

The potential impacts to mobility and non-motorized access are unknown at this time. There is no current project design and the inclusion of multi-use pathways or trail systems is not currently known. Construction of the roadway corridor would provide additional access to Port MacKenzie facilities and thus could have a positive impact on commute traffic and possibly public transportation if such facilities such as bus service are provided for during the design. As no support facilities are proposed, there are no anticipated parking impacts.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would have only minor direct and/or indirect impacts and would therefore not contribute to cumulative impacts on mobility and access within the community of Houston when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Traffic and Circulation Impacts

Direct and Indirect Impacts

The traffic impacts would not be highly significant when compared to the current system. The existing distance from Millers Reach Road to the intersection of Purinton and Burma is approximately 1.5 miles via Big Lake Road. The alternative corridor between these same two points would be approximately 1.6 miles. Therefore, the benefit for travel would be exclusively based on the fact that the new route would have a design speed of 65 mph, compared to Big Lake Road which is currently posted at 55 mph, and the reduced turbulence of adjacent access along Big Lake Road and the avoidance of existing and future traffic signals or roundabouts in Big Lake. See Figure 12 below.

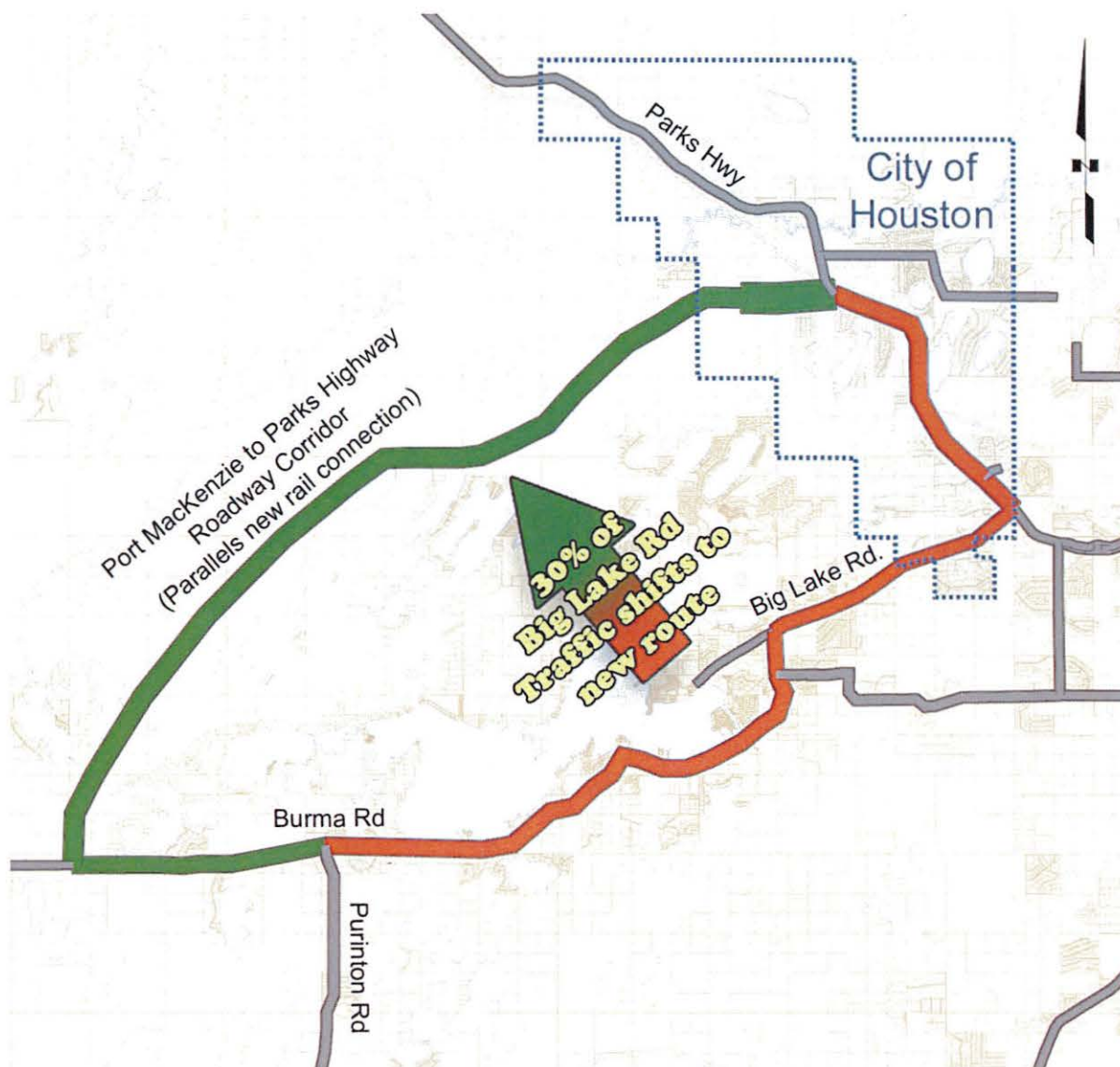


Figure 12. Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor Traffic Shift

Likely effects of a new and improved route between Port MacKenzie and Houston include a shift of traffic volumes from Big Lake to Houston of about 4,000 vehicles per day, which is approximately 30% of the daily traffic on Big Lake Road. A large percentage of the heavy 10 vehicle trips on Big Lake Road would be included in this shifted traffic, particularly after the construction of the proposed Knik Arm Bridge. The decrease in travel time using the new route, if the travel speed is 65 mph, is approximately 5 minutes, considering side street friction and intersection delay due to signals and roundabouts. See Appendix C *Traffic Impacts of Major Planning Projects*

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative could result in changes in economic development and land use based on the projected travel along the corridor. Increased traffic volumes through Houston may allow for greater interest in development along the corridor and Parks Highway.

Provision of Public ServicesDirect and Indirect Impacts

Public facilities such as schools and recreational facilities are not currently at capacity or over capacity given the relatively low population of Houston. The change in demand for additional public services is minimal or null as a result of the roadway corridor. There is no existing public water or wastewater service in Houston and no public facilities are proposed for construction within Houston as part of this alternative; therefore no effect on public facility density within the community is anticipated. At this point, the roadway corridor would be providing access to industrial facilities at Port MacKenzie; therefore, impacts to public facilities in Houston are not anticipated.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would have no cumulative impacts on public facilities within the community of Houston when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

SafetyDirect and Indirect Impacts

Impacts to transportation safety for this alternative are anticipated to be minor. Although safety measures have been incorporated into the design of the railroad corridor (i.e. road/trail crossing indicators and grade-separated crossings), the potential conflict between roadway users and the railroad is possible. Emergency vehicles requiring access to Port MacKenzie may be able to respond quicker to emergencies resulting in additional positive impacts. This alternative is not expected to have any direct or indirect impacts to criminal activity within the community.

Cumulative Impacts

This alternative would not contribute cumulatively to safety impacts within the community of Houston when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

6. OPPORTUNITIES, LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATIONS IDENTIFIED:

The City of Houston's rural setting and character is perceived as both an opportunity and a limitation when considering future development of the community. There is ample land availability that could support industrial, commercial, and residential development. The existing Parks Highway, which bisects the community, as well as the construction of the Rail Extension could further encourage development in Houston. The Extension is viewed as a catalyst for increasing the likelihood of manufacturing, mineral export, or transportation activity taking place in Houston due to its location between the Interior and Southcentral Alaska (see Appendix B). In the short-term, though, the lack of any clear reason or need for Alaska Railroad to invest in infrastructure other than the tracks, such as a loading facility which would support the transportation of any natural resource production, will limit any such development.

Port MacKenzie currently offers minimal infrastructure and associated economic activity, but combined with investment in rail access, a possible gas pipeline, and additional private investment, the Port is viewed as a factor positively impacting the entire region. There is opportunity for the City of Houston to capitalize on growing activity at Port MacKenzie. Possibilities include the potential to host an export facility for coal, gravel, timber, and other natural resources or serve as a staging area for movement of construction materials for oil and natural gas or other major infrastructure projects. These opportunities could become more likely with the completion of the Rail Extension or the construction of a Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor in Houston. The key for activities like this to develop in Houston will be action initiation and investment by the private sector.

The increasing traffic volumes on the Parks Highway may provide an opportunity for development along the Highway corridor and if the Port to Parks Roadway Corridor were to be constructed in Houston, use of the Parks Highway would continue to increase. The tourism industry in Houston could benefit from increases in traffic and capitalize on the Little Susitna River which runs through the Houston City limits, as well as summer use of the lakes for fishing and recreation and the multi-use trails in the winter. Two limiting factors for growth of tourism around the Little Susitna River, however, are access and reduced salmon runs. There currently is no formal boat launch and so boaters use a number of ad-hoc launches along the Parks Highway. Continuing reductions in salmon numbers limits the amount of potential tourism by fishermen, who are the main users of the Little Susitna River.

While land may be plentiful and potential for growth seemingly high, a limitation in development is the low penetration of utilities throughout the community. While there are opportunities to develop relatively large lots that offer privacy, the cost of extending natural gas and electricity utilities can be prohibitive. Population density is the most significant factor reducing availability of natural gas in Houston, especially for residential customers. For this reason, natural gas is unavailable to many residential homes, underlying the reliance on expensive heating oil or wood-burning stoves, which could continue to limit development.

The City of Houston could consider a few approaches if the expansion of utilities became a community priority, including (See Appendix B, Economic Opportunities Report):

- Local Taxation
- Bonding
- State Funding
- Partnering with a Native Organization
- Improvement Districts

Opportunities for new businesses to develop in Houston are supported by the need for amenities such as a gas station or grocery store within the community, the availability of land, increasing traffic along the Parks Highway, and the Park Highway upgrades. The limitations for commercial development reflect similar limitations encountered by industrial and residential development; limited access to utilities, high energy costs, and a small low-density population. However, with the Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade improving access and safety at the intersection of Big Lake Road and the Parks Highway, the potential for new businesses to develop around that location might increase.

During discussions with stakeholders in April, 2015, a number of individuals noted the possibility of Houston becoming a center for both retail marijuana sales and wholesale growing and processing facilities. With the passage of a ballot measure in the fall of 2014 legalizing marijuana in the state and municipalities like Anchorage and Wasilla starting to restrict the use and sale of marijuana, stakeholders thought Houston would benefit if it could position itself as the market for marijuana. While some viewed marijuana as a benefit to the community, a small number of interviewees disapproved of the encouragement of legal marijuana-related activities in Houston. Pointing to the possible social costs of drug use, these stakeholders said they would support restrictions on the local sale and growing of marijuana. On October 6, 2015 Houston voters failed a measure to prohibit commercial marijuana facilities.

When any new development or major action is taken within the City of Houston, the consideration of the action's consistency with community character is essential. The City's Comprehensive Plan outlines goals and policies which are designed to maintain community character and guide desired development with the City. Mitigation between economic development and the maintenance of community character as defined by the policies and goals in the Comprehensive Plan will be essential for successful development within the City of Houston.

7. SUMMARY:

The CIA assessed potential impacts three transportation projects could have on the City of Houston. The Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade will result in minimal short-term direct impacts to the city. Changes in intersection alignment, property access, and vehicle and pedestrian safety and facilities may result in slight land use changes or development of land around the intersection of Big Lake Road and the Parks Highway in the future. Cumulative impacts to the City of Houston due to the Upgrade will be minimal.

The construction of the Rail Extension from Port MacKenzie to the main line in Houston will have moderate land use impacts for the City of Houston, but minimal short-term direct impacts for all other impact categories. The conversion of vacant land to railroad use will not have significant impacts on residents or use of the vacant land, but has the potential to support the changes of land use around the new Rail Extension in the future to non-residential types of development. Long-term cumulative impacts from the Rail Extension could include development that supports industrial activities, commercial development, and support additional transportation facilities such as roadways. Industrial and natural resource development around the new rail junction could have impacts to Houston's economy, but due to the lack of reasonably foreseeable future actions which could be analyzed the impacts are not able to be identified.

The conceptual Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor, connecting to the Parks Highway in Houston near the new rail junction, would have moderate direct traffic impacts for the City of Houston. If the conceptual project were to be built, the projected traffic volumes would shift about 30% of anticipated traffic on Burma Road and Big Lake Road to the new corridor. This traffic would then continue along the Parks Highway through Houston. Direct short-term impacts, other than that to traffic, would be minimal. However, cumulative future impacts could include changes in land use from vacant to that which would support development along the roadway corridor, as well as the more heavily trafficked Parks Highway. Development and higher traffic volumes may initiate changes in Houston's economy.

Many individuals stated during interviews, the CIA open house, and through the household survey that they felt Houston was poised for expansion and had the right attributes to turn the community into a place that would attract residents, new business, and visitors. Most saw Houston being perfectly situated to benefit from a variety of large infrastructure projects such as the development of Port MacKenzie and the accompanying Rail Extension, improvements to the Parks Highway, interim solutions to provide the Interior with natural gas, and the eventual final goal of construction of a natural gas pipeline from the North Slope. While the ideas and long-term visions are numerous, concrete initiatives have not been developed beyond speculation. A possible slowed growth of Houston could include the limited access to natural gas, a relatively small low-density population, growing congestion on the Parks Highway, difficulties in attracting tourism and new businesses to the area, and the possibility that nearby large infrastructure projects may have minimal effect on the city's economy.

Although the alternatives assessed may not directly produce a significant change in the community, the long-term cumulative impacts could be significant. Houston has the potential to emerge as a key connection point for material goods as well as people traveling between Interior and Southcentral Alaska, all of which provides greater growth potential for the City. It should be expected that the City will continue to experience steady population growth and see an increase in the potential for economic development. Maintenance of Houston's unique community character will need to be a priority when considering development actions as well as compliance with the city's goals and policies as defined by its Comprehensive Plan.

8. FUTURE IMPACTS ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

If a significant action was taken by a public or private entity, such as the construction of the Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor in Houston or development of a large industrial facility, it is recommended that the City of Houston conduct an economic analysis and potential update of the Community Impact Assessment. A significant industrial development within the City could produce changes in employment availability, transportation routes and modes frequently used, and land use. Because of this possibility, an update to the CIA would be recommended in order to more adequately support future planning processes undertaken by the City of Houston.

9. REFERENCES:

Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation (FHWA 1996). Community Impacts Assessment – A Quick Reference for Transportation. Publication No. FHWA-PD-96-036. September 1996.

Surface Transportation Board, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Alaska Railroad Corporation Construction and Operation of a Rail Line Extension to Port MacKenzie, Alaska. Docket No. FD 35095. March 2011.

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY



June 4, 2015 Community Impact Assessment & Comp. Plan Review Open House 2 – CIA

Project: City of Houston Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision

Project No: R&M 2136.01

Purpose: Open House for public to review and comment on draft CIA findings

Date: Thursday, June 4th, 2015

Time: 4:30PM – 6:30PM

Location: City of Houston Fire Station

Meeting Attendance: 28 members of the public and Steering Committee member were present

Project Team in Attendance:

R&M Consultants

Van Le, AICP Project Manager

Taryn Oleson Planner & PI Coordinator

Kristi McLean Environmental Specialist, CIA Lead

City of Houston Steering Committee Members

Mayor Virgie Thompson

Lance Wilson, Deputy Mayor

Len Anderson, Chair Steering Committee

Ron Jones

Chris Johnson

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MEETING SUMMARY

As the public entered the Fire Station, they were greeted by a member of the R&M project team who provided a brief explanation on what the CIA is and the purpose of the open house. Attendees signed in, picked up a Fact Sheet on the transportation alternatives assessed in the CIA, and helped themselves to snacks and refreshments. In the truck hull of the Fire Station a variety of boards were on display.

The maps on display were the focus of the open house. Three graphics on large 34x44" boards depicted the potential impacts identified in the CIA to this point. Each graphic showed impacts for one of three impact categories; Transportation, Land Use, and Economic impacts. Impacts were shown geographically on a map of the City of Houston. In addition to the three main boards, a copy of each graphic was printed on the same large size paper and placed on tables for attendees to write directly on. See Attachment A. Supporting the three City of Houston CIA graphics were maps of the existing conditions within Houston, including zoning, land use, land use by zoning. A board showing the Transportation Plan map from the adopted City of Houston 1982 Comprehensive Plan was also on display for reference.

Members of the public were encouraged to read the three CIA maps and provide any comments, concerns, or opinions regarding the information shared. Markers and pens were provided on each table with a CIA map on it and any feedback provided by attendees could be written directly on the map. Comment forms were provided throughout the Open House space to allow written comments to be recorded.

Members of the project team and the Steering Committee engaged in conversations with the public about the process and the goals of performing a CIA. Generally, the public in attendance concurred with the impacts identified. Little new information emerged during the open house; most discussion focused around the opportunities that could emerge due to some of the impacts identified. The Economic Impacts map yielded discussion around the potential development that could occur around the new Port-MacKenzie Rail Extension, including zoning the new areas for industrial development and Knikatnu Inc developing an LED Assembly Facility south of Millers Reach Road. The information and opinions gathered on the impacts identified in the CIA will be incorporated into the CIA report.

Additional comments not directly related to the CIA impacts were largely related to the development of parks and establishment of more services and amenities, such as a gas station and grocery store, in the area. This information will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan Revision effort.

The public was made aware of the open house through direct postcard mailings, an e-notification reminder, and information posted to both the project website as well as the City of Houston's website. The draft CIA will be made available for review by the public via the project website once it has been approved for release by the Steering Committee.



Community Impact Assessment INFO SHEET

What is a CIA and why is the City of Houston conducting one?

A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is an evaluation of potential impacts transportation projects could have on the community of Houston. Each project analyzed has the potential to impact the socioeconomics, physical environment, and future growth and development in Houston. The CIA will serve as a planning tool and reference for the City and the Mat-Su Borough by ensuring the needs, opinions, vision and goals of the community are acknowledged and documented to help guide compatible growth and development within and around Houston. The CIA is being conducted concurrently in support of the City's Comprehensive Plan Update.

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS ANALYZED

Parks Highway Upgrade MP 44-52 Phase 3 Pittman Road to Big Lake Road

PLANNED - AKDOT&PF

- Proposed signalized intersection at Parks Hwy and Big Lake Road and at S. Johnson Road in Wasilla
- Pedestrian improvements include realignment of the pathway along Parks Hwy and Big Lake Rd; a pedestrian island and crosswalk at the intersection of Big Lake Rd and Parks Hwy
- Proposed four-lane divided Hwy from MP 44 in Wasilla returning to a two-lane Hwy after Forrest Lake Drive in Houston
- Proposed lighting at the intersection of Big Lake Road and the Parks Hwy; along the Parks Hwy
- Proposed access and driveway consolidation
- Construction planned for 2017-2018

Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

PLANNED AND IN CONSTRUCTION - ARRC & MSB

- 32-mile extension of the ARRC system to connect Port MacKenzie to the mainline along Parks Hwy
- Extension passes Houston Lake Loop Trail and Horseshoe Lake with connection to the mainline north of Miller's Reach Road
- Grade-separated crossings planned at officially recognized trails and roads
- No support facilities planned as part of the extension

Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor

CONCEPTUAL PROJECT

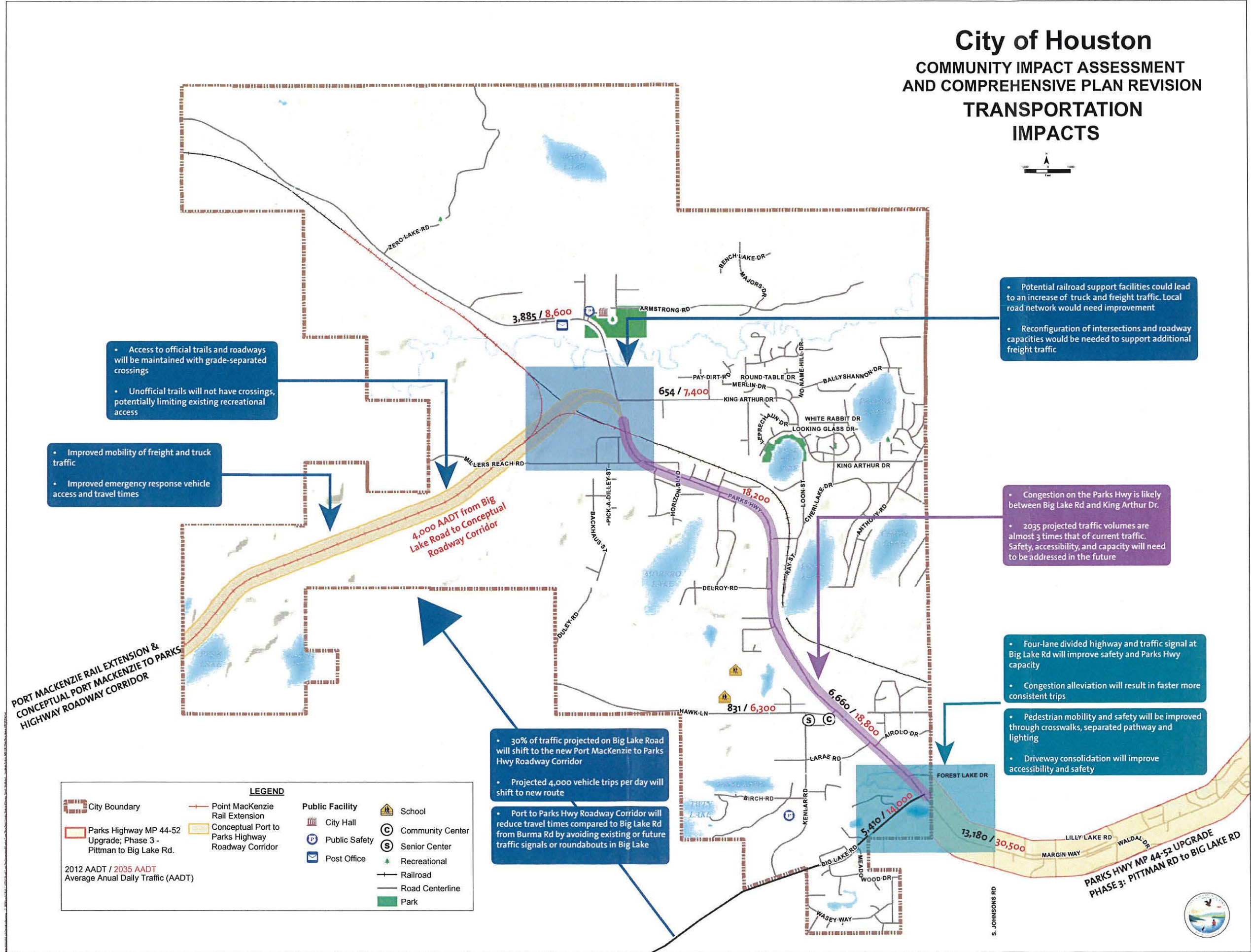
- Road alignment reflects concept shown in the adopted 1982 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan Map
- Road alignment parallels the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension alignment
- Conceptual corridor is 800' wide centered on the Rail Extension alignment, designed for a 2-lane 65 mph Hwy
- Anticipated primary use for freight and truck traffic to and from the Port

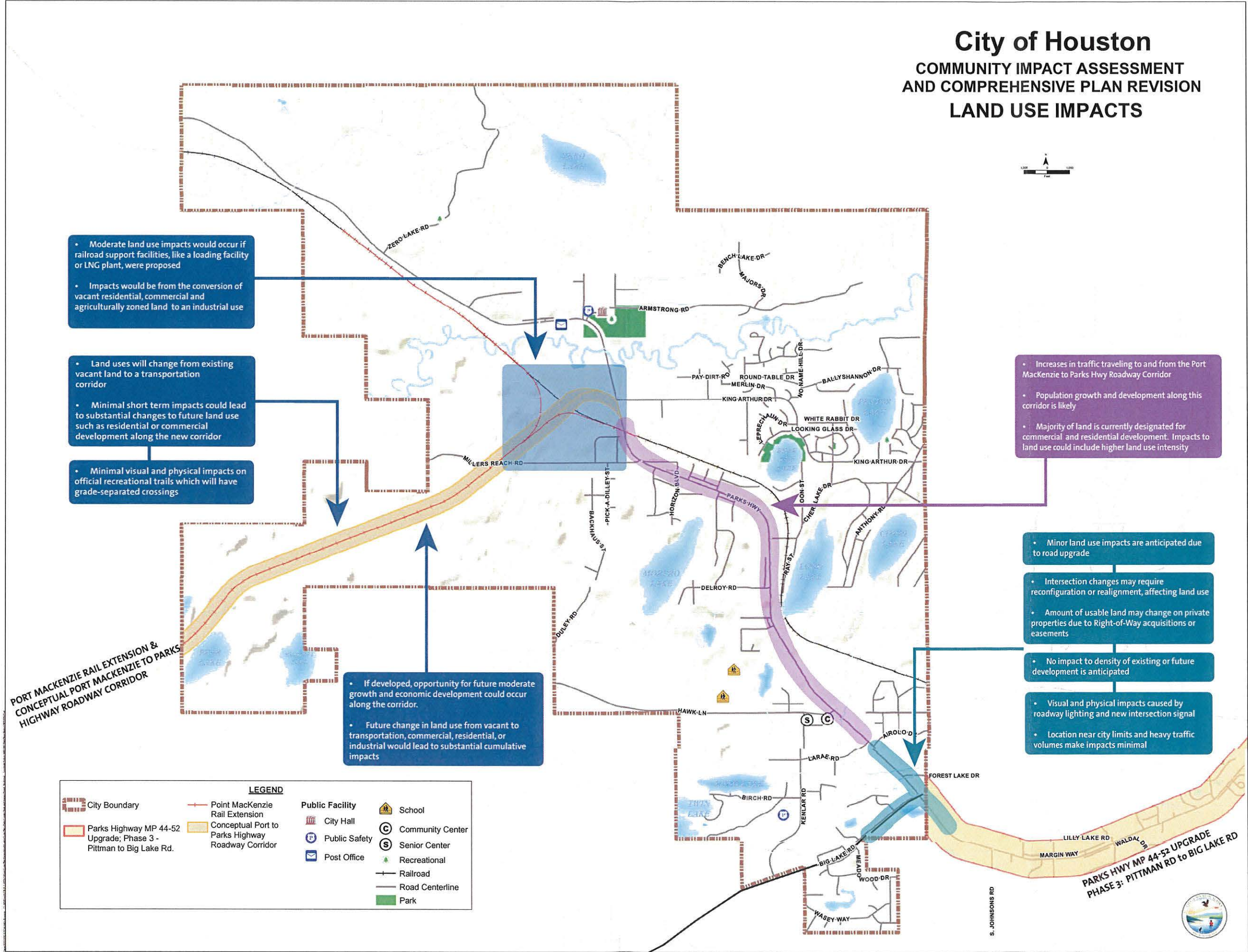
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

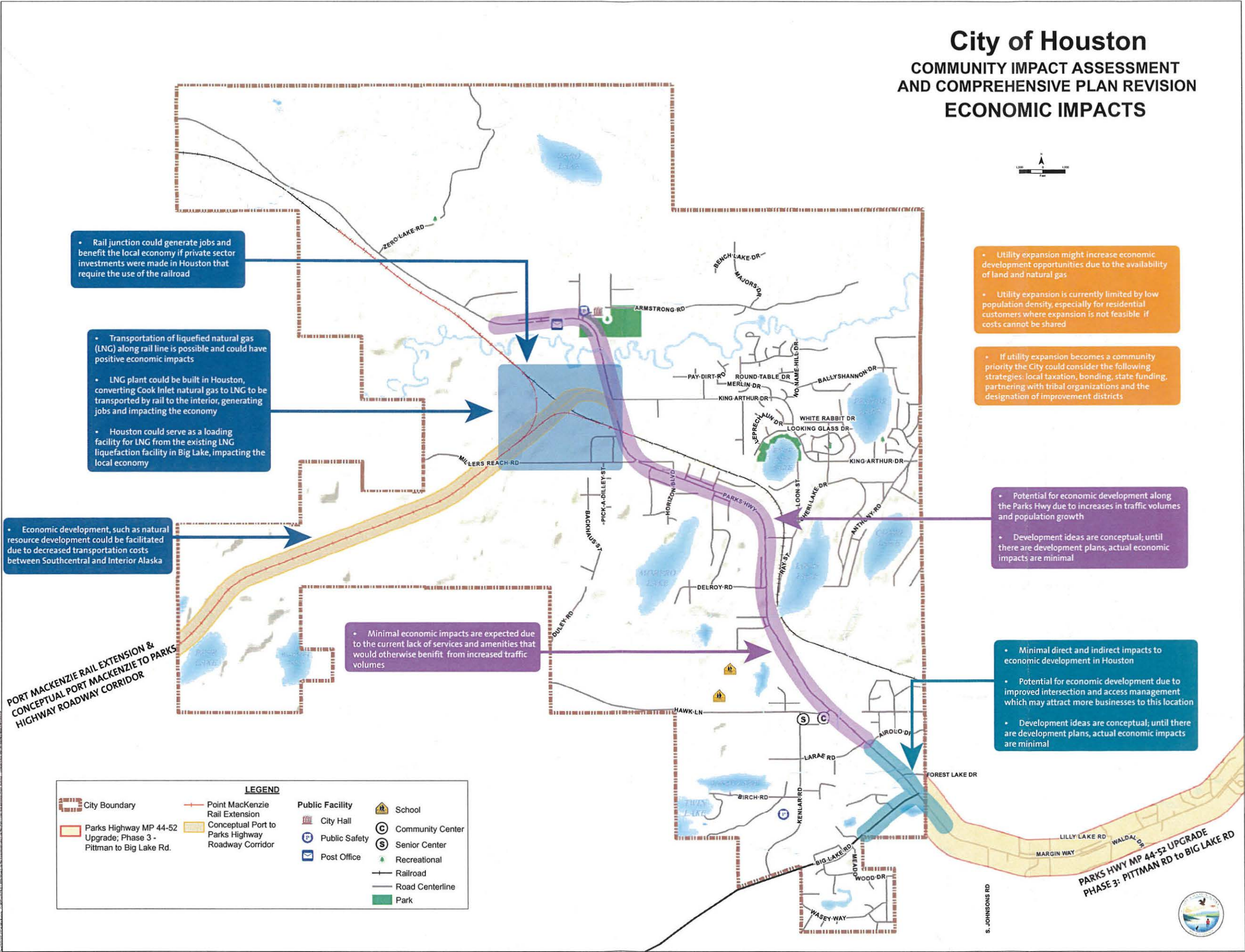
PROJECT MANAGER: VAN LE, AICP | R&M Consultants, Inc. | vle@RMConsult.com | 907.646.9659

PLANNER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR: TARYN OLESON | R&M Consultants, Inc. | Comments@RMConsult.com | 907.646.9645

VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE: WWW.HOUSTONAKCOMPPLAN.COM







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**APPENDIX B: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:
PERSPECTIVES OF COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS**

City of Houston
Economic Development Opportunities:
Perspectives of Community Stakeholders

Draft Report

Prepared for:
City of Houston



April 2015

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Introduction

The process to update the City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan is currently underway. Additionally, a Community Impact Assessment is being conducted to evaluate the economic growth potential of several infrastructure projects in progress within or adjacent to the city's boundaries. Examples of these projects include the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension, the Parks Highway MP44-52 upgrade, future Parks Highway segment upgrades, Parks Highway Alternative Corridor, and the annexation of Knikatu-owned land into City of Houston's boundaries. As part of this assessment, stakeholders with an interest in economic, business, and industrial development in Houston were interviewed. They were asked about the potential of various infrastructure and business opportunities to create employment, generate City revenue, improve community assets, and Houston's vision to respond to growth and change.

Methodology

Working closely with the City of Houston Comprehensive Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision Steering Committee, McDowell Group developed a list of contacts that represented a cross-section of business and community groups and interests related to Houston, including tribal organizations, nonprofits, business leaders, school district officials, utility representatives, and others. Below is a list of the 19 stakeholders interviewed. An interview protocol was designed and adjusted to best capture the interests, experience, and expertise of individual stakeholders.

Name	Title	Organization/Affiliation
Lisa Byrd	Site Manager	Mid-Valley Senior Housing
Rick Dilley	Owner	Cozy Coal
Julie Estay	Director of Public Relations	Matanuska Electric Association
Gary Fandrei	Executive Director	Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association
Robert Hall	Owner	Gorilla Fireworks
Tom Harris	Chief Executive Officer	Knikatu, Inc.
Thomas Hood	Fire Chief	Houston Fire Department
Jimmy Hudson	Facility Manager	Spenard Builders Supply
Marty Metiva	Executive Director	Mat-Su Resources Conservation and Development
Deven Mitchell	Executive Director	Municipal Bond Bank
Richard Porter	Executive Director	Knik Tribal Council
Roger Purcell	Past Houston Mayor/General Manager	A to Z Realty
Chad Rice	Teacher	Houston High School
Kevin Shumway	Pastor/Fire Department Chaplain	Hilltop Assembly of God/Houston Fire Department
Tim Sullivan	External Affairs Manager	Alaska Railroad Corporation
Marc Van Dongen	Port Director	Port MacKenzie
Marsha VonEhr	Document Specialist	Mat-Su Borough
	Network Account	
Dee Williams	Executive	Matanuska Telephone Association
Bruce Zmuda	Marketing Representative	Enstar

Perceived Community Strengths and Weaknesses

What are the City of Houston's strengths and weaknesses?

Stakeholders were each asked what they believed were Houston's core community strengths and weaknesses to attract economic and business development opportunities. Some community attributes were considered both an advantage and a disadvantage when considering opportunities for growth.

Rural Lifestyle

Houston's rural setting emerged as both a strength and weakness. Quick access to the wilderness, a tight-knit community, lack of pollution and development, and privacy were a few factors mentioned as strengths. Stakeholders spoke of a "homestead spirit" prevalent in the area. "There is an attitude in Houston," one resident noted, "that if you are not bothering anyone, you should be left alone." "Last year, our neighbor bought a piece of land and is building a home out-of-pocket," a stakeholder stated, adding "This can be great for a young family that might not be able to get financing. And this contributes to the do-it-yourself attitude of Houston."

While these factors were noted as positive attributes, the same may also detract from residents' satisfaction with Houston's quality of life. As noted by several stakeholders, the "hands-off" attitude has resulted in homes of varying degrees of completion, properties full of old cars and trash, dogs being allowed to run around, and a general lack of consideration for other residents. Yet, some stakeholders noted they see improvement over time: "In the 15 years I have been in Houston, I have seen slow improvement. People seem to be taking better care of their homes and are just having more consideration for others in the community."

The benefit of being able to maintain a rural lifestyle while having access to shopping, services, and healthcare in the Mat-Su Borough and Anchorage was noted by a number of stakeholders. At the same time, some felt the distance from these amenities and services was limiting, especially for employment opportunities. "There are not many jobs locally," a resident said, adding "Many people have to drive into Wasilla to get a decent job, a round-trip commute that can easily be an hour."

Land Availability

Many stakeholders recognized there are significant amounts of developable land available in Houston while others noted the counter-effects of low population density. Both residential and commercial land in Houston is considered relatively inexpensive when compared to other places in the Mat-Su Borough or Anchorage. "This really is an advantage for us," said one interviewee, "we have the ability to grow and maybe attract businesses

because of the room available in Houston. We already see some manufacturing in Big Lake. Maybe Houston can do the same thing.”

The supply of land for residential development also appears to be sufficient and affordable. “While residential land prices have increased recently, our prices are still pretty low compared to other areas in the Borough,” a stakeholder familiar with the local real estate market stated.

While land may be plentiful, the downside is the low penetration of utilities throughout the community. While there are opportunities to develop relatively large lots that offer privacy, the cost of extending natural gas and electricity utilities can be prohibitive. For this reason, natural gas is unavailable to many residential homes, underlying the reliance on expensive heating oil or wood-burning stoves.

Local Government Leadership

Viewpoints about city government were polarizing. Supporters cited stability, pragmatism, low taxes, and a willingness to hear new ideas, and new and enforced codes and zoning laws to improve the aesthetics of the community and manage growth. Critics felt City leaders was short-sighted; they also wanted to see a local police force funded.

The proposed annexation of land owned by Knikatu Inc., an Alaska Native village corporation, into the City of Houston is due, in part, to favorable attitude of City leaders. A Knikatu representative felt they would be treated fairly by the City, saying “We view the City of Houston as a stable local government that will provide value to our organization as we plan for future development.”

Local Road Conditions

The condition of local roads was a concern expressed by several stakeholders. With many of Houston’s residential areas accessed on dirt roads, some felt the low quality of the roads was slowing residential growth. “People don’t want to drive miles and miles on a bumpy, washed-out dirt road. There is good quality residential land that could be developed if it was not for some of the bad roads in Houston,” said an interviewee.

One stakeholder in particular thought the City should be more forceful with the Mat-Su Borough on the issue of road maintenance. “Years ago, the Borough built roads in Houston that simply cannot be maintained properly. Now we have to deal with the Borough’s bad decisions. I think the City should send the Borough a bill for all our road problems.”

While many roads are currently dirt, the recent paving of some local roads, particularly Hawk Lane, was noted as a positive development. “I’m lucky to be able to drive nearly all the way to my house,” said one stakeholder. “I hope we see more paving done in Houston as it helps increase home values and allows for easier commutes.”

Parks Highway Access

With the Parks Highway bisecting the City of Houston, its effect was a common theme heard. Most individuals thought the Highway was a significant benefit to the community, even with growing congestion.

A number of interviewees mentioned they thought Houston could take better advantage of the many vehicles traveling through Houston. "Houston has two rivers—the Little Susitna and the Parks Highway, which is a river of money; we just need to get a few dollars from every vehicle and we will be doing fine," stated one local business leader. "With thousands of vehicles traveling through Houston every day on the Highway, the small number of businesses along the highway benefit from purchases of snacks, meals, and other supplies."

Several stakeholders mentioned a significant increase in traffic in recent years, resulting in longer commute times to Wasilla or Anchorage, and more potential for traffic accidents. "Today, if you do not time a run into Wasilla correctly you could be stuck in traffic on the Parks for 20 minutes or more," mentioned one resident. "This is not something we dealt with in the past. And with all the traffic on the highway we need to be careful when we are just going to a friend's house. Transitioning from a slow dirt road to a highway with people driving 70 miles per hour can be dangerous."

Improved Fire Safety

A few interviewees pointed to the leadership of the fire department, a new fire station, better training, and improved equipment as factors as major steps to improve community safety, leading to a decrease in the cost of fire insurance paid by homeowners and businesses.

Lack of Local Amenities

The lack of amenities, such as a gas station, grocery store, medical clinic, and public transportation were mentioned as weaknesses faced by the residents of Houston. Interviewees noted it would be preferable to support local businesses and organizations instead of traveling to Willow, Talkeetna, Big Lake, and Wasilla. "There is plenty of demand for a gas station or small grocery store but everyone drives out of Houston for basically all their needs," said one stakeholder, adding "If we could start supporting Houston businesses, we might be able to grow our economy."

Tourism Development

What does Houston currently have that attracts tourists? What should be developed to increase tourism?”

Little Susitna River

The Little Susitna River (Little Su) runs through Houston City limits and is perhaps the most significant tourism asset in the area, according to most stakeholders. Salmon and trout fishing, rafting, camping, and wildlife viewing make the Little Su a visitor destination. While most activity takes place in the summer, snowmachining, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing were mentioned as winter-time activities available on the Little Su.

Two limiting factors for growth, however, are access and reduced salmon runs. A number of interviewees mentioned there is no formal boat launch; boaters currently use a number of ad-hoc launches along the Parks Highway. A common one- or two-day trip is to put-in at Houston and take-out at Burma Landing. Reduced salmon runs on the Little Su have resulted in reduced fishing originating in Houston. An interviewee that had lived in the area 30 years noted there are fewer guides offering their services on the Little Su: “Back in the 80s and 90s, there were at least ten guides working on the Little Susitna. Today there are maybe one or two. In my view, this is a result of lower salmon runs.”

Other Attractions

In addition to the Little Su, interviewees noted a variety of other tourism activities and assets Houston has to offer:

LAKES

Visitors can engage in a variety of activities on Houston’s six larger lakes, including fishing in the summer and winter and canoeing or rafting. Three lakes are stocked annually by Alaska Department of Fish & Game with chinook and coho salmon, and rainbow trout. Limited public access to lakes may be preventing visitors from frequenting these water bodies at a higher rate.

WINTER MULTI-USE TRAILS

Houston offers access to trails frequented by dogmushers, cross-country skiers, and snowmachiners. Interviewees noted that Houston’s proximity to the Talkeetna Mountains make the area a good staging area. “We are 30 minutes away from world-class snowmachining and backcountry skiing,” mentioned a stakeholder who was hoping to build some cabins to cater to winter tourists.

TOWN CENTER

The concept of a developed town center was raised by a few stakeholders. Noting the proximity of the Little Su, some thought Houston could become a “destination” through development of waterside boardwalks, small shops, restaurants, and art galleries. “The setting is perfect,” one individual noted. “People could come out from Wasilla, Palmer, or Anchorage to have a relaxing evening along the Little Susitna.”

The possibility of music and art festivals, a brewery, or even a convention center being built in Houston were also mentioned.

Utility Development

Is access to utilities an issue for Houston residents and businesses?

Natural Gas

Stakeholders indicated lack of access to natural gas has led to higher heating costs and stifled economic development for Houston and its residents. While stakeholders report the majority of commercial properties have access to natural gas, many residential homes rely on heating oil (51 percent), wood (23 percent), and electricity (9 percent) for their primary space heating source instead of natural gas (14 percent) (*see table below*). This contrasts with Wasilla and the rest of Mat-Su Valley where 90 percent and 70 percent of homes use natural gas, respectively. Natural gas is traditionally a cheaper energy source than heating oil or electricity.

Primary Source of Space Heating by Source, 2013

	City of Houston	City of Wasilla	Mat-Su Borough
Heating Oil	51%	5%	15%
Wood	23	1	7
Natural Gas	14	90	70
Electricity	9	5	6
Other	4	<1	2
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2014.

Note: Some columns may not sum due to rounding.

Many stakeholders expressed improved access to natural gas would allow for more business and residential growth by reducing energy costs. This perspective was summed up by an interviewee: "If we could combine the land we have that is available with natural gas, businesses in Wasilla or even Anchorage might move out here. It really comes down to lower costs; if people can save money, they will come out here."

Other interviewees spoke about the impact natural gas could have on space-heating costs at the residential level. "Houston can be cold in the winter," a resident said. "It is not uncommon for us to experience weeks of below zero [temperatures]. Many of us use heating oil and supplement our energy needs with wood. If we could access natural gas, a fuel that could be more than 30 percent cheaper, this would be huge for the community."

A representative from Enstar, the natural gas utility serving the area, stated population density was the most significant factor reducing availability of natural gas in Houston, especially for residential customers. Houston's relatively large lot sizes, dispersed residential zoning, and lack of anchor tenants contribute to the situation.

For many homeowners, transitioning to natural gas is cost-prohibitive if the installation costs cannot be shared with others. Enstar can credit a percent of future annual revenue from the customer, typically \$600 for a residential home. The cost of extending natural gas lines to a home begins at \$22.56 per foot and rises quickly when streams need to be crossed or larger pipe is needed.

Enstar reports they have been slowly expanding natural gas distribution lines in Houston. Currently, lines extend down Hawk Lane to Houston High School and Middle School, and from the west along King Arthur Drive. According to Enstar, continued expansion is expected to be slow.

Electricity

An Matanuska Electric Association (MEA) representative reported the same factors limiting the expansion of natural gas also apply to electricity: low population density, difficulty in obtaining right of way easements, customers not wanting trees cut down, road alignment, and the cost of running power lines being the most significant.

The cost to extend power lines are approximately \$30 per foot or \$160,000 per mile, with costs rising as more poles are needed. For the average homeowner, this makes connecting to the electric grid cost-prohibitive and results in the use of generators or other means to generate electricity.

Strategies for Supporting Utility Expansion

Interviewees noted a variety of approaches the City of Houston could consider if expansion of utilities becomes a community priority, including:

LOCAL TAXATION

The City of Houston has authority to raise revenue through a variety of taxes which could be used to help finance expansion of utilities.

BONDING

Revenue could be leveraged through bonding with the Alaska Municipal Bond Bank, a public corporation that helps provide communities with more favorable interest rates than they might be able to obtain on their own.

STATE FUNDING

Precedent exists for state funding to support development of utilities. Current examples include the expansion of natural gas distribution in Homer and Fairbanks.

PARTNERING WITH A TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

The City of Houston may be able to partner with local tribal organizations to encourage expansion of utilities. The Knik Tribal Council (KTC) and the City of Houston have entered into a pilot project that would transfer responsibility of maintenance for some roads to KTC. Because KTC is a federally recognized tribe, they qualify for programs and funding unique to tribal entities. In addition to road maintenance, KTC also intends to provide 76 LED streetlights near Houston High School and Middle School as a demonstration of this partnership. This model of cooperation between the City of Houston and KTC, a number of interviewees mentioned, could be an additional strategy to increase utility expansion in the area.

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

Designation of an “improvement district” would allow Houston to pay for the cost of utilities expansion and effectively finance this expense through a special assessment paid by residents over time.¹ The City of Homer used this approach to increase access to natural gas by charging property owners a fixed amount upfront or financing the development expense at approximately 4 percent over ten years.

Discussions with the Mat-Su Borough reveal this is a common strategy for a wide variety of infrastructure projects. There are currently 68 improvement districts throughout the Borough. Two main types of improvement districts are used:

- *Contiguous improvement district* that requires at least 50 percent of a group of homeowners in a defined area to support an infrastructure project for it to be approved.
- *Non-contiguous improvement district* that only includes homeowners that support the project in question.

A representative from the Mat-Su Borough reported the former type of improvement district may be appropriate for Houston’s unique situation.

¹ Section 4.18.010 of the Houston Municipal Code authorizes improvement districts.

Port MacKenzie Impacts

How will growth at Port MacKenzie impact Houston?

Port MacKenzie, located 42 road-miles from Houston, has the potential to impact Houston development. The Port is located on the west side of Cook Inlet, 3.5 miles from downtown Anchorage. Among other ideas, the Port could host a rail-loading or LNG export facility; facilitate export of coal, gravel, timber, and other natural resources; or serve as a staging area for movement of construction materials for oil and gas projects, or other major infrastructure projects (such as the Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Project).

While the Port currently offers minimal infrastructure and associated economic activity, stakeholders were cautiously optimistic about future development and what it could mean for Houston and its residents. Many viewed the Port as one part of the broad development trajectory the area is on. Combined with investment in rail access, a possible gas pipeline, and additional private investment, the Port is viewed as a positive factor impacting the entire region.

Rail Extension Impacts

How will the rail extension from existing rail lines to Port MacKenzie impact Houston?

The 32-mile construction of a rail extending from Port MacKenzie to existing rail in Houston is viewed by many as an opportunity for the area. This extension could decrease transportation costs between Southcentral and the Interior of Alaska, in turn encouraging development of mineral resources and other projects. A report commissioned by the Mat-Su Borough that examined the benefits of a similar rail extension concluded:

The quantifiable benefits from the Port MacKenzie to Willow rail link with respect to resource development can be divided into the following two major categories:

- *Benefits in the form of rail freight savings derived from the reduced haulage distances from natural resource production sites to tidewater at Port MacKenzie relative to the Ports of Anchorage, Whittier, and Seward.*
- *Benefits to the Rail Belt communities in the form of enhanced economic diversification and economic development as a consequent of increases in natural resource production.²*

Interviewees saw great potential in having the “Y” (the connection between the new and existing rail lines) located in Houston. The extension was viewed as a factor increasing the likelihood of manufacturing, mineral export, or transportation activity taking place in Houston.

“Here we are,” a local business owner stated, “located at the cross roads of the Alaska Railroad. We have land, access to natural gas is improving, some existing manufacturing, and are positioned between the Interior and Southcentral. It is sure to benefit the area.” Other individuals echoed this perspective, pointing to resources locally such as coal, gravel, or timber that could be developed as a result of easier access to rail transportation.

Another stakeholder said Houston would need to be conscious of what is being moved through Houston as a result of the rail extension. “We don’t want to be in a situation where the railroad is moving dangerous cargo through our City without the fire department being prepared for an accident.” Asked about these concerns, a representative of the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) stated they regularly engage with local governments and first responders when moving new types of cargo through an area. The representative also noted ARRC has a long history of moving volatile cargo such as refined petroleum products and a variety of chemicals.

² Metz, Paul A., Economic Analysis of Rail Link, Port MacKenzie to Willow, Alaska, Prepared for the Matanuska Susitna Borough, 2007.

While many interviewees were optimistic about the long-term effects of the rail extension, ARRC indicated there are few marketable ideas in the short- to near-term that would warrant additional investment. "There really needs to be a reason for us to build anything beyond just the new tracks," an ARRC representative said. "If it is clear a loading facility or other infrastructure is needed in the future, we will deal with that then. Until that happens, we see minimal impact on Houston and its economy."

Other Concepts

What other concepts have implications for economic development for Houston?

Energy

Several ideas or concepts involving or requiring natural gas were offered. One of the main assumptions accompanying these ideas was that more natural gas in Houston, whether by a pipeline from the North Slope or if existing utilities are expanded, would reduce the price of energy. Once the cost of energy was reduced, many interviewees stated, projects and ideas previously cost-prohibitive could move forward. The concept of “cheap energy” was mentioned a number of times while discussing potential projects that could impact Houston. The following is a brief overview of the natural gas-related ideas mentioned.

NATURAL GAS BY RAIL

While the Federal Railroad Administration currently restricts the movement of liquefied natural gas (LNG) by rail, ARRC has applied for permission and reports they are confident approval will be granted. Interviewees pointed to two ideas which would transport LNG to the Interior using rail and potential could impact Houston:

- An LNG plant could be built in Houston to convert Cook Inlet natural gas to LNG that would be transported by rail to the Interior. While a number of locations are being considered, ARRC points to three main reasons Houston is a preferred location: (1) Houston is optimally located between the Interior and Southcentral; (2) 10,000 feet of track space is already available; and (3) rail near Houston would require minimal site preparation to support loading and unloading of LNG containers.³
- Instead of constructing a new liquefaction plant in Houston, containers could be filled at the existing LNG liquefaction facility in Big Lake and transshipped by truck onto northbound rail cars in Houston. This concept would require minimal capital investment for ARRC and would be considered an interim solution for Fairbanks in its early stages of natural gas expansion.

NATURAL GAS POWER PLANT

The possibility of a natural gas-fired power plant being built in Houston was mentioned by a few stakeholders. Three factors supporting this perspective were raised: (1) the City’s location along the Railbelt would allow a local power plant to provide electricity both to the Interior and Southcentral; (2) land is available; and (3) natural gas is nearby.

³ <http://www.akrdc.org/membership/events/breakfast/1415/wade.pdf>

INDUSTRIAL GREENHOUSES

An idea that necessitates access to “cheap energy” includes industrial greenhouses, according to one interviewee. “We ship virtually all our food up to Alaska. Maybe we should focus on building greenhouses and try to be more self-sufficient...Natural gas would be used to provide heat and existing agricultural zoning in Houston could be used,” mentioned the stakeholder.

SEPTAGE PLANT

The possibility of a wastewater treatment site in Houston was proposed to provide local economic activity and solve the existing septage problems faced by the Mat-Su Valley.⁴ Septage from residential homes in the Mat-Su Valley is currently trucked to Anchorage where it undergoes treatment before discharge into Cook Inlet. This practice is expected to end in the near-term because of Anchorage’s lack of capacity to process the waste. Some stakeholders supported development of a facility in Houston to not only benefit Houston residents, but the broader Mat-Su Valley as well.

A couple stakeholders mentioned Houston’s septage treatment plant built in the 80s. After five years of operation, the facility closed due to groundwater concerns. While this precedent could mean Houston is a possible candidate for a facility, the Mat-Su Borough has already identified a location near the Borough landfill for a new treatment plant.⁵

MINING/MINERAL RESOURCES

Houston’s legacy as a mining town was mentioned by a small but passionate number of stakeholders. Both the nearby coal that was mined until the mid-20th Century and extensive gravel resources were noted as opportunities to be developed. “We could start mining coal and export it through Port MacKenzie. This would represent the closet coal mine to the export facility.” One contact added, “And there is enough coal that we could build a coal power plant and sell power to the Railbelt.”

Gravel was also mentioned as a valuable resource that could be developed. One stakeholder stated, “With all the road construction that is going on in the proximity of Houston, we should be selling our gravel to all these projects.”

⁴ Septage is the liquid and solid material that comes from septic tanks.

⁵ http://www.frontiersman.com/news/soil-testing-narrows-septage-sites/article_de608c9c-db3f-11e4-8f71-676ca4d023d7.html?mode=story

RETAIL

A desire for more local retail businesses, specifically a grocery store and gas station, was expressed by interviewees. While no formal plans to locate a grocery store in or close to Houston were identified, two interviewees mentioned they had heard rumors that a gas station is being considered. Two locations were noted as possibilities: the Big Lake Road and Parks Highway intersection, and the gravel pit area across the Parks Highway from Millers Market.

One of the main issues slowing the development of a gas station in Houston, one stakeholder reports, was the 2 percent sales tax that would be paid on gas and diesel. "People are very price sensitive to the cost of gasoline and diesel. If they can save a few cents per gallon, they may avoid a gas station that has to pay a tax." This same stakeholder suggested the City to change the municipal code to exclude gasoline sales from the sales tax.

MARIJUANA BUSINESSES

With the passage of a ballot measure in the fall of 2014 legalizing marijuana in Alaska, a number of individuals noted the possibility of Houston becoming a center of both retail marijuana sales and wholesale growing and processing facilities. With municipalities, such as Wasilla and Anchorage, restricting the use and sale of marijuana, stakeholders thought Houston would benefit if it could position itself as the "go-to" spot for marijuana.

The City was approached in early 2015 by a two marijuana-related companies: one wanting to open a grow facility and another business interested in developing a testing facility. With regulations still being crafted at the state government level, Houston has been hesitant to permit any marijuana-related commerce.

While some viewed marijuana as a benefit to the community, a small number of interviewees thought the City should not encourage legal marijuana-related activity in Houston. Pointing to the possible social costs of drug use, these stakeholders said they would support restrictions on the sale and growing of marijuana locally.

FISH RESTORATION

Efforts are underway to increase the annual salmon return on the Little Susitna River. Using a technique called moist air incubation, a number of organizations including the Knik Tribal Council and past Mayor of Houston Roger Purcell, are hoping revitalized salmon runs would benefit local residents and help support fishing-related tourism in the area.

LED ASSEMBLY FACILITY

Knikatnu, Inc. has been exploring the possibility of assembling light-emitting diode (LED) streetlights in Houston. The group owns land in Houston and would build a new facility. "This is the type of low-impact development we would like to see on our land," a Knikatnu representative stated. "The LED facility is in very early stages of planning." The facility would import LEDs and assemble them for use lighting Alaska roads.

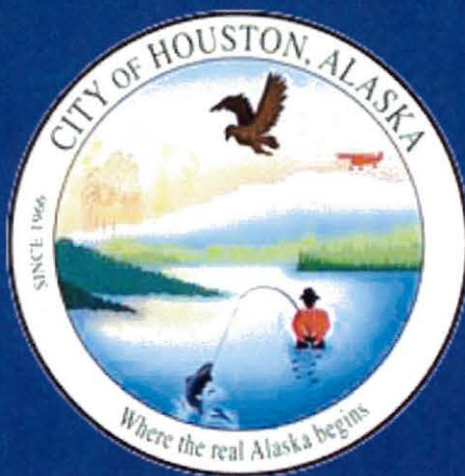
Conclusion

After completion of 19 executive interviews with a variety of Houston stakeholders, McDowell's research team noted the optimism expressed by nearly all contacted. Many individuals said they felt Houston was poised for expansion and had the right attributes to turn the community into a place that would attract residents, new businesses, and visitors. Many saw Houston being perfectly situated to benefit from a variety of large infrastructure projects such as development of Port MacKenzie and the accompanying rail extension, improvements to the Parks Highway, interim solutions to provide the Interior with natural gas, and the eventual construction of a natural gas pipeline from the North Slope. While ideas were plenty, concrete initiatives had not been developed beyond speculation.

While many stakeholders were optimistic, issues that could slow the growth of Houston were also raised. These included limited access to natural gas, a relatively small population, congestion on the Parks Highway, difficulties in attracting tourism and new businesses to the area, and the possibility that nearby large infrastructure projects may actually have minimal effect.

APPENDIX C: TRAFFIC IMPACTS OF MAJOR PLANNING PROJECTS

City of Houston



Traffic Impacts of Major Planning Projects

~ Draft ~

August 2015

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1 Introduction

There are several projects planned or considered for construction in and around the City of Houston which could change the flow of traffic through the existing and future roadway network. Additionally, as traffic levels increase on the existing network, proactive improvements and alternatives may need to be considered in order to accommodate future demand.

In this report, Kinney Engineering, LLC (KE) presents an analysis of the traffic impacts of these projects and makes recommendations for future road infrastructure improvements and alternatives.

2 General Growth and Development

The City of Houston is on the far western edge of an urban/suburban core area of the Matanuska Susitna Borough. Growth and development within the City of Houston is expected to continue at a steady pace through the horizon year of 2035 as the Wasilla and Meadow Lakes area population densities increase and push the extents of the suburban density zone farther towards Houston and Big Lake. Growth is specifically expected to occur in the areas north of the Parks Highway, particularly on King Arthur Road and Armstrong Road, and especially on lakefront and riverfront properties.

Industrial development is possible in the area of the Big Lake Road and Parks Highway intersection and on Miller's Reach Road in the direction of a new future rail connection.

Commercial growth is most likely along the Parks Highway corridor. Near the intersections of Armstrong Road and King Arthur Road with the Parks Highway, commercial growth will target the increased residential traffic served by these roadways.

3 Base Level Traffic Volumes

KE projected average annual daily traffic (AADT) volumes for 2035 using an area travel demand model (TDM) which includes all current planned and funded transportation projects. The models used in this analysis were developed by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) in conjunction with the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) and the Matanuska Susitna Borough (MSB). The extents of the model include the entire network of the MSB and MOA from north of Willow all the way to Girdwood and east as far as the community of Sutton on the Glenn Highway. This model has been used to analyze the traffic impacts of the Knik Arm bridge project as well as the Highway-to-Highway project in downtown Anchorage and various Wasilla Bypass alternative corridors.

The model generates traffic volumes based on socio-economic background data such as population, income level, employment in various work sectors, and school enrollment, as well as a number of special generators such as hotels and airports.

The results of the model were used as a baseline for recommendations and for judging project impacts.

Figure 1 on page 4 presents a diagram of the City of Houston with 2035 AADTs for key roadways taken from the TDM.

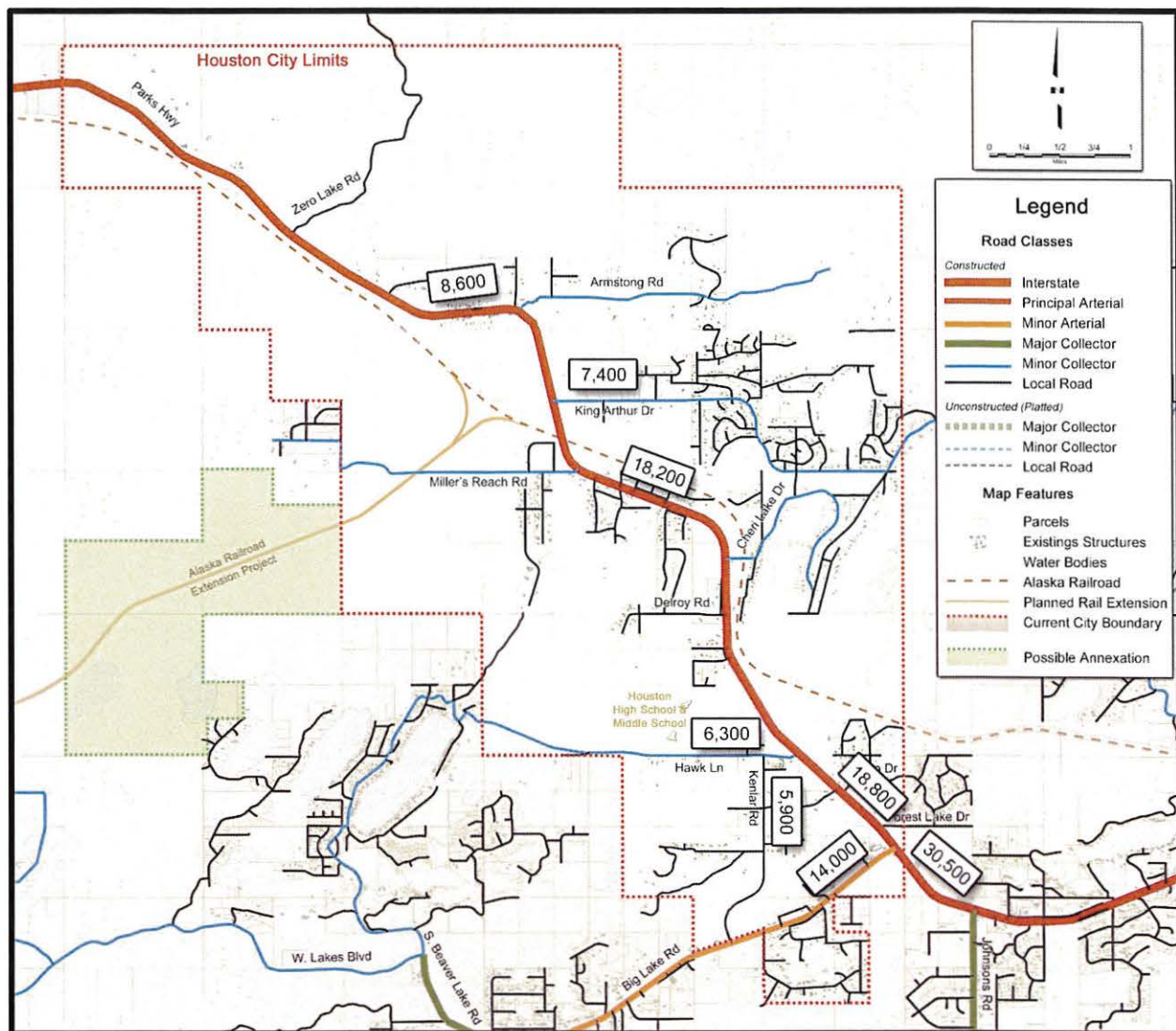


Figure 1 - Projected 2035 Demand Volumes

Note that the above figure shows a planned extension of the Alaska Railroad (ARR) which would link to the existing rail line within Houston city limits.

4 Performance Estimates

One key concern which has arisen from this analysis is the potential 2035 traffic volumes between Big Lake Road and King Arthur Road. These volumes were presented earlier in Figure 1 above. The travel demand model used in this analysis indicates that the volumes north of Big Lake will grow to about 18,500 AADT in the horizon year. Currently these road segments carry 7,000 AADT. This increase is partially a result of the inclusion of the proposed Knik Arm Bridge and Wasilla Bypass Road alternatives in the TDM which would pull additional traffic from Anchorage and Wasilla to attractions in Houston and north on the Parks.

KE used planning level screening analysis to estimate the performance of the existing Parks Highway in this area (a 2-lane undivided rural road). The approximate capacity of the Parks Highway through Houston is 16,500 AADT to achieve a level of service of "D", which is the limit of what is recommended by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. The projected volumes would be at or above this approximate capacity threshold, which suggests that if growth occurs in accordance with the TDM it will likely result in congestion on the Parks Highway between Big Lake Road and King Arthur Road.

Note these projected volumes are equivalent to the traffic volumes currently traveling along segments farther east on the Parks Highway (such as between Vine Street and Pittman Road). As traffic volumes grow over time, congestion and safety concerns similar to current conditions on the Parks Highway MP 44-52 are likely.

5 Future Projects

Several planned and future capital projects are included in the scope of this study. These projects include the Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade, the Alaska Railroad Port MacKenzie Rail Extension, and a Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway roadway corridor.

The scope of this study includes the recent annexation of Knikatu/CIRI lands into the City of Houston along the route of the planned rail extension, as shown in green in Figure 1.

5.1 Project 1 – Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade Phase 3

The Parks Highway MP 44-52 Upgrade Phase 3 project is the third and final phase of an ADOT&PF central region project that is currently in final design with planned construction completion in 2017. The entire project extends from Lucus Road to Big Lake Road. Phase 3 of the project is the section from Pittman Road to Big Lake Road, entering the city limits of Houston.

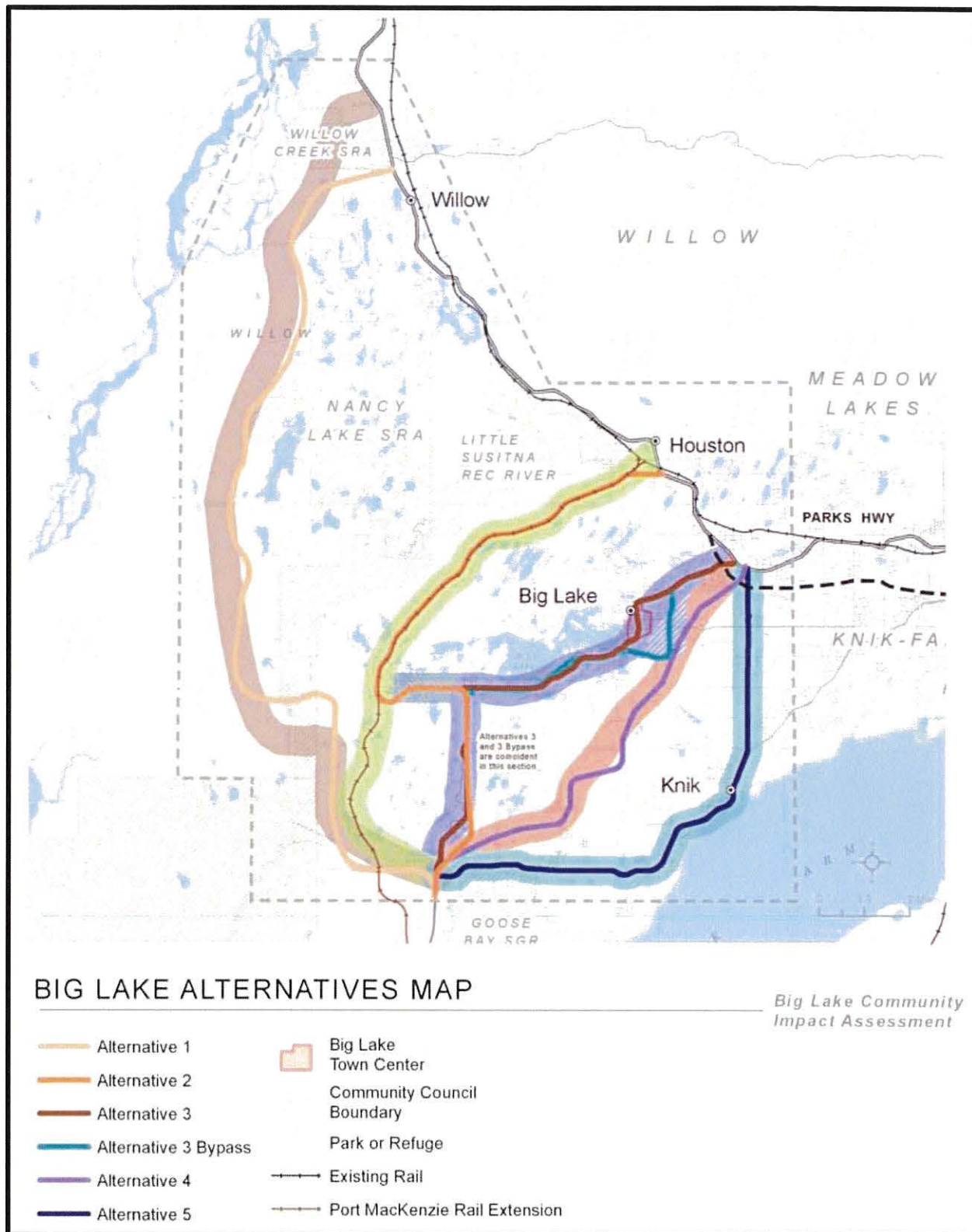
The project will expand the existing 2-lane Parks Highway facility to a full 4-lane divided facility from Wasilla west to Big Lake Road. The main goal of the project is to improve safety along the corridor which historically has had a high rate of severe crashes. The project would also alleviate congestion by increasing estimated segment AADT capacity from approximately 16,500 to 33,000 vehicles per day (vpd). This would result in faster and more consistent trips between Houston or Big Lake and the city of Wasilla, which would impact the economic development in these communities. Additionally, the project would include frontage roads and additional signals, which could also affect the economic development along the corridor.

Due to the scheduled completion date of this project, it is already included in the base traffic volume forecast.

Likely effects of the Parks Highway upgrade include an increase in the number of recreational trips to the City of Houston from Wasilla and surrounding communities; however, local traffic growth as a result of population increases is expected to continue at a steady pace.

5.2 Project 2 – Port MacKenzie to Parks Highway Roadway Corridor

This proposed project would construct a more direct route from Point MacKenzie to the Parks Highway. Various routes have been considered in conjunction with the 2003 Matanuska Susitna Borough Rail Corridor Study, the 2007 Port MacKenzie Rail Corridor Study and the Big Lake Community Impact Assessment in 2013. Figure 2 on page 7 shows the alternatives studied in the more recent Big Lake study, conducted by the Matanuska Susitna Borough.



Source: *Big Lake Community Impact Assessment, 2013*

Figure 2 - Port Mackenzie to Parks Highway Road Alternatives Map

The only alternative that falls within the City of Houston is Alternative 2 which would run north from the port along the section line currently occupied by Purinton Road until it reaches Burma Road. At this point it would travel west on Burma and intersect the railroad extension and would parallel the railroad tracks north to Houston. It would access the Parks Highway at or around the Millers Reach Road intersection.

The expected traffic impacts were assessed using two different versions of the travel demand model. One with the currently planned road network and a second with the alternative road segments included. The road section is modeled as a 2-lane undivided road with a design speed of 65 mph in accordance with assumptions in the planning studies.

Figure 3 on page 9 shows a general diagram of the positive and negative AADT impacts of the alternative route.

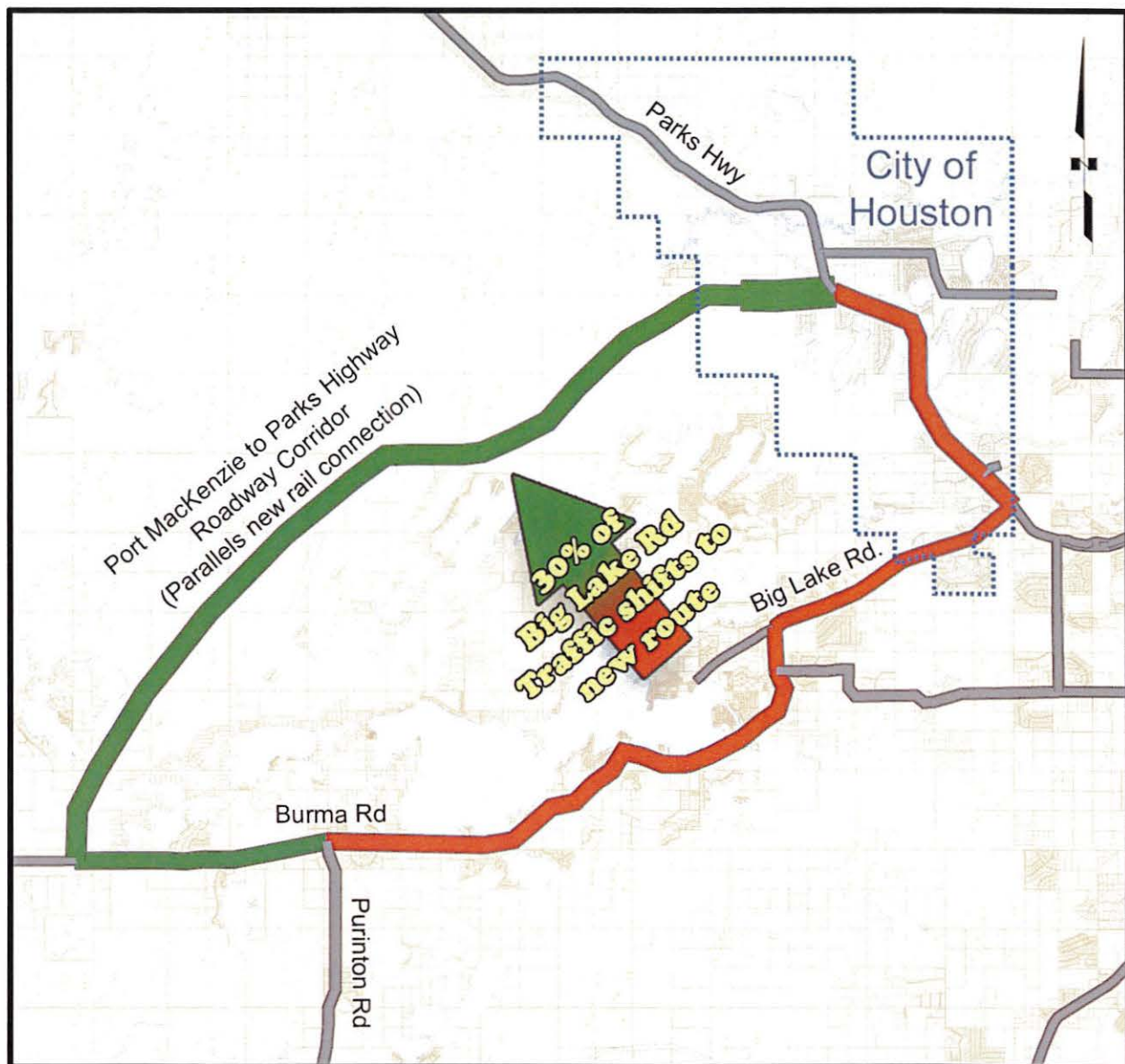


Figure 3 - Traffic Impacts of Road Extension

Note that the traffic impacts would not be highly significant when compared to the current system. The existing distance from Millers Reach Road to the intersection of Purinton and Burma is approximately 15 miles via Big Lake Road. The alternative corridor between these same two points would be approximately 16 miles. Therefore, the benefit for travel would be exclusively based on the fact that the new route would have a design speed of 65 mph, compared to Big Lake Road which is currently posted at 55 mph, the reduced turbulence of adjacent access along Big Lake Road, and the avoidance of existing and future traffic signals or roundabouts in Big Lake.

Likely effects of a new and improved route between Port MacKenzie and Houston include a shift of traffic volumes from Big Lake to Houston of about 4,000 vehicles per day, which is approximately 30% of projected daily traffic on Big Lake Road. A large percentage of

the heavy vehicle trips on Big Lake Road would be included in this shifted traffic, particularly after the construction of the Knik Arm Bridge. The decrease in travel time using the new route, if the travel speed is 65 mph, is approximately 5 minutes, considering side street friction and intersection delay due to signals and roundabouts.

5.3 Project 3 – Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

The Alaska Railroad has begun construction on a 32-mile rail line from Port MacKenzie to connect with the existing ARR line within the City of Houston. The location of the planned rail line was shown previously in Figure 1 on page 4.

The ARR does not currently have any plans to construct facilities or base any operations at the new railroad junction in Houston. Therefore direct socioeconomic impacts (and therefore traffic impacts) due to the rail line project alone are considered to be minimal.

The ARR has expressed willingness to accommodate loading facilities at the junction for private development. The potential passenger car traffic associated with operations such as this would be minimal compared to overall traffic. However, this may have a considerable impact on the percentage of trucks in the local road network.

One scenario currently being considered would use the rail junction as a loading site for material currently being driven by truck north from Big Lake to Fairbanks. Therefore, trips that currently exist on Big Lake Road and the Parks Highway through Houston, would now be turning in and out of a railroad access point at or near Millers Reach Road. Likely accommodations for these truck traffic maneuvers would involve constructing turn lanes to remove the trucks from the travel lanes on the Parks Highway and providing adequate sight distance for trucks leaving the access road to enter the Parks Highway. The existing intersection of Millers Reach Road and the Parks Highway does not meet these characteristics, as it is on the outside of a curve and has no additional turn lanes.

6 Recommendations

The following are general traffic-related observations and recommendations for the City of Houston.

6.1 Functional Classifications

The current traffic volumes on roads outside the Parks Highway corridor are currently at the level of local roads regardless of their planned functional classification. Although several roads are currently classified as “Minor Collectors” they have not yet matured to the point where this function is critical to maintain. Volume projections indicate that in the future, a properly designed and well maintained collector road network will be essential. The current functional classifications of roads were shown previously in Figure 1 on page 4.

It is recommended that the “minor collector” road network in the City of Houston should be preserved. Property driveways should access local roads when possible instead of collector roads and new local roads should be constructed with adequate spacing from adjacent roads to accommodate possible future turn lanes. Additionally, local roads accessing on opposite sides of a collector should be aligned directly across from each other to eliminate offset

intersections. Consideration should be made to possible future right-of-way needs around minor collectors in case these roads ever need to be widened for turn lanes or pathways, particularly in areas around intersections.

6.2 Access Management

Access management will likely become a growing concern as traffic volumes on the Parks Highway continue to increase. The TDM indicates that the majority of growth on the Parks Highway would be local to Houston, rather than being related to pass-through traffic continuing north toward Fairbanks. This suggests that there will be a higher percentage of turning traffic on and off the highway.

One method of accommodating this increase in turning traffic is to encourage turns at safe, logical locations throughout the corridor. This means limiting the number of intersections with the Parks Highway, and relocating trips to consolidated intersections through the use of parallel connections and frontage roads. Specifically, frontage roads are recommended in the existing commercial zone south of Armstrong Road where linked parking lots currently operate as a de facto frontage road.

If the traffic volumes do increase to the level indicated in the 2035 model, a 4-lane divided highway would likely be necessary with access points at a minimum of ½ mile increments. It is recommended that the City of Houston plan for these access points, encouraging development patterns that would reduce the impact and cost of construction for a 4-lane divided highway.

6.3 Pedestrian Crossings

In connection with the consolidation of turning traffic, consideration should also be made concerning the desired location for pedestrian crossings of the Parks Highway. As residential development continues to grow north of the Parks Highway, along King Arthur Road and Armstrong Road, commercial development is expected to increase adjacent to the highway. The major commercial developments currently are on the south side of the highway, and new commercial development is likely to expand out from this established location. This development creates a conflict as pedestrians make home based commercial trips which require crossing the Parks Highway.

Safer crossings could be encouraged through construction and proper maintenance of surrounding trail networks which would direct the flow of walking, biking and motorized pedestrians to reduced speed areas of the Parks Highway or to access points that might be signalized in the future.

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APPENDIX E. LAND USE ASSESSMENT



Community Impact Assessment
& Comprehensive Plan Revision

[LAND USE ASSESSMENT]

Prepared for the City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan Revision

Prepared by:
R&M Consultants, Inc.

Van Le, AICP
Project Manager

November, 2015

November 10, 2015

[LAND USE ASSESSMENT]

Steering Committee Meeting DRAFT

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1.0 Land Use Analysis Overview

The purpose of a land use analysis and assessment is to evaluate the existing land use and zoning districts to determine if there is enough land in the future for the projected growth and desired future residential, commercial and Industrial development. A land use analysis includes a build out analysis which uses existing and projected land use data to determine if there is enough capacity for growth if every parcel of land is developed in the future.

1.1 Existing Conditions - Zoning District Map Evaluation, Land Use and Population

The purpose of this evaluation is to understand how much land is zoned for each type of district to help determine if there is enough of each district to support future needs based on growth projections. Approximately 16,210 acres are zoned with the City of Houston, including the newly annexed and zoned Knikatnu, Inc. owned lands. The table below summarized the zoning district area by type.

Table 1: Existing Zoning by Acreage and % of Total Land

Zoning District	Approx. Area (acres)	Percent of Total
PLI – Public Lands and Institutions	3450	21.28%
R-1 - Single-family and Two-family Residential	3940	24.30%
MFR – Multifamily Residential	960	5.92%
RA 2.5 – Residential / Agriculture	190	1.17%
RA 5 – Low-Density Residential Agriculture	2480	15.30%
NC – Neighborhood Commercial District	0	0%
C – Commercial District	210	1.30%
LI – Light Industrial	1290	7.96%
HI – Heavy Industrial	1460	9.01%
H – Holding District	1270	7.83%
PH – Parks Highway District	960	5.92%

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Of the approximately 16,210 acres within the City of Houston, almost 80% or 12,961 acres of that total land is undeveloped. Approximately 15% of the total land in Houston is currently being used for residential purposes. The following table summarizes the area of existing land uses by type.

Table 2: Existing Land Uses by Acreage and % of Total Land

Land Use	Area (acres)	% Of Total
Churches	2	0.01%
Commercial – Heavy	12	0.07%
Commercial – Light	32	0.20%
Communications	10	0.06%
Duplex – Two-Family	11	0.07%
Education – Public	241	1.49%
Mobile Home	97	0.60%
Mobile Home Parks	1	0.01%
Multi Family	12	0.07%
Public Use	18	0.11%
Public Safety	93	0.57%
Recreation	3	0.02%
Residential	2435	15.02%
Residential Garage	261	1.61%
Residential W/ Commercial Use	10	0.06%
Transient Lodging	11	0.07%
Vacant	12961	79.96%
Total	16,210	100%

Table 3: Vacant Residentially Zoned Land by Residential Zoning District

Zoning	Vacant (Acres)
R-1	2582
RA-2.5	55
RA-5	1690
MFR	416

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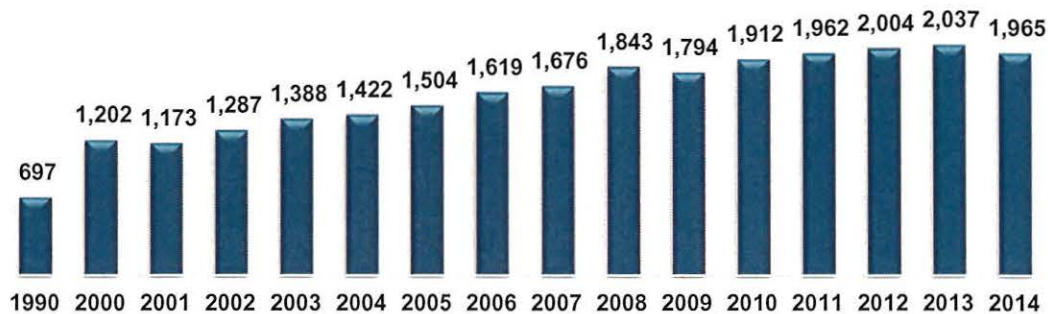
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Total	4327
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2.0 Population and Population Projections

Houston experienced steady population growth over the past two decades. In 2014, Houston's population was estimated at 1,965 residents – nearly triple its 697 residents in 1990 (182 percent growth, see Figure 1). In comparison, the entire Mat-Su grew from 39,683 to 98,063 over the same period (147 percent growth, see Figure 4).

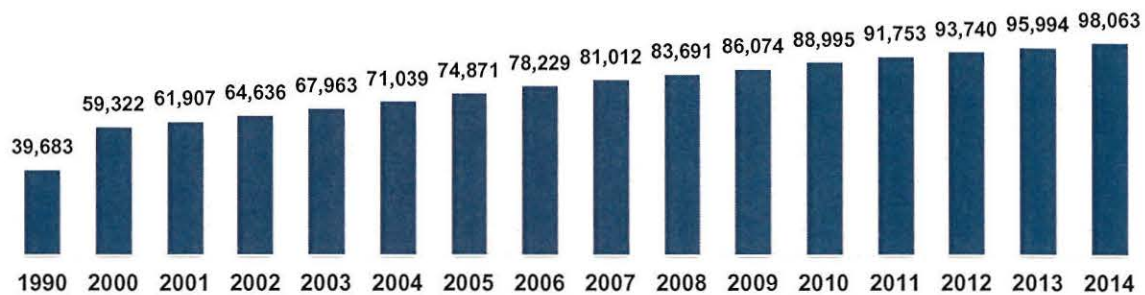
Figure 1: Houston Population, 1990 and 2000-2014



Source: ADOLWD

Houston is expected to match the broader Mat-Su Borough in terms of population growth, which ADOLWD projects population growth to slow from the current annual growth rate of slightly more than 3.6% to less than 2% by 2035.

Figure 2: Mat-Su Borough Population, 1990 and 2000-2014



McDowell Group projects Houston's population growing at a similar rate of approximately 2% over the current period to 2015. With this growth rate, Houston is projected to grow to slightly more than 3,100 residents in 2035, which is an increase of around 50% from current population levels.

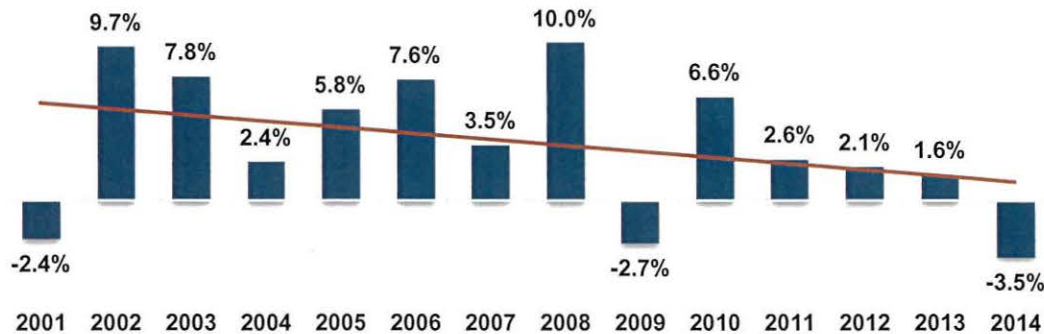
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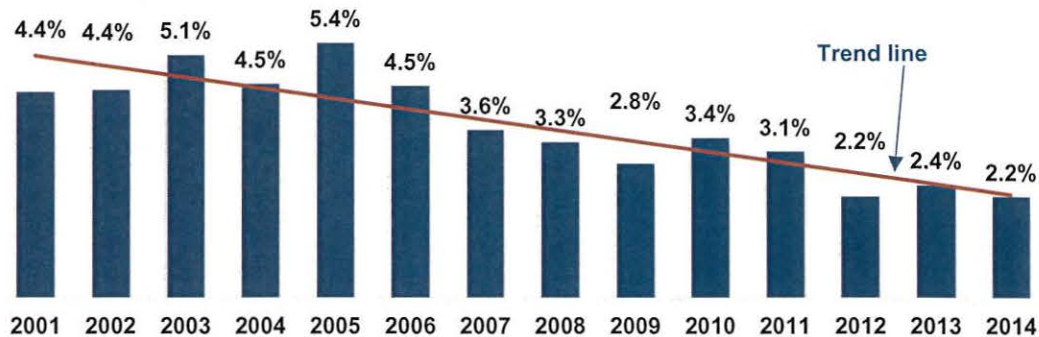
In recent years, population growth rates have slowed in both Houston and the Mat-Su Borough. As shown in Figure 3, Houston grew by 2.6 percent from 2010 to 2011, but experience negative growth from 2013 and 2014. On average, Houston grew 0.7 percent annually since 2011. In comparison, the Borough's population grew 2.5 percent per year, on average, since 2011 (see Figure 4).

Figure 3: Houston Annual Population Growth Rate, 2001-2014



Source: ADOLWD

Figure 4: Mat-Su Borough Annual Population Growth Rate, 2001-2014



Source: ADOLWD

Population Projections

This analysis provides population projections for Houston, based on extending past trends into the future. This methodology differs from a forecast, which would account for economic and other factors with the potential to affect population change. Forces that may affect population growth in Houston over the next 20 years include the following:

- **Economic conditions in Alaska**, including factors such as oil prices, gas line development, and other events in the oil and gas industry (responsible for about a third of Alaska's economy). In

general, increases in economic activity are accompanied by increases in population. Conversely, if economic activity contracts, population growth tends to slow or decline.

- **Economic conditions in Anchorage** might affect Mat-Su's role as a "bedroom" community (a third of the Mat-Su Borough's labor force is employed in Anchorage). Job growth in Anchorage can have population effects in the Mat-Su Borough.
- **Local (Mat-Su) economic conditions** – To the extent the local economy grows (or declines) in response to local events, related or unrelated to statewide or national economic trends, Houston's population could be affected.
- **The condition of the U.S. economy** – A weakening U.S. (Lower 48) economy can cause in-migration to Alaska, as the unemployed come to Alaska seeking work. Conversely, strong growth in the U.S. economy can lead to out-migration from Alaska.
- **Housing costs** – As long as housing prices are lower in the Mat-Su Borough compared to Anchorage, AND commuting costs remain stable, the Mat-Su Borough population will continue to have a large component of Anchorage workers and their households. A similar scenario has developed between Houston and Wasilla; with lower housing costs, some opt to live in Houston and commute to Wasilla (or Anchorage) for employment.
- **Natural growth and other demographic trends** – Birth and death rates, aging of the population, and other demographic forces may also affect local population trends.

It is beyond the scope of this study to consider all of these factors. However, statewide and local population projections, prepared by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (ADOLWD) can be used as the basis for Houston-specific projections.

ADOLWD periodically prepares long-term population forecasts for Alaska overall and for local areas. The most recent projections, published in April 2014, indicate slow growth (0.8 percent annually) over the next 25 years for the state overall.¹ The Mat-Su Borough is expected to continue experiencing the fastest rates of growth, at 1.9 percent annually (see Table 4).

¹ Alaska Population Projections, 2012-2042. Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, April 2014.

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Table 4: Alaska Statewide and Local Area Population Projections, 2012 to 2042

	Percent Growth	Annual Growth Rate
Anchorage	35%	1.0%
Mat-Su Borough	77%	1.9%
Kenai Peninsula Borough	15%	0.5%
Fairbanks North Star Borough	32%	0.9%
City and Borough of Juneau	2%	0.1%
Statewide	26%	0.8%

Source: ADOLWD

ADOLWD uses a “cohort component” methodology, separating the population of each gender into age groups and aging them forward in time, then adding projected births and in-migrants and subtracting projected deaths and out-migrants. ADOLWD assigns each borough/census area its own unique mortality, fertility, and migration rates “based on recent data and knowledge of the specific populations.” Again, these projections do not consider particular events in the economy (such as Alaska’s current state government budget deficits or low oil prices in general).

For purposes of this study, three growth projections have been defined, including low-case, mid-case, and high-case projections. These projections are described, below.

Low Growth Scenario

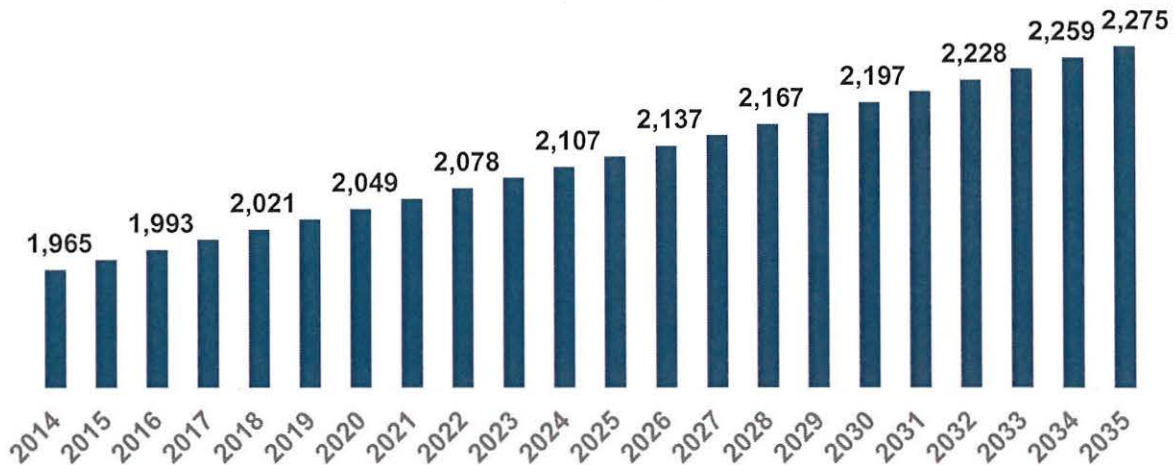
The Low Growth Scenario assumes Houston’s projected growth between 2014 and 2035 will be similar to the recent 4-year (2011-2014) average annual growth of 0.7 percent. Under this scenario, Houston’s population will grow by 310 persons between 2014 and 2035, for an overall growth rate of 16 percent during that time period (see Figure 5). Based on an average of 2.6 persons per household (2010 Census), this growth would indicate 119 new housing units would be needed to accommodate this population growth by 2035.

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Figure 5: Low Growth Scenario, Project Annual Average Growth Rates,
Houston, 2014-2035



Source: McDowell Group estimates

Mid Growth Scenario

The Mid Growth Scenario applies a growth rate at the mid-point between those used in the high and low growth scenarios (see Table 3). Under this scenario, it is estimated that Houston's population will grow by 639 persons between 2014 and 2035, or 33 percent growth overall (see Figure 6). Based on an average of 2.6 persons per household, this growth would indicate 246 new housing units would be needed to accommodate this population growth by 2035.

Table 5: Mid Growth Scenario, Projected Annual Average Growth Rates, Houston 2014-2035

Years	Annual Growth Rate
2014-2017	1.54%
2017-2022	1.45%
2022-2027	1.35%
2027-2032	1.26%
2032-2035	1.16%

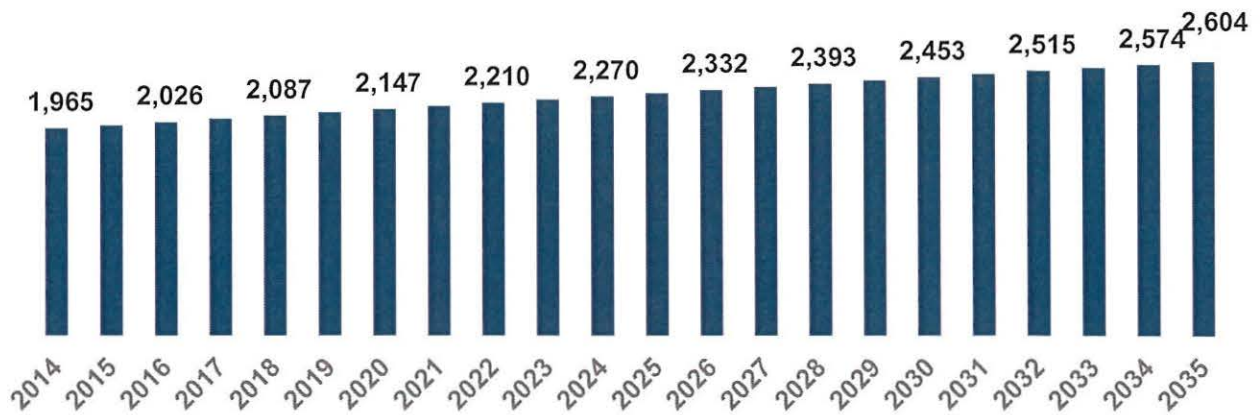
Source: McDowell Group calculations

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Figure 6: Mid Growth Scenario, Projected annual Average Growth Rates, Houston 2014-2035



Source: McDowell Group estimates

High Growth Scenario

The High Growth Scenario assumes Houston matches the broader Mat-Su estimates for population growth as projected by ADOLWD (see Table 4). Under this scenario, it is estimated that Houston's population will grow by 996 persons between 2014 and 2035, for an overall growth rate of 51 percent (see Figure 7). Based on an average of 2.6 persons per household, this growth would require 383 new housing units by 2035.

Table 6: High Growth Scenario, Projected Annual Average Growth Rates, Mat-Su Borough, 2014-2035

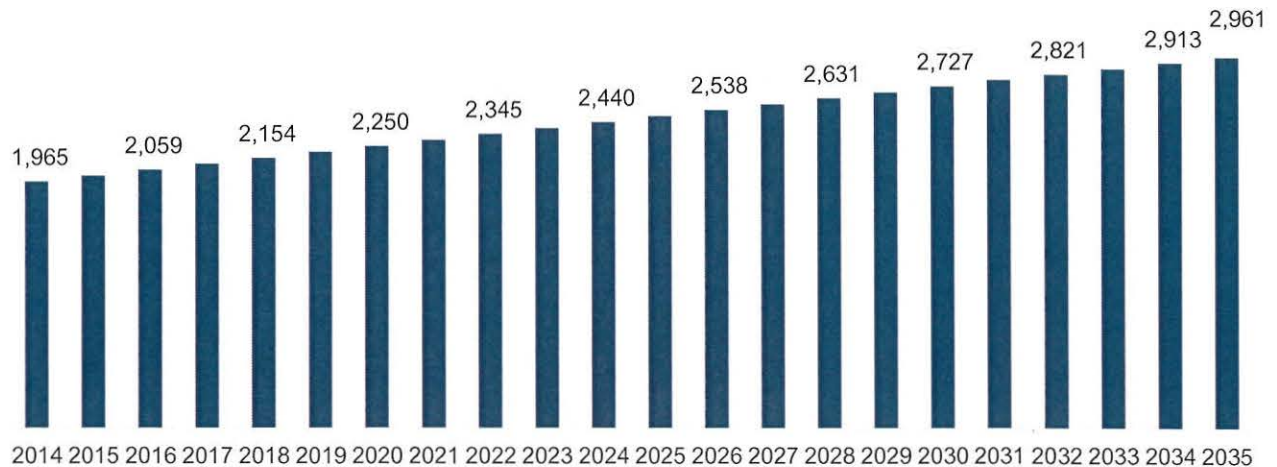
Years	Births	Deaths	Net Migration	Population Change	Annual Growth Rate
2014-2017	1,400	506	1,469	2,363	2.37%
2017-2022	1,591	621	1,476	2,446	2.19%
2022-2027	1,782	755	1,455	2,482	2.00%
2027-2032	1,962	909	1,419	2,472	1.81%
2032-2035	2,128	1,072	1,359	2,415	1.62%

Note: Average annual numbers are rounded to whole numbers. Source: ADOLWD

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Figure 7: High Growth Scenario, Projected Annual Average Growth Rates, Houston, 2014-2035

Source: McDowell Group estimates.

3.0 Build Out and Housing Needs Assessment

Housing in Houston

According to Mat-Su Borough and City of Houston data, there are 999 housing units in Houston. Single-family detached units make up 85 percent (846 units) of all housing units, with the remaining composed of 62 multi-family dwellings, 8 duplexes, and 85 mobile homes (see Table 9).

Table 7: Total Housing Units by Housing Type

	Count	
Total housing units	991	100%
Single-Family Detached	846	85%
Mobile Home	85	9%
Multi-Family	62	6%
Duplex	8	1%

Columns may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Source: City of Houston, Mat-Su Borough

The current amount of land zoned for residential development is considered for the total build out capacity. Using minimum lot sizes stated in the City of Houston Municipal Code, Title 10 Land Use Regulations and the *Housing Needs Analysis* to be conducted by the McDowell Group, the amount of potential housing units and type of housing can be determined.

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This estimate is corroborated by the American Community Survey's 2009-2013 5-year estimate of 991 housing units in Houston. Of these units 72 percent (or 716 units) are considered occupied; and, of these units, 78 percent (561 units or 56 percent of all housing units) are owner-occupied.

According to the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment Household Survey conducted in November 2014, approximately 35 percent of local property owners do not reside in Houston. Presuming these nonresidents have a dwelling on their property, this would suggest approximately 350 homes in Houston are used as vacation/recreation properties (or otherwise used only occasionally).

Houston Housing Characteristics

Housing data for Houston from the American Community Survey (2009-2013 5-year estimates) are provided in Table 8. The data suggests approximately 28 percent of housing units are unoccupied.

Table 8: Houston Housing Units, Occupancy, and Vacancy Rates, 2009-2013 Five Year Estimates

	Count	Margin of Error	Percent	Margin of Error
Total housing units	991	+/-36	100%	-
Occupied housing units	716	+/-50	72.3%	+/-4.9
Vacant housing units	275	+/-51	27.7%	+/-4.9
Homeowner vacancy rate	5.7%	+/-2.9%	-	-
Rental vacancy rate	9.9%	+/-6.9%	-	-

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimates.

The majority of housing units (55 percent) were built since 1990, with construction peaking between 2000 and 2009 (32.3 percent of the housing units) (See Table 9.0).

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Table 9: Houston Housing Units, by Year Built, 2009-2013 Five Year Estimates

	Count	Margin of Error	Percent	Margin of Error
Total housing units	991	+/-36	100%	-
Built 2010 or later	39	+/-21	3.9%	+/-2.1
Built 2000 to 2009	320	+/-56	32.3%	+/-5.6
Built 1990 to 1999	189	+/-50	19.1%	+/-5.0
Built 1980 to 1989	169	+/-42	17.1%	+/-4.2
Built 1970 to 1979	147	+/-43	14.8%	+/-4.2
Built 1960 to 1969	98	+/-31	9.9%	+/-3.1
Built 1950 to 1959	24	+/-19	2.4%	+/-1.9
Built 1940 to 1949	5	+/-8	0.5%	+/-0.8
Built 1939 or earlier	0	+/-9	0.0%	+/-2.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimates.

Table 9.0 indicates that 14 percent (+/-5.1 percent margin of error) of occupied housing units in Houston lack complete plumbing facilities, and 11 percent (+/- 5.0 percent) lack complete kitchen facilities.

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Table 10: Houston Occupied Housing Units, by Selected Utility Characteristics, 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimates

	Count	Margin of Error	Percent	Margin of Error
Occupied housing units	716	+/-50	100%	-
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	100	+/-37	14.0%	+/-5.1
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	81	+/-35	11.3%	+/-5.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimates.

The median value of an owner-occupied unit in Houston is estimated at \$177,300 (+/- \$20,161 margin of error, see Table 11.0). Almost a third (30 percent) of these units are estimated to be valued at less than \$100,000.

Table 11: Houston Housing Units, by Value of Owner-Occupied Units, 2009-2013 Five Year Estimates

	Count	Margin of Error	Percent	Margin of Error
Owner-occupied units	561	+/-47	100%	-
Less than \$50,000	92	+/-33	16.4%	+/-5.7
\$50,000 to \$99,999	77	+/-28	13.7%	+/-4.9
\$100,000 to \$149,999	47	+/-22	8.4%	+/-3.7
\$150,000 to \$199,999	120	+/-40	21.4%	+/-7.1
\$200,000 to \$299,999	143	+/-41	25.5%	+/-6.9
\$300,000 to \$499,999	70	+/-28	12.5%	+/-4.8
\$500,000 to \$999,999	12	+/-15	2.1%	+/-2.7
\$1,000,000 or more	0	+/-9	0.0%	+/-3.5
Median (dollars)	\$177,300	+/- \$20,161	-	-

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013 Five-Year Estimates

Housing Demand Projections

Housing demand will grow (or decline) with changes in population, as discussed above. However, demographic trends can also have specific impacts on housing demand. Demographic factors affecting future housing demand in Houston include:

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- **Aging:** The aging of Houston's population will result in changes in household characteristics and housing preferences. For example, U.S. Census data for Anchorage suggests that householders younger than 34 year and older than 64 are more likely to live in rental or multifamily units, and householders between age 35 and 64 are more likely to live in owner-occupied single-family detached housing.

Additionally, one of the important demographic questions in the coming years is how baby-boomers will behave when they reach retirement age. Will they leave Alaska? Move from Anchorage or Wasilla? Older households will make a variety of housing choices. Many will choose to remain in their homes as long as they are able. Some may downsize to smaller single-family homes; these will be a mixture of owner and renter units. Some may choose to move away from Houston to be closer to specialized medical facilities or to be closer to family care-givers.

- **Household composition:** Houston may be impacted by similar state and national trends in decreasing household size over time due to aging of the householders and smaller families. For example, as householders age, fewer households include children under the age of 18.
- **Income Levels and Home Affordability:** Income levels also affect demand for different types of housing. For example, families with lower incomes may prefer higher density housing (such as duplex, two-family townhouse, and some types of multifamily housing) and are more likely to be renters. Data from the American Community Survey (2009-2013 5-year estimates) estimate that home prices in Houston are 22 percent lower than Wasilla (\$177,300 median value for owner-occupied homes in Houston compared to \$227,800 in Wasilla). Lower housing costs make Houston an attractive place to live, including commuters to Wasilla.

Another factor affecting housing in Houston is the potential for increased demand for vacation and recreational properties.

While many factors can impact housing demand, shifts in population are the main driving force. Based on low, mid, and high population growth scenarios, housing units needed in Houston to accommodate new demand can be estimated.

Under a low growth scenario, approximately 119 new occupied housing units will be needed by 2035; under a high growth scenario, 383 new occupied housing units will be required. The mid-point is 246 new occupied housing units by 2035 (see Table 10). While some of this demand can be met by conversion of vacant housing units (currently estimated at 5.7 percent, see Table 5), new housing development will be clearly needed.

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Table 12: Low, High, and Mid Growth Scenarios, Future Housing Demand in Houston, Number of Housing Units, Houston, Various Years (2014-2035)

Years	Low-Growth	Mid-Growth	High-Growth
2014	756	756	756
2017	772	791	811
2022	799	850	902
2027	828	909	994
2035	875	1,001	1,139
# Growth 2014-2035	+119	+246	+383

Source: McDowell Group estimates.

Land Use Implications

Residential development in Houston can occur on land zoned as:

- R-1: 1-acre minimum lot size designated for single-family and two-family (low density)
- MFR (multifamily): designated for medium density use
- RA-2.5: 2.5 acre lot designated for residential/agriculture use
- RA-5: 5-acre lot size designated for low density residential use

According to City of Houston and Mat-Su Borough GIS data, a total of 4,742 acres within Houston are vacant, buildable, and zoned for residential development (see Table 3.0 and Table 13.0 below). This level of vacant land suggests an ample amount of zoned land is available to address future housing demand and residential development for single-family homes and multi-family homes in Houston by 2035, based on the population projections described in this analysis.

Table 13: Vacant Acreage by Zone District and Housing Demand, Houston, 2014

Zone District	Vacant Zoned Acreage	Number of Available Buildable Lots	Low Growth Scenario Additional # of housing units by 2035	Mid Growth Scenario Additional # of housing units by 2035	High Growth Scenario Additional # of housing units by 2035
R-1	2,582	2,582			
RA-2.5	55	22			
RA-5	1,690	338			
MFR	416	104			
Total	4,742	3,046	119	246	383
Housing Demand by Housing Type					
Single Family Detached Demand (85 percent of total units)			101	209	326
Multi-family Demand (15 percent)			18	37	57

Source: Mat-Su Borough, City of Houston, McDowell Group estimates.

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3.1 Residential Build Out

Table 14: Existing Zoning by Housing Type under Existing Zoning, Capacity for New Housing

Existing Zoning and Capacity for Future Growth (Base Growth) by Housing Type, Under Existing Residential Zoning				
Housing Category	Existing Housing Stock		Total Build Out Capacity	
SINGLE FAMILY	Existing # Housing Units	Percent of Existing Units	Potential # Housing Units	Percent of Housing Units
Single Family (Detached)	846	84.7%	2194	85%
Single Family Large Lot (2.5 acre lots)			22	1%
Single Family Large Lot (5 acre lots)			338	13%
Single Family (Attached)	8 Duplex	0.8%	21	1%
Sub Total 1	851	85.2%	2963	100%
Multi Family, Residential Other				
Multi-Family (3 Units or more)	62	6.2%	104	6%
Residential/Commercial	(2 parcels no units listed)	0%		
Mobile Homes	85 (1 MH Park Unit)	8.6%	196	9%
Residential Other - Residential Garage	No dwelling units	0%		
Transient Lodging	2 parcels, no dwelling units	0%		
Sub Total 2	148	14.8%	300	15%
Total	999	100%	3263	100%

4.0 School Needs Analysis (MSB Data Source)

Another indication of future land needs is population growth of students based on student multiplier and population projects for Houston and the Mat-Su from the Mat-Su Borough School District. Future school and educational facilities needs are based on population projections, and based on housing type to accommodate that future growth in student population. Below is a summary of the MSB School District Projections and summary of methods:

- Grades at all school sites are moved ahead one grade level, assuming 100% cohort survival.

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- Kindergarten enrollment is established by analyzing live birth rate data determined by the
- State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services.
- A cohort survival rate is calculated for each grade level in each school by averaging the percent change over the two prior years. This rate is then applied to the incoming class to establish a projected enrollment by grade level.
- Grade level projections at every school are combined, providing for an aggregate, district wide enrollment projection.
- The District analyzes economic trends and other factors that may assist in determining the accuracy of its projected enrollment and adjusts accordingly.

Based on the two year cohort survival method, the following anticipated enrollment projections for the upcoming years are:

- FY16: 18,098 Students
- FY17: 18,303 Students
- FY18: 18,458 Students
- FY19: 18,379 Students

These enrollment projections were completed 10 months ago and MSB has already exceeded their projection of 18,098 for the 2015-16 school year. MSB is currently serving 18,455 students. Being that the State's student count period does not take place until October, MSB has held off in updating their enrollment projections for the time being.

Demographic Analysis and Enrollment Forecast Summary

Western Demographers provided a demographic analysis and enrollment forecast study that was completed in spring 2015. Western Demographers used their own methodology to arrive enrollment projections across the Valley and takes into account economic trends, the housing market, etc.

School District and Borough Overall Growth Estimates (2010-2013)

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District has grown at approximately 1.5 percent for the past year. The University of Alaska at Anchorage Institute of Social and Economic Research has maintained a standard 3.06 percent growth estimate for the MSB for the foreseeable future and has considered downgrading that figure to two percent. Recent population estimates from the Census Bureau American Community Survey support the eventual estimate of a 2% percent growth given the most recent measured annual growth rate of 2.46 percent.

Table 15: Mat-Su Borough Population Growth and Change

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013
Population	84,147	86,817	89,319	91,519

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Change		2,670	2,502	2,200
Percentage Change		3.17%	2.88%	2.46%

The expected 1.5 percent growth will generate **1,200 elementary students, 800 middle school students** and **1,000 high school students** during the next ten years (2014-2024).

School Needs

Growth in the Borough tends to suggest the future locations of new elementary school attendance areas. New housing will justify new elementary schools within the next decade in these areas:

1. Big Lake / Meadow Lake area
2. Machetanz / Cottonwood Creek / Snowshoe
3. A possible additional elementary serving the far west KGB corridor

Additional school facility needs based on the MSB 6 year CIP (FY 2017-FY 2022):

1. New Knik Area High School
2. New Wasilla Area Elementary School (Hyer Road)
3. New Palmer Area Elementary School

Mat-Su Housing Growth & School Facility Implications

Most development in the Borough has relied on water wells and septic systems as the primary source of domestic utilities and future, build-out modeling has assumed the continuation of low-density development. Growth underway in the Mat-Su is the result of a variety of trends:

- **Housing costs** in the Mat-Su relative to Anchorage have been historically low and have been well documented in local media as the conversation associated with the Anchorage land shortage has grown to address both residential and industrial land needs. Many Anchorage and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) employees have chosen to reside in the Mat-Su in order to afford owning a home vs. renting or to have more house for their money (purchasing power). Mat-Su homes, typically \$160K less than homes in Anchorage, are attractive to buyers.
- The Mat-Su Borough continues to embody the **Alaskan lifestyle** and foster **recreational amenities** that enrich the lives of all Alaskans. Fishing, hunting, sledding, mushing, skiing, boating and aviation opportunities in the Mat-Su are among the best in the State and are within easy reach of its largest population concentration. Many choose to live as close to these recreation amenities as possible. The Glenn Highway has effectively served to tie jobs to

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housing and provide a transportation conduit in both directions between Anchorage and the Mat-Su.

- Historically, the Borough has added significant **new housing units** during the four most recent decades. The most significant housing was added in the 2000's with approximately 15,636 new housing units added between 2000 and 2009.

Future School Needs

The two percent expected annual growth in the Mat-Su Borough and the 1.5 percent expected annual growth in school enrollment supported by this report will require the construction of two or three elementary schools and the completion of the Redington Secondary School Campus High School Facility. Other expansions including the Palmer Junior High may be required to address other capacity short-falls along with boundary changes to balance enrollment. These improvements will be required during the next five to eight years.

5.0 Commercial Space Needs Analysis

Houston currently has 12 acres of Heavy Commercial zoned land and 32 acres of Commercial Light Zoned land or less than 0.5% of the total land. Based on the current commercially zoned and commercial land use, there is not enough commercially zoned land for future development as desired by the City's need for more development to support the tax structure and to support the types of businesses needed to sustain the growing population. Table 16 below summarizes the existing Heavy Commercial Zoning and existing Light Commercial Zoning. The majority of the commercially zoned land is along the Parks Highway where there is good direct access but future Parks Highway upgrades may consolidate access and secondary access from side roads or shared frontage roads may be a reality.

Table 16: Existing Commercial Land Use

Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total
Commercial – Heavy	12	0.08%
Commercial - Light	32	0.23%

6.0 Other Public Facilities Needs Analysis

6.1 Parks and Recreation

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The Land Use map has been updated to reflect the two parks in the City. Currently, there is only 3% of existing land uses are Recreation (see Table 2.0). Based on the desires of the community through the survey, stakeholder interviews, open houses and Steering Committee work, this is not enough recreation for the desired future for Houston to become a destination where outdoor recreation is a draw.

6.2 Library

Mat-Su 2014 Strategic Library Plan Map shows a future library in Houston but no implementation strategies or timeline for such a library is provided.

6.3 Public Safety

A new Fire Station and public safety facility is being planned by City of Houston for the area of Birch Road. If funding for a City based police force is anticipated, more facilities will be needed.

6.4 Transportation

A future Transportation Corridor to support the development of the railroad extension (from Port McKenzie) should be reserved for the future development of a road corridor from Port Mackenzie to Parks Highway through Houston.

7.0 Industrial Space Needs Analysis

There is currently no land use that has developed as either light industrial or heavy industrial. However, there is currently 1290 acres of Light Industrially Zoned land and 1460 acres of Heavy Industrially Zoned land including the Knikatnu, Inc. annexed land. With the availability of this newly zoned land, the need for industrially zoned land may be met for the short term but land use and growth policies may still warrant the need to determine if additional land is needed.

Table 17: Existing Industrial Zoning Districts

Zoning	Acres	Percent of Total Area
Light Industrial	1290	7.96%
Heavy Industrial	1460	9.01%

8.0 Subareas Analysis – (See Existing Land Use and Planning Concepts Map)

- Town Center District (Civic Center of Houston)
- Commercial Areas District (Commercial Activities Center of Houston)

- Geographic Center of Houston – Node

9.0 Suitability Analysis (See Map Packet)

Land suitability is an analysis to determine how much land is developable, based on environmental constraints. These natural constraints include wetlands, floodplains, and unstable soils, slopes that exceed 45% as well as any known historical or archeological sites. Vacant land is categorized into levels of suitability for development based on the presence of constraining environmental factors.

- 5.1.1 Suitable land is assumed to be 100% available for development
- 5.1.2 Marginally Suitable land is assumed to be 66% available (i.e. 60 out of every 100 acres of marginally suitable vacant land are considered developable)
- 5.1.3 Unsuitable land is assumed to be not available for development

Environmental data sets used for this analysis are sourced from the Matanuska Susitna Borough. Wetlands data is from the Cook Inlet Wetlands Inventory and the initial suitability analysis included all types of wetlands within the inventory as unsuitable land. After review, not all types of wetlands within the inventory are undevelopable and so we are working to refine that constraint in the analysis to more realistically represent that attribute.

November 10, 2015

[LAND USE ASSESSMENT]

Steering Committee Meeting DRAFT

Table 18: Existing Land Use Analysis and Recommendations

Map Pages	Description	Recommended Action
1	Parcel 73412 is split over the railway ROW and Parks Highway ROW and has 3 residential units	
3	Parcel 201824 is proposed Susitna Valley State Forest	If State Forest is approved, update land use map
8	City parcel 6627 is where Fire House and City Hall are located. Current land use is recorded as Residential with Commercial Use	Change land use to PLI
8	Parcel 7346 is zoned PHD; 7 dwelling units exist on the designated single-family residential land use	Change land use or zoning if needed
12	Parcel 515626 is privately owned with 1 residential dwelling and parcel 57350 is privately owned with residential garage use; both zoned for PLI	Change zoning
15	Parcels 56708, 49748 have split zoning of R-1 and Holding District buffering the railroad	Eliminate split zoning
17	Parcel 73198 is privately owned, zoned for PLI. Recall discussion with Steering Committee that it might be park space?	
18	Parcel 12086 has split zoning of R-1 and MRF buffering the railroad from the R-1	Eliminate split zoning
19	Parcel 31015 is Borough owned and has Park designation according to City – land use map does not reflect this use	Update Land use map to show recreational use
22	City owned parcel 83874 with one Mobile Home- what is this parcel? (it is zoned PLI)	
23	City owned parcels 27141, 48676 zoned R-1 - what are these parcels?	
23	Privately owned parcel 87426 is zoned for PLI	
29	Native Corp owned parcel 26121 is zoned RA-5 but with annexation, it is proposed to be rezoned to MFR	If approved, update zoning from RA-5 to MFR

November 10, 2015

[LAND USE ASSESSMENT]

Steering Committee Meeting DRAFT

Map Pages	Description	Recommended Action
35	City owned parcel 75182 on north shore of Loon Lake- zoning is R-1, should it be PLI? What is the parcel use?	
41	Borough owned parcel 59946 is zoned RA-5 - is this to remain Borough owned? Should it be rezoned for PLI?	
43	Parcel 67787 is privately owned, zoned for R-1 but is bordered by the Parks Highway and ARRC.	Should be R-1.
46	Parcel 31962 is privately owned, zoned for PLI and is split by the railroad – is it owned by ARRC? What is the intent of the parcel?	
47	Parcels 37005, 46707, 14093, 20663, 1595 are zoned PLI but land use is private single family residentially used parcels. Zoning or land use needs to be updated.	COH: rezone parcels from PLI to R-1 or RA -2.5 or update land use
47	Parcel 33760 is zoned RA-2.5, use is single family residential, and has 4 residential units on it – zoning or land use might need to be updated	
49	PLI zoned parcels 80457 and 27934 are privately owned	
52	Parcel 7018 is privately owned, single family residential land use with one dwelling unit – zoning is Commercial	

General Notes:

- **Parks Highway District**
 - Intent: encourage a moderate level of growth which will provide the city with an economic base, employment opportunities, and decrease dependency on external governmental or economic factors. Encourage this area to support mixed residential and commercial use which maintains community character and promotes a community center.
 - Introduction of a **Town Center district** or overlay might replace this designation in some areas – PHD may not be needed at all if this is established
- **Neighborhood Commercial District**

November 10, 2015

[LAND USE ASSESSMENT]

Steering Committee Meeting DRAFT

- Intent: allows for the provisions of goods and services on a retail basis within residential districts to provide residents with convenience of neighborhood shopping. Intended to apply only to areas which are isolated from other commercial zones, located on collector streets rather than local roads but are easily accessible for the surrounding residential district.
- Currently, no parcels are zoned for NCD
 - City is discussing the removal of this zoning district, debating whether it serves a purpose separate from a conditional use within a residential district
- **Industrial Districts**
 - Newly annexed Knikatu Inc. land is proposed for mainly HI and LI land uses.
 - Knikatu, Inc. anticipates proposing through the CUP process the following projects:
 - Wastewater treatment plant
 - Railroad Reliant Industries
 - Warehousing and other Support Services
- **Commercial District**
 - Other than the Gold Miners Lodge in the northeast, only commercial zoning exists near the Big Lake Road intersection extending north to W Larae Road.
 - Parks Highway District currently allows for commercial development within it
 - If Parks Highway District is eliminated, Town Center District will most likely include some commercial but may want to reconsider some current PHD parcels for commercial designation
- **Recreation and Lake Access**
 - Concerns about lack of access and determined recreation spaces have been expressed within the Steering Committee as well as at the Open Houses
 - Only two areas are designated for recreation/parks – one is the Susitna Campground by City Hall and the other is the Park on the north shore of Bear Paw Lake

November 10, 2015

[LAND USE ASSESSMENT]

Steering Committee Meeting DRAFT

- No Parks and Recreation District exists within zoning, only PLI. Might want to consider creating a P&R District
- Parcel 31015 is owned by the Borough but surrounds the northern shoreline of Bear Paw Lake – Park designation according to our Project Area map but is not listed as a park on our land use map (update land use map)
- City owned parcel 75182 on north shore of Loon Lake, currently zoned for R-1 but could be PLI and has recreational and lake access potential
- Land west of Houston Middle and High Schools is owned by the Borough, zoned PLI has been sighted by the public as a potential area for recreational trails (CIA Open House)

Next Steps**Land Use Plan Map**

- a. Land Use Designations
- b. Designate distribution and general location of land uses including residential, commercial, industrial, parks and institutional development
- c. Address desired density, intensity, character of land use designations
- d. Ensure adequate housing, employment and recreation opportunities
- e. Maintain a balance distribution of land uses
- f. Provide guidance for future public facilities and utility investments
- g. Provides basis for future zoning decisions but is not a Zoning Map
- h. COH's Municipal Code, Title 10, Land Use Regulations is the primary tool for implementing the Comprehensive Plan Policies and are applied as Zoning Districts on the Zoning Map
- i. The Land Use Plan Map is the graphical representation and geographically explicit statement of the Comp Plan policies

APPENDIX F.
CITY OF HOUSTON PLANNING
AND ZONING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 16-PC-07

Introduced By: Councilmember Hartley
Introduction Date:
Public Hearing Date: July 28, 2016
Vote: Anderson, Burnett, and Hartley in favor
Jones and Mistor absent

**CITY OF HOUSTON
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**

RESOLUTION NO. 16-PC-07

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSTON PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION FORWARDING
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE CITY OF HOUSTON COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN UPDATE DRAFT DATED JUNE 23RD, 2016.**

WHEREAS, The City of Houston received Grant # 14-DC-057 in the amount of \$350,000 to perform a Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Update; and

WHEREAS, this process is nearing completion and a Draft Comprehensive Plan Update is ready for review; and

WHEREAS, Houston Municipal Code 7.06.030 Planning Commission Duties states that the Planning & Zoning Commission shall "Undertake a general review of the Comprehensive Plan at least once every two years and make recommendations to the Council for amendments"; and

WHEREAS, this draft plan update was introduced by the Planning Commission at the publicly noticed Planning Commission regular meeting on June 30, 2016 and set to a public hearing on July 28th, 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Houston Planning Commission sufficiently considered all evidence and testimony presented to them to make the following recommendation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Houston to forward the following recommendations regarding proposed City of Houston Comprehensive Plan Update:

Section 1. This following findings-recommendations are made or affirmed:

Recommendation 1:

Under Town Center Development, add language to encourage the development of street side or other public parking venues in the town center.

Recommendation 2:

Implement additional information on the history of industry in Houston.

Recommendation 3:

Under Transport add objective to provide additional traffic crossings across the Little Susitna River to promote public safety and convenience.

Introduced By: Councilmember Hartley

Introduction Date:

Public Hearing Date: July 28, 2016

Vote: Anderson, Burnett, and Hartley in favor
Jones and Mistor absent

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED By a duly constituted quorum of the Planning & Zoning Commission for the City of Houston on this 28th day of January, 2016.


Christian Hartley, Chair

ATTEST:



Sonya Dukes, CMC
Houston City Clerk

APPENDIX G.
CITY OF HOUSTON
CITY COUNCIL
ADOPTING ORDINANCE 16-22

Introduced by: Mayor Thompson
Introduction Date: August 11, 2016
Public Hearing: September 8, 2016
Adoption Date: September 8, 2016

Vote: Barney, Johansen, Johnson, Jorgensen, Stout, Wilson and Thompson in favor

**HOUSTON, ALASKA
ORDINANCE 16-22**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL REPEALING THE 1999 CITY OF HOUSTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, AS AMENDED IN 2003 (ORDINANCE SERIAL NO. 199-078; 2003-108) AND ADOPTING THE 2016 CITY OF HOUSTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED BY THE CITY OF HOUSTON, ALASKA:

WHEREAS, The City of Houston received State of Alaska Grant #14-DC-057 in the amount of \$350,000 to perform a Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Update; and

WHEREAS, in 2013 the City created a Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee to work closely with the consultant, City staff, City Planning Commission and City Council through the public process; and

WHEREAS, in 2013 the City hired qualified planning consultants through the bidding process to assist the Committee and staff in the process of revising the Comprehensive Plan through a number of public meetings, open houses and workshops ; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan is based on community and stakeholder input and has been supported by the City and Committee as a balanced approach to the community's future;

WHEREAS, the 2016 City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan is based on community and stakeholder input and has been supported by the City and Committee as a balanced approach to the community's future;

WHEREAS, the Houston Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the 2016 plan, held a Public hearing and forwarded recommendations on the plan to the City Council (Resolution 16-PC-07).

SECTION I: CLASSIFICATION: This ordinance is a non-code ordinance.

SECTION II: SEVERABILITY: If any provisions of this ordinance, or any application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance and the application to all other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

Introduced by: Mayor Thompson
Introduction Date: August 11, 2016
Public Hearing: September 8, 2016
Adoption Date: September 8, 2016

Vote: Barney, Johansen, Johnson, Jorgensen, Stout, Wilson and Thompson in favor

SECTION III: PURPOSE: The Purpose of Ordinance 16-22 is to replace the regulatory framework for land use and development in the City of Houston with a new, revised comprehensive plan that is responsive and convenient for the City residents.

SECTION IV: REPEAL OF THE 1999 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: the 1999 Comprehensive Plan (Adopted in Ordinance Serial No. 1999-078) including the amendment adopted in 2003 (Ordinance Serial No. 2003-108) is hereby repealed.

SECTION V: ADOPTION OF THE 2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: The 2016 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan, as submitted by the Houston Planning and Zoning Commission and the City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee as contained in Exhibit A of this ordinance, is hereby adopted.

SECTION VI: SUBMISSION TO THE MATANUSKA - SUSITNA BOROUGH. The Mayor shall submit the 2016 City of Houston Comprehensive plan in this ordinance to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough for approval by the Borough Planning Commission and Assembly as required by AS 29.40.030 (b) and MSB 17.42.025.


SECTION VII: ENACTMENT: Sections IV and V of this ordinance shall be effective upon the effective date of the ordinance of the Matanuska Susitna Borough Assembly approving the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan in this ordinance.

ADOPTED by the Houston City Council on September 8, 2016.

THE CITY OF HOUSTON, ALASKA


Virgie Thompson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Sonya Dukes, CMC, City Clerk



Community Outreach



City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment Survey

November 2014

Dear << Name>>

The City of Houston needs your help! We are in the process of updating our Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment. As part of that process, we have contracted with the McDowell Group, an Alaska research firm, to conduct a survey of Houston property owners and residents. The purpose of the survey is to gather your opinions about the city's priorities for the next 20 years. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey now. Your participation is critical. You can make a difference for your community.

The information you provide is confidential and is seen only by McDowell Group. The City of Houston will never see any individual survey data. Survey results are presented only in aggregate with other responses.

Please complete your survey by **December 5, 2014** and return it by using the enclosed self-addressed, postage-paid envelope. You may also fax the survey to (907) 586-2673, scan to robert.koentizer@mcdowellgroup.net, OR complete the survey on-line. Type the following address into your web browser and enter the password found in the bottom right of your survey's last page.

HoustonCompPlanSurvey.com

When you return your completed survey (either by mail, online, fax, or scan), your name will be entered into a drawing to win your choice of one of **20 \$50 Fred Meyer or Walmart gift cards**. Winners will be randomly selected by McDowell Group.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Bob Koenitzer, McDowell Group Project Manager at (866-586-6133) or robert.koenitzer@mcdowellgroup.net.

We appreciate your time and assistance with this important project.

Sincerely,

Virgie Thompson
Mayor
City of Houston

Len Anderson
Chair, City of Houston CIA and Comprehensive Plan
Revisions Steering Committee

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City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment Survey

The City of Houston is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment. This process will outline city priorities and guide planning efforts for the next 20 years. As part of that process, we appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey. Your opinions will help shape the future of your community.

If you prefer, you may also complete the survey online at a secure website by entering the following URL into your computer's browser and then entering your password (found in the bottom right of the survey last page). You will be entered in the drawing if you complete the survey by mail or online.

HoustonCompPlanSurvey.com

When you return your completed survey (either online or by mail), your name will be entered into a drawing to win your choice of **one of 20 \$50 Fred Meyer or Walmart gift cards.**

1. Did you live in Houston for more than 9 months in the past year?

01 ☐ Yes \Rightarrow 1a. If yes, how many years have you lived in Houston? # _____ years (go to Question 2)

02 ☐ No \Rightarrow 1b. Do you rent your Houston property to others? 01 ☐ Yes (go to Q3) 02 ☐ No (go to Q3)

2. Do you own or rent your Houston residence or property?

01 ☐ Own 02 ☐ Rent 03 ☐ Some other arrangement: _____

3. Overall, how would you rate your quality of life in Houston using a scale of 1 – 10, where 1 means "very poor" and 10 means "very good"? (Circle answer)

01 ☐ Do not live in Houston

Very Poor

Very Good

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

4. Please indicate your level of agreement regarding the following statements about the community of Houston.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure/Don't know
a. Houston is a safe place to live.	1	2	3	4	5
b. Houston is family-friendly.	1	2	3	4	5
c. Houston is a good place to enjoy a rural lifestyle.	1	2	3	4	5
d. Houston is a good place for people to live affordably.	1	2	3	4	5
e. Houston is a good place for outdoor recreation.	1	2	3	4	5
f. Houston could use more community planning.	1	2	3	4	5
g. Houston could use more landscaping of public spaces.	1	2	3	4	5

5. Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support each of the following transportation-related projects.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/Don't know
a. Improved road maintenance	1	2	3	4
b. Improved lighting on roads	1	2	3	4
c. Public transportation (bus service) between Houston and other parts of the Mat-Su Borough	1	2	3	4
d. New Alaska Railroad depot/train stop	1	2	3	4
e. New road between Houston and Port Mackenzie	1	2	3	4
f. More paved roads	1	2	3	4
g. Improved street/road signage	1	2	3	4
h. Development of a "Park and Ride" lot for commuters	1	2	3	4
i. Development of a Hawk Lane bike path	1	2	3	4

6. Of the transportation-related projects listed above, which one should be the most important priority for the City? _____(enter letter a-i) ☐ Unsure/Don't know

7. Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support each of the following recreation-related projects.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/Don't know
a. Creation of new parks with playgrounds	1	2	3	4
b. Improved public access to lakes	1	2	3	4
c. Creation of recreation programs for youth	1	2	3	4
d. Maintenance of existing trails and pathways	1	2	3	4
e. More non-motorized trails and pathways (for walking, biking, horse-riding, dog-sledding, etc.)	1	2	3	4
f. More motorized trails and pathways (for ATVs, snow machines, etc.)	1	2	3	4
g. Creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities, such as an ice rink, swimming pool, or running track	1	2	3	4

8. Of the recreation-related projects listed above, which one should be the most important priority for the City? _____(enter letter a-g) ☐ Unsure/Don't know

9. Please indicate how supportive you are for the City of Houston to strengthen each of the following environmental-related issues.

	Very supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not supportive	Unsure/Don't know
a. Stricter regulation of land near rivers, lakes, and streams	1	2	3	4
b. Stricter enforcement of flood plain development regulations	1	2	3	4
c. Protection of drinking water quality	1	2	3	4

10. Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support new development or expansion in each of the following areas of economic development.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/Don't know
a. Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks	1	2	3	4
b. Recruiting new businesses	1	2	3	4
c. Attracting more tourism development	1	2	3	4
d. Developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River (ex. river walk, city park, etc.)	1	2	3	4
e. Developing a "town center" with pedestrian-friendly facilities	1	2	3	4
f. Supporting natural resource development in the area	1	2	3	4
g. Supporting extension of utility services (ex. power, communication, etc.)	1	2	3	4

11. Of the economic development projects listed above, which should be the most important priority for the City? _____ (enter letter a-g) 01 ☐ Unsure/Don't know

12. Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to continue providing the following services.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/Don't know
a. Community planning	1	2	3	4
b. Road maintenance	1	2	3	4
c. Animal control and shelter	1	2	3	4
d. Fire and emergency services	1	2	3	4

13. Please indicate how willing you are to pay for the following suggested new or improved City of Houston services or facilities through increased property taxes.

	Very willing	Somewhat willing	Not willing	Unsure/Don't know
a. Improved road maintenance	1	2	3	4
b. Funding of Public Safety Officers	1	2	3	4
c. Improved city fire and emergency services	1	2	3	4
d. Cemetery development and maintenance	1	2	3	4

14. Please indicate how willing you are to pay a fee to drop off your garbage at a solid waste transfer station located in Houston?

01 ☐ Very willing

02 ☐ Somewhat willing

03 ☐ Not willing

04 ☐ Unsure/Don't know

15 In Houston, do you feel there is too much, too little, or just enough private property regulation?

01 ☐ Too much regulation

02 ☐ Too little regulation

03 ☐ Just enough regulation

04 ☐ Unsure/Don't know

16. How many people, including yourself, live in your Houston household? #_____ people

01 ☐ I do not live in Houston

17. How many people in your Houston household are under 18 years of age? #_____ people

01 ☐ I do not live in Houston

18. What is the highest level of education you have had the opportunity to complete?

01 ☐ Less than HS diploma

04 ☐ Some college

07 ☐ MA (Master's Degree)

02 ☐ HS diploma/GED

05 ☐ AA (Associate's Degree)

08 ☐ PhD (Doctorate)

03 ☐ Vocational/Tech Cert.

06 ☐ BA (Bachelor's Degree)

19. Please indicate the category that best describes your total combined household income before taxes for 2013.

01 ☐ Less than \$15,000

04 ☐ \$35,001 to \$50,000

07 ☐ Over \$100,000

02 ☐ \$15,001 to \$25,000

05 ☐ \$50,001 to \$75,000

03 ☐ \$25,001 to \$35,000

06 ☐ \$75,001 to \$100,000

20. Please indicate your gender

01 ☐ Male

02 ☐ Female

21. In what year were you born? 19_____

22. Please feel free to comment about any other planning issues you feel are important for the City of Houston to consider as it develops its new Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment.

If you have any questions contact: Bob Koenitzer, McDowell Group Survey Manager, call toll free 1-866-586-6133 or 1-907-586-2990, or e-mail robert.koenitzer@mcdowellgroup.net.

Please complete and return this survey by December 3, 2014.

Thank you. Your opinions matter!

For more information on the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment, please visit: <http://houstonakcompplan.com/>

Password



City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment Survey

December 2014

Dear << Name>>

A couple weeks ago, we sent you a survey that asked for your opinions about the City of Houston's priorities for the next 20 years as part of our process to update our City's Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment. If you have completed the survey, thank you for your time and participation in our planning process. If you have not completed the survey, please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey now. Your participation is critical. You can make a difference for your community.

The information you provide is confidential and is seen only by McDowell Group. The City of Houston will never see any individual surveys or names associated with survey data. Survey results will be presented only in total with other responses.

We have extended the survey's due date to **December 15, 2014**. Please return your survey by using the enclosed self-addressed, postage-paid envelope. You may also fax the survey to (907) 586-2673, scan to robert.koenitzer@mcdowellgroup.net, OR complete the survey on-line. Type the following address into your web browser and enter the password found in the bottom right of your survey's last page.

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When you return your completed survey (either by mail, online, fax, or scan), your name will be entered into a drawing to **win your choice of one of 20 \$50 Fred Meyer or Walmart gift cards**. Winners will be randomly selected by McDowell Group.

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We appreciate your time and assistance with this important project.

Sincerely,

Virgie Thompson
Mayor
City of Houston

Len Anderson
Chair, City of Houston CIA and Comprehensive Plan
Revision Steering Committee

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Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in the City of Houston's Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision. Don't forget to add vle@rmconsult.com to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision



Reminder: Complete the Survey!

As part of the City of Houston's Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision, we are conducting a survey of Houston residents and property owners to gather your opinions about the City's priorities for the next 20 years.

You received a survey in the mail from McDowell Group, an Alaska research firm. We appreciate you taking a few minutes to complete the survey.

Your opinions matter and we thank you in advance!

Thank you for attending the Future's Workshop in September

On September 18th, residents gathered in the Houston Fire Station for the first project open house, the Future's Workshop.

Attendees were tasked with "creating ideal futures" and openly discussed what the future of Houston should include; all responses were recorded.

For the results of the Future's Workshop and to provide us with feedback, go to the Public Involvement page of the project website: <http://houstonakcompplan.com/>

Please continue to participate in the City's Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision

The City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision is a collaborative effort between the City of Houston, the Planning Commission, Houston residents and business owners, and the R&M Team.

Questions? Please Contact:

Van Le, AICP
Project Manager
R&M Consultants, Inc.

email:
comments@rmconsult.com
phone: 907-646-9659

Visit the project website:
www.houstonakcompplan.com



R&M Consultants, Inc., 9101 Vanguard Drive, Anchorage, AK 99507

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JOIN US AT THE
OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY
June 4, 2015
4:30 pm-6:30 pm

HOUSTON FIRE STATION

The City of Houston is conducting a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) to identify the potential impacts upcoming projects may have on the community. Please join us at the open house to review identified impacts and provide feedback. The CIA will be used to help inform the Comprehensive Plan Revision currently underway. The City, in partnership with the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, is also kicking off a Parks Highway Corridor Plan effort that will be introduced at the Open House.

13965 W Armstrong Road, Houston, AK 99694

For More Information Please Contact: **PLANNER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR**
TARYN OLESON | R&M Consultants, Inc. | Comments@RMConsult.com | 907.646.9645

VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE – www.HoustonAKCompPlan.com

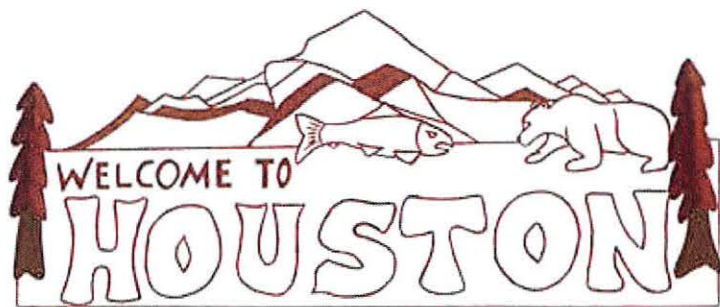


JOIN US AT THE
OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY

June 4, 2015

4:30 pm-6:30 pm



MR. AND MRS. SMITHERS
OR CURRENT RESIDENT
5943 Meow Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99518

Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in the City of Houston's Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision. Don't forget to add vle@rmconsult.com to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



JOIN US AT THE OPEN HOUSE

The City of Houston is conducting a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) to identify the potential impacts upcoming projects may have on the community. Please join us at the open house to review identified impacts and provide feedback. The CIA will be used to help inform the Comprehensive Plan Revision currently underway.

Thursday, June 4, 2015
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM
Houston Fire Station

We hope you continue to participate in the City's Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision process, your input is important appreciated!

For more information about the City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision, please visit the project website www.houstonakcompplan.com

The City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision is a collaborative effort between the City of Houston, the Planning Commission, Houston residents and business owners, and the R&M Team.

Questions? Please Contact:

Van Le, AICP
Project Manager
R&M Consultants, Inc.

email:
comments@rmconsult.com
phone: 907-646-9659

Visit the project website:
www.houstonakcompplan.com



R&M Consultants, Inc., 9101 Vanguard Drive, Anchorage, AK 99507

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Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in the City of Houston's Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision. Don't forget to add vle@rmconsult.com to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



The Draft Community Impact Assessment is Available for Review

The [Draft Community Impact Assessment \(CIA\)](#) is now available for public review. The full report and appendices can be found on the project website:

<http://houstonakcompplan.com/>

The CIA will help inform the current City of Houston Comprehensive Plan revision effort by analyzing potential impacts transportation projects may have on the community and residents' quality of life. The evaluation will allow the city and its residents to prepare for positive impacts and mitigate any potential negative impacts and assist Houston in maintaining its unique community character.

We appreciate your interest in the CIA and Comprehensive Plan Update process and value your comments on this draft report. Comments can be submitted through the project website, or you can contact a member of the project team.

Thank you and please contact a member of the project team if you have any questions!

The City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision is a collaborative effort between the City of Houston, the Planning Commission, Houston residents and business owners, and the R&M Team.

Questions? Please Contact:

Van Le, AICP
Project Manager
R&M Consultants, Inc.

email:
comments@rmconsult.com
phone: 907-646-9659

Visit the project website:
www.houstonakcompplan.com



R&M Consultants, Inc., 9101 Vanguard Drive, Anchorage, AK 99507

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JOIN US AT THE
OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY
May 5, 2016
5:00 pm-7:00 pm

Please join us at the Open House to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan for the City of Houston. This 20-year plan reflects the community's core values and future needs while providing a framework for development in the City of Houston through 2035.

HOUSTON FIRE STATION

13965 W Armstrong Road, Houston, AK 99694

For More Information Please Contact: **PLANNER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR**
VAN LE | R&M Consultants, Inc. | Comments@RMConsult.com | 907.646.9659

VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE – www.HoustonAKCompPlan.com



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You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



Join us at the Draft Comprehensive Plan Open House

Please join us at the Open House to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan for the City of Houston on May 5th, 2016. This 20-year plan reflects the community's core values and future needs while providing a framework for development and improvements in the City of Houston through 2035. We appreciate your interest and encourage your feedback on the Draft Comprehensive Plan Revision.

Open House

Thursday, May 5th, 2016

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Houston Fire Station 9-1

13965 W Armstrong Road, Houston

<http://houstonakcompplan.com/>

The Draft Comprehensive Plan will be posted to the website before the Open House on Thursday.

Comments can be submitted at the Open House, through the project website, or you can contact a member of the project team.

Thank you and please contact Project Manager, Van Le at vle@rmconsult.com if you have any questions!

The City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision is a collaborative effort between the City of Houston, the Planning Commission, Houston residents and business owners, and the R&M Team.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

1. **Postcard Mailing and Flyer– Futures Workshop**
Postcard sent to 1,651 residents, tenants property owners, and businesses and flyers distributed at Founder's Day event and at City Hall
2. **Household Opinion Survey Mailing**
Cover letter, opinion survey, and second round mailing sent out 1,651 residents, tenants, property owners, and businesses
3. **Constant Contact E-Newsletter – Household Survey**
Email newsletter with reminder to complete the Household Survey and with information on past Future's Workshop
4. **Postcard Mailing – CIA Open House**
Postcard sent to 1,651 residents, tenants, property owners, and businesses inviting them to the public open house to identify the potential impacts upcoming projects may have on the community for the CIA
5. **Constant Contact E-Newsletter – CIA Open House**
Email newsletter inviting stakeholders to the CIA Open House
6. **Constant Contact E-Newsletter – Draft CIA Review**
Email newsletter notifying stakeholders the Draft CIA is available for review and to solicit comments on the Draft.
7. **Postcard Flyers – Draft Comprehensive Plan Review**
Over 200 flyers were distributed throughout the community, including City Hall, the Post Office, Miller's Market, etc. inviting them to the public open house to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan.
8. **Constant Contact E-newsletter- Draft Comprehensive Plan Open House**
Email newsletter inviting stakeholders to the public open house to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan.
9. **Frontiersman Advertisement– Public Hearing Notice**
Advertisement placed in the Frontiersman notifying interested stakeholders of the City Council Public Hearing on the Comprehensive Plan
10. **City of Houston Website – Screen Shot of Home Page**
Throughout the project, the city's website prominently advertised the CIA and Comp Plan efforts, events, and updates as they were available. The City Calendar on the left reflected all events and Steering Committee meetings and posted the agenda of each meeting a minimum of one week prior to the meeting date.
11. **CIA & Comp Plan Project Website – Screen Shots (partial view)**
The project specific website, linked to the City of Houston's website, has been routinely updated and managed throughout the project to keep stakeholders well informed. All drafts and reports available for review are posted on the Documents page. Comments can be submitted any time through the website
12. **Public Involvement Page of Project Website – Content View**
Full content on the Public Involvement page of the project specific website.



Your Community, Your Future, Your Plan

Save the date:
Thursday,
September 18, 2014 for a
Futures Workshop

4:30 PM to 7:30 PM
Houston Fire Station



What Should Houston Look Like in the next 20 years?

The City of Houston is conducting a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) and revising its Comprehensive Plan to guide future growth. Since the Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2003, population growth, transportation infrastructure projects and industrial development are on the rise. Join us at the first community workshop to plan for the future and prepare for growth and development while preserving community values.

For More Information Please Contact:
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E-mail:
comments@rmconsult.com
Phone: 907-646-9659

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9101 Vanguard Drive
Anchorage Alaska

City of Houston Comprehensive Plan Household Survey

Watch Your Mail!

As part of Houston's Comprehensive Plan development, we have asked McDowell Group, an Alaska research firm, to conduct a mail survey of Houston residents. The Comprehensive Plan is a document that will guide our community's growth for the next 20 years. We want your opinions to help guide Houston's future.

McDowell Group will be mailing a survey to all households with a Houston mailing address this Fall. Once you receive the survey, we would appreciate you taking a few minutes to participate. Your opinion matters and we thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Virgie Thompson'.

Mayor, City of Houston



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Phone: 907-646-9659

Visit the Project Website:
www.HoustonAKCompPlan.com
to sign up for updates



9101 Vanguard Drive
Anchorage Alaska 99507

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Watch Your Mail
for the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan
Household Survey, conducted by the
McDowell Group in late fall.
We want your opinions to help guide
Houston's future.

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City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment Survey

November 2014

Dear << Name>>

The City of Houston needs your help! We are in the process of updating our Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment. As part of that process, we have contracted with the McDowell Group, an Alaska research firm, to conduct a survey of Houston property owners and residents. The purpose of the survey is to gather your opinions about the city's priorities for the next 20 years. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey now. Your participation is critical. You can make a difference for your community.

The information you provide is confidential and is seen only by McDowell Group. The City of Houston will never see any individual survey data. Survey results are presented only in aggregate with other responses.

Please complete your survey by **December 5, 2014** and return it by using the enclosed self-addressed, postage-paid envelope. You may also fax the survey to (907) 586-2673, scan to robert.koentizer@mcdowellgroup.net, OR complete the survey on-line. Type the following address into your web browser and enter the password found in the bottom right of your survey's last page.

HoustonCompPlanSurvey.com

When you return your completed survey (either by mail, online, fax, or scan), your name will be entered into a drawing to win your choice of one of **20 \$50 Fred Meyer or Walmart gift cards**. Winners will be randomly selected by McDowell Group.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Bob Koenitzer, McDowell Group Project Manager at (866-586-6133) or robert.koenitzer@mcdowellgroup.net.

We appreciate your time and assistance with this important project.

Sincerely,

Virgie Thompson
Mayor
City of Houston

Len Anderson
Chair, City of Houston CIA and Comprehensive Plan
Revisions Steering Committee

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City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment Survey

The City of Houston is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment. This process will outline city priorities and guide planning efforts for the next 20 years. As part of that process, we appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey. Your opinions will help shape the future of your community.

If you prefer, you may also complete the survey online at a secure website by entering the following URL into your computer's browser and then entering your password (found in the bottom right of the survey last page). You will be entered in the drawing if you complete the survey by mail or online.

HoustonCompPlanSurvey.com

When you return your completed survey (either online or by mail), your name will be entered into a drawing to win your choice of **one of 20 \$50 Fred Meyer or Walmart gift cards.**

1. Did you live in Houston for more than 9 months in the past year?

01 ☐ Yes \Rightarrow 1a. If yes, how many years have you lived in Houston? # _____ years (go to Question 2)

02 ☐ No \Rightarrow 1b. Do you rent your Houston property to others? 01 ☐ Yes (go to Q3) 02 ☐ No (go to Q3)

2. Do you own or rent your Houston residence or property?

01 ☐ Own 02 ☐ Rent 03 ☐ Some other arrangement: _____

3. Overall, how would you rate your quality of life in Houston using a scale of 1 – 10, where 1 means "very poor" and 10 means "very good"? (Circle answer)

01 ☐ Do not live in Houston

Very Poor

Very Good

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

4. Please indicate your level of agreement regarding the following statements about the community of Houston.

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure/Don't know</i>
a. Houston is a safe place to live.	1	2	3	4	5
b. Houston is family-friendly.	1	2	3	4	5
c. Houston is a good place to enjoy a rural lifestyle.	1	2	3	4	5
d. Houston is a good place for people to live affordably.	1	2	3	4	5
e. Houston is a good place for outdoor recreation.	1	2	3	4	5
f. Houston could use more community planning.	1	2	3	4	5
g. Houston could use more landscaping of public spaces.	1	2	3	4	5

5. Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support each of the following transportation-related projects.

	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Somewhat important</i>	<i>Not important</i>	<i>Unsure/ Don't know</i>
a. Improved road maintenance	1	2	3	4
b. Improved lighting on roads	1	2	3	4
c. Public transportation (bus service) between Houston and other parts of the Mat-Su Borough	1	2	3	4
d. New Alaska Railroad depot/train stop	1	2	3	4
e. New road between Houston and Port Mackenzie	1	2	3	4
f. More paved roads	1	2	3	4
g. Improved street/road signage	1	2	3	4
h. Development of a "Park and Ride" lot for commuters	1	2	3	4
i. Development of a Hawk Lane bike path	1	2	3	4

6. Of the transportation-related projects listed above, which one should be the most important priority for the City? _____(enter letter a-i) ☐ Unsure/Don't know

7. Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support each of the following recreation-related projects.

	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Somewhat important</i>	<i>Not important</i>	<i>Unsure/ Don't know</i>
a. Creation of new parks with playgrounds	1	2	3	4
b. Improved public access to lakes	1	2	3	4
c. Creation of recreation programs for youth	1	2	3	4
d. Maintenance of existing trails and pathways	1	2	3	4
e. More non-motorized trails and pathways (for walking, biking, horse-riding, dog-sledding, etc.)	1	2	3	4
f. More motorized trails and pathways (for ATVs, snow machines, etc.)	1	2	3	4
g. Creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities, such as an ice rink, swimming pool, or running track	1	2	3	4

8. Of the recreation-related projects listed above, which one should be the most important priority for the City? _____(enter letter a-g) ☐ Unsure/Don't know

9. Please indicate how supportive you are for the City of Houston to strengthen each of the following environmental-related issues.

	<i>Very supportive</i>	<i>Somewhat supportive</i>	<i>Not supportive</i>	<i>Unsure/ Don't know</i>
a. Stricter regulation of land near rivers, lakes, and streams	1	2	3	4
b. Stricter enforcement of flood plain development regulations	1	2	3	4
c. Protection of drinking water quality	1	2	3	4

10. Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support new development or expansion in each of the following areas of economic development.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/Don't know
a. Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks	1	2	3	4
b. Recruiting new businesses	1	2	3	4
c. Attracting more tourism development	1	2	3	4
d. Developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River (ex. river walk, city park, etc.)	1	2	3	4
e. Developing a "town center" with pedestrian-friendly facilities	1	2	3	4
f. Supporting natural resource development in the area	1	2	3	4
g. Supporting extension of utility services (ex. power, communication, etc.)	1	2	3	4

11. Of the economic development projects listed above, which should be the most important priority for the City? _____(enter letter a-g) 01 ☐ Unsure/Don't know

12. Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to continue providing the following services.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/Don't know
a. Community planning	1	2	3	4
b. Road maintenance	1	2	3	4
c. Animal control and shelter	1	2	3	4
d. Fire and emergency services	1	2	3	4

13. Please indicate how willing you are to pay for the following suggested new or improved City of Houston services or facilities through increased property taxes.

	Very willing	Somewhat willing	Not willing	Unsure/Don't know
a. Improved road maintenance	1	2	3	4
b. Funding of Public Safety Officers	1	2	3	4
c. Improved city fire and emergency services	1	2	3	4
d. Cemetery development and maintenance	1	2	3	4

14. Please indicate how willing you are to pay a fee to drop off your garbage at a solid waste transfer station located in Houston?

01 ☐ Very willing

02 ☐ Somewhat willing

03 ☐ Not willing

04 ☐ Unsure/Don't know

15 In Houston, do you feel there is too much, too little, or just enough private property regulation?01 ☐ Too much regulation02 ☐ Too little regulation03 ☐ Just enough regulation04 ☐ Unsure/Don't know**16. How many people, including yourself, live in your Houston household? #_____ people**01 ☐ I do not live in Houston**17. How many people in your Houston household are under 18 years of age? #_____ people**01 ☐ I do not live in Houston**18. What is the highest level of education you have had the opportunity to complete?**01 ☐ Less than HS diploma04 ☐ Some college07 ☐ MA (Master's Degree)02 ☐ HS diploma/GED05 ☐ AA (Associate's Degree)08 ☐ PhD (Doctorate)03 ☐ Vocational/Tech Cert.06 ☐ BA (Bachelor's Degree)**19. Please indicate the category that best describes your total combined household income before taxes for 2013.**01 ☐ Less than \$15,00004 ☐ \$35,001 to \$50,00007 ☐ Over \$100,00002 ☐ \$15,001 to \$25,00005 ☐ \$50,001 to \$75,00003 ☐ \$25,001 to \$35,00006 ☐ \$75,001 to \$100,000**20. Please indicate your gender**01 ☐ Male02 ☐ Female**21. In what year were you born? 19_____****22. Please feel free to comment about any other planning issues you feel are important for the City of Houston to consider as it develops its new Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment.**

If you have any questions contact: Bob Koenitzer, McDowell Group Survey Manager, call toll free 1-866-586-6133 or 1-907-586-2990, or e-mail robert.koenitzer@mcdowellgroup.net.

Please complete and return this survey by December 3, 2014.

Thank you. Your opinions matter!

For more information on the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment, please visit: <http://houstonakcompplan.com/>

Password



City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment Survey

December 2014

Dear << Name >>

A couple weeks ago, we sent you a survey that asked for your opinions about the City of Houston's priorities for the next 20 years as part of our process to update our City's Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment. If you have completed the survey, thank you for your time and participation in our planning process. If you have not completed the survey, please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey now. Your participation is critical. You can make a difference for your community.

The information you provide is confidential and is seen only by McDowell Group. The City of Houston will never see any individual surveys or names associated with survey data. Survey results will be presented only in total with other responses.

We have extended the survey's due date to **December 15, 2014**. Please return your survey by using the enclosed self-addressed, postage-paid envelope. You may also fax the survey to (907) 586-2673, scan to robert.koenitzer@mcdowellgroup.net, OR complete the survey on-line. Type the following address into your web browser and enter the password found in the bottom right of your survey's last page.

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We appreciate your time and assistance with this important project.

Sincerely,

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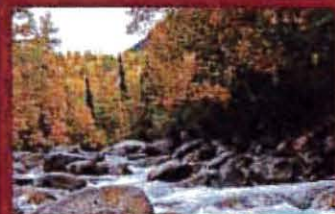
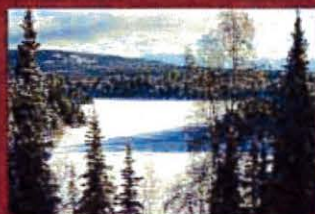
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City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision



Reminder: Complete the Survey!

As part of the City of Houston's Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision, we are conducting a survey of Houston residents and property owners to gather your opinions about the City's priorities for the next 20 years.

You received a survey in the mail from McDowell Group, an Alaska research firm. We appreciate you taking a few minutes to complete the survey.

Your opinions matter and we thank you in advance!

Thank you for attending the Future's Workshop in September

On September 18th, residents gathered in the Houston Fire Station for the first project open house, the Future's Workshop.

Attendees were tasked with "creating ideal futures" and openly discussed what the future of Houston should include; all responses were recorded.

For the results of the Future's Workshop and to provide us with feedback, go to the Public Involvement page of the project website: <http://houstonakcompplan.com/>

Please continue to participate in the City's Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision

The City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision is a collaborative effort between the City of Houston, the Planning Commission, Houston residents and business owners, and the R&M Team.

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JOIN US AT THE
OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY
June 4, 2015
4:30 pm-6:30 pm

The City of Houston is conducting a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) to identify the potential impacts upcoming projects may have on the community. Please join us at the open house to review identified impacts and provide feedback. The CIA will be used to help inform the Comprehensive Plan Revision currently underway. The City, in partnership with the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, is also kicking off a Parks Highway Corridor Plan effort that will be introduced at the Open House.

HOUSTON FIRE STATION

13965 W Armstrong Road, Houston, AK 99694

For More Information Please Contact: **PLANNER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR**
TARYN OLESON | R&M Consultants, Inc. | Comments@RMConsult.com | 907.646.9645

VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE – www.HoustonAKCompPlan.com

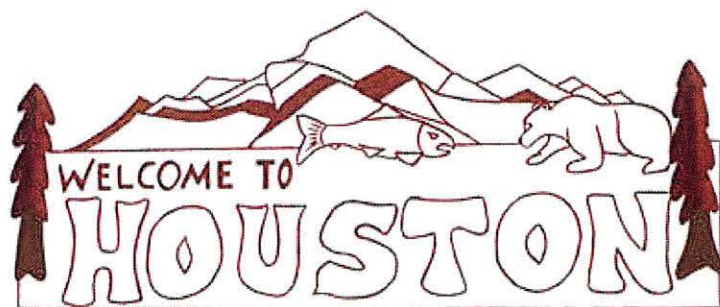


JOIN US AT THE
OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY

June 4, 2015

4:30 pm-6:30 pm



MR. AND MRS. SMITHERS
OR CURRENT RESIDENT
5943 Meow Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99518

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Thursday, June 4, 2015
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM
Houston Fire Station

We hope you continue to participate in the City's Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision process, your input is important appreciated!

For more information about the City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision, please visit the project website www.houstonakcompplan.com

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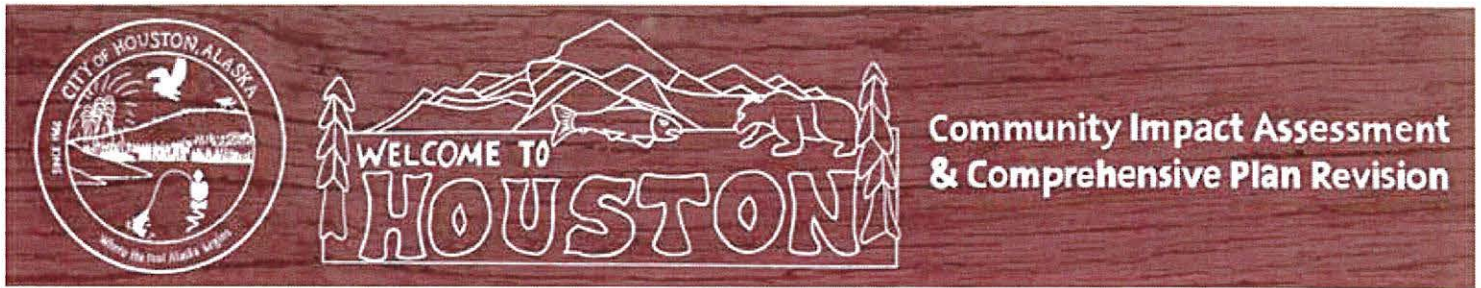
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JOIN US AT THE
OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY
May 5, 2016
5:00 pm-7:00 pm

Please join us at the Open House to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan for the City of Houston. This 20-year plan reflects the community's core values and future needs while providing a framework for development in the City of Houston through 2035.

HOUSTON FIRE STATION

13965 W Armstrong Road, Houston, AK 99694

For More Information Please Contact: **PLANNER & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR**
VAN LE | R&M Consultants, Inc. | Comments@RMConsult.com | 907.646.9659

VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE – www.HoustonAKCompPlan.com



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Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in the City of Houston's Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision. Don't forget to add vle@rmconsult.com to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



Join us at the Draft Comprehensive Plan Open House

Please join us at the Open House to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan for the City of Houston on May 5th, 2016. This 20-year plan reflects the community's core values and future needs while providing a framework for development and improvements in the City of Houston through 2035. We appreciate your interest and encourage your feedback on the Draft Comprehensive Plan Revision.

Open House

Thursday, May 5th, 2016

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**Houston Fire Station 9-1
13965 W Armstrong Road, Houston**

<http://houstonakcompplan.com/>

The Draft Comprehensive Plan will be posted to the website before the Open House on Thursday.

Comments can be submitted at the Open House, through the project website, or you can contact a member of the project team.

Thank you and please contact Project Manager, Van Le at vle@rmconsult.com if you have any questions!

The City of Houston Community Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision is a collaborative effort between the City of Houston, the Planning Commission, Houston residents and business owners, and the R&M Team.

Questions? Please Contact:

Van Le, AICP
Project Manager
R&M Consultants, Inc.

email:
comments@rmconsult.com
phone: 907-646-9659

Visit the project website:
www.houstonakcompplan.com



R&M Consultants, Inc., 9101 Vanguard Drive, Anchorage, AK 99507

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(907) 352-2277 fax

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, STATE OF ALASKA, THIRD DIVISION
BEFORE ME, THE UNDERSIGNED, A NOTARY PUBLIC, THIS DAY
PERSONALLY APPEARED BEFORE **JACKIE DOWNS** WHO, BEING
FIRST DULY SWORN, ACCORDING TO LAW, SAYS THAT SHE IS THE
LEGAL AD CLERK OF THE **FRONTIERSMAN**
PUBLISHED AT WASILLA, IN SAID DIVISION THREE AND STATE OF ALASKA
AND THAT THE ADVERTISEMENT, OF WHICH THE ANNEXED IS A TRUE
COPY, WAS PUBLISHED ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS:

AUGUST 26, 2016

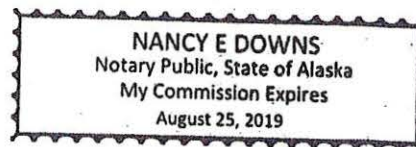
AND THAT THE RATE CHARGED THEREIN IS NOT IN EXCESS OF
THE RATE CHARGED PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS.

Jackie Downs

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME
THIS 13TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2016.

Nancy E Downs

NOTARY PUBLIC FOR STATE OF ALASKA



CITY OF HOUSTON



City of Houston

www.houston-ak.gov

Public Hearing Notice Houston City Council - Regular Meeting September 8, 2016, 7 P.M.

Houston City Hall - 138778 Armstrong Road

During the upcoming Regular City Council meeting on September 8, 2016,
at 7 p.m. the Houston City Council will take public testimony
on the following public hearing items:

- AM 16-15: City Council statement of non-protest to the application of a retail marijuana store license # 10316 held by Silverthorn Investment group LLC, DBA Denali 420 Recreational (Introduced by Mayor Thompson).
- Ordinance 16-21: An Ordinance of the Houston City Council amending Houston Municipal Code Title 3, Elections to provide clarification and specifications to definitions, declaration of candidacy payment options, notifications, election officials, ballots, election procedures, materials, voting methods, ballot counting procedures and the recount process, and requiring voter identification and a payment for contest of election. (Introduced August 11, 2016).
- Ordinance 16-22: An Ordinance of the Houston City Council repealing the 1999 City of Houston Comprehensive plan, as amended in 2003, (Ordinance serial no. 199-078; 2003-108) and adopting the 2016 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan. (Introduced August 11, 2016).

Comments are limited to 3-minutes per person.

Publish: August 26, 2016

HOUSTON CITY HALL
13878 W ARMSTRONG ROAD, HOUSTON AK, 99694

WWW.HOUSTON-AK.GOV

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT THE CLERK'S OFFICE AT 907-892-6869



City of Houston

www.houston-ak.gov

Public Hearing Notice Houston City Council - Regular Meeting September 8, 2016, 7 P.M.

Houston City Hall - 138778 Armstrong Road

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Houston, Alaska

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CITY CALENDAR

 September
2016

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3				
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	
< Aug						Oct >

[Read more](#)

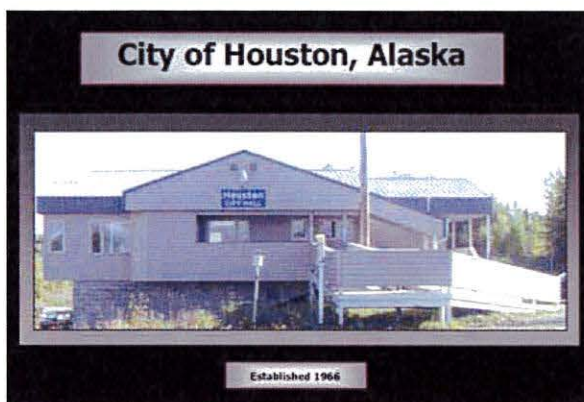
Licensed Houston Business Services

The Mat-Su Valley is the fastest growing area in Alaska. Several large infrastructure projects as well as the peace and beauty of Valley life are drawing record numbers of families and businesses to the area.

Please click read more and visit the category buttons on the left to discover who is doing business in Houston and which services you may be able to benefit from right here at home.

[Shop local!](#)
[Read More](#)

Welcome to Houston, Alaska!



Houston Happenings

DRAFT CITY OF HOUSTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

 Visit <http://houstonakcompplan.com> to access this document.

The *DRAFT* Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is Available for Public Review.

The full report and appendices can be found on the project website:

<http://houstonakcompplan.com/>

The CIA will help inform the current City of Houston Comprehensive Plan revision effort by analyzing potential impacts transportation projects may have on the community and residents' quality of life. The evaluation will allow the City and its residents to prepare for positive impacts and mitigate and potential negative impacts.

For more information contact:

Project Manager, Van Le, AICP at 907.646.9659 or comments@rmconsult.com

[To View All City Holidays Click Here](#)

Notice:

The Little Su Campground is now CLOSED as of September 6th, 2016.

Houston/Willow Creek Sled Trailhead Parking Area Welcome all trail user enthusiasts! The new Houston/Willow Creek Trailhead parking area is maintained by the City of Houston. [Click Here](#) for directions and information.

For Campground Information please call 907-355-8794

Public Notice

[9.8.16 Notice of Council Action Taken](#)

[Click Here](#)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

Regular City Council Meeting

Items set for a Public Hearing at a Regular Meeting on September 8, 2016 at 7:00 pm. (Public Hearing to be held 13878 W Armstrong Road).

Ordinance 16-21: An Ordinance of the Houston City Council amending Houston Municipal Code, Title 3 Elections.

Ordinance 16-22: An Ordinance of the Houston City Council repealing the 1999 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan as amended in 2003, and adopting the 2016 City of Houston Comprehensive Plan.

MSB District 7 Platting Board Seat Available

The Borough is looking to fill a vacant seat on the Platting Board for District 7.

For more information and how to apply please visit <http://www.matsugov.us/boards/platting>

The Platting Board acts on applications for preliminary plats, variances, public use easements, plat note amendments and vacation of public interest. The Platting Board also acts on appeals of the Platting Officer's decision.

Zoning Map

[To view the City of Houston Official Zoning Map, Click Here!](#)

[For Marijuana Business Information in the City of Houston, Click Here!](#)

Alaska State Rail Plan

[Click Here](#) for the official website outlining future freight and passenger rail transportation policy in Alaska.

Mayor Thompson is available 5 days a week after 5 pm
Please call City Hall to set up an appointment

Unless otherwise noted:

All City Meetings are Held at Houston City Hall, located at
13878 W Armstrong Road, Houston AK 99694.

For a **Map** [CLICK HERE](#)

Your Next Regular City Council Meeting

Thursday, September 8th, at 7:00pm

Agenda: [Click Here](#)

Packet: To Be Posted

Your Next Planning Commission Meeting

Thursday September 29th, at 7:00 pm

For Agenda: To Be Posted

For Packet: To Be Posted

NOTICE TO RESIDENTS CONCERNING ISO RATING

Houston residents and business owners may see reduced fire insurance premium costs due to an improved fire class rating.

Please [click here](#) for notice for your Insurance Company.

City of Houston, 13878 W Armstrong, PO Box 940027, Houston AK
99694
P:907-892-6869 F:907-892-7677

Last updated 9/9/2016

Official City of Houston, Alaska Website

Parks HWY Project MP 44-52 (Lucas Rd - Big Lake Rd)

DOT info about the Parks HWY expansion project
[Click Here](#) or 1-907-535-1877 or
mycomments@brooks-alaska.com



Absentee By-Mail Ballot Applications



Did you know?

You can vote by mail. [Click here to apply for an Absentee By-Mail Application!](#)

We are on Facebook!



The City of Houston is on Facebook.

[Check us out by clicking here!](#)



Alaska | Community Impact Assessment | houstonai.complan.com

Assessment Public | Title 23 | Anchorage Link | MCA Property | Alaska News | Anchorage, AK, 99501 | Forecast for Anchorage | Alaska Department | DENNIS Digest | Register

Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision

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Public Hearing Draft of the Comprehensive Plan Available for Review

June 23, 2016

The City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan Revision - Public Hearing Draft is available for review. On Thursday, June 23rd, 2016, starting at 7 PM the Houston Planning Commission will introduce and discuss the draft. Please submit your comments on the Public Hearing Draft on our Comments page or contact a member of the Urban Team.

City of Houston Comprehensive Plan, Public Hearing Draft June 2016

Download the draft: [Download Draft](#)



Open House to Review Draft Comprehensive Plan Revision

Open House February 10, 2016

Mark your calendars to join us at the Open House to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan for the City of Houston in May, 2016. This 20-year plan reflects the community's core values and future needs while providing a framework for development in the City of Houston through 2036. We open our doors to your interest and encourage your feedback on the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan Revision.

Alaska | Community Impact Assessment | houstonai.complan.com

Assessment Public | Title 23 | Anchorage Link | MCA Property | Alaska News | Anchorage, AK, 99501 | Forecast for Anchorage | Alaska Department | DENNIS Digest | Register

Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision

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Documents

City of Houston Comprehensive Plan Revision - Public Hearing Draft

The City of Houston Planning Commission will be introducing the Public Hearing Draft of the Comprehensive Plan on Thursday, June 23rd, 2016.

Draft City of Houston Comprehensive Plan Revision - Public Review Draft

The City of Houston Planning Commission will be introducing the Public Review Draft of the Comprehensive Plan on Thursday, June 23rd, 2016.

Review and public feedback on the draft plan

Approved to be Comprehensive Plan Revision

City of Houston Planning Commission - Public Review Draft Report

Appendix of the City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan Revision

City of Houston Planning Commission - Public Review Draft Report

City of Houston Planning Commission - Public Review Draft Report

City of Houston Planning Commission - Public Review Draft Report

houstonak.com/plan/...
second Public > Title 22 | Anchorage Link | MGA Property Information | Alaska News, Politics | Anchorage, AK, 995 | Forecast for Anchorage | Alaska Department | CAMMS Digital | Register

WELCOME TO HOUSTON Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision

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Schedule

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION SCHEDULE

2014 2015 2016 2017

Community Impact Assessment

Anticipated Plan Adoption

Public Involvement

Planning Commission, Commission & Workshop

houstonak.com/plan/...
second Public > Title 22 | Anchorage Link | MGA Property Information | Alaska News, Politics | Anchorage, AK, 995 | Forecast for Anchorage | Alaska Department | CAMMS Digital | Register

WELCOME TO HOUSTON Community Impact Assessment & Comprehensive Plan Revision

Home Comment Contacts Documents Public Involvement Schedule

Comment

If you have an idea or a comment for the Community Impact Assessment, please use the comments form.

Leave a Reply

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Comment

Name *

Email *

Website

Post Comment

Public Involvement

Join Us at the Open House to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan

Join us at the Houston Fire Station on **Thursday, May 5th** to review and provide feedback on the City of Houston's Draft Comprehensive Plan. Members of the project team and Steering Committee will be in attendance to answer any questions you may have. Please continue to help your community plan for the next 20 years by visiting us at the Open House.

Thank you for attending the Second Open House on June 4th

The second Open House focused on the Community Impact Assessment. Thank you for joining us to identify and analyze the impacts upcoming projects may create for the City of Houston. The information gathered at the Open House will be incorporated into the CIA.

Thank you for participating in the Survey!

Thank you for your participation in the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan Household Survey, conducted by the McDowell Group over the last two months. Your opinions will help guide Houston's future.

The **Future's Workshop was held on September 18th** at the Houston Fire Station where residents gathered to answer the question;

"What should Houston be like in 20 years?"

If you missed the Workshop, it's not too late to participate. Please use the [comment](#) form or [contact](#) the Project Manager to tell us what your ideal future of Houston is like!

Workshop Summary:

In small groups, residents were tasked with "creating ideal futures" and openly discussed what the future of Houston should include; all responses were recorded. After the small group session, residents reported key themes and ideas shared within their group to all attendees in an effort to find common ground on the future.

The Mind Maps are the complete list of ideas and themes we heard the community say during the Future's Workshop:

View or print the [Workshop's Small Group Mind Maps](#).

View or print the [Workshop's Whole Group Mind Maps](#).

The following is what we heard the community say in the whole group session:

Community Character

- Houston as a destination for tourism and recreation

- Have a unique identity or theme for us to be recognized by- distinguish Houston Alaska from the rest of the country and state
- Preservation of residential character – keeping “Houston Houston” with larger parcels for housing and minimal light pollution and noise
- Own a recreational identity; more than just trail heads
- Design standards for development
- Establish a Town Center keeping to the Houston feel
- Preservation of existing trails and ecology
- Involving community in the development and construction of community facilities
- Maintaining the quiet dark character – open for growth but keep it rural
- Community needs to be proactive
- Family friendly
- Make both sides of the river and railroad tracks feel like one community
- Wide reaching community government and development- increased involvement

Working Mission Statement:

The community of Houston wants to develop as a destination for tourism and recreation; while maintaining a family friendly community that will encompass a future town center, designated trails and community facilities.

Transportation

- Train station in the City
- More connectivity – more emergency access
- Town center that is accessible and multiuse
- Multiuse pathways
- Better signage
- Main road be protected – increased vegetation
- Maintain multiuse trails
- Improved lighting and roadways
- Eventually expand availability of utilities and services
- Safety on the Parks corridor
- Development of King Arthur Rd.
- Hawk lane bike path – improvement of pedestrian safety via pathways and lighting
- Industrial development along the rail lanes- light industrial
- Increase vegetative buffers in roadways
- Main artery needs proper planning for controlled access and the expansion of the Parks highway and the secondary roadways – *proper planning for corridor*
- *Port to Parks*
- Bus stop marker, signage, and lighting
- Park and ride with Valley-movers throughout Mat-Su and Anchorage Bowl

Summary Statement:

There is a need to increase safety, accessibility, and mobility through much of the City and improvements shall be beneficial to all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized uses, while maintaining the community character.

Planning

- More staffing for City, Fire department should not be responsible for all emergency and police services
- Evolve into a 1st class city

- Corridor study
- Planning land use (one comment on no zoning restrictions)
- Water resource planning –special attention to the flood planes
- Development suitability study
- MSB build out- match with community growth
- Program to reduce junk cars
- Transfer centers
- Incentive for people to come here – education, recreation facilities, design
- Encourage subdivision with more high income development

Summary Statement:

Effective, implementable planning is a recognized need for successful growth, development, and overall health of the community, as defined by its residents.

Housing

- Incentivize Dr. and medical facilities to move here
 - Assisted care facilities
- Plan for multi-family and senior housing with the aging population
- Conveniences for high end houses for a higher tax base – designate areas for high end housing

Summary Statement:

The availability of housing in Houston should be appealing for a wide range of incomes, while providing opportunities for satisfactory, safe living for all residents.

Community Facilities and Services

- Education – elementary school
- Town Center with; pedestrian friendly facilities, landscaping, panels and walk theme, restaurants, mixed use, near river or railroad, building codes (Form based codes)
- Youth summer programs
- Opportunities for post-secondary education/carter school
- Public safety; EMS expansion, year round water flow for fire
- Flood control response planning
- Community watch
- Recreation; trails, multiuse, designated facilities for recreation (rinks, pools, ball courts), preservation of natural areas, facility maintenance for motorized and non-motorized users including horses and dogs
- Animal shelter
- Utility expansion dependent on road alignment ; natural gas, coal, alternative energy
- Recreation destination; use Little Su for business services (tourism)
- Cemetery
- Veterinary clinic
- Daycare
- Business districts; planned, designed, and built
- Pharmacy
- Dentist
- Medical facilities
- Assisted care facilities
- Gas station and goods services
- Grocery store or food shops

Summary Statement:

The City of Houston recognizes the need to expand its facilities and services in order to provide safe and satisfactory living for its residents, while enhancing the City's autonomy, economy, and unique identity.

Economic Development

- Keep tax base
- Local jobs
- Riverwalk
- Community identity for economic development (using it to draw in visitors and residents)
- Centralized for recreation for Hatcher Pass, Deskha, etc. – capitalize on natural location
- Facilities at King Arthur; Laundromat, shower, gym, meeting place
- Daycare
- Natural resource development; coal mines, power plant, city owned utility

Summary Statement:

While maintaining the current tax structure, the City of Houston aims to develop economically by capitalizing on its current amenities and natural resources; allowing commercial and light industrial development as long as it aligns with the community character and will be to the benefit of City residents.

Let us know how you would define Houston's Community Character and your opinion on these summary statements!



**PUBLIC HEARING
QUASI-JUDICIAL**

Resolution No. 16-33

Longbeach Subdivision Variance Request
3220 E. Palmdale Drive

(Page 489 – 564)

PUBLIC HEARING

LONGBEACH SUBDIVISION, DIVISION 2
BLOCK 8, LOT 12
SETBACK VARIANCE
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION
NO. 16-33

STAFF REPORT

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH****Planning and Land Use Department****Development Services Division**

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7822 • Fax (907) 861-7876

E-mail: permitcenter@matsugov.us**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIVISION STAFF REPORT**

File Number: 176520160002

Applicant & Property Owner Denny & Rebecca Nelson

Request: Planning Commission Resolution No. 16-33
Request for a setback variance to construct an attached garage to the existing single-family residence 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way

Location: Longbeach Subdivision, Division 2, Block 8, Lot 12,; MSB Tax Account# 1892B09L012; 3220 E. Palmdale Drive; Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Section 1, Seward Meridian

Size of Property: .53 acres

Public Hearing: October 17, 2016

Planning Commission Action: The planning commission shall conduct a public hearing and render a decision on the application for a setback variance

Reviewed By: Eileen Probasco, Planning & Land Use Director *EP*
Alex Strawn, Development Services Manager *AS*

Staff: Susan Lee, Planner II *Susan*

Recommendation: Approval

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A setback variance application has been submitted requesting to construct an attached garage to the existing single-family residence. The proposed garage will be set back 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way. In order to grant a variance, the planning commission must find that each of the requirements of MSB 17.65.020(A) has been met.

LAND USE

Existing Land Use:

The lot is currently developed with a single-family residence with an attached garage.

Surrounding Land Use:

The subject lot is located in Longbeach Subdivision, Division 2. The subdivision is developed with residential properties. Wasilla Lake is situated on the south side of the lot. The subject lot is located between Palmdale Drive and Wasilla Lake. Seward Meridian Parkway is east of the property and Bogard Road is north of the property.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Plan (2005 Update) pertains to this property. Two of the plan's land use goals state:

***Goal (LU-1):** Protect and enhance the public safety, health, and welfare of Borough residents.*

***Policy LU-1:** Provide for consistent, compatible, effective and efficient development within the borough.*

***Goal (LU-2):** Protect residential neighborhoods and associated property values.*

***Policy LU2-1:** Develop and implement regulations that protect residential development by separating incompatible uses, while encouraging uses that support such residential uses including office, commercial and other mixed-use developments that are shown to have positive cumulative impacts to the neighborhood.*

The proposed setback variance is consistent with the policies and goals of the MSB Comprehensive Plan (2005 Update). The variance will protect the safety, health and welfare of the community for which setbacks are designed to further by allowing the construction of a garage at the roadway level.

REVIEW OF APPLICABLE CRITERIA AND FINDINGS

MSB 17.03 – Public Notification

Finding: Notices were mailed to all property owners within 600 feet of the subject property. A total of 43 notices were mailed. The public hearing notice was published in the August 24, 2016 Frontiersman. The application material was posted on the borough's web site. This property is not located within a community council boundary. One written public comment was submitted.

In addition to the applicant's responses to code sections 17.65.020 and 17.65.030, the applicant provided the following description:

- 1. A variance from MSB 17.55.010 is being applied for and is specifically described.***
This variance is being applied for under title 17.55.010 SETBACK to allow for construction of a garage that will create a safe driveway in the icy winter months and reduce the risk of injury and property loss.

2. Provide a detailed written description as to why the variance is required.

We purchased the property in Nov 2012 and that winter had a very hard time getting down the driveway and into the garage. The driveway ranges from 18.4% to 22.2% grade which is very steep and when icy creates a very dangerous condition. The previous owner slid into the center support of the garage and almost knocked it off its foundation and in 2013 I slid into the left support and caused over \$3,000.00 of damage to our car.

I am a Disabled Veteran with several screws holding my left foot together and the steep driveway makes it very difficult for me to get up and down. The steep driveway is dangerous for people trying to walk or drive to our house. UPS drivers won't drive down the driveway to deliver packages and have a hard time even walking them to the house. My entire family has fallen on the driveway numerous times which hasn't resulted in any serious injuries yet, but the potential is always there. If granted the variance, it would allow me to build a safe driveway that was even with the road and provide a useable garage that we could access even in the worst Alaskan condition eliminating the dangerous icy slope.

The house was built so that no part of the structure is located in the 100 year flood area. I believe the original owner designed the house so that no part of the house was located in the flood zone. By locating the house so it sat outside the flood zone there was no room left to design a practical driveway which created the current issue.

With the proposed garage there would be a 5.7' setback from the front left corner of the garage (closest point of proposed garage to existing constructed road) to the Palmdale Drive right-of-way. The road was constructed on the Northern most portion of the Palmdale Drive right-of-way so it would still leave approximately 30' setback from the edge of the constructed road to the closest point of the proposed garage.

Section 17.65.020 Requirements for Granting a Variance

(A) In order to grant a variance to the regulations of MSB title 17, the planning commission must find that each of the following requirements has been met:

(1) There are unusual conditions or circumstances that apply to the property for which the variance is sought.

Applicant Response: *The property was constructed in a way that only left room for a driveway with an average grade of 19%. It is very dangerous in the winter when it gets icy. There have already been two accidents where a car slid into the house causing extensive damage to the cars and house. With the proposed new garage elevation it will eliminate the steep grade and allow us to drive directly in from the road without the dangerous slope.*

Staff Findings:

Finding: The subject lot is .53 acres in size

Finding: Longbeach Subdivision, Division 2, was platted in 1979.

Finding: The existing residence was constructed in 2002.

Finding: This lot is served by a community sewer system.

Finding: The south two-thirds of the lot are located within the special flood hazard area.

Finding: The application material states that the existing residence was constructed at this particular location so that it would be located outside of the special flood hazard area.

Finding: The existing residence is set back 29 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way.

Finding: The driveway grade ranges from 18.4% to 22.2%.

Finding: The lot was developed in such a way that only left room for a driveway with an average grade of 19%, which exceeds the maximum allowable 10% grade for a driveway.

Finding: A borough driveway permit was not applied for or issued for this driveway.

Finding: The application material states that during the icy winter months the steep driveway creates dangerous conditions and vehicles slide into the garage and is dangerous to walk on.

Finding: The variance will allow for a garage to be constructed level with the roadway.

Conclusions of Law: Based on the above findings, there are unusual conditions or circumstances applicable to this property, as Palmdale Drive is at a higher elevation than the house, which makes for a very steep driveway and created dangerous conditions (MSB 17.65.020(A)(1)).

(2) The strict application of the provisions of this title could deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties under the terms of this title.

Applicant Response: *The strict application of the 25 foot setback to an easement will deprive the parcel of having a driveway with an acceptable grade. In its current construction the garage is not safe to use during the icy winter months due to the extremely steep grade and short distance. Therefore there is an undue burden placed upon this lot by the strict application of the 25 foot building setback preventing the construction of a new garage that will be level with the road. During the winters as the ice builds up it becomes more and more dangerous to try and get up or down. Our children have fallen many times just going to the bus or returning from school. Deliverymen have refused to come down the driveway to deliver packages to the house because the driveway is so dangerous.*

Staff Findings:

Finding: The applicants/owners already have use of the property with the existing single-family residence and attached garage.

Finding: The concrete pad in front of the garage doors is heated; however, ice builds up on it during the winter.

Finding: The applicants/owners are unable to use the garage at times in the winter due to the steep, icy driveway.

Finding: Construction of a new garage less than 25 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way will allow a garage to be level with the roadway.

Finding: The existing house and attached garage is approximately 40' x 40' in size.

Finding: The proposed garage addition is 24' x 26' in size.

Finding: The subdivision is developed with residences with either attached or detached garages that are similar in size to the existing residence and the proposed garage addition.

Conclusions of Law: Based on the above findings, the strict application of the provisions of this title would deprive the applicants/owners of rights commonly enjoyed by others as the existing residence and proposed garage addition are similar in size to other residences and garages in the subdivision (MSB 17.75.020(A)(2)).

(3) The granting of the variance will not be injurious to nearby property, nor harmful to the public welfare.

Applicant Response: *The 25 foot building setback ensures that the public rights-of-way have adequate room for snow storage and maintenance. The granting of the variance to allow this building to be closer than 25 feet to the Palmdale Drive right-of-way, where the road right-of-way is not constructed and cannot be developed for road construction due to the steepness of the grades and existing buildings, would in no way be injurious to nearby property, nor harmful to the public welfare. It will in fact make safer conditions for nearby property and reduce public risk due to the steep grade of the driveway when approaching the house.*

Staff Findings:

Finding: The proposed garage will be set back 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way.

Finding: The proposed garage will be set back approximately 30 feet from the constructed roadway.

Finding: The south side of the Palmdale Drive right-of-way has not been constructed due to its steep grade.

Finding: Palmdale Drive is not likely to be upgraded.

Finding: The proposed garage will not interfere with the community sewer system line.

Finding: Palmdale Drive sits at a higher elevation than the existing garage which has created a steep and unsafe driveway.

Finding: Construction of the garage within the right-of-way setback will provide for safer conditions, as it will be constructed at the same elevation as Palmdale Drive.

Finding: Setbacks promote a variety of public purposes such as provisions for light and air, fire protection, traffic safety, prevention of overcrowding, rest and recreation, solving drainage problems, protecting the appearance and character of a neighborhood, and conserving property values.

Conclusions of Law: Based on the above findings, granting the variance will not be injurious to nearby property, nor harmful to the public welfare, as the proposed garage will not interfere with the flow of traffic on Palmdale Drive. The proposed garage will be constructed at the same level as Palmdale Drive, making it a safe and useable structure (MSB 17.65.020(A)(3)).

(4) The granting of the variance will be in harmony with the objectives of this title and any applicable comprehensive plans.

Applicant Response: *The granting of this variance would allow for the safe use of this lot which is what this regulation was created to provide homeowners.*

The Palmdale Drive right-of-way in this location is not suitable for road construction and therefore the objectives of this title would not be in jeopardy with the reduction of the building setback.

Staff Findings:

Finding: MSB Chapter 17.65 – Variances, was written to grant relief to property owners whose lots are impacted by topographic constraints and/or existing land use regulations thereby making the lot undevelopable.

Finding: The applicants/owners have reasonable use of their property; however, there are unsafe conditions due to the steep grade of the driveway into the garage.

Finding: Constructing the new garage at the roadway level will eliminate the hazards of the steep driveway into the existing garage.

Finding: The proposed setback variance is consistent with the policies and goals of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Plan (2005 Update), as it will protect the public safety, health, and welfare of the community which setbacks are designed to further by allowing the construction of a garage at the roadway level.

Conclusions of Law: Based on the above findings, the proposed variance does meet the intent of MSB 17.65 and is consistent with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Plan (2005 Update) (MSB 17.65.020(A)(4)).

(5) The deviation from the requirement of this title that is permitted by the variance will be no more than is necessary to permit a reasonable use of the property.

Applicant Response: *The variance will reduce the setback for the residential dwelling for the proposed attached garage shown in the attached PLAN (performed by Alaska RIM engineering). The proposed garage is just large enough to accommodate a mid-sized vehicle and stairs (inside the garage) that lead into the current garage to provide access to the house. There will be no additional stairs outside the house.*

Staff Findings:

Finding: There is reasonable use of this lot without a variance.

Finding: The use of the garage on the lot is hazardous due to the steep grade of the driveway.

Finding: The proposed garage will replace the existing garage. The existing garage will become storage space and not be used as a garage.

Finding: The existing house and detached garage is approximately 40' x 40' in size.

Finding: The proposed garage addition is 24' x 26' in size.

Finding: The size of the proposed garage is the average size of a two-car garage.

Finding: Lots in the subdivision are developed with residences with either attached or detached garages.

Finding: The subdivision is developed with residences and garages similar in size to the existing residence and the proposed garage addition.

Conclusions of Law: Based on the above findings, deviation from this title will be no more than is necessary to permit a reasonable use of the property, as the existing residence and proposed garage addition are similar in size to the other residences and garages in the subdivision (MSB 17.65.020(5)).

Section 17.65.030 Cases Where Variance is Illegal

(A) A variance from this title may not be granted if:

(1) Special conditions that require the variance are caused by the person seeking the variance.

Applicant Response: *The house was built in 2003 and we purchased the house in Nov 2012. We didn't know the severity of the driveway until we moved in and that first winter slid into the house. We discovered that just simply trying to clear snow and ice off the driveway was extremely difficult and almost impossible to maintain throughout the winter.*

Staff Findings:

Finding: The person seeking the variance did not construct the existing structure.

Finding: The person seeking the variance is requesting to construct the new garage.

Finding: The person seeking the variance did not cause the topography of the lot.

Finding: The application material states that the existing residence was constructed in its current location to avoid building within the special flood hazard area.

Finding: Due to where the residence was constructed to avoid the flood zone, there was no room left on the lot to design a practical driveway, which created the current conditions.

Finding: The average grade of the driveway is 19% which exceeds the maximum allowable 10% grade for driveways.

Finding: The variance is being requested in order to build a garage that is level with the roadway in order to alleviate hazardous conditions.

Conclusions of Law: Based on the above findings, the person seeking the variance did not cause the need for the variance, as the applicants/owners are requesting the variance in order to build a new garage to eliminate a safety issue with the steep driveway into the existing garage (MSB 17.65.030(A)(1)).

(2) The variance will permit a land use in a district in which that use is prohibited.

Applicant Response: *The variance will not be permitting a land use in a district in which that use is prohibited.*

Staff Findings:

Finding: The subject lot is not in a special land use district.

Finding: Residential structures and garages are permitted on this property.

Conclusions of Law: Based on the above findings, the variance, if granted, will not permit a land use in a district in which that use is prohibited, as residential structures are permitted on this site. The variance, if granted, will allow a garage to be constructed within the right-of-way setback area (MSB 17.65.030(A)(2)).

(3) The variance is sought solely to relieve pecuniary hardship or inconvenience.

Applicant Response: *The variance is sought to reduce the building setback for residential building to allow for a useable garage, a safe driveway and substantially reduce the risk of injury or property loss.*

Staff Findings:

Finding: The variance is being sought in order to mitigate hazardous conditions on the lot.

Finding: The variance is being sought for safety purposes for the property owners and others using the driveway and garage on the lot.

Finding: The proposed garage addition is not out of character with the existing residential development in the subdivision.

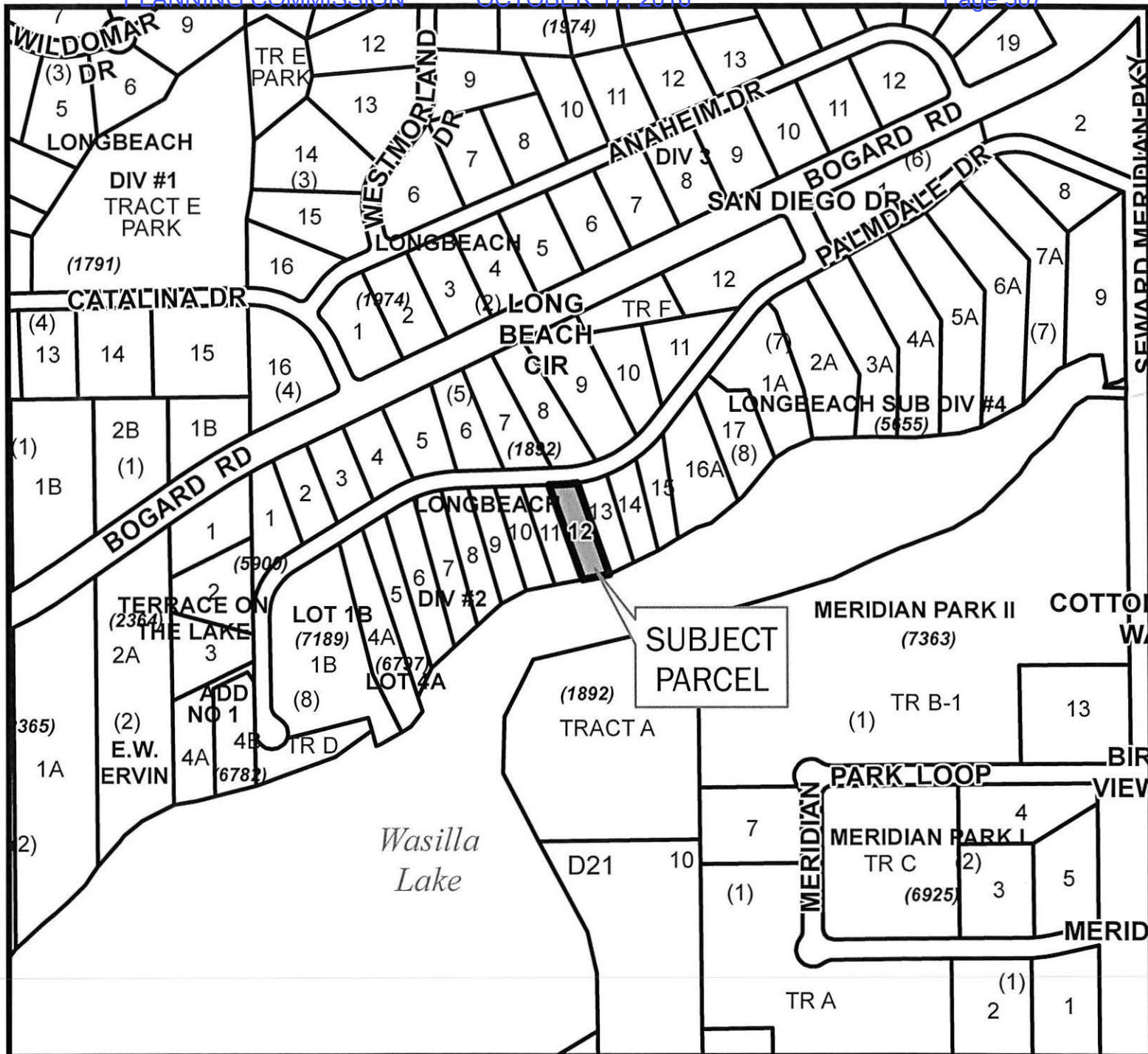
Conclusions of Law: Based on the above findings, the variance is not solely to relieve pecuniary hardship or inconvenience, as the variance is being requested in order to remedy safety issues due to the steep driveway into the existing garage and the proposed garage addition is not out of character with the existing residential development in the subdivision (MSB 17.65.030(A)(3)).

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff is recommending approval of this variance request as it meets the requirements of MSB 17.65 for approval. Should the Planning Commission choose to deny the variance they must make findings for denial and amend the resolution.

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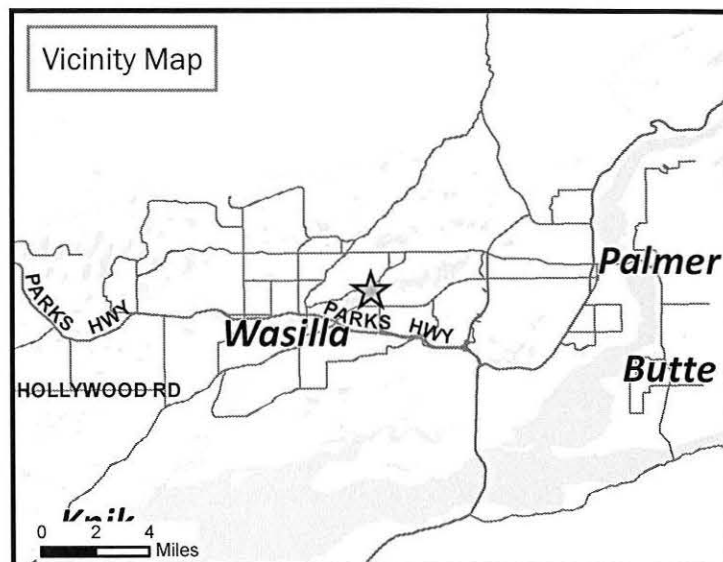
VICINITY MAP



1892B08L012

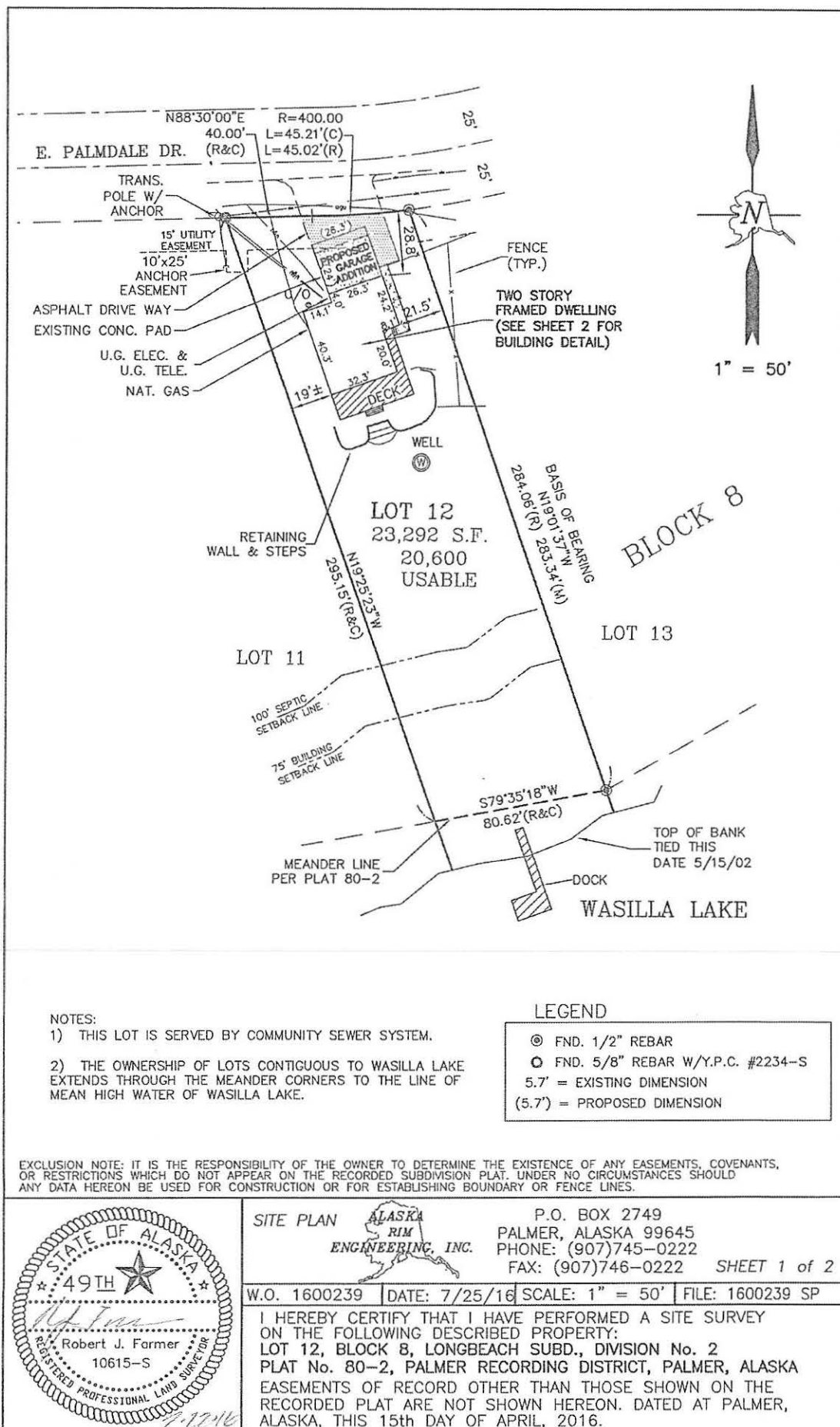


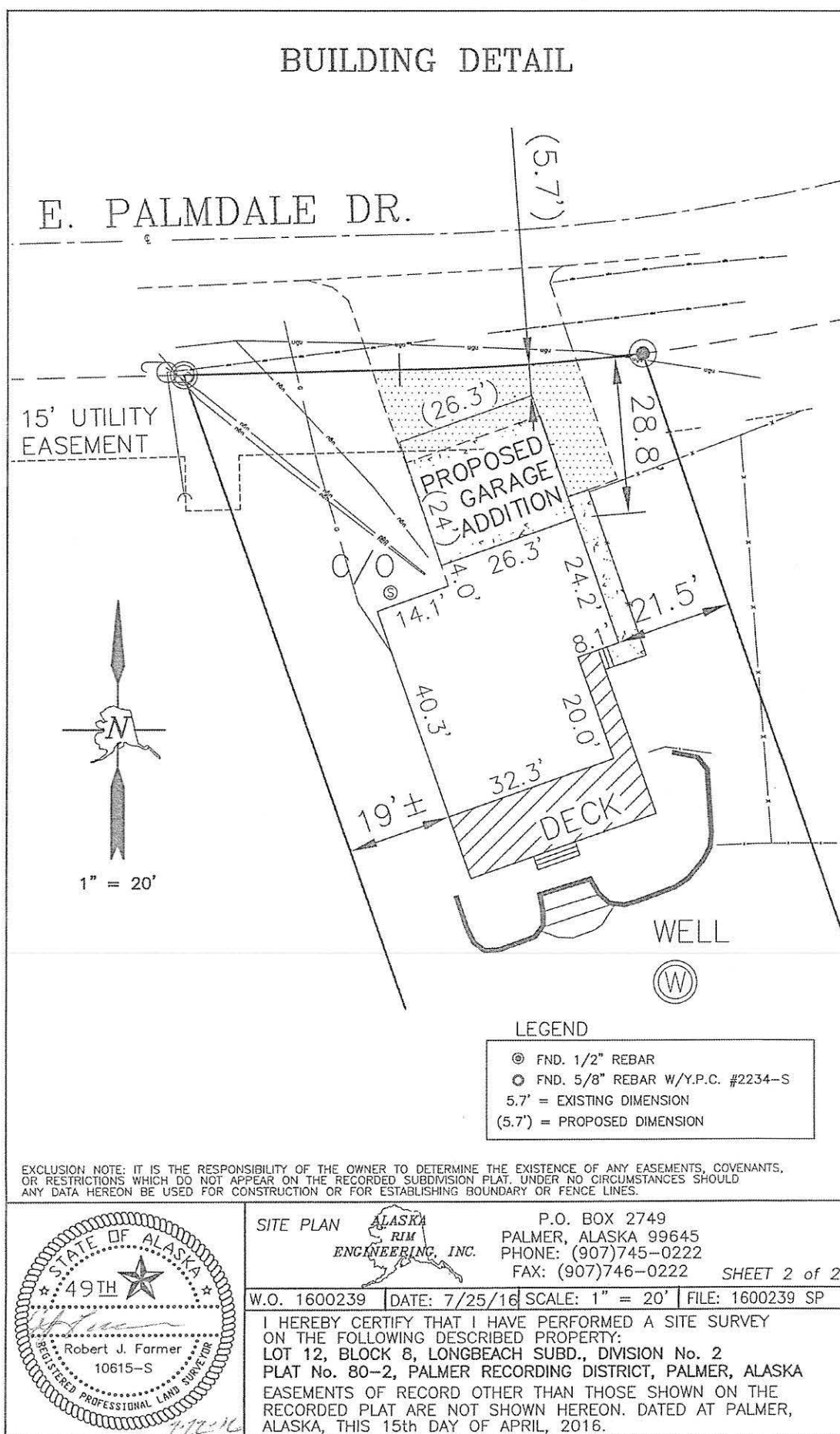
This map is solely for informational purposes only. The Borough makes no express or implied warranties with respect to the character, function, or capabilities of the map or the suitability of the map for any particular purpose beyond those originally intended by the Borough. For information regarding the full disclaimer and policies related to acceptable uses of this map, please contact the Matanuska-Susitna Borough GIS Division at 907-861-7801.

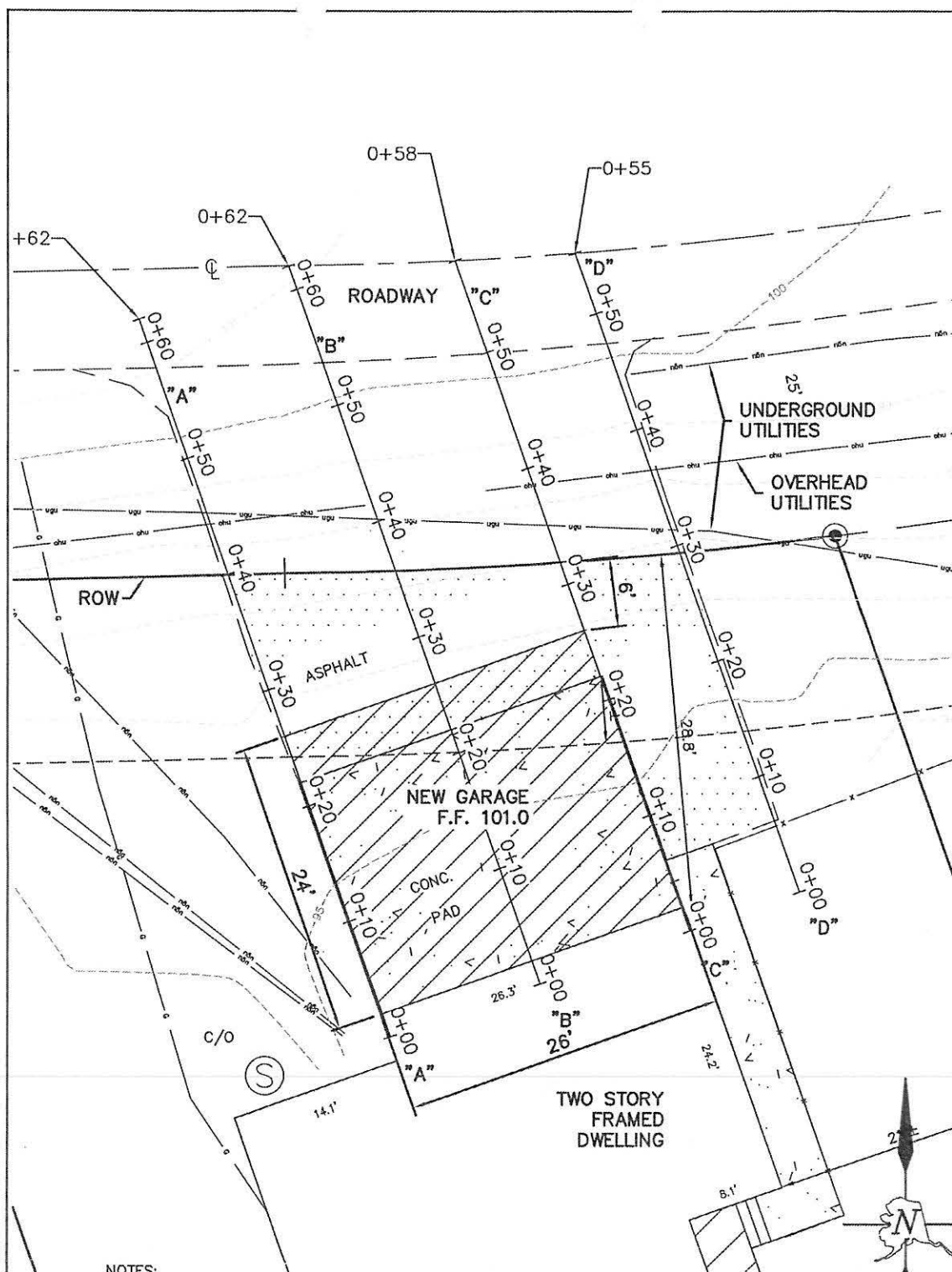


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SITE PLAN

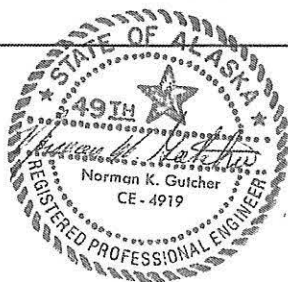






NOTES:

1. TOPOGRAPHY PERFORMED BY ALASKA RIM ENGINEERING, INC. 4/15/16.
2. ELEVATIONS ARE AN ASSUMED DATUM. CONTOURS ARE 1 ft. INTERVALS.
3. TBM'S FOR THIS SITE ARE A RECOVERED 5/8" REBAR w/PLASTIC CAP LOCATED AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THIS LOT HAVING AN ASSUMED ELEVATION OF 98.0 ft. AND A RECOVERED 1/2" REBAR LOCATED AT THE SOUTHEAST WITNESS CORNER OF THIS LOT HAVING AN ASSUMED ELEVATION OF 86.0 ft.



PLAN



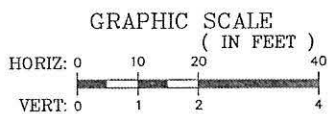
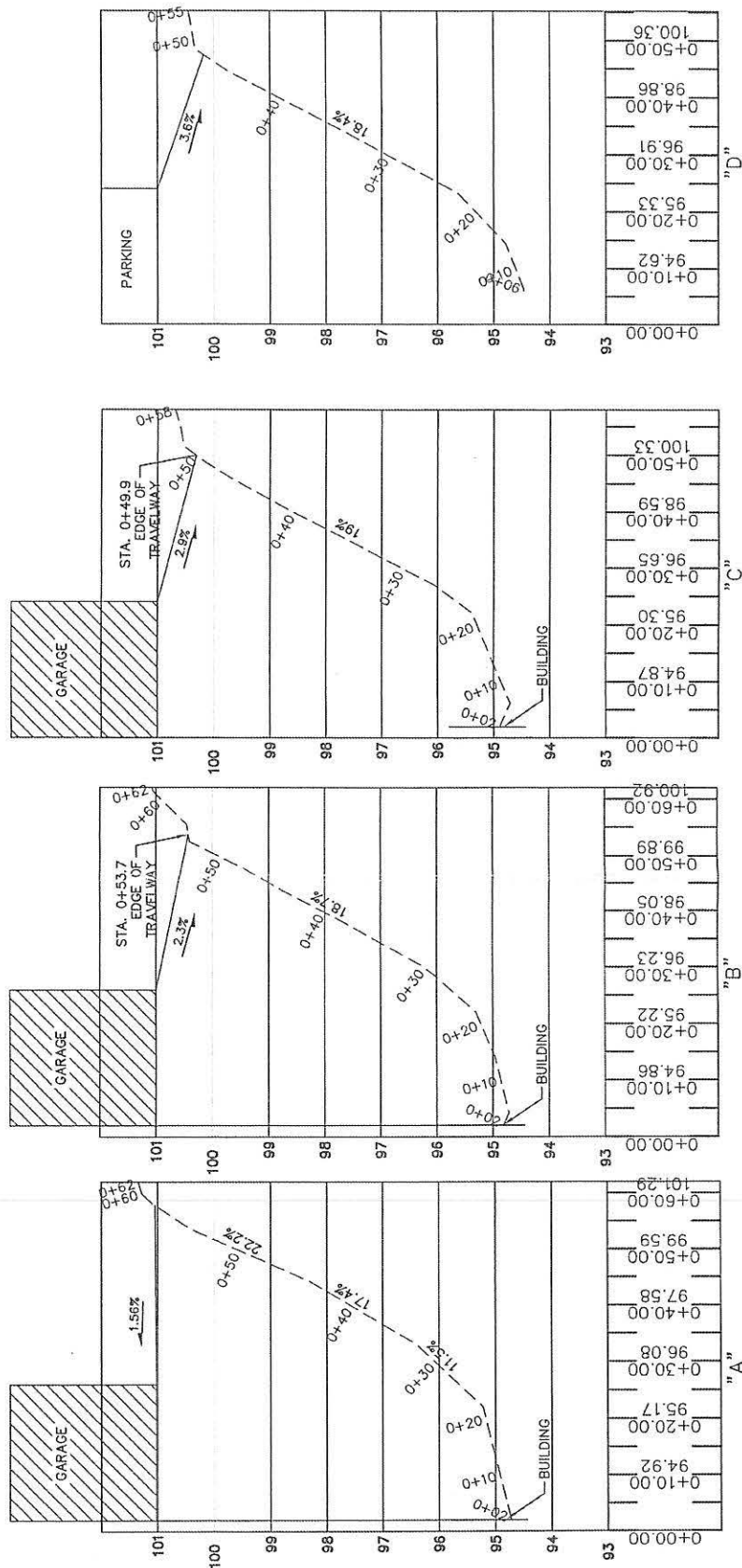
ALASKA RIM ENGINEERING, INC.

9131 E. FRONTAGE RD.
PALMER, ALASKA 99645
PH: (907)745-0222 : FAX: (907)746-0222
EMAIL: akrim@alaskarim.com : WEB: www.alaskarim.com

WO: 1600239	FB: 16-
PAGE: 1 of 1	TM:
SCALE: AS NOTED	FILE: 1600239 PP

LONGBEACH SUBDIVISION, DIVISION No. 2, BLOCK 8, LOT 12,

©2016



PROFILES



ALASKA RIM ENGINEERING, INC.

9131 E. FRONTAGE RD.
PALMER, ALASKA 99645

PH: (907)745-0222 : FAX: (907)746-0222

EMAIL: akrim@alaskarim.com : WEB: www.alaskarim.com

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PAGE: 1 of 1

TM:

SCALE: AS NOTED FILE: 1600239 PP

LONGBEACH SUBDIVISION, DIVISION No. 2, BLOCK 8, LOT 12,

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APPLICATION MATERIAL



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Planning and Land Use Department

Development Services Division

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7822 • Fax (907) 861-7876

Email: PermitCenter@matsugov.us

RECEIVED
JUN 14 2016

PERMIT CENTER

APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE – MSB 17.65

Carefully read instructions and applicable borough code. Fill out forms completely. Attach information as needed. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

Application fee must be attached:

☒ \$1,000 for Variance

Prior to the public hearing, the applicant must also pay the mailing and advertising fees associated with the application. Applicants will be provided with a statement of advertising and mailing charges. Payment must be made prior to the application presentation before the Borough Planning Commission.

Subject Property Township: 17 North, Range: 1 West, Section: _____, Meridian _____

MSB Tax Acct # 18923086012

SUBDIVISION: Long Beach BLOCK(S): 8, LOT(S): 12

STREET ADDRESS: 3220 E Palmdale Dr

(US Survey, Aliquot Part, Lat. /Long. etc) _____

Ownership A written authorization by the owner must be attached for an agent or contact person, if the owner is using one for the application. Is authorization attached? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

Name of Property Owner

Name of Agent/ Contact for application

Denny & Rebecca Nelson

Address: _____

Address: 3220 E Palmdale Dr

Wasilla, AK 99654

Phne: Hm _____ Fax _____

Phne: Hm 631 3439 Fax _____

Wk _____ Cell _____

Wk _____ Cell 414 0676

E-mail _____

E-mail dnelson@aktna.net

Description	Attached
A variance from MSB 17.55, 014 is being applied for and is specifically described.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Provide a detailed written description as to why the variance is required.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Drawings	Attached
A boundary survey and site plan of the proposed and/or existing development, of the particular parcel or parcels affected. (See attached survey standards checklist). The survey must be submitted under the seal of an Alaska registered professional land surveyor.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Structural elevation drawing(s) for the purpose of indicating the proposed height and bulk, view and other dimensions of the subject structure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

In order to grant a variance from MSB Title 17, the Planning Commission must find that each of the following requirements has been met (17.65.020). Explain how the request meets each requirement. Include information such as physical surroundings, shape or topographical conditions of the property which would support the granting of a variance.	Attached
1. What unusual conditions or circumstances apply to the property for which the variance is sought?	✓
2. How the strict application of the provisions of this title will deprive you of the rights commonly enjoyed by other properties under the terms of this title.	✓
3. Why the granting of the variance will not be injurious to nearby property, nor harmful to the public welfare.	✓
4. How will the granting of the variance be in harmony with the objectives of this title and any applicable comprehensive plans?	✓
5. How the deviation from the requirements of this title as permitted by the variance will be no more than is necessary to permit a reasonable use of the property.	✓

A variance may <u>not</u> be granted if any of the conditions listed below are true. Explain why each condition is <u>not</u> applicable to this application.	Attached
1. The special conditions that require the variance are caused by the person seeking the variance.	✓
2. The variance will permit a land use in a district in which that use is prohibited.	✓
3. The variance is sought solely to relieve pecuniary hardship or inconvenience.	✓

OWNER'S STATEMENT: I am owner of the following property:

MSB Tax parcel ID #(s) 1892 B08L012 and,
I hereby apply for approval a setback variance on that property as described in this application.

I understand all activity must be conducted in compliance with all applicable standards of MSB 17.55 and MSB 17.65 and with all other applicable borough, state or federal laws.

I understand that other rules such as local, state and federal regulations, covenants, plat notes, and deed restrictions may be applicable and other permits or authorization may be required. I understand that the borough may also impose conditions and safeguards designed to protect the public's health, safety and welfare and ensure the compatibility of the use with other adjacent uses.

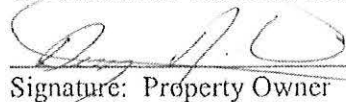
I understand that it is my responsibility to identify and comply with all applicable rules and conditions, covenants, plat notes, and deed restrictions, including changes that may occur in such requirements.

I understand that this permit and zoning status may transfer to subsequent owners of this land and that it is my responsibility to disclose the requirements of this status to the buyer when I sell the land.

I understand that changes from the approved variance may require further authorization by the Borough Planning Commission. I understand that failure to provide applicable documentation of compliance with approved requirements, or violation of such requirements will nullify legal status, and may result in penalties.

I grant permission for borough staff members to enter onto the property as needed to process this application and monitor compliance. Such access will at a minimum, be allowed when the activity is occurring and, with prior notice, at other times necessary to monitor compliance.

The information submitted in this application is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

 Denny Nelson June 8, 2016
Signature: Property Owner Printed Name Date

Signature: Agent Printed Name Date

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Property: MSB TAX ACCT. # 1892B08L012

SUBDIVISION: LONGBEACH, Plat No. 80-2, Block 8, Lot 12

STREET ADDRESS: 3220 East Palmdale DR, Wasilla Alaska 99654

Description:

1. **A variance from MSB 17.55.010 is being applied for and is specifically described.**

This variance is being applied for under Title 17.55.010 SETBACK to allow for construction of a garage that will create a safe driveway in the icy winter months and reduce the risk of injury and property loss.

2. **Provide a detailed written description as to why the variance is required.**

We purchased the property in Nov 2012 and that winter had a very hard time getting down the driveway and into the garage. The driveway ranges from 18.4% to 22.2% grade which is very steep and when icy creates a very dangerous condition. The previous owner slid into the center support of the garage and almost knocked it off its foundation and in 2013 I slid into the left support and caused over \$3,000.00 of damage to our car.

I am a Disabled Veteran with several screws holding my left foot together and the steep driveway makes it very difficult for me to get up and down. The steep driveway is dangerous for people trying to walk or drive to our house. UPS drivers won't drive down the driveway to deliver packages and have a hard time even walking them to the house. My entire family has fallen on the driveway numerous times which hasn't resulted in any serious injuries yet, but the potential is always there. If granted the variance, it would allow me to build a safe driveway that was even with the road and provide a useable garage that we could access even in the worst Alaskan condition eliminating the dangerous icy slope.

The house was built so that no part of the structure is located in the 100 year flood zone. I believe that the original owner designed the house so that no part of the house was located in the flood zone. By locating the house so it sat outside the flood zone there was no room left to design a practical driveway which created the current issue.

With the proposed garage there would be a 5.7' setback from the front left corner of the garage (closest point of proposed garage to existing constructed road) to the Palmdale Drive right-of-way. The road was constructed on the Northern most portion of the Palmdale Drive right-of-way so it would still leave approximately 30' setback from the edge of the constructed road to the closest point of the proposed garage.

Matanuska - Susitna Borough
Development Services

JUL 26 2016

Received

In order to grant a variance from MSB Title 17, the Planning Commission must find that each of the following requirements has been met (17.65.020). Explain how the request meets each requirement. Include information such as physical surrounding, shape or topographical conditions of the property which would support the granting of the variance.

1. **What unusual conditions or circumstances apply to the property for which the variance is sought?**

The property was constructed in a way that only left room for a driveway with an average grade of 19%. It is very dangerous in the winter when it gets icy. There have already been two accidents where a car slid into the house causing extensive damage to the cars and house. With the proposed new garage elevation it will eliminate the steep grade and allow us to drive directly in from the road without the dangerous slope.

2. **How the strict application of the provisions of this title will deprive you of the rights commonly enjoyed by other properties under the terms of this title.**

The strict application of the 25 foot setback to an easement will deprive this parcel of having a driveway with an acceptable grade. In its current construction the garage is not safe to use during the icy winter months due to the extremely steep grade and short distance.

Therefore there is an undue burden placed upon this lot by the strict application of the 25 foot building setback preventing the construction a new garage that will be level with the road. During the winters as the ice builds up it becomes more and more dangerous to try and get up or down. Our children have fallen many times just going to the bus or returning from school. Deliverymen have refused to come down the driveway to deliver packages to the house because the driveway is so dangerous.

3. **Why the granting of the variance will not be injurious to nearby property, nor harmful to the public welfare.**

The 25 foot building setback ensures that the public rights-of-way have adequate room for snow storage and maintenance. The granting of the variance to allow this building to be closer than 25 feet to the Palmdale Drive right-of-way, where the road right-of-way is not constructed and cannot be developed for road construction due to the steepness of the grades and existing buildings, would in no way be injurious to nearby property, nor harmful to the public welfare. It will in fact make safer conditions for nearby property and reduce public risk due to the steep grade of the driveway when approaching the house.

4. **How will the granting of the variance be in harmony with the objectives of this title and any applicable comprehensive plans?**

The granting of this variance would allow for the safe use of this lot which is what this regulation was created to provide homeowners.

The Palmdale Drive right-of-way in this location is not suitable for road construction and therefore the objectives of this title would not be in jeopardy with the reduction of the building setback.

5. **How the deviation from the requirements of this title as permitted by the variance will be no more than necessary to permit a reasonable use of the property.**

The variance will reduce the setback for the residential dwelling for the proposed attached garage shown in the attached PLAN (performed by Alaska RIM engineering). The proposed garage is just large enough to accommodate a mid-sized vehicle and stairs (inside the garage) that lead into the current garage to provide access to the house. There will be no additional stairs outside the house.

A variance may not be granted if any of the conditions listed below are true. Explain why each condition is not applicable to this application.

1. **The special conditions that require the variance are caused by the person seeking the variance.**

The house was built in 2003 and we purchased the house in Nov 2012. We didn't know the severity of the driveway until we moved in and that first winter slid into the house. We discovered that just simply trying to clear snow and ice off the driveway was extremely difficult and almost impossible to maintain throughout the winter.

2. **The variance will permit a land use in a district in which that use is prohibited.**

The variance will not be permitting a land use in a district in which that use is prohibited.

3. **The variance is sought to relieve pecuniary hardship or inconvenience.**

The variance is sought to reduce the building setback for residential building to allow for a useable garage, a safe driveway and substantially reduce the risk of injury or property loss.

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ENSTAR Natural Gas Company
A DIVISION OF SEMCO ENERGY
Engineering Department
Right of Way Section
P. O. Box 190288
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-0288
(907) 277-5551
FAX (907) 334-7798

May 24, 2016

Denny and Rebecca Nelson
3220 E. Palmdale Drive
Wasilla, AK 99654

Grid: NW3965

Subject: Letter of Non-Objection

To whom it may concern:

ENSTAR Natural Gas Company has no objection to the proposed garage encroachment of nine (9) feet into the 15-foot utility easement parallel and coincident with the north lot line of Lot 12, Block 8, Longbeach Subdivision No. 3, according to the official plat thereof, filed under plat no. 80-2, located at 3220 E. Palmdale Drive within Section 1, Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Seward Meridian, Records of the Palmer Recording District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska.

Acceptance and use of this letter of non-objection by yourself, your heirs, your assigns, or your successors, will constitute agreement to the following stipulations:

- Landowner/Contractor working near ENSTAR gas facilities shall contact the Alaska Digline, Inc., (907) 278-3121 or 811 for line locating two (2) business days prior to any related excavation. This service is free of charge.
- ENSTAR will be held harmless, now and forever for any damages or injury to any person or property as a result of this encroachment.
- Any ENSTAR facility damaged or destroyed, as a result of this encroachment will be repaired at no cost to ENSTAR.
- Any costs incurred by ENSTAR for special construction necessitated by this encroachment will be borne by the land owner.
- All applicable safety code regulations will be observed and maintained.
- This letter of non-objection will in no way preclude ENSTAR from full use and enjoyment of its rights within any portion of its right-of-way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robin Leighty". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Robin Leighty
Right of Way and Permitting

cc. file



May 26, 2016

Denny Nelson
3220 E Palmadale Dr,
Wasilla, Alaska 99654

Dear Denny Nelson:


Subject to your agreement to indemnify the company as set forth below, GCI Communication Corp has no objection to the shed and house encroaching into the 15' Utility easement of Lot 12, Block 8, Longbeach subdivision #2, also known as 3220 E Palmadale Dr, city grid NW3965.

This letter of non-objection in no way precludes GCI Communication Corp from full use and enjoyment of any rights it may have within any portion of the utility easement and or the right-of-way, including unlimited access for servicing its facilities. Also any additional and extraordinary costs incurred during any future required construction, repair or reconstruction of GCI's facilities to accommodate any or all of the encroachments shall be paid by the property owner.

By signing below, you agree to indemnify and hold GCI Communication Corp harmless, now and forever, for any damage, costs, expense (including reasonable attorney's fees), liabilities and injury to any person or property occurring as a result of the encroachment.

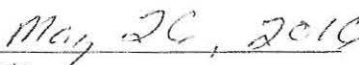
Please indicate your acceptance by signing and returning this letter to me at the address below.

Sincerely,


Acceptance



Markus Kofoed
OSP Design Engineer III
GCI Communication Corp
5151 Fairbanks St.
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-868-6168 Office
907-868-8580 Fax


Date



NON-OBJECTION TO EASEMENT ENCROACHMENT DOCUMENT

By this document Matanuska Telephone Association, Inc. (MTA) declares that it has no objection to the encroachment of the new garage being built within the platted 15 foot utility easement on Lot 12, Block 8, Longbeach Subdivision Division No. 2, Plat number 80-2, Palmer Recording District, State of Alaska.

Please be advised that MTA through the issuance of this document does not forfeit any of its rights to the use of the area cited. In the exercise of these rights MTA will, if needed, upgrade, maintain, repair, and/or replace buried or aerial telecommunications facilities within the easement. Any repairs that may be required to the encroachment as a result of utility construction will be borne by the property owner of record. This document does not authorize the placement of any additional encroachments within the easement area. Property owners are required to obtain utility locates before doing any kind of work in the utility easements and will be liable for any damages caused by their construction work in the easements.

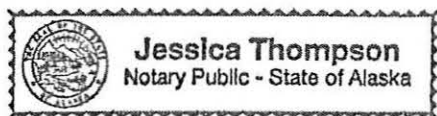
This document is, in no way, an agreement to vacate any portion of the utility easement and should not be interpreted as such.

Issued for Matanuska Telephone Association, Inc. this 30th day of May, 2016, by,

, OSP Engineering & Construction Manager

THIS IS TO CERTIFY, that on this 30th day of May, 2016, before me the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State of Alaska, duly commissioned and sworn as such, personally appeared Robbie Nash known to me and to me known to be the individual named in and who executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged to me that he signed and sealed the same as a voluntary act and deed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal the day and year first above written.



Notary Public in and for Alaska
My commission expires: 05-04-2019

Matanuska Telephone Association Inc.
PO Box 3550
Palmer Alaska 99645 3550

800.746.9510
907.761.2510
907.761.2645 (fax)

www.mtasolutions.com

Local
Long Distance
Wireless
Business Solutions
Internet
Directory
DTV

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COMMENTS

Susan Lee

From: Theresa Taranto
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2016 10:49 AM
To: Susan Lee
Subject: RE: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance

FIRM 8105, X and A Zone.

Property has a LOMA (Letter of Map Amendment)

No other comments.

Thanks,

Theresa Taranto
Development Services
Administrative Specialist

Mat-Su Borough
350 E Dahlia Ave.
Palmer, Alaska 99645
907-861-8574

From: Susan Lee
Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 1:21 PM
To: mearow@matanuska.com; rglenn@mta-telco.com; row@enstarnaturalgas.com; Michelle Wagner; Richard Boothby; Elizabeth Weiant; Terry Dolan; Theresa Taranto; stevecolligan@mtaonline.net; Andy Dean
Subject: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance

A variance application under MSB 17.65 – Variances, has been submitted requesting to construct an attached garage to the existing single-family residence. The proposed garage will be set back 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way. The Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing on this request on October 17, 2016. Please review and submit any comments you may have to me by **September 1, 2016**.

If you have any questions or need additional information please let me know.

Thanks, Susan

Susan Lee
Planner II
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
907-861-7862 (Direct Line)
907-861-7876 (FAX)

Susan Lee

From: Theresa Taranto
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2016 10:51 AM
To: Susan Lee
Subject: FW: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance

This is also in the Core Area.

Theresa Taranto
Development Services
Administrative Specialist

Mat-Su Borough
350 E Dahlia Ave.
Palmer, Alaska 99645
907-861-8574

From: Theresa Taranto
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2016 10:49 AM
To: Susan Lee
Subject: RE: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance

FIRM 8105, X and A Zone.
Property has a LOMA (Letter of Map Amendment)
No other comments.
Thanks,

Theresa Taranto
Development Services
Administrative Specialist

Mat-Su Borough
350 E Dahlia Ave.
Palmer, Alaska 99645
907-861-8574

From: Susan Lee
Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 1:21 PM
To: mearow@matanuska.com; rglenn@mta-telco.com; row@enstarnaturalgas.com; Michelle Wagner; Richard Boothby; Elizabeth Weiant; Terry Dolan; Theresa Taranto; stevecolligan@mtaonline.net; Andy Dean
Subject: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance

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If you have any questions or need additional information please let me know.



ENSTAR Natural Gas Company
A DIVISION OF SEMCO ENERGY
Engineering Department
Right of Way Section
401 E. International Airport Road
P. O. Box 190288
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-0288
(907) 277-5551
FAX (907) 334-7798

August 17, 2016

Matanuska - Susitna Borough
Development Services

AUG 18 2016

Received

Susan Lee, Planner II
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Planning & Land Use Department
350 East Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, Alaska 99645-6488

Subject: Request for a variance from the setback requirements
Lot 12, Block 8, Longbeach Subdivision, Division 2, located within Township 17
North, Range 1 West, Section 1, Seward Meridian.

Dear Ms Lee:

ENSTAR Natural Gas Company has reviewed the application for the subject Request for a
Variance.

We have no comments or concerns related to this activity.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 907-334-7944 or by email at
cassie.wohlgemuth@enstarnaturalgas.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cassie Wohlgemuth", written over a horizontal line.

Cassie Wohlgemuth
Right-of-Way and Compliance Technician
ENSTAR Natural Gas Company

Susan Lee

From: Becky Glenn <rglenn@mta-telco.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 17, 2016 7:51 AM
To: Susan Lee
Cc: Jessica Thompson
Subject: RE: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance

Susan Lee,

MTA has reviewed the request for variance, Longbeach Div. 2. MTA has no objections.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment.

Becky Glenn

MTA

From: Susan Lee [<mailto:Susan.Lee@matsugov.us>]
Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 1:21 PM
To: mearow@matanuska.com; Becky Glenn <rglenn@mta-telco.com>; row@enstarnaturalgas.com; Michelle Wagner <Michelle.Wagner@matsugov.us>; Richard Boothby <Richard.Boothby@matsugov.us>; Elizabeth Weiant <Elizabeth.Weiant@matsugov.us>; Terry Dolan <Terry.Dolan@matsugov.us>; Theresa Taranto <Theresa.Taranto@matsugov.us>; stevecolligan@mtaonline.net; Andy Dean <Andy.Dean@matsugov.us>
Subject: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance

Be wary of unsolicited attachments, even from people you know - If something seems suspicious you may want to check with the person who supposedly sent the message to make sure it's legitimate before opening any attachments.

A variance application under MSB 17.65 – Variances, has been submitted requesting to construct an attached garage to the existing single-family residence. The proposed garage will be set back 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way. The Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing on this request on October 17, 2016. Please review and submit any comments you may have to me by **September 1, 2016**.

If you have any questions or need additional information please let me know.

Thanks, Susan

Susan Lee
Planner II
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
907-861-7862 (Direct Line)
907-861-7876 (FAX)

Susan Lee

From: Nancy Cameron
Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 3:33 PM
To: Susan Lee
Subject: FW: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance
Attachments: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance Application.pdf

No borough land is affected by variance. LRM has no objection to the variance request.

Nancy Cameron
Land Mangement Agent
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
350 E. Dahlia Ave.
Palmer, AK 99645
Direct 907-861-7848
Nancy.cameron@matsugov.us

From: Elizabeth Weiant
Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 1:22 PM
To: Nancy Cameron
Subject: FW: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance

From: Susan Lee
Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 1:21 PM
To: mearow@matanuska.com; rglenn@mta-telco.com; row@enstarnaturalgas.com; Michelle Wagner; Richard Boothby; Elizabeth Weiant; Terry Dolan; Theresa Taranto; stevecolligan@mtaonline.net; Andy Dean
Subject: Longbeach Div. 2 Variance

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If you have any questions or need additional information please let me know.

Thanks, Susan

Susan Lee
Planner II
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
907-861-7862 (Direct Line)
907-861-7876 (FAX)



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Planning and Land Use Department

Development Services Division

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7822 • Fax (907) 861-7876

Email: PermitCenter@matsugov.us
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Development Services

AUG 16 2016

MEMORANDUM

Received

DATE: August 16, 2016

FROM: Susan Lee, Planner II

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR REVIEW AND COMMENTS

PROJECT: Setback Variance

TAX ACCOUNT#: Longbeach Subdivision, Division 2, Block 8, Lot 12 (1892B08L012)

TAX MAP: WA11

LOCATION: Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Section 1, Seward Meridian

APPLICANT: Denny & Rebecca Nelson

A variance application under MSB 17.65 - Variances, has been submitted requesting to construct an attached garage to the existing single-family residence. The proposed garage will be set back 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way. The Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing on this request on October 17, 2016. If we do not receive comments from you we will assume you have no objections to this request.

Distribution:

<input type="checkbox"/> Borough Manager (info only)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Design Division
<input type="checkbox"/> Collections	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Works Director
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning Division	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Right-of-Way Coordinator <i>A.R.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Services Director
<input type="checkbox"/> Platting Division	<input type="checkbox"/> Code Compliance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources

Comments: Return written comments by **September 1, 2016**. Thank you for your review.

Please confirm no part of sewer service lines will be under garage area or where it cannot be dug up to maintain. *A.R.*



Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Planning & Land Use Department
Development Services Division
350 East Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Matanuska - Susitna Borough
Development Services

51892B08L009 35
SCHNEIDER DAVID C & BETH A
3160 PALMDALE DR
WASILLA, AK 99654

SEP 06 2016

FIRST CLASS MA.

Received

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission will consider the following:

Application or Item: Application for a variance to the setback requirements

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Code Section: MSB 15.55 - Setbacks and MSB 15.05 - Variances

Applicant: Denny & Rebecca Nelson

Request: A variance application has been submitted requesting to construct an attached garage to the existing single-family residence. The proposed garage will be set back 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way.

Location: Longbeach Subdivision, Division 2, Block 8, Lot 12; 3220 S. Palmdale Drive; within Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Section 1, Seward Meridian.

The Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing in the Borough Assembly Chambers, Palmer, Alaska, on this item on October 17, 2016. The meeting begins at 6:00 p.m. **Public hearings begin at 6:15 p.m.** This may be the only presentation of this item before the Planning Commission and you are invited to attend.

The Planning Commission members may submit questions to the Planning Commission Clerk concerning the matter or request for more information from the applicant at the time of the introduction. All questions and requests submitted by the Commission shall be in writing and copies will be provided to the applicant and made available to all interested parties and the public upon request. Answers to questions and additional material requests will be addressed in the staff report for the public hearing.

Commission members may not receive or engage in ex-parte contact with the applicant, other parties interested in the application, or members of the public concerning the application or issues presented in the application.

Application material may be viewed online at www.matsugov.us and clicking on 'Public Notices'. Application material may also be reviewed in the Borough Permit Center. If you have any questions or, would like to send us comments, concerning the proposed action, this form may be used for your convenience by filling in the information below and mailing it to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Development Services Division, Planning Department, 350 East Dahlia, Palmer, Alaska 99645. You may fax comments to 861-7876 or e-mail to slee@matsugov.us. For additional information please contact Susan Lee, Planner II, at 861-7862. Comments received prior to October 3, 2016 will be included in the Planning Commission packet for the Commissioner's review and information. Comments received after that date will not be included in the staff report to the Planning Commission. If there is not enough room below, please attach to another piece of paper. In order to be eligible to file an appeal from a decision of the Planning Commission, a person must be an interested party. See MSB 15.39.010 for definition of "Interested Party". The procedures governing appeals to the Planning Commission and Appeals are contained in MSB 15.39.010-250, which is available on the Borough internet home page, (<http://www.matsugov.us>), in the Borough Clerk's office, or at various libraries within the borough.

Name: David Schneider **Address:** 3160 E Palmdale Dr. Wasilla AK

Location/Legal Description of your property: Longbeach Sub Div 2 BK 8 Lot 9

Comments: We need to be sure this variance will not harm the Community sewer system line buried under their current driveway, the overhead Power Lines, and allowing their several cars to block our access off Palmdale while being parked (it has been in the past).

Note: Vicinity Map Located on Reverse Side

Susan Lee

From: Susan Lee
Sent: Wednesday, September 07, 2016 11:00 AM
To: dnelson@ahtna.net
Subject: variance comments
Attachments: Scan_20160907_105319.pdf

Hi Denny:

I received these comments regarding your proposed variance. Will the proposed garage be constructed over the community sewer system line?

Susan

Susan Lee
Planner II
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
907-861-7862 (Direct Line)
907-861-7876 (FAX)

Susan Lee

From: Denny Nelson <dnelson@ahtna.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 07, 2016 11:10 AM
To: Susan Lee
Subject: RE: variance comments

Susan,

The sewer system line is well beyond the proposed garage and there is still 15 feet between the proposed garage and the overhead power lines. The parked cars will not interfere with the access to Palmdale drive. There has been occasions when parked cars was on the side of the road but it is rare when that happens.

Denny

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Lee [<mailto:Susan.Lee@matsugov.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, September 07, 2016 11:00 AM
To: Denny Nelson
Subject: variance comments

Hi Denny:

I received these comments regarding your proposed variance. Will the proposed garage be constructed over the community sewer system line?

Susan

Susan Lee
Planner II
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
907-861-7862 (Direct Line)
907-861-7876 (FAX)

Susan Lee

From: Denny Nelson <dnelson@ahtna.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 07, 2016 1:58 PM
To: Susan Lee
Subject: Re: variance comments

In the driveway. When have a party people would park on the road. We have never block off his access to Palmdale Dr. He is the neighborhood busy body.

Denny

Sent from my iPhone

> On Sep 7, 2016, at 11:48 AM, Susan Lee <Susan.Lee@matsugov.us> wrote:

>

> Are you parking your vehicles in your driveway or in the road during the winter?

>

> Susan Lee

> Planner II

> Matanuska-Susitna Borough

> 907-861-7862 (Direct Line)

> 907-861-7876 (FAX)

>

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Denny Nelson [<mailto:dnelson@ahtna.net>]

> Sent: Wednesday, September 07, 2016 11:10 AM

> To: Susan Lee

> Subject: RE: variance comments

>

> Susan,

>

> The sewer system line is well beyond the proposed garage and there is still 15 feet between the proposed garage and the overhead power lines. The parked cars will not interfere with the access to Palmdale drive. There has been occasions when parked cars was on the side of the road but it is rare when that happens.

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> From: Susan Lee [<mailto:Susan.Lee@matsugov.us>]

> Sent: Wednesday, September 07, 2016 11:00 AM

> To: Denny Nelson

> Subject: variance comments

>

> Hi Denny:

>

> I received these comments regarding your proposed variance. Will the proposed garage be constructed over the community sewer system line?

>

> Susan

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

















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MAPS

PALMDALE

Legend

 2' Contour Lines 1892B08L012

D FIRM Zone

 A Building Footprints

This map is solely for informational purposes only. The Borough makes no express or implied warranties with respect to the character, function, or capabilities of the map or the suitability of the map for any particular purpose beyond those originally intended by the Borough. For information regarding the full disclaimer and policies related to acceptable uses of this map, please contact the Matanuska-Susitna Borough GIS Division at 907-861-7801.

Development Services
October 4, 2016


1 inch = 50 feet

0 50 100 Feet



PALMDALE

Legend

 1892B08L012

D FIRM Zones

 A

 X



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Development Services
October 4, 2016

1 inch = 50 feet

0 50 100
Feet



PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION

By: Susan Lee
Introduced: October 3, 2016
Public Hearing: October 17, 2016
Action:

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 16-33

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVING A VARIANCE TO THE RIGHT-OF-WAY SETBACK FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ATTACHED GARAGE ON BLOCK 8, LOT 12, LONGBEACH SUBDIVISION, DIVISION 2, PALMER RECORDING DISTRICT.

WHEREAS, an application for a variance from the setback requirements of MSB 17.55.010(A) has been received to allow construction of an attached garage to the existing single-family residence less than 25 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way on Block 8, Lot 12, Longbeach Subdivision, Division 2; within Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Section 1, Seward Meridian; and

WHEREAS, at its closest point, the garage will be set back 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on October 17, 2016 on this matter; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission reviewed the application, associated materials, and the staff report containing findings of fact and conclusions of law; and

WHEREAS, the lot is .53 acres in size; and

WHEREAS, Longbeach Subdivision, Division 2, was platted in 1979; and

WHEREAS, the lot is served by a community sewer system; and

WHEREAS, the south two-thirds of the lot is located within special flood hazard area; and

WHEREAS, the application material states that the existing residence was constructed at this particular location so that it would be located outside of the special flood hazard area; and

WHEREAS, the existing residence is set back 29 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the driveway grade ranges from 18.4% to 22.2%; and

WHEREAS, the lot was developed in such a way that only left room for a driveway with an average grade of 19%, which exceeds the maximum allowable 10% grade for driveways; and

WHEREAS, a borough driveway permit was not applied for or issued for this driveway; and

WHEREAS, the application material states that during the icy winter months the steep driveway creates dangerous conditions and vehicles slide into the garage and is dangerous to walk on; and

WHEREAS, there are unusual conditions or circumstances applicable to this property, as Palmdale Drive is at a higher elevation than the house, which makes for a very steep driveway and created dangerous conditions; and

WHEREAS, the applicants/owners already have use of the property with the existing single-family residence and attached garage; and

WHEREAS, the concrete pad in front of the garage doors is heated; however, ice builds up on it during the winter; and

WHEREAS, the applicants/owners are unable to use the garage at times in the winter due to the steep, icy driveway; and

WHEREAS, construction of a new garage less than 25 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way will allow a garage to be level with the roadway; and

WHEREAS, the existing house and attached garage is approximately 40' x 40' in size; and

WHEREAS, the proposed garage addition is 24' x 26' in size; and

WHEREAS, the size of the proposed garage is the average size of a two car garage; and

WHEREAS, the subdivision is developed with residences with either attached or detached garages that are similar in size to the existing residence and the proposed garage addition; and

WHEREAS, the strict application of the provisions of this title would deprive the applicants/owners of rights commonly enjoyed by others as the existing residence and proposed garage addition are similar in size to other residences and garages in the subdivision; and

WHEREAS, the proposed garage will be set back approximately 30 feet from the constructed roadway; and

WHEREAS, the south side of the Palmdale Drive right-of-way has not been constructed due to its steep grade; and

WHEREAS, Palmdale Drive is not likely to be upgraded; and

WHEREAS, the proposed garage will not interfere with the community sewer system line; and

WHEREAS, construction of the garage within the right-of-way setback will provide for safer conditions, as it will be constructed at the same elevation as Palmdale Drive; and

WHEREAS, setbacks promote a variety of public purposes such as provisions for light and air, fire protection, traffic safety, prevention of overcrowding, rest and recreation, solving drainage problems, protecting the appearance and character of a neighborhood, and conserving property values; and

WHEREAS, granting the variance will not be injurious to nearby property, nor harmful to the public welfare, as the proposed garage will not interfere with the flow of traffic on Palmdale Drive and it will be constructed at the same level as Palmdale Drive, making it a safe and useable structure; and

WHEREAS, MSB Chapter 17.65 - Variances, was written to grant relief to property owners whose lots are impacted by topographic constraints and/or existing land use regulations thereby making the lot undevelopable; and

WHEREAS, the applicants/owners have reasonable use of their property; however, there are unsafe conditions due to the steep grade of the driveway into the garage; and

WHEREAS, constructing the new garage at the roadway level will eliminate the hazards of the steep driveway into the existing garage; and

WHEREAS, the proposed setback variance is consistent with the policies and goals of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Plan (2005 Update), as it will protect the public safety, health, and welfare of the community which setbacks are designed to further by allowing the construction of a garage at the roadway level; and

WHEREAS, the proposed variance does meet the intent of MSB 17.65 and is consistent with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Plan (2005 Update); and

WHEREAS, there is reasonable use of this lot without a variance; and

WHEREAS, the proposed garage will replace the existing garage, which will become storage space; and

WHEREAS, deviation from this title will be no more than is necessary to permit a reasonable use of the property, as the existing residence and proposed garage addition are similar in size to the other residences and garages in the subdivision; and

WHEREAS, the person seeking the variance did not construct the existing structure; and

WHEREAS, the person seeking the variance is requesting to construct the new garage; and

WHEREAS, the person seeking the variance did not cause the topography of the lot; and

WHEREAS, due to where the residence was constructed to avoid the flood zone, there was no room left on the lot to design a practical driveway, which created the current conditions; and

WHEREAS, the person seeking the variance did not cause the need for the variance, as the applicants/owners are requesting the variance in order to build a new garage to eliminate a safety issues with the steep driveway into the existing garage; and

WHEREAS, the subject lot is not in a special land use district; and

WHEREAS, residential structures and garages are permitted on this property; and

WHEREAS, the variance, if granted, will not permit a land use in a district in which that use is prohibited, as residential structures are permitted on this site and the variance will allow a garage to be constructed within the right-of-way setback area; and

WHEREAS, the variance is being sought in order to mitigate hazardous conditions on the lot; and

WHEREAS, the variance is being sought for safety purposes for the property owners and others using the driveway and garage on the lot; and

WHEREAS, the proposed garage addition is not out of character with the existing residential development in the subdivision; and

WHEREAS, the variance is not solely to relieve pecuniary hardship or inconvenience, as the variance is being requested in order to remedy safety issues due to the steep driveway into the existing garage and the proposed garage addition is not out of character with the existing residential development in the subdivision.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission hereby approves the setback variance to construct a garage 5.7 feet from the Palmdale Drive right-of-way.

/

/

/

/

/

/

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning
Commission this ____ day of ____, 2016.

JOHN KLAPPERICH, Chair

ATTEST

MARY BRODIGAN, Planning Clerk

(SEAL)

YES:

NO:

**PUBLIC HEARING
QUASI-JUDICIAL**

Resolution No. 16-38

MTA Telecommunications Tower THP1 CUP
29625 S. Talkeetna Spur

(Page 565 -776)

PUBLIC HEARING

STAFF REPORT

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH****Planning and Land Use Department****Development Services Division**

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7822 • Fax (907) 861-7876

www.matsugov.us

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIVISION STAFF REPORT

File Number: 176720160004


Applicant: Sherrie Greenshields of New Horizons Telecom, Inc. on the behalf of MTA Communications


Property Owner: Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Request: Request for a conditional use permit in accordance with MSB 17.67 – Tall Structures Including Telecommunication Facilities, Wind Energy Conversion Systems, and Other Tall Structures

Location: 29625 S. Talkeetna Spur (Tax ID# 25N04W19A006); within Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Section 19, Seward Meridian

Size of Property: 10 acres

Reviewed By Alex Strawn, Development Services Manager 

Staff: Mark Whisenhunt, Planner II 

Staff Recommendation: Approval, with conditions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A conditional use permit application under MSB 17.67 – Tall Structures Including Telecommunication Facilities, Wind Energy Conversion Systems, and Other Tall Structures, has been submitted by Sherrie Greenshields of New Horizons Telecom, Inc. on the behalf of MTA Communications to construct a 200-foot tall telecommunication tower. A tall structure exceeding 85 feet in height is only permitted upon the issuance of an administrative or conditional use permit. Unless this type of use is maintained under and in accordance with a lawfully issued permit, a tall structure is declared to be a public nuisance. Maintenance of such a land use without a permit is prohibited.

LAND USE

Existing Land Use:

The subject parcel is 10 acres in size and undeveloped. The whole property is wooded with mature forest growth. While the south half is generally flat, the north half gains elevation by hilly terrain. Access to the site has been cleared of vegetation. The property has not been classified by the Borough.

Surrounding Land Use:

The parcel is surrounded by large parcels ranging from five to forty acres in size. Some of the larger parcels have residential homes, but the area in general remains heavily forested.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The site is located within the Talkeetna Community Council planning area. The Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan does not address telecommunications towers.

This site is also located within the boundaries of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Development Plan (2005 Update) planning area. The plan does not specifically address telecommunications towers. A Land Use Goal and Policy of the plan states:

Policy LU3-1: Develop and implement regulations that provide for non-residential development.

Policy LU3-2: Allow local communities through local community based plans, to refine borough-wide regulations addressing development patterns and impacts while maintaining consistency with the goals and policies of the Borough-wide Comprehensive Plan.

As proposed and with conditions, the telecommunications tower is consistent with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Comprehensive Plan (2005 Update) and does not conflict with the Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan.

REVIEW OF APPLICABLE CRITERIA AND FINDINGS

Public Notification

A notice was mailed to the Talkeetna Community Council and to all property owners within one-half mile of the subject property. A total of 32 notices were mailed on September 7, 2016. The public hearing notice was published in the September 2, 2016 Frontiersman. The application material was posted on the Borough's web site. The property is located within the Talkeetna Community Council boundary. The Talkeetna Community Council (TCC) submitted comments opposing the lease of MSB land to the applicant on June 21, 2016, approximately 55 days prior to our office receiving the subject application and approximately 94 days prior to closure of the public comment period. One other written comment from the public was received on July 5, 2016. The comment was in opposition to the proposed tall structure. Their concerns in general are:

- The height of the tower
- Impact to view shed
- Opposition to the Borough leasing land for commerce
- Opposition to this use on Borough land
- Potential illegal dumping site
- Lack of effort to co-locate on existing tower(s)
- Proximity to the Talkeetna Special Land Use District
- Proximity to the float plane base at Fish Lake
- Encourage MTA to co-locate on existing tower(s)
- Potential negative impact to neighboring B&B

Section 17.67.040 Types of Permits Available

(A) There are three types of permits available for tall structures:

(1) Administrative permit: new tall structures that are greater than 85 feet but less than or equal to 125 feet. The applicant may request that the decision on an administrative permit be made by the planning commission. The request shall be in writing at the time of application and all requirements for a conditional use permit shall be followed.

(2) Conditional use permit: new tall structures greater than 125 feet; or tall structures that exceed the height threshold at which a conditional use permit within a special land use district is required.

(3) Network improvement permit: allows legally constructed telecommunication towers to be increased in height in accordance with MSB 17.67.110.

Finding: According to the application material, the proposed tall structure is a 200-foot tall telecommunication tower.

Finding: The subject lot is not within a special land use district.

Finding: Currently, there are no existing tall structures on the subject property.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above findings, the proposed use meets the criteria to qualify for conditional use permit for the construction a 200-foot tall structure (MSB 17.67.040(A)(2)).

Section 17.67.050 Pre-Application Requirements for New Tall Structures That Require a Conditional Use Permit

(A) Prior to applying for a conditional use permit for a new tall structure, the potential applicant shall hold at least one community meeting:

(1) The meeting shall be held at the nearest facility where community council meetings are regularly scheduled. If the facility is not available, the nearest available public facility that is capable of seating a minimum of 20 people shall be utilized;

(2) The meeting shall be held at least 15 calendar days after mailing of the notification;

- (3) *The meeting shall not start prior to 5 p.m. and no later than 7 p.m.;*
- (4) *Notification of the meeting shall, at a minimum, include the following:*
 - (a) *legal description and map of the general parcel, or parcels, within the coverage area under consideration for the telecommunication facility;*
 - (b) *description of the proposed development including height, design, lighting, potential access to the site, and proposed service;*
 - (c) *date, time, and location of informational meeting;*
 - (d) *contact name, telephone number, and address of applicant; and*
 - (e) *comment form created by the borough that has a comment submittal deadline and provides options for submitting comments.*
- (5) *At a minimum, the notification area for the meeting shall include the following:*
 - (a) *property owners within one-half mile of the parcels under consideration for the proposed tall structure; and*
 - (b) *the nearest community council and any community council whose boundary is within 1,200 feet of the parcels under consideration for the tall structure.*

(B) A written report summarizing the results of the community meeting shall be prepared that includes the following information:

- (1) *dates and locations of all meetings where citizens were invited to discuss the potential applicant's proposal;*
- (2) *content, dates mailed, and numbers of mailings, including letters, meeting notices, newsletters, and other publications;*
- (3) *sign-in sheet(s) used at the meeting, that includes places for names, addresses, phone numbers, and other contact information such as email addresses;*
- (4) *a list of residents, property owners, and interested parties who have requested in writing that they be kept informed of the proposed development through notices, newsletters, or other written materials;*
- (5) *the number of people who attended meetings;*
- (6) *copies of written comments received at the meeting;*
- (7) *a certificate of mailing identifying all who were notified of the meeting; and*
- (8) *a written summary that addresses the following:*
 - (a) *the substance of the public's written concerns, issues, and problems;*
 - (b) *how the applicant has addressed, or intends to address, concerns, issues, and problems expressed during the process; and*
 - (c) *concerns, issues, and problems the applicant has not addressed or does not intend to address and why.*

Applicant's Response: *Please refer to attached Exhibit F (Notification Letter, Mailing List, Meeting Sign-in and Meeting Summary) and Exhibit G (Summary Page & Written Comments).*

Finding: According to the application material, the applicant held a public meeting on June 20, 2016 at the Talkeetna Public Library.

Finding: A certified mailing notification showed notice was mailed on June 3, 2016 to all property owners within one-half mile of the subject property and to the Talkeetna Community Council.

Finding: The notification included a legal description and map of the parcel, a description of the proposed development, the date, time, and location of the informational meeting, contact name, telephone number, and address of the applicant, and comment form created by the borough with a deadline to submit comments and submittal options.

Finding: Exhibit F & G of the application material contains a copy of all received written comments, a written report summarizing the comments received during the public meeting, and a detailed response from the applicant.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above findings, the applicant has met the pre-application requirements for new tall structures that require a Conditional Use Permit (MSB 17.67.050).

Section 17.67.080 Standards for Approval of New Tall Structures

(A) A permit for a new tall structure may only be approved if it meets the requirements of this section in addition to any other applicable standards required by this chapter.

(B) In granting or denying a permit, the commission or director shall make findings on whether the applicant has demonstrated that:

(1) To the extent that is technically feasible and potentially available, the location of the tall structure is such that its negative effects on the visual and scenic resources of all surrounding properties have been minimized;

Applicant's Response: *The site is situated within a lot surrounded by existing trees. The access road is "dog-legged" in so the site is not visible from direct line of view from access road. The residences surrounding the lot have trees that will help screen the tower from view.*

Finding: According to the site plan, the proposed tall structure site is approximately 1,090 feet away from the right-of-way line of South Talkeetna Spur.

Finding: According to the application material, the proposed tall structure is a 200-foot tall telecommunication tower.

Finding: The proposed tall structure is approximately 215 feet from the west side lot line, 325 feet from the north side lot line, 420 feet from the east side lot line, and 370 feet from the south side lot line.

Finding: The proposed setback to the public use easement is greater than the height of the tower.

Finding: The proposed access is “dog-legged” to make use of the heavily treed property for screening.

Finding: According to the application material, a computer model using topography and surface interference data was used to identify the best locations for the proposed location and tower height.

Finding: According to the application material, co-locating on existing towers was considered; however, it was determined the available spaces on existing towers did not provide coverage for the identified gaps in service.

Finding: The subject parcel does not front South Talkeetna Spur.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above findings, the location of the tall structure is such that its negative effects on the visual and scenic resources of all surrounding properties have been minimized (MSB 17.67.080(B)(1)).

(2) Visibility of the tall structure from public parks, trails recognized within adopted borough plans, and water bodies has been minimized to the extent that is technically feasible and potentially available;

Applicant’s Response: *The site is situated within a lot surrounded by existing trees. The access road is “dog-legged” in so the site is not visible form direct line of view from the access road. The residences surrounding the lot have trees that will help screen the tower from view.*

Finding: The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Trail Plan does not identify any trails within the one-half mile notice area.

Finding: The subject property is heavily treed, which will aid in screening the proposed conditional use.

Finding: According to the application material, a computer model using topography and surface interference data was used to identify the best locations for the proposed location and tower height.

Finding: According to the application material, co-locating on existing towers was considered; however, it was determined the available spaces on existing towers did not provide coverage for the identified gaps in service.

Finding: Fish Lake is approximately one-half mile to the north east.

Finding: A balloon test was conducted on June 27, 2016. It showed the tower was largely obscured from view along the Talkeetna Spur right-of-way.

Finding: The proposed tall structure will be galvanized steel and gray in color.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above findings, visibility of the proposed tall structures from public parks and trails has been minimized (MSB 17.67.080(B)(2)).

(3) The tall structure will not interfere with the approaches to any existing airport or airfield that are identified in the borough's regional aviation system plan or by the Alaska State Aviation System Plan; and

Applicant's Response: Please refer to Appendix B (FAA Determination). The site does not interfere with existing airports or airfields.

Finding: According to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's database of registered airport and landing strips, there are no existing airports or airfields within the one-half mile notice area.

Finding: According to a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) determination issued on June 20, 2016, the proposed tall structure will not be a hazard to air navigation provided it is marked/lighted in accordance with FAA lighting standards.

Finding: The proposed tall structure will be lit with a medium intensity dual lighting system.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above findings, the proposed tall structure will not interfere with the approaches to any existing airport or airfield that are identified in the borough's regional aviation system plan or by the Alaska State Aviation System Plan (MSB 17.67.080(B)(3)).

(4) Granting the permit will not be harmful to the public health, safety, convenience, and welfare.

Applicant's Response: The proposed site will not be harmful to the public health, safety, convenience and welfare.

Finding: The tower facility is located within a fenced and locked area. The fence is 6-feet in height and topped with barbed wire.

Finding: According to the application material, the proposed tower has been engineered in accordance with all state building codes.

Finding: The applicant submitted documents showing the proposed tower conforms to the Electronic Industries Alliance/Telecommunication Industries Association's EIA/TIA-22-G structures standards.

Finding: According to the application material, the proposed tower and transmission equipment will operate within radio frequency levels deemed safe by the Federal Communications Commission.

Finding: According to the application material, signs will be posted that contain: a contact number, owner information, federal antenna structure registration number, and a “no trespassing” notice.

Finding: According to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough’s database of registered airport and landing strips, there are no existing airports or airfields within the one-half mile notice area.

Finding: According to a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) determination issued on June 20, 2016, the proposed tall structure will not be a hazard to air navigation provided it is marked/lighted in accordance with FAA lighting standards.

Finding: The proposed tall structure will be lit with a medium intensity dual lighting system.

Finding: According to the site plan, the proposed tall structure site is approximately 1,090 feet away from the right-of-way line of South Talkeetna Spur.

Finding: According to the application material, the proposed tall structure is a 200-foot tall telecommunication tower.

Finding: The proposed tall structure is approximately 215 feet from the west side lot line, 325 feet from the north side lot line, 420 feet from the east side lot line, and 370 feet from the south side lot line.

Finding: The proposed setback to the public use easement is greater than the height of the tower.

Finding: A locked gate will be located across the driveway, approximately five feet from the right-of-way line of South Talkeetna Spur.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above findings, the proposed tower will not be harmful to the public health, safety, convenience, and welfare (MSB 17.60.080(B)(4)).

Section 17.67.090 Operation Standards for New Tall Structures

(A) The following setback requirements shall apply to all new telecommunications towers regulated under this chapter:

(1) The equipment compound shall meet minimum setback distances from all property lines in accordance with MSB 17.55.

Applicant’s Response: *The proposed site conforms to MSB 17.55.*

Finding: According to the site plan, fencing that surrounds the supporting telecommunication equipment will be approximately 185 feet away from the closest (western) property line.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above finding, the proposed use meets the minimum setback distances from all property lines in accordance with MSB 17.55 (MSB 17.67.090(A)(1)).

(2) Minimum setback for the tower base shall be a distance equal to the height of the tower.

(a) The commission, or director if it is an administrative permit, may reduce the setback to a distance less than the height of the tower, if the applicant demonstrates there is no risk to public health, safety, or welfare of adjacent property owners.

Applicant's Response: *The proposed tower setback is a distance equal to the height of the tower.*

Finding: According to the site plan, the proposed tall structure site is approximately 1,090 feet away from the right-of-way line of South Talkeetna Spur.

Finding: According to the application material, the proposed tall structure is a 200-foot tall telecommunication tower.

Finding: The proposed tall structure is approximately 215 feet from the west side lot line, 325 feet from the north side lot line, 420 feet from the east side lot line, and 370 feet from the south side lot line.

Finding: The proposed setback to the public use easement is greater than the height of the tower.

Finding: The proposed setback to all property lines is greater than the height of the tower.

Conclusion of Law: The proposed setbacks for the tower base are greater than the height of the tower (MSB 17.67.090(A)(2)).

(B) For all tall structures regulated under this chapter, adequate vehicle parking shall be provided on the subject property, outside of public use easements and rights-of-way, to enable emergency vehicle access.

(1) No more than two spaces per provider shall be required.

Applicant's Response: *Refer to Exhibit A (Site Document and Design Documents). The site has adequate vehicle parking on subject property to enable emergency vehicle access.*

Finding: According to the application material, two parking spaces will be provided at the proposed site.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above finding, adequate vehicle parking has been provided (MSB 17.67.090(B)(1)).

(C) The following requirements apply to all new and existing telecommunication towers and wind energy conversion systems regulated under this chapter:

(1) The following signage shall be visibly posted at the equipment compound:

(a) informational signs for the purpose of identifying the tower such as the antenna structure registration number required by the Federal Communications Commission, as well as the party responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility;

Applicant's Response: MTAC will comply with signage requirements.

Finding: According to the application material, signs will be posted that contain: a contact number, owner information, federal antenna structure registration number, and a "no trespassing" notice.

Finding: According to the application material, signs will be posted on the surrounding 6-foot tall fence.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above findings, adequate signage has been provided (MSB 17.67.090(C)(1)(a)).

(b) if more than 220 volts are necessary for the operation of the facility, warning signs shall be located at the base of the facility and shall display in large, bold, high contrast letters the following: "HIGH VOLTAGE – DANGER"; and

Applicant's Response: MTAC proposed service will be 240 volts. MTAW will comply with signage requirements.

Finding: According the application material, the site requires 240-volts for the operation of the facility.

Finding: According to the application material, a "high voltage – dangerous" sign will be located at the base of the facility.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above findings, a "high voltage – dangerous" sign will be posted in accordance with code (MSB 17.67.090(C)(1)(b)).

(c) a 24-hour emergency contact number.

Applicant's Response: a 24 hour contact number will be referenced on signage.

Finding: According to the application material, signs will be posted that contain: a contact number, owner information, federal antenna structure registration number, and a "no trespassing" notice.

Conclusion of Law: Based on the above finding, a 24-hour emergency contact number has been provided (MSB 17.67.090(C)(1)(c))

(2) A fence or wall not less than six feet in height with a secured gate shall be maintained around the base of the tower.

Applicant's Response: Please refer to Appendix A (Site Document and Design Documents).

Finding: According to the application material, a 6-foot tall chain link fence topped with barbed wire and locking gate will surround the tower and supporting telecommunication equipment.

Conclusion of Law: Base on the above finding, a fence not less than six feet in height with a secured gate, is being provided (MSB 17.67.090(C)(2)).

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

This application does meet all of the applicable standards of MSB 17.67 and staff recommends approval of this conditional use permit with the following conditions:

1. The operation shall comply with all federal, state, local regulations, and the terms and conditions of the permit.
2. Authorized representatives of the borough shall be allowed to inspect the site and related records, at reasonable times for the purpose of monitoring compliance with all permit conditions. Upon reasonable notice from the borough, the permittee shall provide necessary assistance to facilitate authorized inspections (MSB 17.67.300(D)).
3. The facility shall be removed, at the owner's expense within 90 days after abandonment or termination of the permit in accordance with MSB 17.67.130(A)(1).
4. A fence 6-feet in height and topped with barbed wire shall be constructed and maintained in good working condition. The fence shall surround the base of the tower and supporting telecommunication equipment as indicated on the site plan dated August 24, 2016.
5. The tower shall be lit in accordance with the Federal Aviation Administration's lighting standards.
6. The following informational signage shall be visibly posted at the tower site:
 - The antenna structure registration number required by the Federal Communications Commission.
 - The party responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility.

- Warning signs shall be located at the base of the facility and shall display in large, bold, high contrast letters the following: "HIGH VOLTAGE – DANGER".
- A 24-Hour emergency contact number.







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FIRST CLASS MAIL

The Planning Director of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough will consider the following:

Application: Application for a Conditional Use Permit for the Construction of a Tall Structure.
MSB Code Section: MSB 17.67-Tall Structures
Applicant: Sherrie Greenshields of New Horizons Telecom, Inc. on the behalf of MTA Communications
Property Owner: Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Location: 29625 S. Talkeetna Spur (Tax ID# 25N04W19A006); within Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Section 19, Seward Meridian
Request: To the construct a cell tower, 200-feet in height.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing concerning the following application for a Conditional Use Permit on Monday, October 17, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, in Palmer.

Application material may be viewed online at www.matsugov.us by clicking on 'All Public Notices & Announcements.' Application material may also be reviewed at the Borough Permit Center. For additional information, you may contact Mark Whisenhunt, Planner II, at 861-8527. Written comments can be mailed to the MSB Development Services Division, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, AK 99645. You may fax comments to 861-7876 or e-mail to mwhisenhunt@matsugov.us. In order to be eligible to file an appeal from a decision of the Planning Commission, a person must be designated an "interested party". See MSB 15.39.010 for definition of "interested party". The procedures governing appeals to the Board of Adjustment and Appeals are contained in MSB 15.39.010-250, which is available on the Borough homepage: www.matsugov.us, in the Borough Clerk's office, and at various libraries within the borough.

Comments are due on or before September 23, 2016 and will be included in the Planning Commission packet for the Commissioner's review and information. Please be advised that comments received from the public after that date will not be included in the staff report to the Planning Commission. If there is not enough room below, please attach this sheet to another piece of paper.

Name: _____ Mailing Address: _____

Location/Legal Description of your property: _____

Comments: _____



Matanuska-Susitna Borough

www.matsugov.us

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

All meetings of recognized boards, committees, and commissions of the Borough are open to the public and are held at Borough offices, 350 E. Dahlia Ave., Palmer, AK, unless specified otherwise. Three or more Assembly Members may be present at advertised public meetings of federal, state, and local governments or other entities. Meetings are scheduled as follows:

BOARD	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Assembly Regular Meeting	09/06/16	6:00 pm	Assembly Chambers
Abbreviated Plat	09/07/16	8:30 am	Conference Room 110
Bogard RSA Board of Supervisors	09/07/16	6:30 pm	Mat-Su Covenant Church, 5201 E Mayflower Lane
Board of Equalization	09/08/16	10:00 am	Lower Level Conference Room
Wastewater & Septage Advisory Board	09/08/16	2:00 pm	Assembly Chambers
Greater Talkeetna RSA Board of Supervisors	09/08/16	7:00 pm	Talkeetna Public Safety Building
Willow FSA Board of Supervisors	09/08/16	7:00 pm	Willow Public Safety Building, Station 12-6
Joint Assembly/School Board Committee on School Issues	CANCELLED 09/12/16	12:00 pm	Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District Administration Building (Superintendent's Office), 501 N. Gulkene Street
West Lakes FSA Board of Supervisors	09/12/16	6:00 pm	West Lakes Public Safety Building, Station 7-3
Meadow Lakes RSA Board of Supervisors	09/12/16	6:30 pm	West Lakes Public Safety Building, Station 7-1
Central Mat-Su FSA Board of Supervisors	09/12/16	7:00 pm	Central Mat-Su Public Safety Building, Station 6-1
Assembly Special Meeting Re: Planning Session Update	09/13/16	3:00 pm	Assembly Chambers
Joint Assembly/School Board Meeting	09/13/16	6:00 pm	Assembly Chambers
Abbreviated Plat	09/14/16	8:30 am	Conference Room 110
Greater Willow RSA Board of Supervisors	09/14/16	6:30 pm	Willow Area Community Center
Platting Board	09/15/16	1:00 pm	Assembly Chambers
MSB Fish & Wildlife Commission	09/15/16	6:00 pm	Lower Level Conference Room
Local Road Service Area Advisory Board	09/15/16	6:30 pm	West Lakes Public Safety Building, Station 7-3

If you would like further information on any of these meetings or are interested in serving on any of the advisory boards, please call the Borough Clerk's Office at 861-8683, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Borough Website is: <http://www.matsugov.us/publicmeetings>.

Disabled persons needing reasonable accommodation in order to participate at a Borough Board/Commission meeting should contact the Borough ADA Coordinator at 861-8432 at least one week in advance of the meeting.

The Planning Team meetings scheduled are: (Planning teams consist of Planning staff and members of the public who are appointed by the Planning Commission to work on community comprehensive plans and special land use districts, and community planning meetings.)

None

The Community Council meetings scheduled are: (Community Councils are not agencies or subgroups of the Borough)

Talkeetna Community Council	09/06/16	7:00 pm	Talkeetna Public Library
Lazy Mountain Community Council	09/08/16	7:00 pm	Lazy Mountain Bible Church
Point MacKenzie Community Council	09/08/16	7:00 pm	Art & Boots Scates Public Safety Building, Station 6-4
Willow Area Community Organization	09/12/16	7:00 pm	Willow Area Community Center
Big Lake Community Council	09/13/16	7:00 pm	Big Lake Lions Recreational Center, 2942 S Lions Court
Butte Community Council	09/14/16	7:00 pm	Butte Community Center
Chickaloon Community Council	09/14/16	7:00 pm	Chickaloon Community Center, Mile 76.2 Glenn Hwy
Meadow Lakes Community Council	09/14/16	7:00 pm	Birch Creek Villas, 1210 N Kim Drive
Trapper Creek Community Council	09/15/16	6:30 pm	Trapper Creek Community Center, Mile 115.2 Parks Hwy
South Knik River Community Council	09/15/16	7:00 pm	George E Steffes Public Safety Building, Station 2-2

Publish: September 2, 2016

09-01-16

2016 OVER THE COUNTER LAND SALE MSB007178

Land Sale Brochures are now available for the 2016 Over The Counter Land Sale. Offers will be accepted between 8:00 a.m., Aug 28, 2016 and 12:00 noon, Oct 14, 2016. Instructions and forms for submitting a purchase request can be found in the brochure, along with information and maps for each parcel. Parcels included in this sale are NOT tax foreclosed properties and will be sold to the first qualified buyer submitting a properly completed application.

Obtain A Sale Brochure:

INTERNET: View and download a complete brochure from the Mat-Su Borough Website at www.matsugov.us Select "Property & Maps", then "Land Sales", then scroll down to the Land Sales section, and click on the 2016 Over the Counter Land Sale Land Sale Brochure. Forms in brochure may be copied and used for submittals.

IN PERSON: Borough Land Management Division, Monday-Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., 350 E. Dahlia Ave., on the second floor of the Borough building in downtown Palmer.

BY EMAIL: You may request a brochure by contacting lm@matugov.us

Publish: Aug. 24, 26, 31, Sept. 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30, Oct. 5, 7 and 9, 2016

08-28-16

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing concerning the following application for a Conditional Use Permit on Monday, October 17, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Borough Assembly Chambers, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, in Palmer.

An application for Conditional Use Permit in accordance with MSB 17.67 - Tall Structures has been submitted by Sherrie Greenhields of New Horizons Telecom, Inc. on the behalf of MTA Communications, for the construction of a cell tower, 200-feet in height. The site is located at 29625 S. Talkeetna Spur (Tax ID# 25N04W19A006); within Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Section 19, Seward Meridian.

Application material may be viewed online at www.matsugov.us by clicking on "All Public Notices & Announcements." Application material may also be reviewed at the Borough Permit Center. For additional information, you may contact Mark Whisenhunt, Planner II, at 861-8527. Written comments can be mailed to the MSB Development Services Division, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, AK 99645. You may fax comments to 861-7876 or e-mail to mwhisenhunt@matsugov.us. In order to be eligible to file an appeal from a decision of the Planning Commission, a person must be designated an "interested party". See MSB 15.39.010 for definition of "interested party". The procedures governing appeals to the Board of Adjustment and Appeals are contained in MSB 15.39.010-250, which is available on the Borough homepage: www.matsugov.us, in the Borough Clerk's office, and at various libraries within the borough.

Comments are due on or before September 23, 2016 and will be included in the Planning Commission packet for the Commissioner's review and information. Please be advised that comments received from the public after that date will not be included in the staff report to the Planning Commission.

Publish: September 2, 2016

09-03-16

PUBLIC HEARING

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing concerning the following application for a conditional use permit on Monday, November 7, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Borough Assembly Chambers in Palmer.

A conditional use permit under MSB 17.70 - Regulation of Alcoholic Beverage Uses, has been submitted by Nine Oh Seven, Corporation for the operation of an alcohol beverage dispensary (bar) at the 907 Club, located at 2541 S. Rosalie Court, within Township 17 North, Range 3 West, Section 21, Seward Meridian; Tax ID# 5428000T00A.

The Planning Commission members may submit questions to the Planning Commission Clerk concerning the matter or request for more information from the applicant at the time of the introduction. All questions and requests submitted by the Commission shall be in writing and copies will be provided to the applicant and made available to all interested parties and the public upon request. Answers to questions and additional material requests will be addressed in the staff report for the public hearing.

Commission members may not receive or engage in ex-parte contact with the applicant, other parties interested in the application, or members of the public concerning the application or issues presented in the application.

Application material may be viewed online at www.matsugov.us by clicking on "All Public Notices & Announcements". Application material may also be reviewed in the Borough Permit Center of the Planning and Land Use Department. Written comments can be mailed to the MSB Development Services, 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, AK 99645. You may fax comments to 861-7876 or e-mail to mwhisenhunt@matsugov.us. Comments are due on or before October 18, 2016 and will be included in the Planning Commission packet for the Commissioner's review and information. Please be advised that comments received from the public after that date will not be included in the staff report to the Planning Commission. For additional information please contact Mark Whisenhunt, Planner II, at 861-8527. In order to be eligible to file an appeal for a decision of the Planning Commission, a person must be designated an "interested party". The procedures governing appeals to the Board of Adjustment and Appeals are contained in MSB 15.39.010-350, which is available on the Borough's web site: www.matsugov.us, in the Borough Clerk's office, and at various libraries within the borough.

Publish: September 2, 2016

09-04-16



Vern Halter, Mayor
861-8682
vern.halter@matsugov.us

Jen Sykes, #1
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jmsykesdistrict1@gmail.com

Matthew Beck, #2
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George McKee, #3
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george.mckee@matsugov.us

Steve Colligan, #4
373-1022
stevecolligan@mtaonline.net

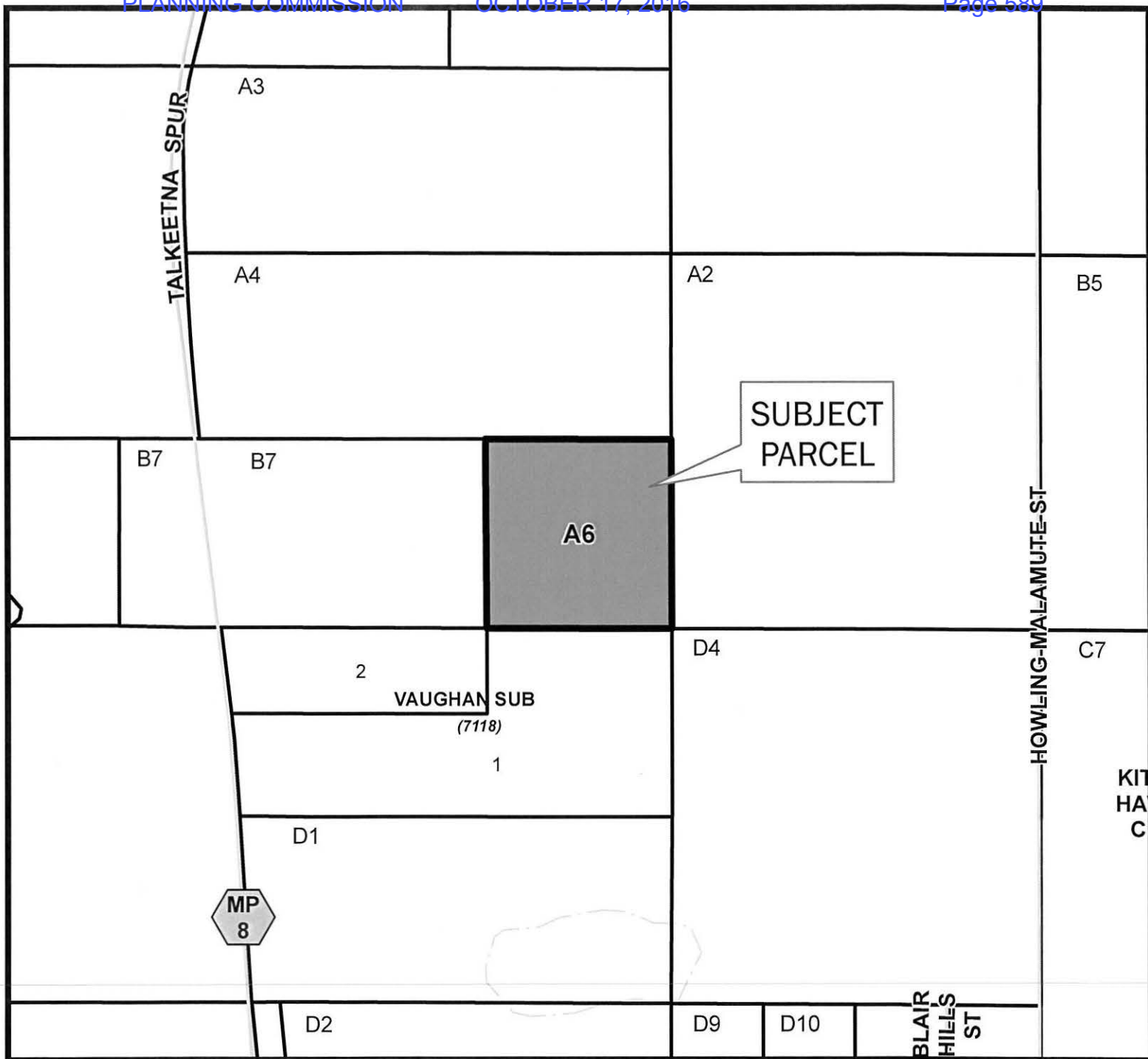
Dan Mayfield, #5
892-7495
dan.mayfield@matsugov.us

Barbara J. Doty, #6
748-0460
barbara.doty@matsugov.us

Randal Kowalski, #7
315-0625
randall_k2@msn.com

To see a complete listing of all boards and commissions, please go to <http://www.matsugov.us/boards> and scroll to the bottom of the page, and click on membership.

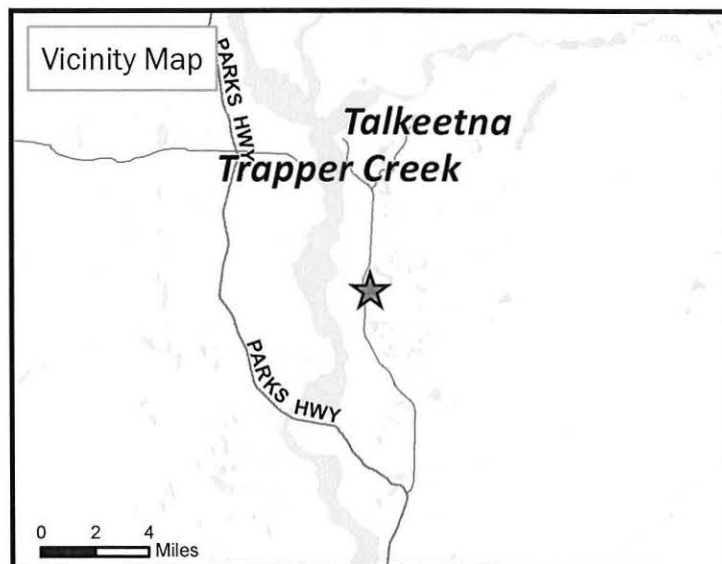
VICINITY MAP



25N04W19A006



This map is solely for informational purposes only. The Borough makes no express or implied warranties with respect to the character, function, or capabilities of the map or the suitability of the map for any particular purpose beyond those originally intended by the Borough. For information regarding the full disclaimer and policies related to acceptable uses of this map, please contact the Matanuska-Susitna Borough GIS Division at 907-861-7801.



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SITE PLAN



AUG 24 2016

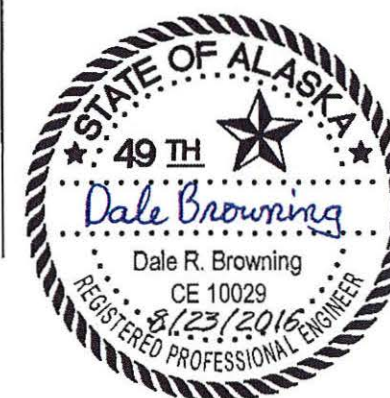
Received

NEW HORIZONS  **TELECOM, INC.**

MTA
THP1 LTE SITE
SITE
PLAN

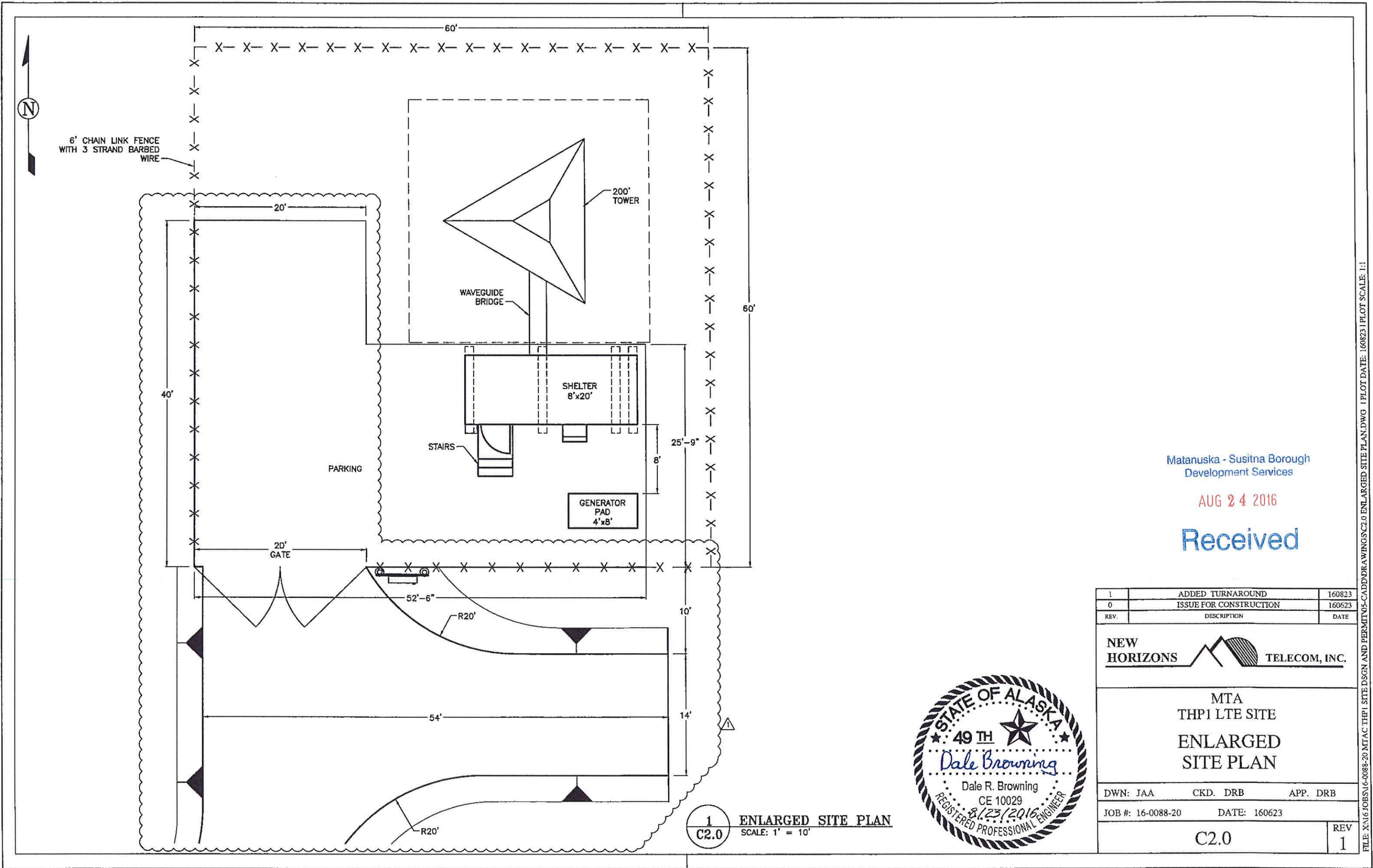
C1.0

REV
1



1 **SITE PLAN**
C1.0 **SCALE: 1"=200'**

[illegible]



Matanuska - Susitna Borough
Development Services

AUG 24 2016

Received

1	ADDED TURNAROUND	160823
0	ISSUE FOR CONSTRUCTION	160623
REV.	DESCRIPTION	DATE
NEW HORIZONS TELECOM, INC.		
MTA THP1 LTE SITE ENLARGED SITE PLAN		
DWN: JAA CKD: DRB APP: DRB		
JOB #: 16-0088-20 DATE: 160623		
C2.0		REV 1

APPLICATION MATERIAL



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Planning and Land Use Department

Development Services Division

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7822 • Fax (907) 861-7876

Email: permitcenter@matsugov.us

THP1

APPLICATION FOR A TALL STRUCTURE – MSB 17.67

Carefully read instructions and applicable borough code. Fill out forms completely. Attach information as needed. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

RECEIVED
AUG 15 2016

Application fee must be attached:

× \$1,000 for **Conditional Use Permit** - > 125 feet in height

\$ 500 for **Administrative Permit** – 85' to 125' in height

\$ 100 for **Network Improvement Permit** – In accordance with MSB 17.67.10

PERMIT CENTER

Prior to the public hearing, the applicant must also pay the mailing and advertising fees associated with the application. Applicants will be provided with a statement of advertising and mailing charges. Payment must be made **prior** to the application presentation before the Borough Planning Commission or Planning Director decision.

Subject Property Township: 25N, Range: 4W, Section: 19, Meridian

MSB Tax Account # 25N04W19A006

SUBDIVISION: None BLOCK(S): LOT(S): A6

STREET ADDRESS: 29625 S Talkeetna Spur

(US Survey, Aliquot Part, Lat. /Long. etc)

Ownership A written authorization by the owner must be attached for an agent or contact person, if the owner is using one for the application. Is authorization attached? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Name of Property Owner

Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Address: 350 E Dahlia Ave

Palmer, AK 99645-6488

Phne: Hm Fax

Wk Cell

E-mail

Name of Agent/ Contact for application

Sherrie Greenshields

Address: 901 Cope Industrial Way

Palmer, Alaska 99645

Phne: Hm 907-761-6000 Fax 907-761-6001

Wk 907-761-6057 Cell 907-315-3201

E-mail Sgreenshields@nhtiusa.com

Special Land Use District (if applicable):

Pre-Application Requirements for New Tall Structures that Require a Conditional Use Permit	
<i>Prior to applying for a conditional use permit for a new tall structure, the applicant shall hold at least one community meeting.</i>	
1. The meeting shall be held at the nearest facility where community council meetings are regularly scheduled. If the facility is not available, the nearest available public facility that is capable of seating a minimum of 20 people shall be utilized.	
2. The meeting shall be held at least 15 calendar days after mailing of the notification.	
3. The meeting shall not start prior to 5:00 p.m. and no later than 7:00 p.m.	
4. Notification of the meeting shall, at a minimum, include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal description and map of the general parcel, or parcels, within the coverage area under consideration for the telecommunication facility. • Description of the proposed development including height, design, lighting, potential access to the site and proposed service. • Date, time, and location of the informational meeting. • Contact name, telephone number, and address of applicant. • Comment form created by the borough that has a comment submittal deadline and provides options for submitting comments. 	
5. At a minimum, the notification area for the meeting shall include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property owners within one-half mile of the parcels under consideration for the proposed tall structure. • The nearest community council and any community council whose boundary is within 1200 feet of the parcels under consideration for the tall structure. 	
<i>A written report summarizing the results of the community meeting shall be prepared that includes the following information:</i>	Attached
1. Dates and locations of all meetings where citizens were invited to discuss the potential applicant's proposal.	X
2. Content, dates mailed, and numbers of mailings, including letters, meeting notices, newsletters and other publications.	X
3. Sign-in sheet(s) used at the meeting, that includes places for names, address, phone numbers and other contact information such as e-mail addresses.	X
4. A list of residents, property owners, and interested parties who have requested in writing that they keep informed of the proposed development through notices, newsletters, or other written materials.	X
5. The number of people who attended meetings.	x
6. Copies of written comments received at the meeting.	x
7. A certificate of mailing identifying all who were notified of the meeting.	x
8. A written summary that addresses the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The substance of the public's written concerns, issues, and problems. • How the applicant has addressed, or intends to address, concerns, issues and problems expressed during the process. • Concerns issues, and problems the applicant has not addressed or does not intend to address and why. 	X

General application requirements for <u>Administrative</u> and <u>Conditional Use Permits</u>	Attached
1. Design drawings for the proposed tall structure, drawn to scale, and certified by a registered engineer or architect.	X
2. Citizen participation report <i>(if applying for a Conditional Use Permit)</i>	x
3. Certified site plan <i>(As defined in MSB 17.125.010)</i>	x
4. Copy of a determination of no hazard to air navigation from the Federal Aviation Administration.	X
5. If breakpoint technology is intended to be utilized, a written statement specifying the height at which the engineered structural weakness will be located.	X

In order to grant a <u>Conditional Use Permit</u> or <u>Administrative Permit</u> the Planning Commission or Planning Director must find that each of the following criteria has been met. Explain the following in detail:	Attached
1. To the extent that is technically feasible and potentially available, the location of the tall structure is such that its negative effects on the visual and scenic resources of all surrounding properties have been minimized.	X
2. Visibility of the tall structure from public parks, trails recognized within adopted MSB plans, and waterbodies has been minimized to the extent that is technically feasible and potentially available.	X
3. The tall structure will not interfere with the approaches to any existing airport or airfield that are identified in the MSB Regional Aviation System Plan or by the Alaska State Aviation System Plan.	X
4. That granting the permit will not be harmful to the public health, safety, convenience, and welfare.	X

Application requirements for a <u>Network Improvement Permit</u>	Attached
1. A description of the proposed modifications to the telecommunication tower, including a description of the height, type, and lighting of the new or modified structure and the existing structure.	
2. A certified site <i>(as defined in MSB 17.125.010)</i> for purposes of setback verification.	
3. Design drawings for the proposed modified or new structure, drawn to scale, and certified by a registered engineer or architect.	

In order to grant a <u>Network Improvement Permit</u> the Planning Director must find that each of the following criteria has been met. Explain the following in detail.	Attached
1. The proposed development conforms to setback requirements of MSB 17.55.	
2. The telecommunication tower being extended was lawfully constructed at the time of application for a Network Improvement Permit.	
3. The proposed modification does not violate permit conditions of any valid permits that have been issued to the existing facility, provided that the condition being violated does not limit height of the structure.	

Operation Standards for New Tall Structures – Conditional Use Permit, Administrative Permit, and Network Improvement Permit	Attached
1. The equipment compound shall meet minimum setback distances from all property lines in accordance with MSB 17.55	X
2. Setbacks shall be determined from the dimensions of the entire lot, even though the tower may be located on lease areas within the lot.	X
3. Adequate vehicle parking shall be provided on the subject property, outside of public use easements and rights-of-way to enable emergency vehicle access. No more than two spaces per provider shall be required.	X
4. Information signs for the purpose of identifying the tower such as the antenna structure registration number required by the Federal Communications Commission, as well as the party responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility shall be visibly posted at the equipment compound.	X
5. If more than 220 volts are necessary for the operation of the facility, warning signs shall be located at the base of the facility and shall display in large, bold, high contrast letters the following: "HIGH VOLTAGE – DANGER".	X
6. A 24-hour emergency contact number shall be visibly posted at the equipment compound.	X
7. A fence or wall not less than six (6) feet in height with a secured gate shall be maintained around the base of the tower.	X

Additional Standards for <u>Wind Energy Conversion Systems</u> (WECS) – In addition to the operations standards for new tall structures, the following standards shall apply to WECS	Attached
1. WECS shall be equipped with an automatic overspeed control device designed to protect the system from sustaining structural failure such as splintered or thrown blades and the overturning or breaking of towers due to an uncontrolled condition brought on by high winds.	
2. WECS shall have a manually operable method that assures the WECS can be brought to a safe condition in high winds. Acceptable methods include mechanical or hydraulic brakes or tailvane deflection systems which turn the rotor out of the wind.	

OWNER'S STATEMENT: I am owner of the following property:

MSB Tax parcel ID #(s) 6461 and,
I hereby apply for approval conditional use permit on that property as described in this application.

I understand all activity must be conducted in compliance with all applicable standards of MSB 17.67
and with all other applicable borough, state or federal laws.

I understand that other rules such as local, state and federal regulations, covenants, plat notes, and deed restrictions may be applicable and other permits or authorization may be required. I understand that the borough may also impose conditions and safeguards designed to protect the public's health, safety and welfare and ensure the compatibility of the use with other adjacent uses.

I understand that it is my responsibility to identify and comply with all applicable rules and conditions, covenants, plat notes, and deed restrictions, including changes that may occur in such requirements.

I understand that this permit and zoning status may transfer to subsequent owners of this land and that it is my responsibility to disclose the requirements of this status to the buyer when I sell the land.

I understand that changes from the approved conditional use permit may require further authorization by the Borough Planning Commission. I understand that failure to provide applicable documentation of compliance with approved requirements, or violation of such requirements will nullify legal status, and may result in penalties.

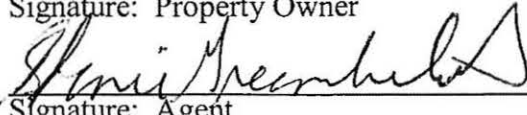
I grant permission for borough staff members to enter onto the property as needed to process this application and monitor compliance. Such access will at a minimum, be allowed when the activity is occurring and, with prior notice, at other times necessary to monitor compliance.

The information submitted in this application is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: Property Owner

Printed Name

Date



Sherrie Greenshield

8/15/2016

Signature: Agent

Printed Name

Date

MSB USE ONLY

Date application submitted:

Date application determined complete: _____

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August 15, 2016

Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Planning and Land Use Department
Development Services Division
350 East Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, AK 99645

RECEIVED
AUG 15 2016
PERMIT CENTER

RE: MSB 17.67 Tall Structures – Site THP1 Conditional Use Application

MTA Communications, LLC (MTAC) is proposing construction of a 205-foot antenna structure (200 foot tower and 5 foot lightning rod) at 29625 S Talkeetna Spur, Alaska on that property fully described as Township 25N Range 4W Section 19 Lot A6.

Construction of this facility will fill a documented significant gap in cellular communications and wireless broadband to the surrounding area. The proposed facility is located on a parcel of land where towers over 125 feet in height are permitted under a conditional use permit. The proposed project is the least intrusive alternative to fill the existing gap in MTAC's coverage in the area.

The attached narrative describes the proposed tower project and responds to elements of MSB 17.67. Please accept this as a part of MTAC's permit application.

Should the Planning Commission have any questions regarding this project, please contact us at the information below.

Sincerely,

Sherrie Greenshields
New Horizons Telecom, Inc.
sgreenshields@nhtiusa.com
907-761-6057

Eric Anderson
MTA Communications
Director of Engineering/Construction/Operations
eanderson@mta-telco.com
907-761-2795

MTA Communications, LLC
1740 S. Chugach Street
Palmer, Alaska 99645

907-745-3211
www.mtasolutions.com

MTA Long Distance, MTA Wireless, MTA Solutions and MTA Vision are registered trade names of MTA Communications, LLC

Long Distance
Wireless
Business Solutions
Internet
Television

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Conditional Use Permit Application

Township 25N Range 4W Section 19 Lot A6

Sherrie Greenshields
New Horizons Telecom, Inc.
sgreenshields@nhtiusa.com
907-761-6057

Eric Anderson
MTA Communications
Director of Engineering/Construction/Operations
eanderson@mta-telco.com
907-761-2795

1.0 Introduction

MTA Communications (MTAC) is an Alaskan owned and operated telecommunications company that provides telecommunication service to the citizens of Alaska.

More than two in five (45.4%) American homes no longer use traditional landline telephone service and instead choose to be wireless only.¹ More than 50% of all adults aged 18-44 and of children under the age of 18 are living in wireless-only households. In Alaska, 31.8% of homes choose to be wireless-only households and another 21.1% are “wireless-mostly.”² The demand for data on provider networks also continues to grow exponentially. In light of this growing reliance on wireless communications and increased data demand; additional infrastructure has become essential to providing reliable service. The demand for access to wireless communications continues to grow exponentially across both Alaska and the continental United States.

As part of MTAC’s efforts to fill network gaps, MTAC is proposing construction of 205-foot antenna structure (200 foot tower with 5 foot lighting rod) at 29625 S Talkeetna Spur. The proposed construction will fill an existing significant gap in cellular and wireless broadband service coverage. The construction of communication towers is permitted pursuant to a Conditional Use Application. The proposed tower location is the least intrusive, reasonably available and technically feasible location for the proposed tower construction.

The below sections present a description of radio frequency science, applicable federal law governing telecommunications, and the decision logic used to meet Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Department requirements set forth in standards MSB 17.67.

1.1 Radio Frequency Description and Evolution

Wireless networks are a complex mesh of radio frequencies that have an exclusive license to operate by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). This mesh of licensed frequencies allows cellular communications to be delivered at a wide variety of scales. The scale that can be covered by the frequencies is directly proportional to the type of spectrum being used and distance between each set of antennas delivering the signals.

Radio Frequency (RF) is a frequency or band of frequencies in the range 10^4 to 10^{11} or 10^{12} Hz at which radio waves are transmitted, and they’re suitable for use in telecommunications. Hertz (Hz) is the unit of RF and it refers to the number of cycles per second. Wavelength is the distance between successive crest of a wave, peaks of the electromagnetic waves. The relationship between RF and Wavelength is as follows: $\text{Wavelength} = C/\text{Frequency}$ where C is the speed of light (3×10^8 m/s). Radio Frequencies are allocated and regulated by the FCC and are a part of the electromagnetic spectrum.

¹ “Wireless Substitution: Early Release of Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, July-December 2014,” U.S. DHHS, CDC National Center for Health Statistics.

² CDC Wireless Substitution: State-level Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey (December 2014)

The FCC has established safety guidelines for Human Exposure to Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields that broadcaster/wireless carriers must adhere to.

A cellular network is a radio network distributed over land through cells where each cell includes a fixed location transceiver known as base station. Multiple cells together provide radio coverage over larger geographical areas.

Mobile communication operators use radio spectrum to provide mobile calling and data services. In order to keep up with a demand that is exponentially growing, the technology continues to evolve. Some Factors that affect wireless network performance

- Physical Obstructions – Wireless signals have difficulty penetrating solid objects such as hills, buildings, foliage, etc. The more obstructions there are between the transmitter and receiver the higher the chances of a poor signal level.
- Network Range and Distance between Devices – The way wireless signal propagates and with obstructions on the way, the further apart the devices are, the weaker the signal becomes. The signal strength decreases, roughly in an inverse cubic relation with respect to the distance between two devices (4Gon Solutions). For example, if the distance between two devices doubles, the signal becomes at least eight times weaker.
- Network Usage and Load – If the number of active users in the network increases due to a special event or something of that nature, the resources required to support them may not be available. This results in reducing network performance by decreased data speeds or reduced accessibility.

1.2 Telecommunications Act of 1996

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was enacted to encourage the rapid deployment of new telecommunications technologies, while also preserving state and local control over zoning matters. *T-Mobile Northeast LLC v. City of Lawrence*, 755 F.Supp.2d 286, 290 (D. Mass. 2010) (internal citations omitted). The Act generally preserves state and local authority over the placement and construction of telecommunication tower facilities. The Act places several limitations on local control. Specifically, the Act dictates that:

- (1) A local government cannot unreasonably discriminate among providers of functionally equivalent services; and
- (2) A local government cannot prohibit or effectively prohibit the provision of personal wireless services; and
- (3) A local government cannot deny or limit an application for the construction of a wireless tower on the basis of the health or environmental effects of radio frequency emissions, as long as the proposed tower complies with FCC requirements for emissions; and
- (4) Any local government decision to deny a request to construct personal wireless facilities must be in writing and supported by substantial evidence.

Since the Act's adoption, federal courts have assessed the application of these limitations and concluded that "a significant gap in service (and thus an effective prohibition of service) exists whenever a provider is prevented from filling a significant gap in *its own* service coverage." *MetroPCS, Inc. v. City & Cnty. of San Francisco*, 400 F.3d 715, 733 (9th Cir. 2005). Essentially, the Act precludes a municipality from restricting the construction of new infrastructure required by a provider to fill a gap in its network, even if coverage is available from other providers

in the area. The fact that coverage is provided by another carrier in the area cannot be relied upon by a local land use commission to deny a permit application for a new tower.

Any decision by a local planning or zoning authority denying a land use permit required to construct a personal wireless services facility must be in writing and supported by substantial evidence. Where a provider has demonstrated a significant gap in its service coverage and proposed the least intrusive means to fill this gap, the burden of proof shifts to the zoning board to demonstrate that the record contains substantial evidence in support of its decision. When a provider has made a prima facie showing that a proposed tower is the least intrusive means of filling a significant gap in service, even if a zoning board's denial is supported by substantial evidence the Commission must also specifically show that there are some potentially available and technologically feasible alternatives for construction. *T-Mobile USA v. City of Anocortes*, 572 F.3d 987, 998 (9th Cir. 2009). The provider must then have an opportunity to dispute the availability and feasibility of the alternatives favored by the locality. *Id.*

2.0 Existing Significant Gap in MTAC Coverage

The area of Mat-Su Borough in the vicinity of the proposed cell site is currently underserved by MTAC for both voice and data coverage, which results in a significant gap in coverage for the MTAC system.

Detailed Propagation maps are included under Exhibit E (Propagation Maps). Four heights for the tower were considered, 120 feet, 150 feet, 180 feet and 200 feet. However, the 120, 150 and 180 foot elevations do not result in full coverage of the significant gaps.

2.1 Site Selection Process

To fill the significant gaps in MTAC's service, MTAC's engineers used computer modeling to determine an idealized design point for tower construction and a surrounding search radius containing properties which, dependent upon topography and other surface interference, could serve as a build location. A potential tower location within the search ring would be ideal to fill the existing significant gap in MTAC's coverage.

MTAC's preference is to co-locate on existing towers wherever possible. There were no existing towers or building co-location sites in the general vicinity.

2.2 Tower and Site Design

Through strategic choices in site design and tower height the proposed construction is designed to fill the significant gap in MTAC's coverage in the least intrusive manner possible. The proposed site is located on a parcel of land which is undeveloped. There are residential lots that border the proposed site.

A detailed site plan for the tower construction is included with this application as Exhibit A. The drawings are certified by a licensed professional engineer demonstrating soundness and conformity with all applicable codes, as well as State and federal law. The tower complex will be surrounded by a six-foot chain link fence. The tower site will be access using a new driveway.

The tower structure is a lattice tower. Site placement allows existing trees to screen the site from adjacent properties. The tower will be galvanized steel and gray in color. Power supply to the site will be provided by a three gang meter base. This will allow three carriers to each have a separate 200amp electrical service for the tower.

2.3 Tower Height

The tower is designed to be the minimum height necessary to assure that the significant gap in MTAC's service coverage can be filled.

The propagation maps are included in Exhibit E (Propagation Maps) depict the proposed tower at heights of 120 feet, 150 feet, 180 feet and 200 feet.

It is MTAC's policy to construct all wireless infrastructures to an engineering standard that allows multiple carriers to locate equipment on the structure. The proposed tower is designed and engineered to accommodate two additional sets of antennas, of equal or lesser specification to MTAC's proposed equipment, yielding the ability to co-locate two additional carriers on the structure. With the inclusion of the MTAC's antennas, the structure allows for a total of three carriers on the tower.

2.4 Tower Illumination

The FAA has determined that marking or lighting is required for this tower location (FAA Determination of No Hazard). The FAA requires a medium intensity dual lighting system. This will consist of a top mounted beacon white LED flashing light by day and red flashing by night along with red side lights at the mid-point height on the tower. Documentation is attached to this application as Exhibit B. The document can also be searched and downloaded from the FAA's website using Aeronautical Study Number 2016-AAL-444-OE.

As a condition of the determination, the structure is to be marked/lighted in accordance with FAA advisory circular 70/7460-1 L, obstruction marking and lighting, a med-dual system.

3.0 Application Criteria Matanuska-Susitna Borough 17.67

As set forth above, MTAC's proposed tower requires a Conditional Use Permit Matanuska-Susitna Borough 17.67. The project will protect the public health, safety, and welfare, will not injure the lawful use with existing neighboring uses.

17.67.050 PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW TALL STRUCTURES THAT REQUIRE A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT.

- (A) Prior to applying for a conditional use permit for a new tall structure, the potential applicant shall hold at least one community meeting:

- (1) The meeting shall be held at the nearest facility where community council

meetings are regularly scheduled. If the facility is not available, the nearest available public facility that is capable of seating a minimum of 20 people shall be utilized;

- (1) The meeting shall be held at least 15 calendar days after mailing of the notification;
 - (2) The meeting shall not start prior to 5 p.m. and no later than 7 p.m.;
 - (3) Notification of the meeting shall, at a minimum, include the following:
 - (a) Legal description and map of the general parcel, or parcels, within the coverage area under consideration for the telecommunication facility;
 - (b) Description of the proposed development including height, design, lighting, potential access to the site, and proposed service;
 - (c) Date, time, and location of informational meeting;
 - (d) Contact name, telephone number, and address of applicant; and
 - (e) Comment form created by the borough that has a comment submittal deadline and provides options for submitting comments.
 - (4) At a minimum, the notification area for the meeting shall include the following:
 - (a) Property owners within one-half mile of the parcels under consideration for the proposed tall structure; and
 - (b) The nearest community council and any community council whose boundary is within 1,200 feet of the parcels under consideration for the tall structure.
- (B) A written report summarizing the results of the community meeting shall be prepared that includes the following information:
- (1) Dates and locations of all meetings where citizens were invited to discuss the potential applicant's proposal;
 - (2) Content, dates mailed, and numbers of mailings, including letters, meeting notices, newsletters, and other publications;
 - (3) Sign-in sheet(s) used at the meeting that includes places for names,

addresses, phone numbers, and other contact information such as email addresses;

- (4) A list of residents, property owners, and interested parties who have requested in writing that they be kept informed of the proposed development through notices, newsletters, or other written materials;
- (5) The number of people who attended meetings;
- (6) Copies of written comments received at the meeting;
- (7) A certificate of mailing identifying all who were notified of the meeting; and
- (8) a written summary that addresses the following:
 - (a) The substance of the public's written concerns, issues, and problems;
 - (b) How the applicant has addressed, or intends to address, concerns, issues, and problems expressed during the process; and
 - (c) Concerns, issues, and problems the applicant has not addressed or does not intend to address and why.

MTAC Response – Please refer to attached Exhibit F (Notification Letter, Mailing List, Meeting Sign-In, and Meeting Summary) and Exhibit G (Summary Page & Written Comments).

17.67.070 GENERAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS.

(A) An application for a conditional use or administrative permit to construct a new tall structure may be initiated by a property owner or the owner's authorized agent and shall include:

- (1) Completed application form provided by the department and signed by the property owner or authorized agent;

MTAC Response – Please find application form attached to this narrative.

- (2) Design drawings for the proposed tall structure, drawn to scale, and certified by a registered engineer or architect;

MTAC Response – Please refer to Exhibit A (Site Document and Design Documents)

- (3) Fee in the amount designated in MSB [17.99](#);

MTAC Response – Fee amount will be paid

- (4) Citizen participation report in accordance with MSB [17.67.050\(B\)](#);

MTAC Response – Please refer to attached Exhibit F (Notification Letter, Mailing List, Meeting Sign-In, and Meeting Summary) and Exhibit G (Summary Page & Written Comments).

- (5) a certified site plan,

MTAC Response – Please refer to Exhibit A (Site Document and Design Documents)

- (6) Copy of a determination of no hazard to air navigation from the Federal Aviation Administration; and

MTAC Response – Please refer to Exhibit B (FAA Determination)

- (7) If breakpoint technology is intended to be utilized, a written statement specifying the height at which the engineered structural weakness will be located.

MTAC Response – breakpoint technology not applicable to this tower application.

17.67.080 STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL OF NEW TALL STRUCTURES.

(A) A permit for a new tall structure may only be approved if it meets the requirements of this section in addition to any other applicable standards required by this chapter.

(B) In granting or denying a permit, the commission or director shall make findings on whether the applicant has demonstrated that:

- (1) To the extent that is technically feasible and potentially available, the location of the tall structure is such that its negative effects on the visual and scenic resources of all surrounding properties have been minimized;

MTAC Response – the site is situated within a lot surrounded by existing trees. The access road is “dog-legged” in so the site is not visible from direct line of view from access road. The residences surrounding the lot have trees that will

help screen the tower from view.

- (2) Visibility of the tall structure from public parks, trails recognized within adopted borough plans, and water bodies has been minimized to the extent that is technically feasible and potentially available;

MTAC Response – the site is situated within a lot surrounded by existing trees. The access road is “dog-legged” in so the site is not visible from direct line of view from access road. The residences surrounding the lot have trees that will help screen the tower from view.

- (3) The tall structure will not interfere with the approaches to any existing airport or airfield that are identified in the borough’s regional aviation system plan or by the Alaska State Aviation System Plan; and

MTAC Response – Please refer to Appendix B (FAA Determination). The site does not interfere with existing airports or airfields. As a condition of the determination, the structure is to be marked/lighted in accordance with FAA advisory circular 70/7460-1 L, obstruction marking and lighting, a med-dual system.

- (4) Granting the permit will not be harmful to the public health, safety, convenience, and welfare.

MTAC Response – the proposed site will not be harmful to the public health, safety, convenience and welfare.

17.67.090 OPERATION STANDARDS FOR NEW TALL STRUCTURES.

- (A) The following setback requirements shall apply to all new telecommunications towers regulated under this chapter:

- (1) The equipment compound shall meet minimum setback distances from all property lines in accordance with MSB 17.55.

MTAC Response – The proposed site conforms to MSB 17.55.

- (2) Minimum setback for the tower base shall be a distance equal to the height of the tower.

MTAC Response – The proposed tower setback is a distance equal to the height of the tower.

- (a) The commission, or director if it is an administrative permit, may reduce the setback to a distance less than the height of the tower, if the applicant

demonstrates there is no risk to public health, safety, or welfare of adjacent property owners.

- (3) Setbacks shall be determined from the dimensions of the entire lot, even though the tower may be located on lease areas within the lot.

MTAC Response – The proposed tower setback is a distance equal to the height of the tower.

- (B) For all tall structures regulated under this chapter, adequate vehicle parking shall be provided on the subject property, outside of public use easements and rights-of-way, to enable emergency vehicle access.

MTAC Response – Refer to Exhibit A (Site Document and Design Documents). The site has adequate vehicle parking on subject property to enable emergency vehicle access.

- (1) No more than two spaces per provider shall be required.
- (C) The following requirements apply to all new and existing telecommunication towers and wind energy conversion systems regulated under this chapter:
- (1) The following signage shall be visibly posted at the equipment compound:

- (a) Informational signs for the purpose of identifying the tower such as the antenna structure registration number required by the Federal Communications Commission, as well as the party responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility;

MTAC Response – MTAC will comply with signage requirements.

- (b) If more than 220 volts are necessary for the operation of the facility, warning signs shall be located at the base of the facility and shall display in large, bold, high contrast letters the following: "HIGH VOLTAGE – DANGER"; and

MTAC Response – MTAC proposed service will be 240 volts. MTAW will comply with signage requirements.

- (c) A 24-hour emergency contact number.

MTAC Response – a 24 hour contact number will be referenced on signage.

- (2) A fence or wall not less than six feet in height with a secured gate shall be maintained around the base of the tower.

MTAC Response – Please refer to Appendix A (Site Document and Design Documents)

4.0 Conclusion

MTAC's Matanuska-Borough network includes a significant gap in coverage in the proposed site vicinity as depicted in attached propagation studies in Exhibit E. After a search of available sites which could meet the technical requirements necessary to fill this coverage gaps, MTAC has identified 29625 S Talkeetna Spur, Alaska on that property fully described as Township 25N Range 4W Section 19 Lot A6 as the location which will allow for construction meeting network requirements. As described in detail in this application, this tower location is the least intrusive and most appropriate option to meet the significant gap in MTAC's coverage, which can only be met through placement of a new tower. Finally, MTAC's proposed tower will affirmatively protect the public health, safety, and welfare by providing cellular and wireless broadband services to a currently underserved area, impacting both area households and residents and transient customers seeking to access this technology from roadways and public spaces in the area. We believe we have exceeded the burden of proof outlined in MSB 17.67. for the requested Conditional Use Permit. Therefore, MTAC respectfully requests that the Matanuska-Susitna Planning Commission grant the Conditional Use Permit.

5.0 Exhibits

Exhibit A: Site Document and Design Documents

Exhibit B: FAA Determination

Exhibit C: Balloon Flight

Exhibit D: Lease Agreement

Exhibit E: Propagation Maps

Exhibit F: Notification Letter, Mailing List, Meeting Sign In, and Meeting Summary

Exhibit G: Summary Page and Written Public Comments

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Mark Whisenhunt

From: Sherrie Greenshields <SGreenshields@nhtiusa.com>
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2016 8:00 AM
To: Mark Whisenhunt
Subject: THP1 and DOT Right of Way Permit Application Status Change Notification
Attachments: ATT00001.htm

Mark,

See below. We don't have a final permit yet from ADOT for THP1. We are following up with ADOT for status. Sherrie

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kim Thibodeaux <KThibodeaux@nhtiusa.com>
Date: October 3, 2016 at 7:48:07 AM AKDT
To: Sherrie Greenshields <SGreenshields@nhtiusa.com>
Cc: Dale Browning <DBrowning@nhtiusa.com>, Leann Krey <LKrey@nhtiusa.com>
Subject: FW: DOT Right of Way Permit Application Status Change Notification

Sherrie,

The last email that I have is the message below dated 9 Sept 2016 where the ADOT change the Driveway Permit status to "In Review". I have not seen a notice from the ADOT where the permit is approved but will have Dale check first things this morning. Note that MTA held back on NHTI for filing for the ADOT driveway permit until 8/29/2016

From: Dale Browning
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2016 3:20 PM
To: Kim Thibodeaux <KThibodeaux@nhtiusa.com>; rode@mtaonline.net; jrowse@mta-telco.com
Subject: Fwd: DOT Right of Way Permit Application Status Change Notification

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: <kevin.vakalis@alaska.gov>
Date: September 9, 2016 at 2:28:36 PM AKDT
To: <drb@nhtiusa.com>
Subject: DOT Right of Way Permit Application Status Change Notification

The status of your Right of Way permit application has changed.

Application ID: 26929

Application Type: Driveway / Approach Road

Location: Talkeetna D/W - 29625 Talkeetna Spur Road (MP 8.2) -

New Status: In Review

Sincerely,

Kevin A Vakalis
(907) 269-0688

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH****Community Development Department**

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7869 • Fax (907) 861-8635

E-mail: lmb@matsugov.us**COMMUNICATION SITE LEASE**

THIS LEASE (the "Lease") is entered into this 21st day of June 2016, by and between:

MATANUSKA SUSITNA BOROUGH (hereinafter "Lessor"), a municipal corporation formed under the laws of the State of Alaska, whose mailing address is 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska 99645;

and

MTA Communications, LLC, a Limited Liability Company (hereinafter "Lessee"); whose mailing address is ATTN: Alisha Naylor, 1740 S Chugach Street, Palmer, Alaska 99645

The parties recite that:

- A. Lessor desires to lease to Lessee, and Lessee desires to lease from Lessor, a parcel of land more specifically described and depicted on Exhibit A attached to and for all purposes made a part of this Lease.
- B. The parties desire to adopt this Lease as a complete and final statement of all of the promises, covenants, terms and conditions in effect and binding between them.
- C. Lessor is entering into this Lease as land owner, exercising its power to manage its own lands under Alaska Statute 29.35.010(8), and the applicable provisions of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Code ("MSB Code") Section 1.10.010(A)(9) and Title 23. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Community Development Department, Land and Resource Management Division is responsible for management of borough-owned real property, timber, and gravel resources including lease origination, management, oversight, and enforcement, pursuant to Sections 23.05.010, 23.05.050, 23.05.070, 23.10.060, and 23.10.180 of MSB Code.

In so acting, Lessor is not waiving, and Lessor is explicitly reserving unto itself, all of its governmental authority, sovereignty and power to enact and enforce laws and regulations governing land use and development, or the conduct of any business or activity, anywhere within the Borough. Nothing in this Lease shall waive or otherwise diminish Lessor's governmental authority, sovereignty and power with respect to leased land or Lessee's use or occupancy of it.

- D. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough cannot, and does not, through this Lease, make any representations, warranties or guarantees as to the future results of any land use permits, applications, or proposals which are governed by Matanuska-Susitna Borough Code. MTA Communications, LLC must obtain a conditional use permit in conjunction with this lease.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and covenants set out below, the parties agree as follows:

Section 1. Premises Leased.

- 1.1 **Leased Premises.** Lessor, for and in consideration of the rents, covenants and conditions hereinafter specified to be paid, performed and observed by Lessee, leases to Lessee, and Lessee leases from Lessor, land situated Talkeetna Spur Road. The leased land is more particularly described and the site depicted on Exhibit A. Within 180 days of lease effective date Lessee will provide the Borough an Amended Exhibit A with reference to the Record of Survey of the leasehold recorded in the Talkeetna Recording District. At that time, the parties will execute an Amendment to incorporate the Amended Exhibit A into this document. The As-Built Amendment will define the actual acreage of the leasehold. The leased land, together with all rights, easements, privileges and appurtenances attaching or belonging to the described land, but subject to the reservation contained in Section 1.2 below, is referred to hereafter as the "Leased Premises."
- 1.2 **Reservation of Minerals and Resources.** All oil, gas, coal, other hydrocarbons, geothermal resources, rock, sand, gravel, peat, timber, and minerals of whatever nature on, in or under the above-described land are excluded from the Leased Premises and reserved to Lessor. Lessor may, nevertheless, grant Lessee a permit to make use of the timber, rock, sand, or gravel found on the Leased Premises in Lessee's development of the Leased Premises, which may require Lessee to obtain any required permit. Lessor has not promised or obligated itself to providing any such permit to Lessee. If Lessor mines and/or extracts any of the reserved minerals or resources, Lessor agrees that the mining and/or extraction shall not interfere with Lessee's business and activities on the Leased Premises or its access to the Leased Premises.

Section 2. Term.

- 2.1 **Lease Term.** This Lease shall be and continue in full force and effect for an initial term of twenty (20) years (the "Initial Term") commencing as of August 2, 2016, and expiring at 11:59 p.m. on August 1, 2036, unless earlier terminated as provided in this Lease.

2.2 Option to Renew. Lessee may apply to renew this Lease for up to two (2) additional periods of up to five (5) years each (the "Renewal Term"). To effectively exercise an option to renew, Lessee must not be in default of any of its obligations at the time of the exercise or at the time of the commencement of any Renewal Term. During the Renewal Term(s), all of the provisions of this Lease shall remain in full force and effect, except that the rent Lessee shall pay to Lessor shall be adjusted as is provided for below.

2.2.1 Unless otherwise agreed in writing by lessor and lessee, lessee will apply for lease renewal no more than 180 days prior to lease expiration and no less than 120 days prior to lease expiration. Lease renewal for periods of 5 years may be approved by the Borough Manager.

Section 3. Use and Occupancy.

3.1 Permitted Use. The non-exclusive use of Premises shall be to construct, install, maintain, repair, operate, and manage a communication site, including but not limited to the construction and maintenance of a driveway, a tower 205 feet in height, structural tower base, communications equipment, and an equipment cabinet.

3.1.1 Collocated Communication Equipment. Lessee is encouraged to cooperate with other companies interested in equipment collocation. It is to be noted that collocation of equipment and/or additional collocated cabinets is subject to application for and receipt of an appropriate land use lease from MSB Land and Resource Management Division for surface cabinet space at the site and requires Development Plans from any and all collocators.

3.2 Quiet Enjoyment. Upon Lessee's timely payment of all of rents and other sums required to be paid by Lessee under this Lease, and upon Lessee's full and faithful observance and performance of all of its obligations contained in this Lease, and so long as such observance and performance continues, Lessee shall peaceably hold and enjoy the Leased Premises during the Term without hindrance or interruption by Lessor or anyone lawfully claiming by, through, or under Lessor.

3.3 Repair and Maintenance. Lessee shall, at Lessee's expense and without notice from Lessor at all times during the Term, keep the Leased Premises and all Improvements now existing or hereafter built on the Leased Premises (including but not limited to exterior building walls, windows, doors, fences, signs, landscaping and yard areas, refuse disposal equipment and facilities, pavement, curbs, gutters, exterior lighting, and drainage facilities), in good order, condition, maintenance, operability, and repair and of a neat, clean, and pleasing appearance reasonably satisfactory to Lessor.

3.4 Compliance with Laws. Lessee, at all times during the Term, at its own expense, and with all due diligence, shall observe and comply with all laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations that are now in effect or that may later be adopted by any governmental authority (including Lessor), and that may be applicable to the Leased Premises or any Improvement on it or any use of it.

3.5 Authorized Representative. Immediately after the execution of this Lease, Lessee shall provide Lessor with the name and contact information (including cell phone number and e-mail address) for Lessee's principal point of contact for Lessee's operations on the Leased Premises. Lessor shall be entitled to directly communicate with the named individual for all matters under this Lease. Lessee shall promptly notify Lessor of any change in the person acting as Lessee's Authorized Representative for the Leased Premises.

3.6 Supervision. Lessee shall maintain reasonable and adequate on-site supervision of the Leased Premises to insure that the terms and conditions of this Lease and all applicable federal, state and borough laws, rules, and regulations governing operations within the Leased Premises are enforced.

3.7 Signage. Lessee shall not place on the Leased Premises any signage that is unrelated to any business Lessee is operating on the Leased Premises. Lessee's signage shall conform to the requirements in 17.25 Talkeetna Special Land Use District, if signage is placed on the Talkeetna Spur Road. No electioneering or campaign signs of any kind shall be placed upon the Leased Premises.

3.8 Utilities. Lessee shall pay for all utility services consumed or used on the Leased Premises.

3.9 Waste and Wrongful Use. Lessee shall not commit or suffer any strip or waste of the Leased Premises, or engage in any unlawful activity, or engage in any unauthorized activity that is unsafe, results in any public or private nuisance thereon, or adversely affects the value, character, or utility of Lessor's surrounding property.

3.10 Setbacks. Lessee shall observe all setback requirements applicable to the Leased Premises and shall not construct or maintain any building or other structure whatever between any road or other specified rights-of-way boundary of the Leased Premises and any setback along such boundary, except for fences or walls approved by Lessor. Lessor reserves the right to make use of, and to grant utility easements and other rights to third parties in, the setback areas of the Leased Premises.

3.11 Inspection and Repair. Lessee shall repair, maintain and make good all conditions required under the provisions of this Lease, permit requirements and applicable laws within a time frame provided for curing a default under the terms of this Lease. In the event of an emergency, Lessor's notice may be verbally given and followed after-the-fact by written notice. If Lessee refuses or neglects to provide reasonable and necessary repairs or maintenance for the Leased Premises as required under the terms of this Lease to the reasonable satisfaction of Lessor after written demand, then Lessor, without prejudice to any other right or remedy it has under this Lease or otherwise, may perform such reasonable and necessary maintenance work or make such repairs without liability to Lessee for any loss or damage that may accrue to Lessee's merchandise or other property or Lessee's business by reason thereof. Upon completion of any such repair or maintenance, and no later than thirty (30) days after presentation of an invoice therefore, Lessee shall pay as additional rent Lessor's reasonable costs for making such necessary repairs or performing such maintenance, plus fifteen percent (15%) of the repair cost to cover Lessor's overhead.

3.11.1 Condition of Premises. Lessee has had an opportunity to inspect Premises and enters into this lease solely in reliance on lessee's own examination and not by reason of any representation by the Borough. Lessee accepts the Premises in present condition "AS IS WHERE IS". No reliance shall be placed on any opinion, material, or information provided by or through Borough, and Lessee does so at its own risk, cost, and expense.

Section 4. Rent.

Rent for the initial five years of the lease has been negotiated, using the assessed value of \$380 per acre/per month for Parcel 1 and \$324 per acre/per month for Parcel 2, for a fair market value rental rate of \$704 per month.

4.1 Rent. Rent may be based on a combination of rent for the land and rent for any other collocated authorized users (collectively referred to as "Authorized Users"). Prior to collocation of ground or air structures by another company as an Authorized User they shall obtain a land use lease through Land and Resource Management Division, for cabinet or other structure location.

4.1.1.1 Land Rent. Based on the site plan and acreage, Lessee shall pay in advance the land rent of \$250.00 a month during the time necessary to obtain a Tall Tower Conditional Use Permit and for the construction phase. The construction phase includes the access driveway and entire parcel of the tower site. Upon conclusion of construction, Lessee will obtain and record, at Lessee's cost, a Record of Survey for the communication tower site and driveway with a separate acreage shown for the tower site and the driveway.

4.1.1.1.1 Starting in lease year six, and each year thereafter, rent will be increased by 2.5% or CPI, Anchorage, whichever is higher, each July 1.

4.2 Taxes. Lessee shall pay all taxes imposed by MSB on Premises and improvements thereon or any other taxes relating to its operations during the term of the Lease.

4.3 Assessments. Lessee shall pay its pro rata share of assessments charged against Premises. Borough will send a written notice with a detailed explanation of any assessments pertaining to Premises to Lessee. Lessee shall pay assessment within thirty (30) days of receipt of written notice from Borough.

4.4 Failure to Pay. If Borough must pay any tax, assessment, penalty, or interest because of the failure of Lessee to pay such taxes, assessments, penalties, or interest, such obligations shall be considered a debt to Borough.

4.5 Late Charge. In the event Lessee fails to make any payment of rent or any other payments due hereunder upon the date due, Borough shall be entitled to collect from Lessee a late charge equal to six percent (6%) of the amount of the delinquent payment or \$50.00, whichever is greater.

4.6 Interest Charge. Failure to pay rent or any other payments due under the Lease on the date due shall be subject to interest at the rate of 10.5% per annum.

Section 5. Special Requirements.

5.1 Electrical Power. Lessee shall pay for all electric power and other charges or expenses incurred for Premises to supply the electric power.

5.2 Compliance with Laws. Lessee shall conform with all local, state, and federal applicable laws and regulations of public authority affecting Premises and the use thereon and assume, at Lessee's sole expense, any costs of such compliance including any fines or penalties. Lessee shall obtain all federal, state, and local permits and licenses necessary to operate under this lease, including but not limited to compliance with Federal Communication Commission (FCC) requirements, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements, Title 47 CFR, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), ANSI/NFPA 70.

5.3 Minerals and Valuable Materials. Lessee shall not remove or sell valuable materials, held by the Borough, including but not limited to gravel and timber without written consent of Borough.

5.3.1 Lessee will reimburse MSB for any gravel from the Premises utilized in construction of the access road or construction site at FMV. Authorization for same may be obtained by providing an application to Resource Specialist, Land and Resource Management Division, (907) 861-8572.

5.3.2 Lessee will make timber removed for construction that is \geq 4-inch diameter at breast height (DBH) available to the Lessor through notification of the Resource Manager, Land and Resource Management Division, (907) 861-7863.

5.4 Fire. To the extent possible, Lessee shall protect Premises from fire and shall report any fires on Premises to Borough, by phone, as soon as possible, at the phone number shown on the signature page.

5.5 FCC License. Lessee shall operate its equipment and units in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission or Lessee's license authority. Within thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of operation and any subsequent collocation, Lessee shall furnish Borough with a copy of its current license and subsequent renewal license to: Matanuska Susitna Borough, Land and Resource Management Division, MSB007139, 350 East Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska, 99645.

5.6 Hazardous, Toxic, or Harmful Substances.

5.6.1 Deleterious Material. Lessee shall not make, or suffer to be made, any filling in of Premises or any deposit of rock, earth, ballast, refuse, garbage, waste matter, chemical,

biological, or other wastes, hydrocarbons, any other pollutants, or other matter within or upon Premises, except as approved in writing by Borough. If Lessee fails to remove all non-approved fill material, refuse, garbage, wastes, or any other of the above materials from Premises, Lessee agrees that Borough may, but is not obligated to, remove such materials and charge Permittee for the cost of removal and disposal.

5.6.2 Hazardous, Toxic, or Harmful Substances. For the purposes of this Lease, the term "Hazardous Material" means any hazardous or toxic substances, material, or waste, including but not limited to oil, petroleum products and byproducts, gasoline, diesel fuel, stove oil, kerosene, and other hydrocarbons; those substances, materials and wastes listed in U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials table (49 CFR Part 172.101) or by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as hazardous substances (40 CFR Part 302), and amendments thereto; all materials the release of which must be reported under Title 46 of Alaska Statutes; and any such other substance, materials, and wastes that are or become regulated under any applicable local, state, or federal law.

5.6.2.1 Lessee or any authorized users shall not keep on or about Premises, any substances now or hereinafter designated as or containing components now or hereinafter designated as hazardous, toxic, dangerous, or harmful (and/or which are subject to regulation as hazardous, toxic, dangerous, or harmful) by any federal, state, or local law, regulation, statute, or ordinance (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Hazardous Substances") unless such are necessary to carry out Lessee's permitted use under Section 3 and unless Lessee fully complies with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, statutes, and ordinances now in existence or as subsequently enacted or amended. Any substances designated as hazardous, toxic, dangerous, or harmful that are necessary to carry out Lessee's permitted use will be reported to Lessor, in writing, and copies of required permits will be provided to Lessor.

5.6.2.2 Lessee shall immediately notify Borough of any of the following:

5.6.2.2.1 all spills or re-permits of any Hazardous Substance in, on, or adjacent to Premises,

5.6.2.2.2 all failures to comply with any federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance, as now enacted or as subsequently enacted or amended,

5.6.2.2.3 all inspections of Premises by, or any correspondence, orders, citations, or notifications from any regulatory entity concerning Hazardous Substances affecting Premises,

5.6.2.2.4 all regulatory orders or fines, or all response or interim cleanup actions taken by or proposed to be taken by any government entity or private party concerning Premises.

5.6.2.2.5 on request, Lessee shall provide copies to Borough of any and all correspondence, pleadings, and/or reports received by or required of Lessee or issued or written by Lessee or on Lessee's behalf with respect to the use, presence, transportation, or generation of Hazardous Substances in, on, about, or adjacent to Premises.

5.6.2.3 Lessee shall be fully and completely liable to Borough, and, to the full extent permitted by law, shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Lessor and its elected and appointed officials, employees, officers, and agents with respect to any and all damages, costs, fees (including attorney's fees and costs), penalties (civil and criminal), and cleanup costs assessed against or imposed as a result of Lessee or authorized user's use, disposal, transportation, generation, and/or sale of Hazardous Substances or that of Lessee's employees, agents, assigns, contractors, subcontractors, licensees, or invitees.

5.7 Non-Ionizing Electromagnetic Radiation (NIER). Lessee shall comply with standards or requirements in effect for non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation levels as established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or other governing agencies.

5.8 Weed Control. Weed control shall be approved in writing by Borough prior to beginning such activities. No aerial spraying without prior approval by Borough is allowed.

5.9 Survey. Lessee shall submit a recorded Record of Survey for the Premises within thirty (30) days of completion of the construction phase, stamped by a licensed surveyor or engineer.

Section 6. Assignment, Insurance, and Indemnity

6.1 Assignment. Lessee shall not hypothecate, mortgage, assign, subpermit, transfer, or otherwise alienate this lease ("Assignment"), or any interest therein, without the prior written consent of Borough, which consent shall be at the sole discretion of Borough; however, the Borough will not unduly withhold consent. The consent of Borough to any one assignment shall not constitute a waiver of Borough's right to consent to subsequent assignments, nor shall consent of Borough to any one assignment relieve any party previously liable as Lessee from any obligations under this Lease. The acceptance by Borough of the payment of rent following an assignment shall not constitute consent to any assignment and Borough's consent shall be evidenced only in writing.

Name Change. If during the term of this Agreement Lessee changes its name, Lessee shall provide Borough with documentation legally supporting the name change within 60 days of the effective date of the change. Lessee may contact Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Land and Resource Management Division for a list of acceptable documentation.

6.2 Lessee's Assumption of Liability, and Liability and Casualty Insurance

6.2.1 Assumption of Liability. Borough shall have no responsibility with respect to any aspect of Premises or any activity conducted thereon from and after the effective date of the lease. Lessee shall indemnify and save Borough harmless from any and all liability, damage, expense (including attorney fees and costs), cause of action, suits, claims, or judgments by any reason whatsoever caused or arising out of the use, occupation, and control of Premises by Lessee, Collocated Lessees, invitees, agents, employees, licensees, or permittees except as may arise solely out of the willful act or gross negligence of Borough or Borough's officers, agents, or employees.

6.2.2 Evidence of Insurance. Lessee must furnish evidence of insurance in the form of a Certificate of Insurance satisfactory to Borough, executed by a duly authorized representative of each insurer showing compliance with the insurance requirements set forth below. The Certificate of Insurance must reference the Matanuska Susitna Borough as a certificate holder and shall contain the MSB Agreement number. Before implementing this Agreement, Lessee must provide proof of coverage.

6.2.3 Cancellation. The Certificate(s) of Insurance must provide 45 days written notice to Borough before the cancellation, non-renewal, or material change of any insurance coverage included therein. Notices must be sent to Borough via certified mail.

6.2.4 Minimum Coverage Requirements. The Minimum Coverage Requirements set forth the minimum limits of insurance Lessee must purchase to secure a contract with the Borough. These limits may not be sufficient to cover all liability losses and related claim settlement expenses. Purchase of these minimum limits of coverage does not relieve Lessee from liability for losses and settlement expenses greater than these amounts.

During the term of this Agreement, Lessee must purchase and maintain, and shall require all authorized collocated lessees or independent contractors to maintain while performing work on Premises, the minimum insurance coverages and limits in Exhibit C, which may be increased by Borough at its sole discretion:

The Lessee waives all rights against the Borough for the recovery of damages to the extent they are covered by business auto liability or commercial umbrella liability insurance.

6.3 Self-Insurance. In lieu of the coverages required under Exhibit B Insurance "Minimum Coverage Requirements," Borough at its sole discretion, may accept evidence of self-insurance by Lessee, provided Lessee provides the following:

6.3.1 Lessee shall provide a statement by a CPA or actuary; satisfactory to the Borough that demonstrates Lessee's financial condition is satisfactory to self-insure any of the required insurance coverages.

6.3.2 Borough may require Lessee to provide the above yearly to ensure Lessee's continuing ability to self-insure. If at any time Lessee does not satisfy the self-insurance

requirement, Lessee shall immediately purchase insurance as set forth under "Minimum Coverage Requirements".

6.3.4 Aside from any "self-insurance" guaranteed by the Lessee, it is the responsibility of Lessee to ensure that its contractors, agents, employees, guests, invitees, Collocated Authorized Users, or affiliates in, on, under, or above Premises, any adjoining property, or any other property subject to use by Lessee in conjunction with its use of Premises, meet minimum insurance requirements described above.

Section 7. Indemnity

7.1 Lessee assumes all responsibility, risk, and liability for its activities and use of or contact with the Leasehold. The Lessee shall defend, indemnify, save, and hold harmless the Borough, its elected and appointed officials and officers, agents, and employees, from and against any and all demands, causes of action (whether in the nature of an action for damages, indemnity, contribution, government cost recovery, hazardous materials or otherwise), fines, judgments, suits, claims, actions, proceedings, losses, costs (including full reasonable attorney's fees and costs), expenses, charges, forfeitures, liens, liabilities, settlements, penalties, and damages of any kind or nature whatsoever, including, but not limited to those alleging personal injury, wrongful death, nuisance property damage, economic loss, damages, violation of statutes, ordinances, constitutions, or other laws, rules, or regulations, contractual claims, environmental contamination (including any disposal, release, spill or discharge or any threatened disposal, release, spill, or discharge of, or contamination by hazardous materials), and environmental noncompliance (including the Lessee's failure to provide all information, make all submissions, and take all steps required by the authority under the environmental laws or any other law concerning any spill, discharge, or contamination), or any other kind of loss, tangible or intangible, sustained by any person, or property arising out of, in connection with, directly or indirectly from, or otherwise incident to Lessee's, Lessee's officers, agents, employees, partners, attorneys, suppliers, and subcontractors' Leasehold activities or performance related to this lease in any way whatsoever or use of or contact with the Leasehold, except to the extent the sole legal cause of injury or damage is the negligence or willful misconduct of the Lessor or anyone acting on the Lessor's behalf. This defense and indemnification responsibility includes claims alleging acts or omission by the Lessor or its agents which are said to have contributed to the losses, failure, violations, or damage. However, the Lessee shall not be responsible for any damages or claim arising from the sole negligence or willful misconduct of the Lessor, its agents, or employees.

7.1.1 The obligations of the Lessee to indemnify the Lessor under the terms of this lease shall survive transfer, assignment, or other disposition of an interest in this lease as well as the expiration, forfeiture, relinquishment, abandonment, or other termination of this lease.

7.1.2 The Lessee shall name the Lessor as an additional insured on all insurance policies obtained and maintained by the Lessee. Any insurance purchased by the Lessee under this section will not be construed to limit in any way the Lessee's liabilities or responsibilities under this lease.

7.2 If any portion of this clause is voided by law or a court of competent jurisdiction the remainder of the clause shall remain enforceable.

Section 8. Default and Termination.

8.1 Breach by Lessee. In the event of any breach of any provision of this Lease by Lessee, the breach, whether material or not, shall be deemed a default entitling Borough to cancel this Lease and seek any other remedies set forth in this Lease or otherwise available at law or equity, after Borough has delivered to Lessee notice of the breach and a demand that the same be remedied immediately. Lessee shall not be in default if the breach pertains to the payment of money and Lessee cures the breach within twenty (20) days of receipt of the notice, or if the breach pertains to a matter other than the payment of any monies due under this lease, and Lessee promptly commences to cure the breach and cures the breach within forty-five (45) days after receipt of the notice.

8.2 Re-entry. In the event of any default by Lessee, Borough shall have the right, with or without canceling the Lease, to re-enter the Premises and remove all persons and property from Premises and take whatever actions may be necessary or advisable to relet, protect or preserve the Premises. Borough shall not be responsible for any damages or losses suffered by Lessee as a result of such re-entry, removal, storage, or other disposition, and no such action shall be construed as an election to terminate this Lease unless a written notice of termination is given to Lessee.

8.3 Termination of Agreements. Borough may terminate this lease for default by Lessee and subject to any non-disturbance and attornment agreements, if any, Borough shall have a right to terminate any and all subpermits, licenses, concessions, or other arrangement for possession affecting Premises.

8.4 Right to Cure. If Lessee fails to perform any undertaking or promise contained herein, Borough shall have the right but not the obligation to make such performance thirty (30) days after expiration of the notice to cure defaults stated above. Borough's expenditures to correct Lessee's failure to perform shall be reimbursed by Lessee.

8.5 Remedies Cumulative. The specified remedies to which Borough or Lessee may resort under the terms of this permit are cumulative and are not intended to be exclusive of any other remedies or means of redress to which Borough or Lessee may lawfully be entitled in case of any breach or threatened breach by Borough or Lessee of any provision of this permit.

8.6 Insolvency. If a receiver or trustee is appointed to take possession of all or substantially all of the assets of Lessee; or if any action is taken or suffered by Lessee pursuant to an insolvency, bankruptcy or reorganization act; or if Lessee makes a general assignment for the benefit of its creditors; and if such appointment, action or assignment continues for a period of thirty (30) days, it shall, at Borough's option, constitute a material breach by Lessee.

8.7 Termination Upon Notice. Lessor or Lessee may terminate this agreement for any reason or

for no reason upon 180 days prior written notice.

Section 9. Access and Driveway Maintenance.

9.1 Access. Provisions for access to Premises are as follows:

9.1.1 No Access. Access to this site will be from Talkeetna Spur Road. Lessee is solely responsible for constructing legal driveway access to Premises. All driveway construction will be in compliance with current Matanuska Susitna Borough road construction standards. Lessee is responsible for obtaining any necessary permits for driveway construction. Such access must contain a provision that entitles Borough to use the access as a licensee to the extent necessary to administer this lease.

9.1.2 Restricting Access. Lessee will, at its sole expense, restrict public access to the Premises and Tower by construction of at least a 6-foot chain link gated fence around the cell tower site. Access to borough property and tower site property outside the fence will be limited by a locked, gated driveway.

9.2 Driveway Repair/Maintenance. Lessee shall repair or cause to be repaired at its sole cost and expense that damage to said driveway.

9.3 Improvements. Lessee shall construct no improvements to roads where access has been provided by Borough without the prior written consent of Borough, which shall not be unreasonably withheld. Unless Borough agrees to share in the cost of the improvement in writing, the improvements shall be at the sole cost of the improver.

9.4 Insurance. The provisions under Section 6 – Assignment, Insurance, and Indemnity- shall apply to Lessee's use of roads or driveways authorized herein.

9.5 Time Restrictions. Road or driveway maintenance shall take place after June 15 and prior to October 15 of each year. Lessee shall provide Borough with a driveway or road (for any borough roads involved) maintenance plan to be accepted by Borough prior to June 1 of each year. MTA Communications, LLC plans to use snowmachines for winter access, as needed.

Section 10. Improvements.

10.1 Site Plan. Lessee has submitted and Borough has accepted a site plan, which is attached as Exhibit C. Lessee shall not construct any improvement unless such improvements are authorized in an approved site plan. The plan shall not be changed without prior written acceptance by Borough.

10.2 Utilities. Prior to excavation, clearing, or construction, Lessee will employ a utility locator service, at no cost to Borough, to check the permit area for buried utilities.

10.3 Unauthorized Improvements. All improvements made on Premises without the written

consent of Borough are unauthorized and shall, at the option of Borough, be removed by Lessee, be removed by Borough at the cost to Lessee, or become the property of Borough.

10.4 Maintenance and Repair of Improvements. Lessee shall maintain and repair all improvements owned by Lessee, at its own cost.

10.5 Removal of Improvements. Lessee shall remove all Lessee owned improvements, including fixtures, from Premises within sixty (60) days from the Termination Date unless otherwise provided herein. In the event Borough authorizes Lessee owned improvements to remain past the sixty-day period, Lessee shall pay to Borough the contract rent then in effect from the Termination Date until the improvements are removed. If Lessee fails to remove the improvements at the end of the sixty day period where no extension has been granted or at the end of such other period authorized by Borough, Lessee shall be in trespass, and such improvements shall be deemed unauthorized improvements subject to disposition as set forth in Section 9.3.

10.6 As-Built Drawing. Within 30 days after the completion of construction, Lessee shall provide Borough with an 8-1/2 x 11 inch as-built drawing of the site stamped by a licensed surveyor or engineer. As-built drawing must establish the location and dimensions of all improvements constructed or installed, including tower, tower footings, surface structures (cabinets), fences, and utilities, and must provide bearings and distances to an established survey point in a form consistent with generally accepted professional standards and any special survey instructions issued. This As-Built is in addition to the required Record of Survey for the site.

Section 11. Miscellaneous.

11.1 No Partnership. Borough is not a partner nor a joint venturer with Lessee in connection with the business carried on under this permit and shall have no obligation with respect to Lessee's debts or other liabilities.

11.2 Non-Waiver. Waiver by either party of strict performance or any provisions of this permit shall not be a waiver of nor prejudice the party's right to require strict performance of the same provision in the future or of any other provision.

11.3 Venue and Choice of Law. Any dispute arising out of this Lease shall be governed by the laws of the State of Alaska. Venue for resolving such disputes shall be in State of Alaska, Third Judicial District at Palmer and not elsewhere.

11.4 Interpretation and Numbering. This lease has been submitted to the scrutiny of all parties hereto and their counsel if desired, and shall be given a fair and reasonable interpretation in accordance with the words hereof, without consideration or weight being given to its having been drafted by any party hereto or its counsel. Section numbers or titles are not to be considered in interpreting this permit.

11.5 Notices.

11.5.1 Any notice given under this lease shall be deemed received when delivered by hand or three (3) days after deposit in the United States mail with proper first class postage affixed addressed to the parties authorized representatives.

11.5.2 Changes of address may be given in accordance with this section. Lessee shall notify Borough within seven (7) calendar days of any change of address, business name, contact person's name or other changes that may affect the permit.

11.6 Liens. Lessee shall not suffer nor permit any lien to be filed against Lessee's interest in Premises or any improvement thereon by reason of work, labor, services or materials performed or supplied to Lessee or anyone holding Premises or any part thereof under the lease. If any such lien is filed against Lessee's interest or any improvements thereon, Lessee shall cause the same to be discharged of record within thirty (30) days after the date of filing the same unless other arrangements are authorized in writing by Borough. Lessee shall indemnify Borough for any costs, damages or expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred as a result of the filing of such liens or in obtaining their discharge whether such costs, damages or expenses were incurred prior or subsequent to permit termination.

11.7 Force Majeure. Borough's or Lessee's failure to perform any of its obligations under this lease shall be excused if due to causes beyond its control and without the fault or negligence of Borough or Lessee, including but not restricted to acts of God, acts of the public enemy, vandalism, fires, lightning, floods, epidemics or labor strikes.

11.8 Preservation of Markers. Any legal land subdivision survey corners, reference points or monuments are to be preserved. If such are destroyed or disturbed by Lessee, Lessee shall re-establish them by a licensed land surveyor in accordance with U. S. General Land Office standards at their own expense. Corners, reference points, or monuments that must necessarily be disturbed or destroyed in the process of carrying out the operations allowed by this lease must be adequately referenced and/or replaced. Such references must be approved by Borough prior to removal of said corners, reference points, or monuments.

11.9 Condemnation. If all of Premises is taken by any public authority under the power of eminent domain, this lease shall terminate as of the date possession was taken by said public authority pursuant to such condemnation. If any part of Premises is so taken and, in the opinion of either Borough or Lessee, it is not economically feasible to continue this lease in effect, either party may terminate this lease. Such termination by either party shall be made by notice to the other given not later than thirty (30) days after possession is so taken, the termination to be effective as of the later of thirty (30) days after said notice or the date possession is taken. If part of Premises is so taken and neither Borough nor Lessee elects to terminate this lease, or until termination is effective, as the case may be, the rental shall be abated in the same proportion as the portion of Premises so taken bears to the whole of Premises. All damages awarded for the taking or damaging of all or any part of Premises, or Borough-owned improvements thereon, shall belong to and become the property of Borough and Lessee hereby assigns to Borough any and all claims to such award. However,

Borough shall not claim any interest in or to personal property or authorized improvements belonging to Lessee.

11.10 Discriminatory Acts Prohibited. Lessee in its use or occupancy of the Leased Premises, shall not discriminate against any person or class of persons by reason of sex, race, color, creed, or national origin and shall comply with all federal regulations and laws in regard to discrimination.

11.11 Recordation of Lease. This Lease shall be recorded, along with all Exhibits and attachments therefrom, and which recording expense shall be borne by the Lessee.

11.12 Proprietary Information/Public Disclosure. Materials or information submitted as required in this Agreement shall become public records within the meaning MSB 1.50.030 and A.S. 40.25.110.

Any submitted materials or information that the Lessee claims as exempt from disclosure under the provisions of MSB 1.50.040 and A.S. 40.25.110 must be clearly designated. The page must be identified and the particular exemption from disclosure upon which the Lessee will rely upon in making the claim for exemption must be identified. Making the entire submitted materials or information exempt from disclosure is not acceptable unless warranted.

The Borough will consider a Lessee's request for documents to be exempt from disclosure; however, the Borough will make an independent decision on the applicability of any claimed exemption. If a public records request is made regarding materials that the Lessee has requested be exempt, the affected Lessee will be given notice of the request and allowed to seek a court injunction against the requested disclosure prior to the Borough fulfilling the public records request.

Section 12. Exhibits. This Lease is subject to the terms and conditions of exhibits referenced herein, which are attached hereto and by this reference, made a part hereof.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A	Legal Description
Exhibit B	Driveway and Site
Exhibit C	Insurance
Exhibit D	Record of Survey to Amend Exhibit A

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Lessor and Lessee have duly executed and acknowledged this Lease for on the dates indicated below.

MATANUSKA SUSITNA BOROUGH



John Moosey
Borough Manager

STATE OF ALASKA)
)ss.
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 11th day of August, 2016, by John Moosey, the Manager of MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH, on behalf of the municipal corporation.




Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: April 20, 2020

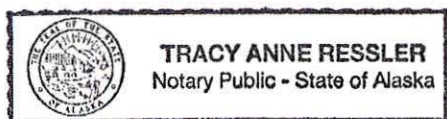
MTA COMMUNICATIONS, LLC




ERIC ANDERSON
DIRECTOR, MTA COMMUNICATIONS LLC

STATE OF ALASKA)
)ss.
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 11 day of August 2016, by Eric Anderson, the authorized representative of MTA Communications, LLC, on behalf of the limited liability company.




Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 3-23-19

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EXHIBIT A

The Leased Premises are legally described as follows:

Parcel 1:

Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Seward Meridian

Section 19: SE1/4SE1/4NW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4NE1/4.

Containing 20 acres, more or less,

According to the official U.S. Survey Plat of a portion of Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Seward Meridian, examined and approved by the U.S. Surveyor General's Office in Juneau, Alaska on January 15, 1919.; and

Parcel 2:

Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Seward Meridian

Section 19: SW1/4SW1/4NE1/4

Containing 10 acres, more or less,

According to the official U.S. Survey Plat of a portion of Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Seward Meridian, examined and approved by the U.S. Surveyor General's Office in Juneau, Alaska on January 15, 1919.

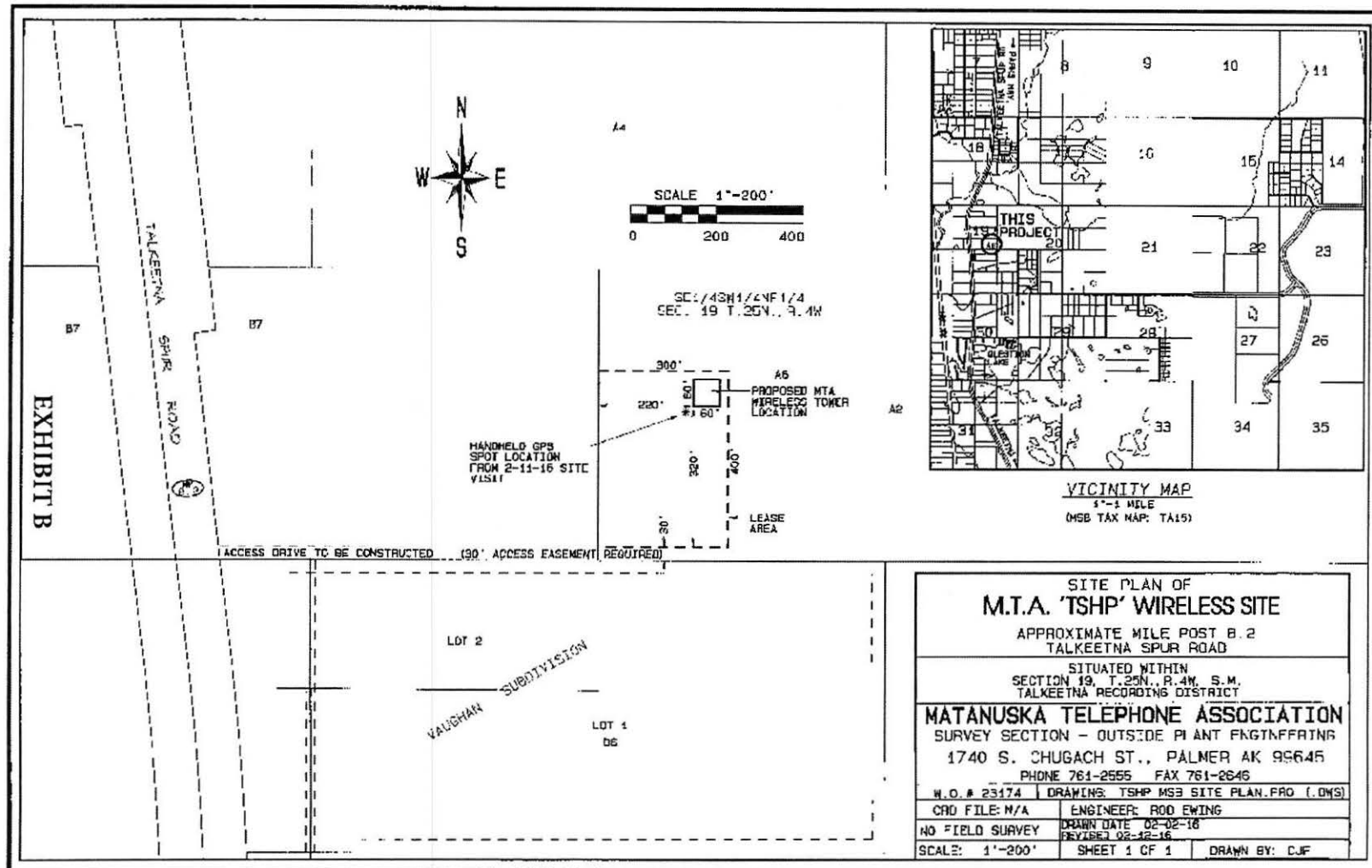


EXHIBIT C

INSURANCE
(Lessee/Permittee/Manager)

It is specifically agreed between the parties executing this Agreement that it is not intended by any of the provisions of the Agreement to create in the public or any member thereof a third party benefit hereunder, or to authorize anyone not a party to this Agreement to maintain a suit for personal injuries or property damage pursuant to the terms or provisions of this Agreement.

It is highly recommended that the Lessee/Permittee/Manager confer with their respective insurance companies or brokers to determine if their insurance program complies with the Lessor's Insurance requirements.

The Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall procure and maintain the following insurance:

A. Minimum Scope of Insurance

Coverage shall be at least as broad as:

1. Insurance Services office form number CG 0001 (Edition 10/01) covering Commercial General Liability.
2. Insurance Services office form number CA 0001 (Edition 10/99) covering Automobile Liability, symbol 1 "any auto."
3. Worker's Compensation insurance as required by the State of Alaska and Employers Liability Insurance.
4. Builders risk for any leasehold development to cover:
 - a. building materials (installed and uninstalled) and supplies on the job site, in storage, and in transit;
 - b. temporary structures, foundations, and excavation sites;
 - c. equipment, scaffolding, and fences;
 - d. theft, flood, sinkholes, fire, earthquakes, and other weather-related damage; and
 - e. design error, faulty workmanship, changes in laws;
5. Protection and Indemnity Insurance if operating a vessel or engaged in any activities creating liability traditionally covered by maritime insurance, if applicable. Insurance shall cover crew and third-party liability and coverage shall not be less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.
6. Environmental/Pollution Liability insurance to cover any activities arising out of the Lessee's operations.

B. Minimum Limits of Insurance

Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall maintain limits no less than:

1. General Liability:

\$1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, property damage, personal injury and advertising injury. The general aggregate limit shall be \$1,000,000 minimum. The general aggregate limits shall apply separately to each project.

General liability insurance shall be maintained in effect throughout the term of the Agreement.

If the general liability insurance is written on a claim made form, the Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall provide insurance for a period of two years after termination or expiration of this Agreement. The policy(s) shall evidence a retroactive date, no later than the beginning of this Agreement.

2. Auto Liability:

\$1,000,000 combined single limit per accident for bodily injury and property damage.

3. Worker's Compensation and Employers Liability:

Worker's Compensation shall be statutory as required by the State of Alaska. Employer's liability shall be endorsed to the following minimum limits:

Bodily injury by Accident -	\$100,000 each accident
Bodily injury by Disease -	\$100,000 each employee
Bodily injury by Disease -	\$500,000 policy limit

4. Builders risk: Minimum would be determined by cost of project. This insurance may be provided by the Lessee or Lessee's contractor.

5. Protection and Indemnity (P&I),
If applicable, minimum \$1,000,000.

6. Environmental/Pollution Liability.

A policy providing coverage for claims involving transport, remediation, storage, disposal, or other handling of hazardous materials or waste arising out of the Lessee's operations. Such Pollution Liability policy shall provide at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence/aggregate coverage for bodily injury and property damage.

7. Excess Liability:

In order to meet the required minimum limits of insurance it is permissible for the Lessee/Permittee/Manager to combine an excess liability or umbrella policy with the general liability, auto liability or employer's liability. In the instance where the Lessee/ Permittee/ Manager purchases an excess liability or umbrella policy the occurrence limit and the aggregate limit may be of the same amount.

C. Deductibles and Self-Insured Retention

Prior to occupancy, any deductible or self-insured retention must be declared and approved by the Lessor. Lessee/Permittee/Manager may be requested to demonstrate how the deductible or self-insured retention will be funded in the event of a claim. At the option of the Lessor, the Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall reduce or eliminate such deductibles or self-insured retention as respects the Lessor, its officers, officials, employees and volunteers; or the Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall procure a bond guaranteeing payment of losses and related investigations, claim administration, and defense expenses.

D. Other Insurance Provisions

The policies are to contain, or be endorsed to contain, the following provisions:

1. General Liability, Automobile Liability

- a. The Lessor, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers shall be covered as additional insured as respects: liability arising out of activities performed by or on behalf of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager; products and completed operations of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager; premises owned, occupied or used by the Lessee/ Permittee/ Manager or automobiles owned, leased, hired or borrowed by the Lessee/Permittee/Manager. The coverage shall contain no special limitation on the scope of protection afforded to the Lessor, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers.
- b. The Lessee/Permittee/Manager's insurance coverage shall be primary insurance as respects the Lessor, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers. Any insurance or self-insurance maintained by the Lessor, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers shall be excess of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager insurance and shall not contribute to it.
- c. The Lessee/Permittee/Manager insurance shall apply separately to each insured against whom claim is made or suit is brought, except with respect to the limits of the insurer's liability.

2. Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability

The insurer shall agree to waive all rights of subrogation against the Lessor, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers for losses arising from work performed by the Lessee/Permittee/Manager or any subcontractor of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager in relation to this Agreement.

3. All Insurance

Each insurance policy required by this Agreement shall be endorsed to state that coverage shall not be suspended, voided, canceled by either party, reduced in coverage or in limits except after 30 days prior written notice for nonpayment of premium or fraud on the part of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager or 60 days prior written notice for any other reason by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the Lessor. *Such notice shall be mailed to the attention of the Lessor's Land Management representative.*

E. Acceptability of Insurers

Insurance is to be placed with insurers with a Best's rating of no less than A-VII.

F. Verification of Coverage

Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall furnish the Lessor with certificates of insurance and with certified copies of all endorsements effecting coverage required by this clause. The certificates and endorsements for each insurance policy are to be signed by a person authorized by that insurer to bind coverage on its behalf. The certificates are to be on forms acceptable to the Lessor. All certificates are to be received and approved by the Lessor before occupancy commences. The Lessor reserves the rights to require complete, certified copies of all required insurance policies, at any time.

G. Subcontractors

Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall include all subcontractors and as insured under its policies or shall furnish separate certificates and endorsements for each subcontractor. All coverage for subcontractors shall be subject to all requirements stated herein.

H. Lapse in Insurance Coverage

A lapse in insurance coverage, any change that restricts, reduces insurance provided, or changes name of insured without Lessor approval is a material breach of this agreement, which shall result in immediate termination of the agreement.

EXHIBIT D – RECORD OF SURVEY TO AMEND EXHIBIT A

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Exhibit A

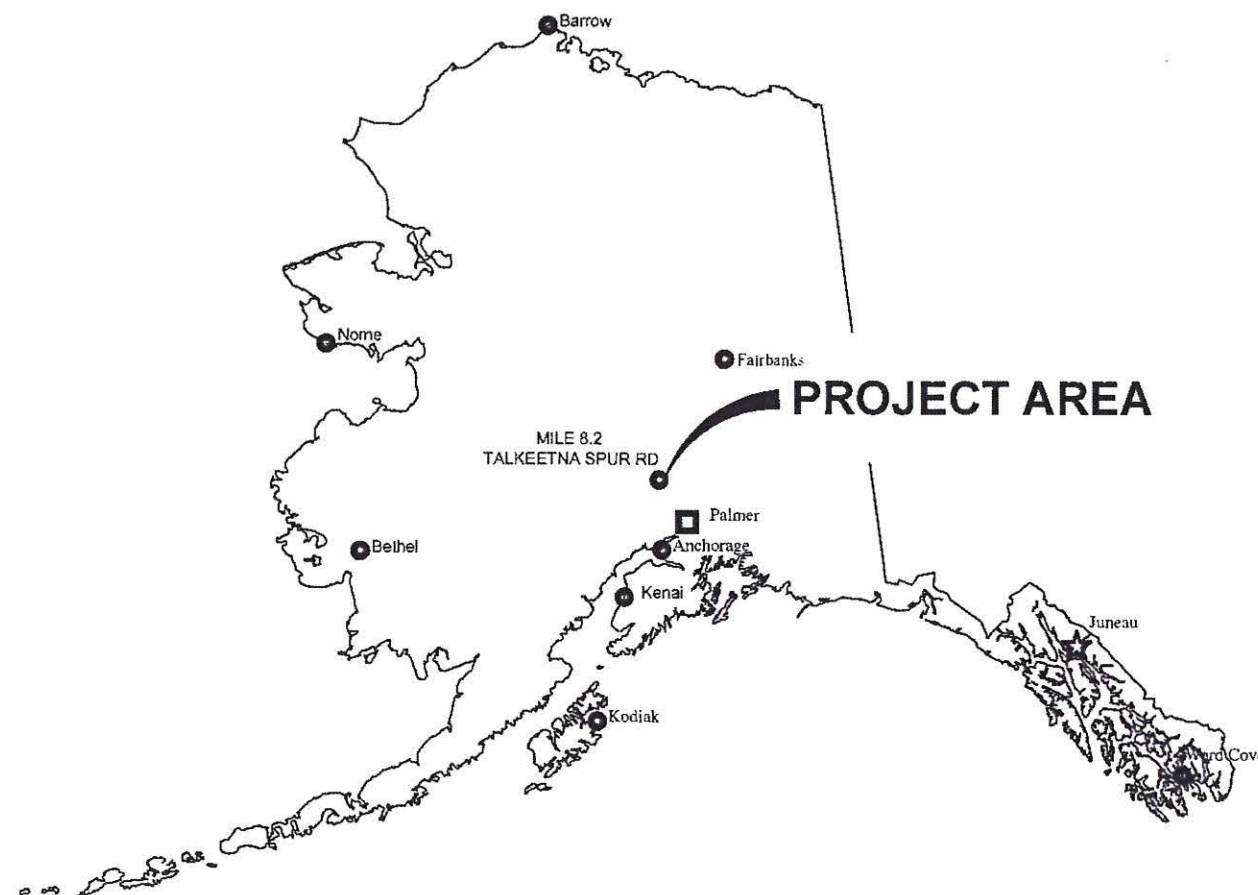
Site Document & Design
Documents



Sheet List Table

SHEET #	TITLE
T1.0	COVER SHEET
C1.0	SITE PLAN
C1.1	SITE ELEVATION
C2.0	ENLARGED SITE PLAN
C3.0	DRIVEWAY TOPO
C3.1	DRIVEWAY PROFILE
C3.2	DRIVEWAY AND PAD SECTIONS
S1.0	TOWER FOUNDATION PLAN
S1.1	TOWER FOUNDATION SECTION
S1.2	GRADE BEAM LAYOUT AND DETAILS

REV #
1
1
1
0
0
0



Received

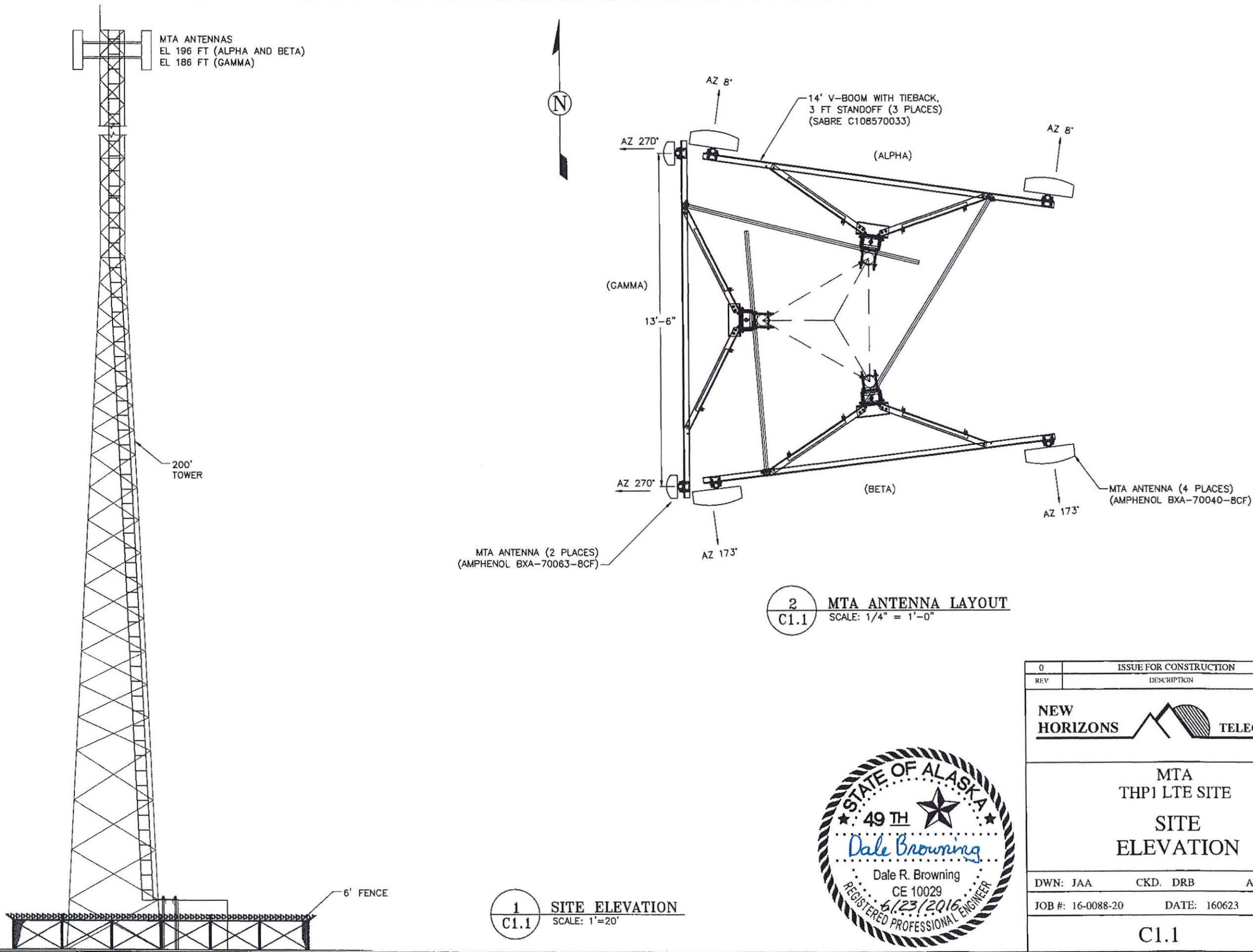
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0	ISSUED FOR CONSTRUCTION	160623
REV.	DESCRIPTION	DATE



MTA
THP1 LTE SITE
COVER SHEET

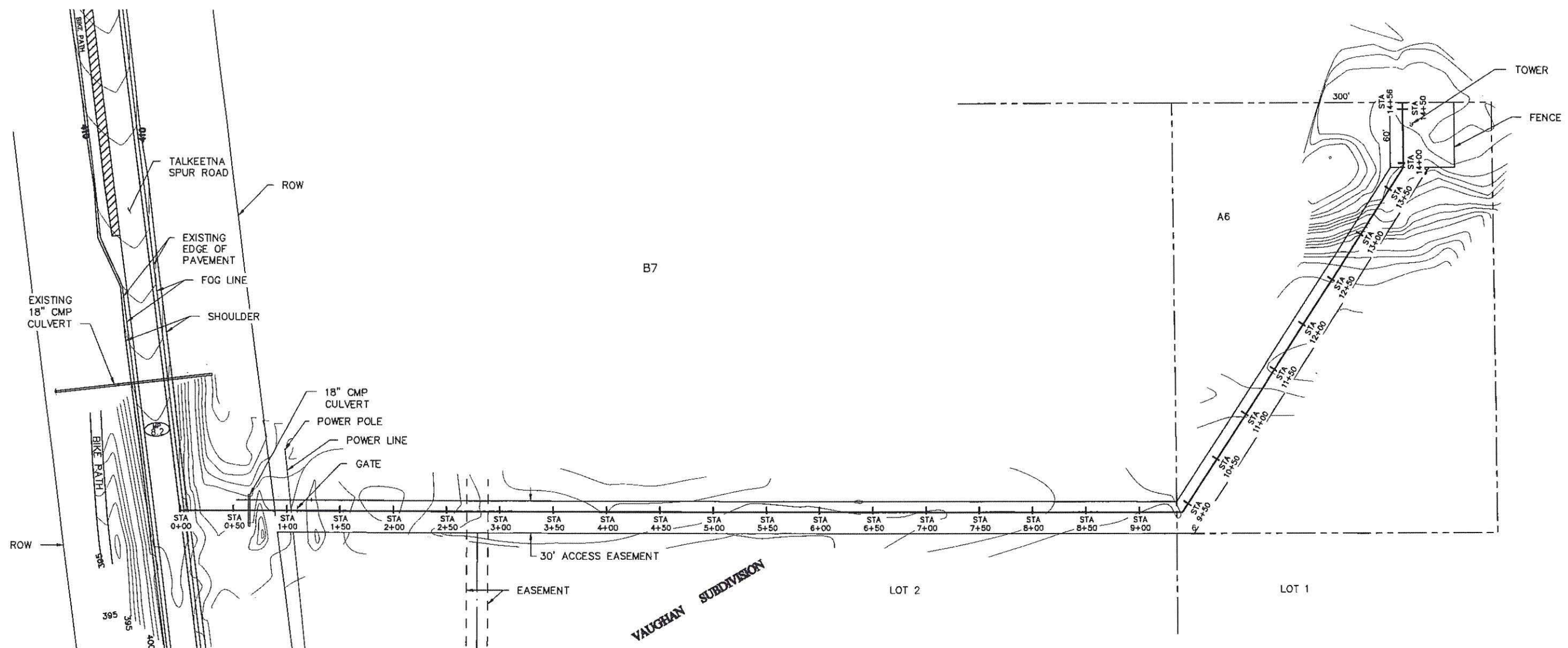
T1.0

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0	ISSUE FOR CONSTRUCTION	160623
REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE
NEW HORIZONS TELECOM, INC.		
MTA THP1 LTE SITE SITE ELEVATION		
DWN: JAA	CKD. DRB	APP. DRB
JOB #: 16-0088-20	DATE: 160623	
C1.1		REV 0

FILE: X:\16 JOBS\16-0088-20 MTA THP1 SITE DSGN AND PERMIT\16-0088-20 MTA THP1 SITE ELEVATION.DWG | PLOT DATE: 160623 | PLOT SCALE: 1:1

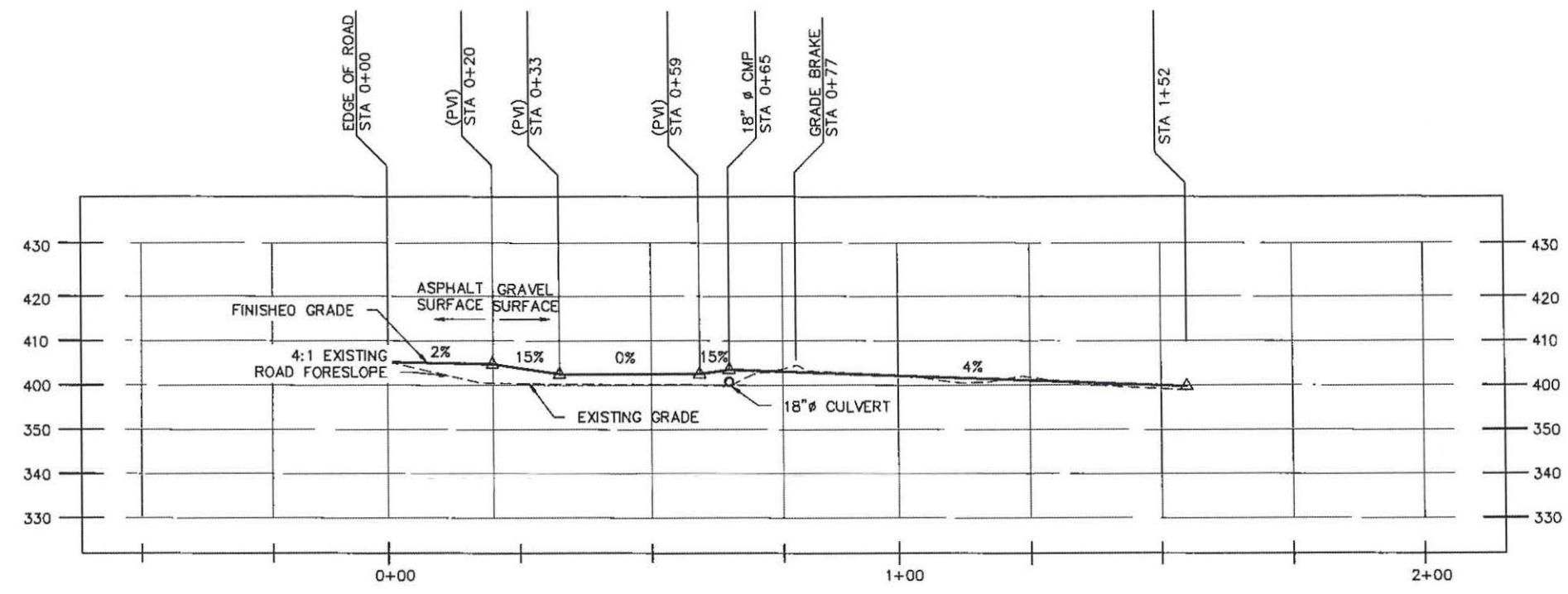


1 DRIVEWAY TOPO
C3.0 SCALE: 1=100

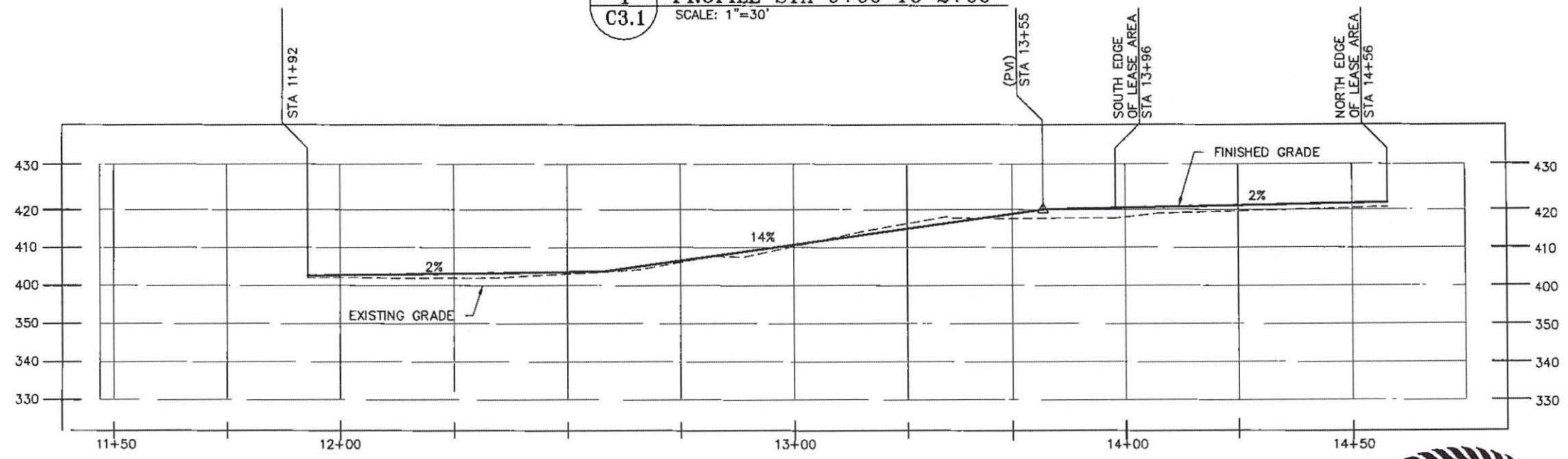


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REV.	DESCRIPTION	DATE
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DWN: RSB	CKD. DRB	APP. DRB
JOB #: 16-0088-20	DATE: 160623	
C3.0		REV 0

FILE: X:\16 JOBS\16-0088-20 MTA\THP1 SITE DSGN AND PERMIT\05-CADD\DRAWINGS\C3.0-C3.1 TOPO AND PROFILE.DWG | PLOT DATE: 160623 | PLOT SCALE: 1:1



1
C3.1 PROFILE STA 0+00 TO 2+00
SCALE: 1"=30'

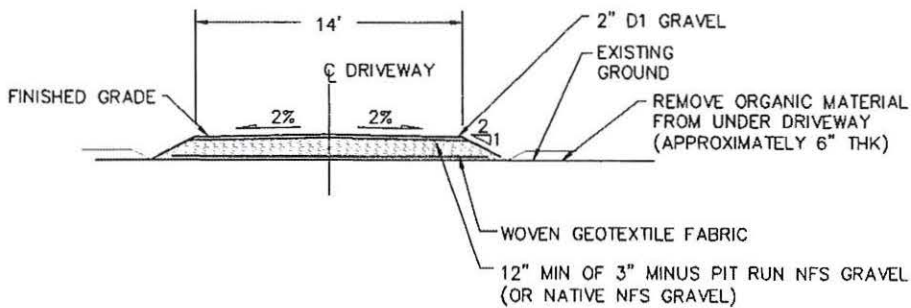


2
C3.1 PROFILE STA 11+92 TO 14+56
SCALE: 1"=30'

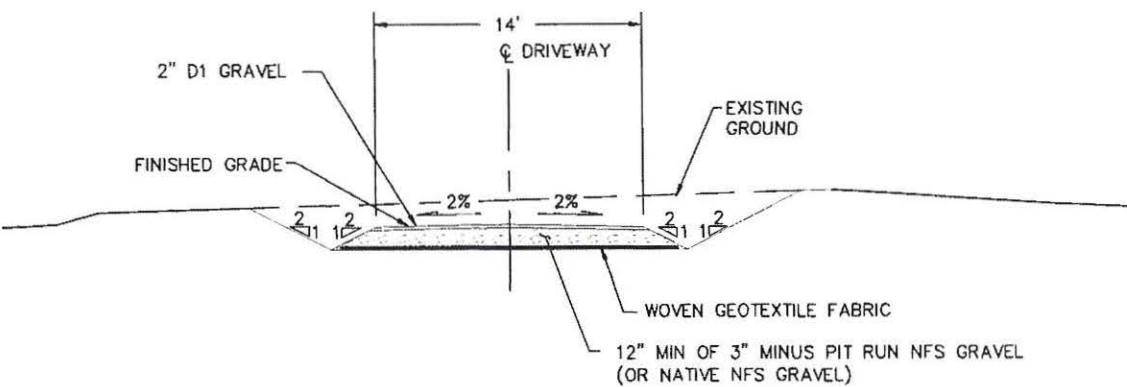


0	ISSUE FOR CONSTRUCTION	160623
REV.	DESCRIPTION	DATE
NEW HORIZONS TELECOM, INC.		
MTA THP1 LTE SITE DRIVEWAY PROFILE		
DWN: RSB	CKD: DRB	APP: DRB
JOB #: 16-0088-20		DATE: 160623
C3.1		REV 0

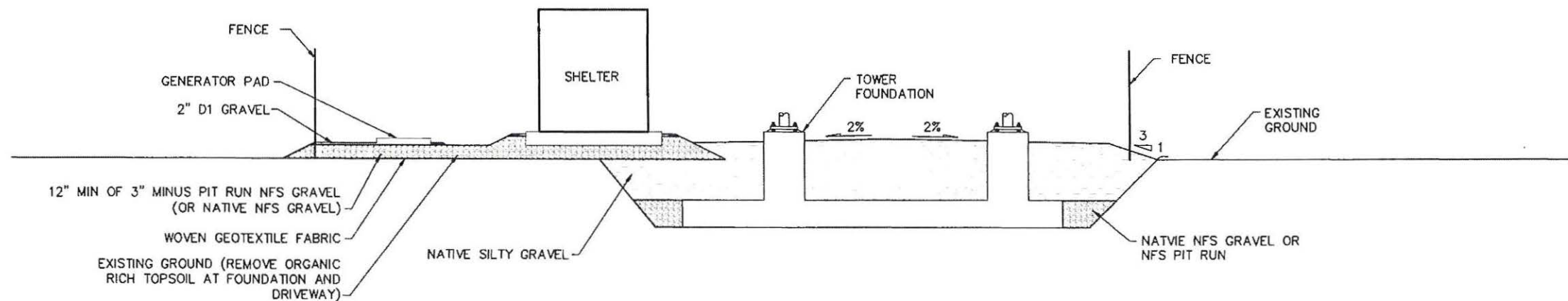
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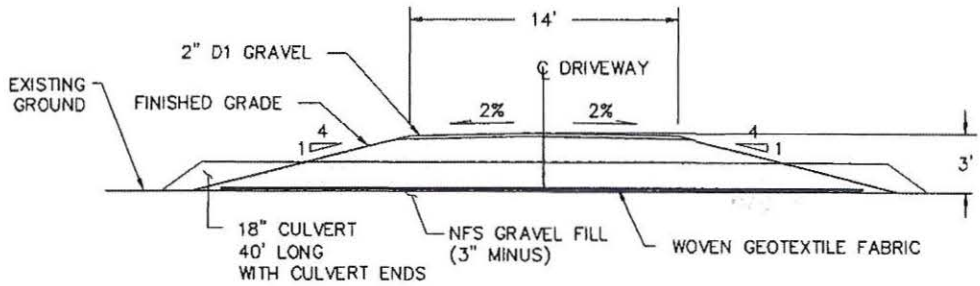
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C3.2 DRIVEWAY SECTION (TYP) (PARKING SIMILAR)
SCALE: 1"=10'



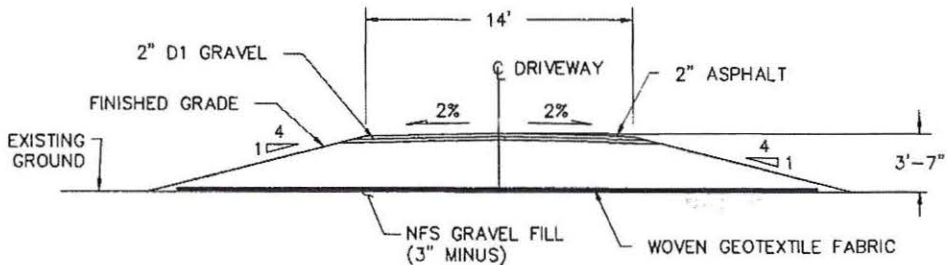
2
C3.2 CUT SECTION AT STA 0+77
SCALE: 1"=10'
(TYPICAL AT CUT LOCATIONS)



3
C3.2 PAD SECTION
SCALE: 1"=10'



4
C3.2 CULVERT SECTION AT STA 0+65
SCALE: 1"=10'

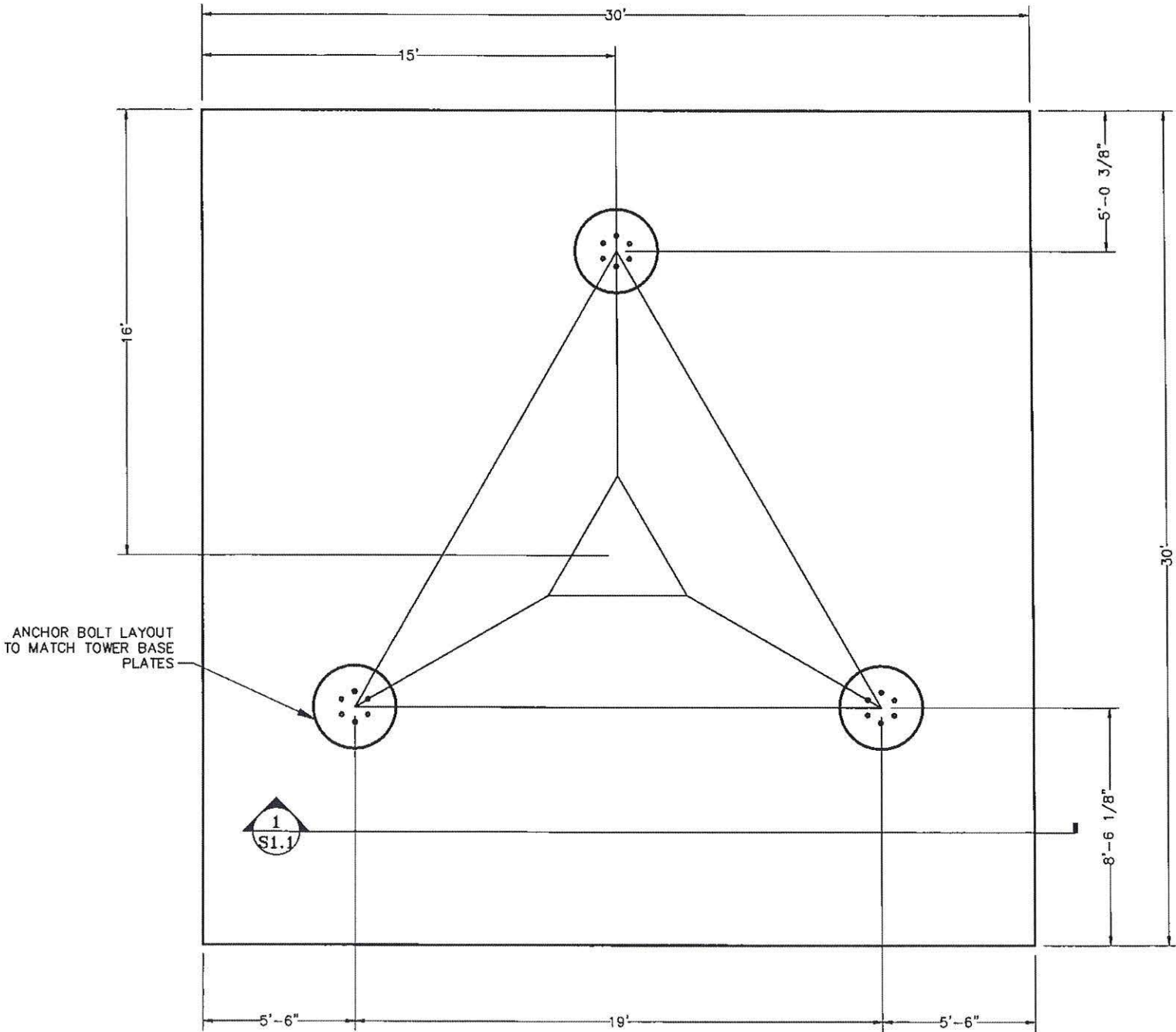


5
C3.2 SECTION AT STA 0+20
SCALE: 1"=10'



0	ISSUE FOR CONSTRUCTION	160623
REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE
NEW HORIZONS TELECOM, INC.		
MTA THP1 LTE SITE DRIVEWAY AND PAD SECTIONS		
DWN: JAA	CKD. DRB	APP. DRB
JOB #: 16-0088-20	DATE: 160623	
C3.2		REV 0

FILE: X:\16 JOBS\16-0088-20 MTA\THP1 SITE DSGN AND PERMITS-CADD\DRAWINGS\C3.2 DRIVEWAY AND PAD SECTIONS.DWG I PLOT DATE: 160623 I PLOT SCALE: 1:1



DESIGN CRITERIA:

TOWER BASE REACTIONS (SABRE #140133)

AXIAL LOAD: 89.51 KIPS
TOTAL SHEAR: 61.62 KIPS
O.T. MOMENT: 6,863 FT-KIPS
UPLIFT PER LEG: 380 KIPS
COMP PER LEG: 419 KIPS
SHEAR PER LEG: 36.59 KIPS

ALLOWABLE SOIL BEARING: 4000 psf (GRAVEL)

DESIGN WIND SPEED: 100 MPH
(3 SEC. GUST) PER TIA-222-G

EXPOSURE: C,
TOPO CATEGORY: 1
STRUCTURE CLASS: II
IMPORTANCE FACTOR: 1.0
RADIAL ICE: 1/2 IN

NOTES:

EARTHWORK:

1. REMOVE ALL ORGANIC MATTER AND DELETERIOUS MATERIALS FROM UNDER FOOTINGS AND DRIVEWAY. EXCAVATE 5FT BELOW EXISTING GRADE FOR TOWER FOUNDATION.
2. ALL COMPACTED FILL TO BE COMPACTED TO 90% TO 95% MAXIMUM LABORATORY DENSITY IN 12 INCH LIFTS.
3. COMPACTED FILL AND OR EXCAVATION IS REQUIRED TO ALLOW DRAINAGE SO THAT NO STANDING WATER WILL ACCUMULATE ON THE SITE AS A RESULT OF THIS WORK.
4. ALL EXCAVATIONS SHALL BE SHORED OR SLOPED OR OTHERWISE SUPPORTED TO PROTECT PERSONNEL IN ACCORDANCE WITH OSHA, 29 CFR 1926, SUBPART P.

CONCRETE:

1. CONCRETE SHALL OBTAIN A 28-DAY COMPRESSIVE STRENGTH OF 4,500 PSI ($F'_c = 4,500$ PSI). THE MIX SHALL CONTAIN A MINIMUM OF 6 SACKS CEMENT PER CUBIC YARD OF CONCRETE.
2. CEMENT SHALL CONFORM TO ASTM C150 TYPE I OR II.
3. AGGREGATE SHALL CONFORM TO ASTM C33. MAXIMUM AGGREGATE SIZE SHALL BE 3/4 INCH.
4. SLUMP SHALL BE BETWEEN 3 - 5 INCHES.
5. ADMIXTURE SHALL BE PROVIDED AS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE 5% - 8% AIR ENTRAINMENT WITH A MAXIMUM WATER/CEMENT RATIO OF 0.45.
6. CONCRETE SHALL BE KEPT FROM FREEZING FOR THE FIRST SEVEN DAYS AFTER PLACING. SURFACES TO RECEIVE CONCRETE SHALL BE NOT LESS THAN 40° F. THE TEMPERATURE OF THE CONCRETE WHEN PLACED SHALL NOT BE LESS THAN 50° F OR GREATER THAN 80° F.

REINFORCING STEEL:

1. ALL REINFORCING BARS SHALL BE DEFORMED AND CONFORM TO ASTM A615, GRADE 60.
2. ALL BOTTOM MAT REINFORCING BARS SHALL BE ACCURATELY PLACED AND SUPPORTED BY GALVANIZED METAL CHAIRS OR CONCRETE BLOCKS (WOODEN STAKES SHALL NOT BE USED).
3. SUPPORT TOP MAT OF REBAR WITH #4 BENT REBAR SPACERS (STANDIES) AT 4' O.C.
4. MINIMUM CONCRETE COVER FOR REBAR WHERE CONCRETE IS PLACED IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH SOIL IS 3 INCHES CLEAR, FOR ALL OTHER FORMED SURFACES IS 2 INCHES.
5. ALL REBAR SPLICES SHALL BE LAPPED 40 BAR DIAMETERS MIN.

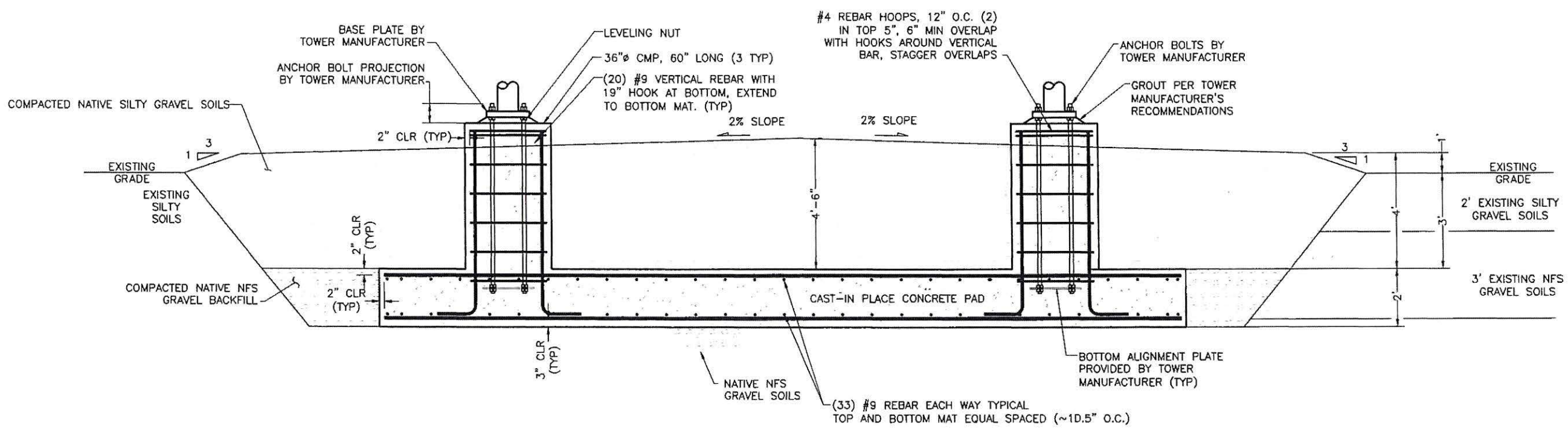
STRUCTURAL STEEL:

1. STRUCTURAL STEEL INCLUDING PLATES, ANGLES AND MISCELLANEOUS SHAPES SHALL BE ASTM A36.



0	ISSUE FOR CONSTRUCTION	160623
REV.	DESCRIPTION	DATE
NEW HORIZONS TELECOM, INC.		
MTA THP1 LTE SITE TOWER FOUNDATION PLAN		
DWN: JAA	CKD: DRB	APP: DRB
JOB #: 16-0088-20	DATE: 160623	
S1.0		REV 0

FILE: X:\16 JOBS\16-0088-20 MTA THP1 SITE DSGN AND PERMITS-CADD\DRAWINGS\16 TOWER FOUNDATION.DWG | PLOT DATE: 160623 | PLOT SCALE: 1:1



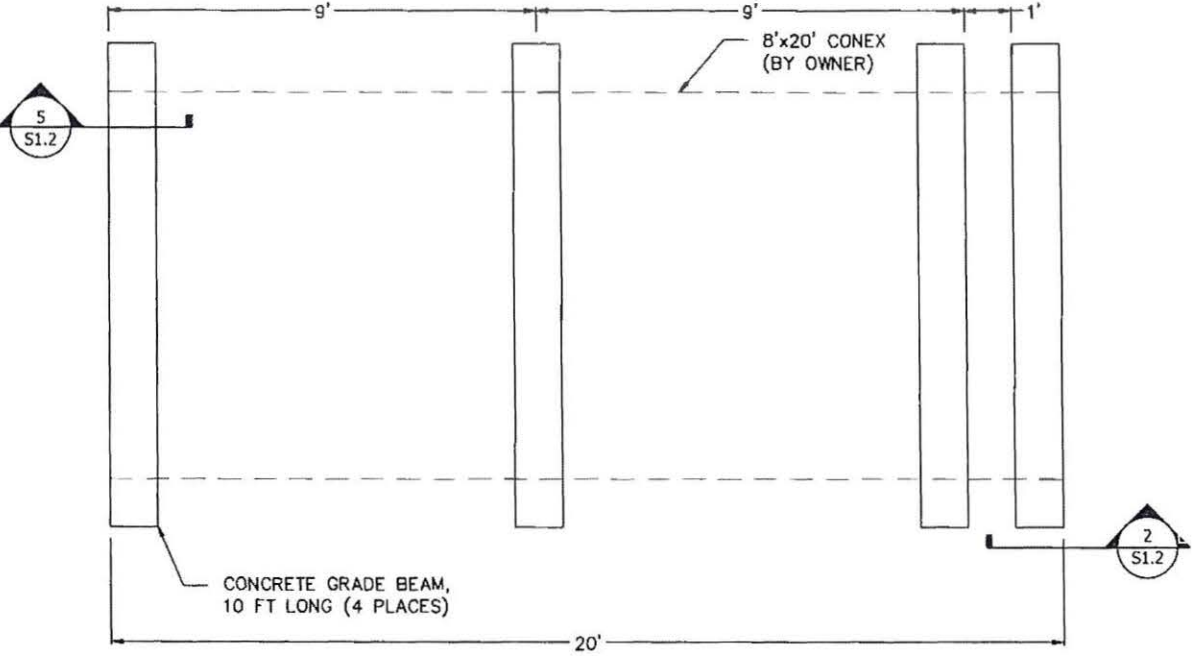
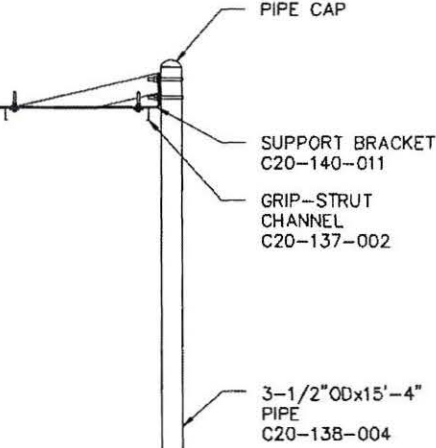
1
S1.1 TOWER FOUNDATION SECTION
SCALE: NTS

- NOTES:
- 1. ON SITE TEST HOLE FOUND APPROXIMATELY 6" OF ORGANIC RICH TOPSOIL. THEN 1.5 FT OF SILTY GRAVEL SOILS. THEN NFS GRAVEL SOILS TO BOTTOM OF TEST HOLE AT 9FT.
 - 2. BOTTOM OF TOWER FOUNDATION TO BE PLACED IN THE CLEAN NFS GRAVEL LAYER.
 - 3. IF EXCAVATION FOR TOWER FOUNDATION REVEALS DIFFERENT SOIL CONDITIONS. CONTACT ENGINEER OF RECORD FOR DIRECTION. DO NOT PLACE TOWER FOUNDATION ON MATERIAL OTHER THAN NATIVE NFS GRAVEL.
 - 4. PROOF ROLL BOTTOM OF EXCAVATION TO ENSURE THERE ARE NO SOFT SPOTS. CONTACT ENGINEER OF RECORD FOR DIFFERING CONDITIONS.

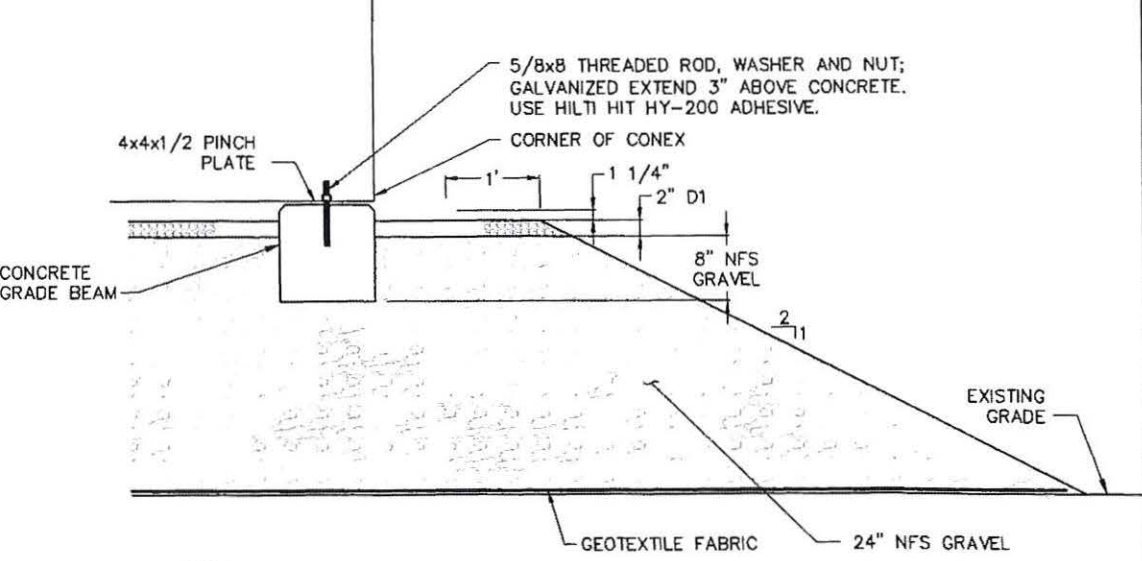


0	ISSUE FOR CONSTRUCTION	160623
REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE
NEW HORIZONS TELECOM, INC.		
MTA THP1 LTE SITE		
TOWER FOUNDATION SECTION		
DWN: JAA	CKD: DRB	APP: DRB
JOB #: 16-0088-20	DATE: 160623	
S1.1		REV 0

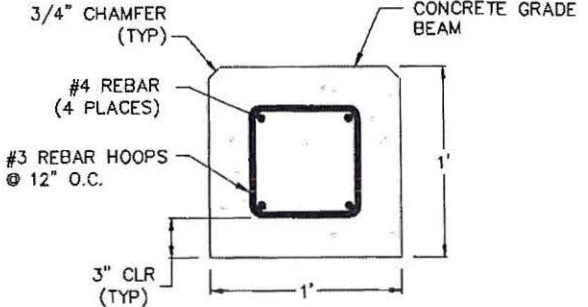
FILE: X:\16 JOBS\16-0088-20 MTA THP1 SITE DSGN AND PERMITS-CADD\DRAWINGS\S1.1 FOUNDATION SECTION.DWG | PLOT DATE: 160623 | PLOT SCALE: 1:1



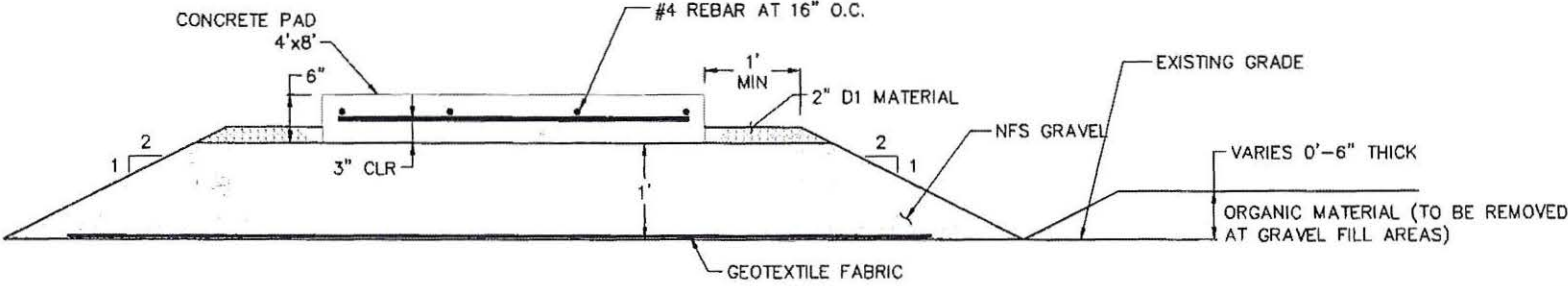
1
S1.2
GRADE BEAM LAYOUT
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



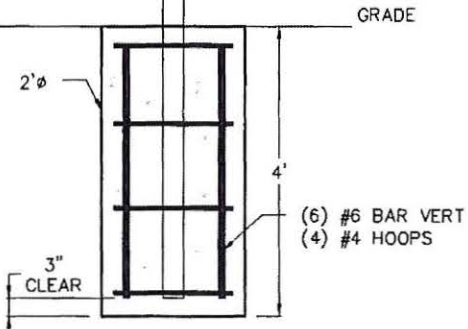
2
S1.2
GRADE BEAM CONNECTION DETAIL
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



5
S1.2
CROSS SECTION
SCALE: 1" = 1'-0"



4
S1.2
GENERATOR PAD DETAIL
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



3
S1.2
POST AND FOOTING DETAIL
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



0	ISSUE FOR CONSTRUCTION	160623
REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE
<div>NEW HORIZONS TELECOM, INC.</div> <div>MTA THPI LTE SITE</div> <div>GRADE BEAM LAYOUT AND DETAILS</div>		
DWN: JAA	CKD. DRB	APP. DRB
JOB #: 16-0088-20	DATE: 160623	
S1.2		REV 0

FILE: X:\16 JOBS\16-0088-20 MTA\THPI SITE DSGN AND PERMIT\05-CADD\DRAWINGS\S1.2 GRADE BEAM LAYOUT AND DETAILS.DWG: 160623 | PLOT DATE: 160623 | PLOT SCALE: 1:1

Exhibit B

FAA Determination



Mail Processing Center
Federal Aviation Administration
Southwest Regional Office
Obstruction Evaluation Group
10101 Hillwood Parkway
Fort Worth, TX 76177

Aeronautical Study No.
2016-AAL-444-OE

Issued Date: 06/20/2016

Rod Ewing
MTA Communications, Inc.
1740 S Chugach St
Palmer, AK 99645

**** DETERMINATION OF NO HAZARD TO AIR NAVIGATION ****

The Federal Aviation Administration has conducted an aeronautical study under the provisions of 49 U.S.C., Section 44718 and if applicable Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations, part 77, concerning:

Structure:	Antenna Tower THP1
Location:	Talkeetna, AK
Latitude:	62-14-35.80N NAD 83
Longitude:	150-04-51.94W
Heights:	422 feet site elevation (SE) 205 feet above ground level (AGL) 627 feet above mean sea level (AMSL)

This aeronautical study revealed that the structure does not exceed obstruction standards and would not be a hazard to air navigation provided the following condition(s), if any, is(are) met:

As a condition to this Determination, the structure is marked/lighted in accordance with FAA Advisory circular 70/7460-1 L, Obstruction Marking and Lighting, a med-dual system - Chapters 4,8(M-Dual),&12.

It is required that FAA Form 7460-2, Notice of Actual Construction or Alteration, be e-filed any time the project is abandoned or:

- ☐ At least 10 days prior to start of construction (7460-2, Part 1)
☒ Within 5 days after the construction reaches its greatest height (7460-2, Part 2)

This determination expires on 12/20/2017 unless:

- the construction is started (not necessarily completed) and FAA Form 7460-2, Notice of Actual Construction or Alteration, is received by this office.
- extended, revised, or terminated by the issuing office.
- the construction is subject to the licensing authority of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and an application for a construction permit has been filed, as required by the FCC, within 6 months of the date of this determination. In such case, the determination expires on the date prescribed by the FCC for completion of construction, or the date the FCC denies the application.

NOTE: REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF THE EFFECTIVE PERIOD OF THIS DETERMINATION MUST BE E-FILED AT LEAST 15 DAYS PRIOR TO THE EXPIRATION DATE. AFTER RE-EVALUATION OF CURRENT OPERATIONS IN THE AREA OF THE STRUCTURE TO DETERMINE THAT NO SIGNIFICANT AERONAUTICAL CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED, YOUR DETERMINATION MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR ONE EXTENSION OF THE EFFECTIVE PERIOD.

This determination does not constitute authority to transmit on the frequency(ies) identified in this study. The proponent is required to obtain a formal frequency transmit license from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) or National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), prior to on-air operations of these frequency(ies).

This determination is based, in part, on the foregoing description which includes specific coordinates , heights, frequency(ies) and power . Any changes in coordinates , heights, and frequencies or use of greater power will void this determination. Any future construction or alteration , including increase to heights, power, or the addition of other transmitters, requires separate notice to the FAA.

This determination does include temporary construction equipment such as cranes, derricks, etc., which may be used during actual construction of the structure. However, this equipment shall not exceed the overall heights as indicated above. Equipment which has a height greater than the studied structure requires separate notice to the FAA.

This determination concerns the effect of this structure on the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace by aircraft and does not relieve the sponsor of compliance responsibilities relating to any law, ordinance, or regulation of any Federal, State, or local government body.

Any failure or malfunction that lasts more than thirty (30) minutes and affects a top light or flashing obstruction light, regardless of its position, should be reported immediately to (800) 478-3576 so a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) can be issued. As soon as the normal operation is restored, notify the same number.

A copy of this determination will be forwarded to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) because the structure is subject to their licensing authority.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact our office at (907) 271-5863. On any future correspondence concerning this matter, please refer to Aeronautical Study Number 2016-AAL-444-OE.

Signature Control No: 293631402-296241982

(DNE)

Robert van Haastert
Specialist

Attachment(s)
Frequency Data
Map(s)

cc: FCC

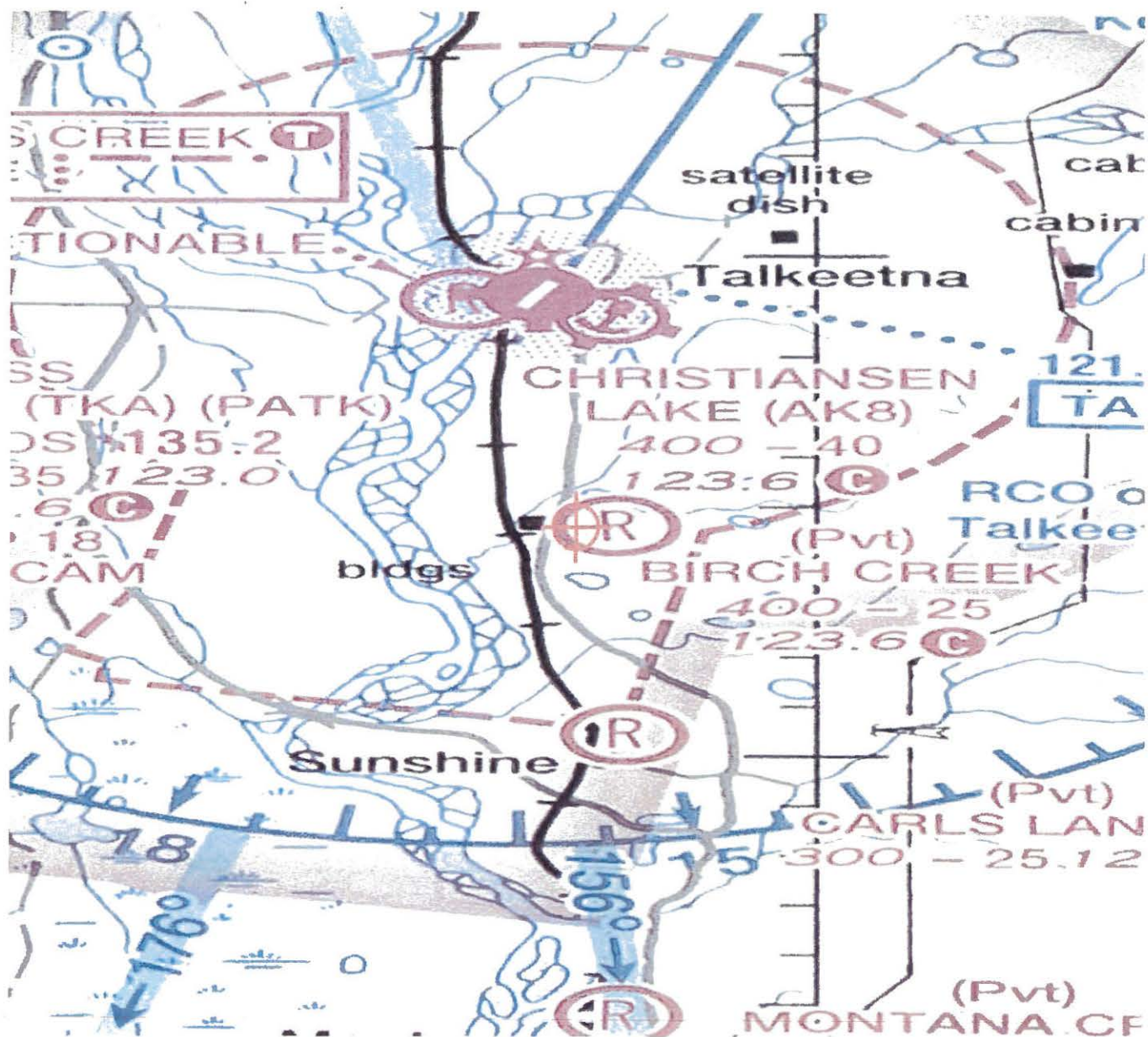
Frequency Data for ASN 2016-AAL-444-OE

LOW FREQUENCY	HIGH FREQUENCY	FREQUENCY UNIT	ERP	ERP UNIT
698	806	MHz	1000	W

TOPO Map for ASN 2016-AAL-444-OE



Sectional Map for ASN 2016-AAL-444-OE



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Exhibit C

Balloon Flight

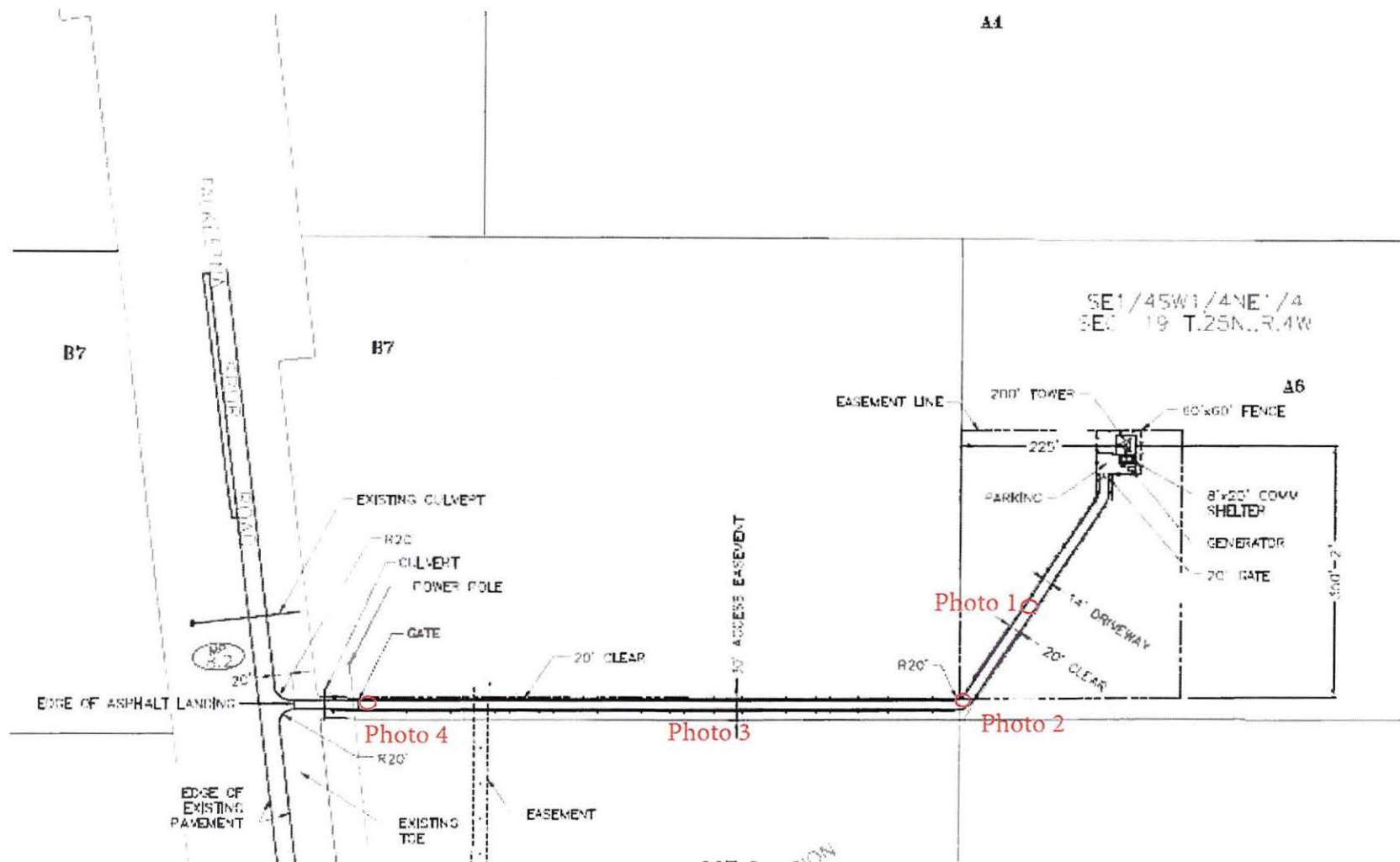
MTA Communications

Site Name THP1

Talkeetna, Alaska

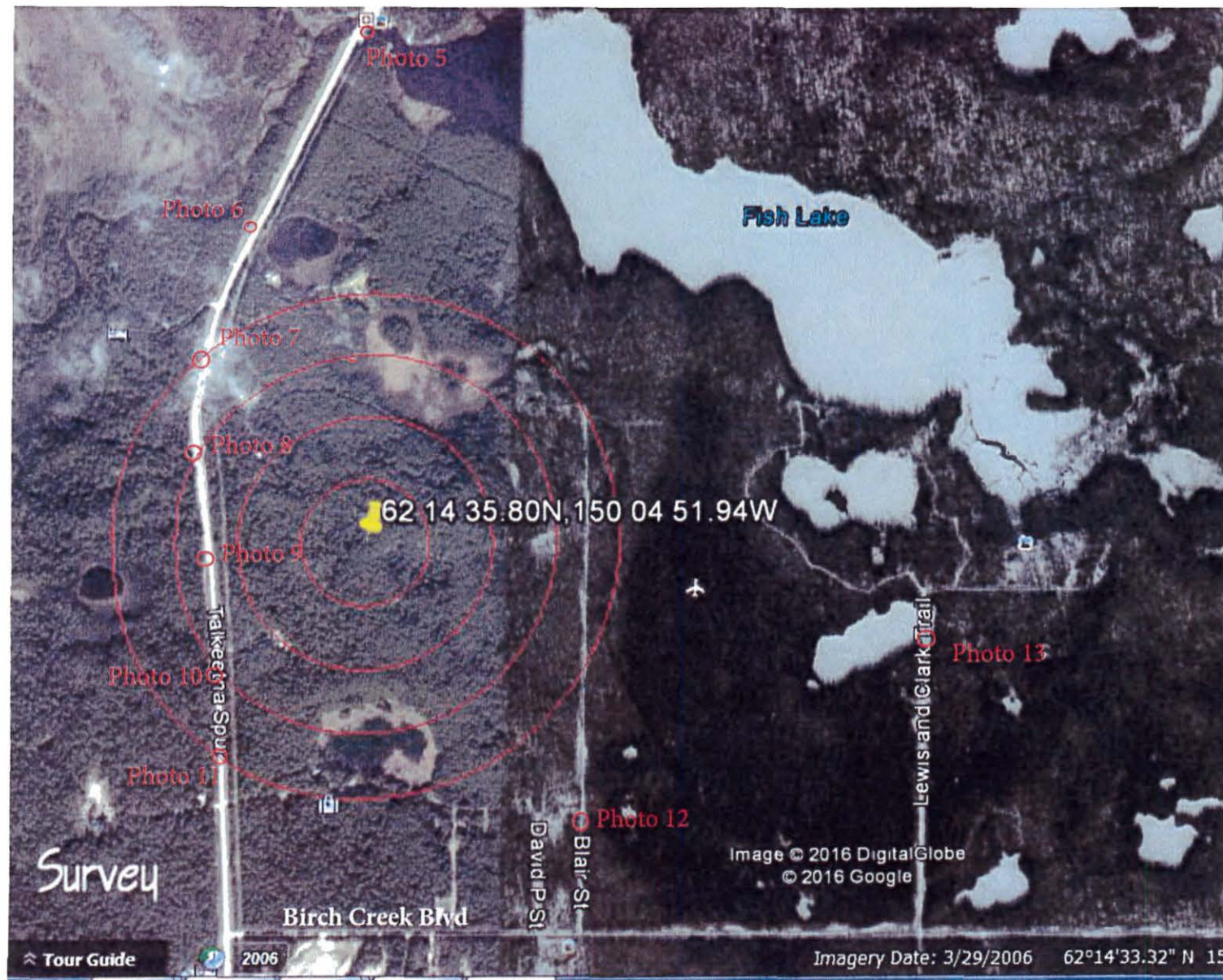
Balloon Test

June 27, 2016



Area overview of proposed driveway and site placement

Photograph numbers are referenced in relation to the plan view.



Area overview with 500 Ft., 1000 Ft., 1500 Ft. and 2000 Ft. radius circles depicted.

Photograph numbers are referenced in relation to the plan view.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13

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Exhibit D

Lease Agreement

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH****Community Development Department**

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7869 • Fax (907) 861-8635

E-mail: lmb@matsugov.us**COMMUNICATION SITE LEASE**

THIS LEASE (the "Lease") is entered into this 21st day of June 2016, by and between:

MATANUSKA SUSITNA BOROUGH (hereinafter "Lessor"), a municipal corporation formed under the laws of the State of Alaska, whose mailing address is 350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska 99645;

and

MTA Communications, LLC, a Limited Liability Company (hereinafter "Lessee"); whose mailing address is ATTN: Alisha Naylor, 1740 S Chugach Street, Palmer, Alaska 99645

The parties recite that:

- A. Lessor desires to lease to Lessee, and Lessee desires to lease from Lessor, a parcel of land more specifically described and depicted on Exhibit A attached to and for all purposes made a part of this Lease.
- B. The parties desire to adopt this Lease as a complete and final statement of all of the promises, covenants, terms and conditions in effect and binding between them.
- C. Lessor is entering into this Lease as land owner, exercising its power to manage its own lands under Alaska Statute 29.35.010(8), and the applicable provisions of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Code ("MSB Code") Section 1.10.010(A)(9) and Title 23. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Community Development Department, Land and Resource Management Division is responsible for management of borough-owned real property, timber, and gravel resources including lease origination, management, oversight, and enforcement, pursuant to Sections 23.05.010, 23.05.050, 23.05.070, 23.10.060, and 23.10.180 of MSB Code.

In so acting, Lessor is not waiving, and Lessor is explicitly reserving unto itself, all of its governmental authority, sovereignty and power to enact and enforce laws and regulations governing land use and development, or the conduct of any business or activity, anywhere within the Borough. Nothing in this Lease shall waive or otherwise diminish Lessor's governmental authority, sovereignty and power with respect to leased land or Lessee's use or occupancy of it.

- D. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough cannot, and does not, through this Lease, make any representations, warranties or guarantees as to the future results of any land use permits, applications, or proposals which are governed by Matanuska-Susitna Borough Code. MTA Communications, LLC must obtain a conditional use permit in conjunction with this lease.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and covenants set out below, the parties agree as follows:

Section 1. Premises Leased.

- 1.1 **Leased Premises.** Lessor, for and in consideration of the rents, covenants and conditions hereinafter specified to be paid, performed and observed by Lessee, leases to Lessee, and Lessee leases from Lessor, land situated Talkeetna Spur Road. The leased land is more particularly described and the site depicted on Exhibit A. Within 180 days of lease effective date Lessee will provide the Borough an Amended Exhibit A with reference to the Record of Survey of the leasehold recorded in the Talkeetna Recording District. At that time, the parties will execute an Amendment to incorporate the Amended Exhibit A into this document. The As-Built Amendment will define the actual acreage of the leasehold. The leased land, together with all rights, easements, privileges and appurtenances attaching or belonging to the described land, but subject to the reservation contained in Section 1.2 below, is referred to hereafter as the "Leased Premises."
- 1.2 **Reservation of Minerals and Resources.** All oil, gas, coal, other hydrocarbons, geothermal resources, rock, sand, gravel, peat, timber, and minerals of whatever nature on, in or under the above-described land are excluded from the Leased Premises and reserved to Lessor. Lessor may, nevertheless, grant Lessee a permit to make use of the timber, rock, sand, or gravel found on the Leased Premises in Lessee's development of the Leased Premises, which may require Lessee to obtain any required permit. Lessor has not promised or obligated itself to providing any such permit to Lessee. If Lessor mines and/or extracts any of the reserved minerals or resources, Lessor agrees that the mining and/or extraction shall not interfere with Lessee's business and activities on the Leased Premises or its access to the Leased Premises.

Section 2. Term.

- 2.1 **Lease Term.** This Lease shall be and continue in full force and effect for an initial term of twenty (20) years (the "Initial Term") commencing as of August 2, 2016, and expiring at 11:59 p.m. on August 1, 2036, unless earlier terminated as provided in this Lease.

2.2 Option to Renew. Lessee may apply to renew this Lease for up to two (2) additional periods of up to five (5) years each (the "Renewal Term"). To effectively exercise an option to renew, Lessee must not be in default of any of its obligations at the time of the exercise or at the time of the commencement of any Renewal Term. During the Renewal Term(s), all of the provisions of this Lease shall remain in full force and effect, except that the rent Lessee shall pay to Lessor shall be adjusted as is provided for below.

2.2.1 Unless otherwise agreed in writing by lessor and lessee, lessee will apply for lease renewal no more than 180 days prior to lease expiration and no less than 120 days prior to lease expiration. Lease renewal for periods of 5 years may be approved by the Borough Manager.

Section 3. Use and Occupancy.

3.1 Permitted Use. The non-exclusive use of Premises shall be to construct, install, maintain, repair, operate, and manage a communication site, including but not limited to the construction and maintenance of a driveway, a tower 205 feet in height, structural tower base, communications equipment, and an equipment cabinet.

3.1.1 Collocated Communication Equipment. Lessee is encouraged to cooperate with other companies interested in equipment collocation. It is to be noted that collocation of equipment and/or additional collocated cabinets is subject to application for and receipt of an appropriate land use lease from MSB Land and Resource Management Division for surface cabinet space at the site and requires Development Plans from any and all collocators.

3.2 Quiet Enjoyment. Upon Lessee's timely payment of all of rents and other sums required to be paid by Lessee under this Lease, and upon Lessee's full and faithful observance and performance of all of its obligations contained in this Lease, and so long as such observance and performance continues, Lessee shall peaceably hold and enjoy the Leased Premises during the Term without hindrance or interruption by Lessor or anyone lawfully claiming by, through, or under Lessor.

3.3 Repair and Maintenance. Lessee shall, at Lessee's expense and without notice from Lessor at all times during the Term, keep the Leased Premises and all Improvements now existing or hereafter built on the Leased Premises (including but not limited to exterior building walls, windows, doors, fences, signs, landscaping and yard areas, refuse disposal equipment and facilities, pavement, curbs, gutters, exterior lighting, and drainage facilities), in good order, condition, maintenance, operability, and repair and of a neat, clean, and pleasing appearance reasonably satisfactory to Lessor.

3.4 Compliance with Laws. Lessee, at all times during the Term, at its own expense, and with all due diligence, shall observe and comply with all laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations that are now in effect or that may later be adopted by any governmental authority (including Lessor), and that may be applicable to the Leased Premises or any Improvement on it or any use of it.

3.5 Authorized Representative. Immediately after the execution of this Lease, Lessee shall provide Lessor with the name and contact information (including cell phone number and e-mail address) for Lessee's principal point of contact for Lessee's operations on the Leased Premises. Lessor shall be entitled to directly communicate with the named individual for all matters under this Lease. Lessee shall promptly notify Lessor of any change in the person acting as Lessee's Authorized Representative for the Leased Premises.

3.6 Supervision. Lessee shall maintain reasonable and adequate on-site supervision of the Leased Premises to insure that the terms and conditions of this Lease and all applicable federal, state and borough laws, rules, and regulations governing operations within the Leased Premises are enforced.

3.7 Signage. Lessee shall not place on the Leased Premises any signage that is unrelated to any business Lessee is operating on the Leased Premises. Lessee's signage shall conform to the requirements in 17.25 Talkeetna Special Land Use District, if signage is placed on the Talkeetna Spur Road. No electioneering or campaign signs of any kind shall be placed upon the Leased Premises.

3.8 Utilities. Lessee shall pay for all utility services consumed or used on the Leased Premises.

3.9 Waste and Wrongful Use. Lessee shall not commit or suffer any strip or waste of the Leased Premises, or engage in any unlawful activity, or engage in any unauthorized activity that is unsafe, results in any public or private nuisance thereon, or adversely affects the value, character, or utility of Lessor's surrounding property.

3.10 Setbacks. Lessee shall observe all setback requirements applicable to the Leased Premises and shall not construct or maintain any building or other structure whatever between any road or other specified rights-of-way boundary of the Leased Premises and any setback along such boundary, except for fences or walls approved by Lessor. Lessor reserves the right to make use of, and to grant utility easements and other rights to third parties in, the setback areas of the Leased Premises.

3.11 Inspection and Repair. Lessee shall repair, maintain and make good all conditions required under the provisions of this Lease, permit requirements and applicable laws within a time frame provided for curing a default under the terms of this Lease. In the event of an emergency, Lessor's notice may be verbally given and followed after-the-fact by written notice. If Lessee refuses or neglects to provide reasonable and necessary repairs or maintenance for the Leased Premises as required under the terms of this Lease to the reasonable satisfaction of Lessor after written demand, then Lessor, without prejudice to any other right or remedy it has under this Lease or otherwise, may perform such reasonable and necessary maintenance work or make such repairs without liability to Lessee for any loss or damage that may accrue to Lessee's merchandise or other property or Lessee's business by reason thereof. Upon completion of any such repair or maintenance, and no later than thirty (30) days after presentation of an invoice therefore, Lessee shall pay as additional rent Lessor's reasonable costs for making such necessary repairs or performing such maintenance, plus fifteen percent (15%) of the repair cost to cover Lessor's overhead.

3.11.1 Condition of Premises. Lessee has had an opportunity to inspect Premises and enters into this lease solely in reliance on lessee's own examination and not by reason of any representation by the Borough. Lessee accepts the Premises in present condition "AS IS WHERE IS". No reliance shall be placed on any opinion, material, or information provided by or through Borough, and Lessee does so at its own risk, cost, and expense.

Section 4. Rent.

Rent for the initial five years of the lease has been negotiated, using the assessed value of \$380 per acre/per month for Parcel 1 and \$324 per acre/per month for Parcel 2, for a fair market value rental rate of \$704 per month.

4.1 Rent. Rent may be based on a combination of rent for the land and rent for any other collocated authorized users (collectively referred to as "Authorized Users"). Prior to collocation of ground or air structures by another company as an Authorized User they shall obtain a land use lease through Land and Resource Management Division, for cabinet or other structure location.

4.1.1.1 Land Rent. Based on the site plan and acreage, Lessee shall pay in advance the land rent of \$250.00 a month during the time necessary to obtain a Tall Tower Conditional Use Permit and for the construction phase. The construction phase includes the access driveway and entire parcel of the tower site. Upon conclusion of construction, Lessee will obtain and record, at Lessee's cost, a Record of Survey for the communication tower site and driveway with a separate acreage shown for the tower site and the driveway.

4.1.1.1.1 Starting in lease year six, and each year thereafter, rent will be increased by 2.5% or CPI, Anchorage, whichever is higher, each July 1.

4.2 Taxes. Lessee shall pay all taxes imposed by MSB on Premises and improvements thereon or any other taxes relating to its operations during the term of the Lease.

4.3 Assessments. Lessee shall pay its pro rata share of assessments charged against Premises. Borough will send a written notice with a detailed explanation of any assessments pertaining to Premises to Lessee. Lessee shall pay assessment within thirty (30) days of receipt of written notice from Borough.

4.4 Failure to Pay. If Borough must pay any tax, assessment, penalty, or interest because of the failure of Lessee to pay such taxes, assessments, penalties, or interest, such obligations shall be considered a debt to Borough.

4.5 Late Charge. In the event Lessee fails to make any payment of rent or any other payments due hereunder upon the date due, Borough shall be entitled to collect from Lessee a late charge equal to six percent (6%) of the amount of the delinquent payment or \$50.00, whichever is greater.

4.6 Interest Charge. Failure to pay rent or any other payments due under the Lease on the date due shall be subject to interest at the rate of 10.5% per annum.

Section 5. Special Requirements.

5.1 Electrical Power. Lessee shall pay for all electric power and other charges or expenses incurred for Premises to supply the electric power.

5.2 Compliance with Laws. Lessee shall conform with all local, state, and federal applicable laws and regulations of public authority affecting Premises and the use thereon and assume, at Lessee's sole expense, any costs of such compliance including any fines or penalties. Lessee shall obtain all federal, state, and local permits and licenses necessary to operate under this lease, including but not limited to compliance with Federal Communication Commission (FCC) requirements, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements, Title 47 CFR, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), ANSI/NFPA 70.

5.3 Minerals and Valuable Materials. Lessee shall not remove or sell valuable materials, held by the Borough, including but not limited to gravel and timber without written consent of Borough.

5.3.1 Lessee will reimburse MSB for any gravel from the Premises utilized in construction of the access road or construction site at FMV. Authorization for same may be obtained by providing an application to Resource Specialist, Land and Resource Management Division, (907) 861-8572.

5.3.2 Lessee will make timber removed for construction that is \geq 4-inch diameter at breast height (DBH) available to the Lessor through notification of the Resource Manager, Land and Resource Management Division, (907) 861-7863.

5.4 Fire. To the extent possible, Lessee shall protect Premises from fire and shall report any fires on Premises to Borough, by phone, as soon as possible, at the phone number shown on the signature page.

5.5 FCC License. Lessee shall operate its equipment and units in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission or Lessee's license authority. Within thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of operation and any subsequent collocation, Lessee shall furnish Borough with a copy of its current license and subsequent renewal license to: Matanuska Susitna Borough, Land and Resource Management Division, MSB007139, 350 East Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska, 99645.

5.6 Hazardous, Toxic, or Harmful Substances.

5.6.1 Deleterious Material. Lessee shall not make, or suffer to be made, any filling in of Premises or any deposit of rock, earth, ballast, refuse, garbage, waste matter, chemical,

biological, or other wastes, hydrocarbons, any other pollutants, or other matter within or upon Premises, except as approved in writing by Borough. If Lessee fails to remove all non-approved fill material, refuse, garbage, wastes, or any other of the above materials from Premises, Lessee agrees that Borough may, but is not obligated to, remove such materials and charge Permittee for the cost of removal and disposal.

5.6.2 Hazardous, Toxic, or Harmful Substances. For the purposes of this Lease, the term "Hazardous Material" means any hazardous or toxic substances, material, or waste, including but not limited to oil, petroleum products and byproducts, gasoline, diesel fuel, stove oil, kerosene, and other hydrocarbons; those substances, materials and wastes listed in U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials table (49 CFR Part 172.101) or by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as hazardous substances (40 CFR Part 302), and amendments thereto; all materials the release of which must be reported under Title 46 of Alaska Statutes; and any such other substance, materials, and wastes that are or become regulated under any applicable local, state, or federal law.

5.6.2.1 Lessee or any authorized users shall not keep on or about Premises, any substances now or hereinafter designated as or containing components now or hereinafter designated as hazardous, toxic, dangerous, or harmful (and/or which are subject to regulation as hazardous, toxic, dangerous, or harmful) by any federal, state, or local law, regulation, statute, or ordinance (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Hazardous Substances") unless such are necessary to carry out Lessee's permitted use under Section 3 and unless Lessee fully complies with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, statutes, and ordinances now in existence or as subsequently enacted or amended. Any substances designated as hazardous, toxic, dangerous, or harmful that are necessary to carry out Lessee's permitted use will be reported to Lessor, in writing, and copies of required permits will be provided to Lessor.

5.6.2.2 Lessee shall immediately notify Borough of any of the following:

5.6.2.2.1 all spills or re-permits of any Hazardous Substance in, on, or adjacent to Premises,

5.6.2.2.2 all failures to comply with any federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance, as now enacted or as subsequently enacted or amended,

5.6.2.2.3 all inspections of Premises by, or any correspondence, orders, citations, or notifications from any regulatory entity concerning Hazardous Substances affecting Premises,

5.6.2.2.4 all regulatory orders or fines, or all response or interim cleanup actions taken by or proposed to be taken by any government entity or private party concerning Premises.

5.6.2.2.5 on request, Lessee shall provide copies to Borough of any and all correspondence, pleadings, and/or reports received by or required of Lessee or issued or written by Lessee or on Lessee's behalf with respect to the use, presence, transportation, or generation of Hazardous Substances in, on, about, or adjacent to Premises.

5.6.2.3 Lessee shall be fully and completely liable to Borough, and, to the full extent permitted by law, shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Lessor and its elected and appointed officials, employees, officers, and agents with respect to any and all damages, costs, fees (including attorney's fees and costs), penalties (civil and criminal), and cleanup costs assessed against or imposed as a result of Lessee or authorized user's use, disposal, transportation, generation, and/or sale of Hazardous Substances or that of Lessee's employees, agents, assigns, contractors, subcontractors, licensees, or invitees.

5.7 Non-Ionizing Electromagnetic Radiation (NIER). Lessee shall comply with standards or requirements in effect for non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation levels as established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or other governing agencies.

5.8 Weed Control. Weed control shall be approved in writing by Borough prior to beginning such activities. No aerial spraying without prior approval by Borough is allowed.

5.9 Survey. Lessee shall submit a recorded Record of Survey for the Premises within thirty (30) days of completion of the construction phase, stamped by a licensed surveyor or engineer.

Section 6. Assignment, Insurance, and Indemnity

6.1 Assignment. Lessee shall not hypothecate, mortgage, assign, subpermit, transfer, or otherwise alienate this lease ("Assignment"), or any interest therein, without the prior written consent of Borough, which consent shall be at the sole discretion of Borough; however, the Borough will not unduly withhold consent. The consent of Borough to any one assignment shall not constitute a waiver of Borough's right to consent to subsequent assignments, nor shall consent of Borough to any one assignment relieve any party previously liable as Lessee from any obligations under this Lease. The acceptance by Borough of the payment of rent following an assignment shall not constitute consent to any assignment and Borough's consent shall be evidenced only in writing.

Name Change. If during the term of this Agreement Lessee changes its name, Lessee shall provide Borough with documentation legally supporting the name change within 60 days of the effective date of the change. Lessee may contact Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Land and Resource Management Division for a list of acceptable documentation.

6.2 Lessee's Assumption of Liability, and Liability and Casualty Insurance

6.2.1 Assumption of Liability. Borough shall have no responsibility with respect to any aspect of Premises or any activity conducted thereon from and after the effective date of the lease. Lessee shall indemnify and save Borough harmless from any and all liability, damage, expense (including attorney fees and costs), cause of action, suits, claims, or judgments by any reason whatsoever caused or arising out of the use, occupation, and control of Premises by Lessee, Collocated Lessees, invitees, agents, employees, licensees, or permittees except as may arise solely out of the willful act or gross negligence of Borough or Borough's officers, agents, or employees.

6.2.2 Evidence of Insurance. Lessee must furnish evidence of insurance in the form of a Certificate of Insurance satisfactory to Borough, executed by a duly authorized representative of each insurer showing compliance with the insurance requirements set forth below. The Certificate of Insurance must reference the Matanuska Susitna Borough as a certificate holder and shall contain the MSB Agreement number. Before implementing this Agreement, Lessee must provide proof of coverage.

6.2.3 Cancellation. The Certificate(s) of Insurance must provide 45 days written notice to Borough before the cancellation, non-renewal, or material change of any insurance coverage included therein. Notices must be sent to Borough via certified mail.

6.2.4 Minimum Coverage Requirements. The Minimum Coverage Requirements set forth the minimum limits of insurance Lessee must purchase to secure a contract with the Borough. These limits may not be sufficient to cover all liability losses and related claim settlement expenses. Purchase of these minimum limits of coverage does not relieve Lessee from liability for losses and settlement expenses greater than these amounts.

During the term of this Agreement, Lessee must purchase and maintain, and shall require all authorized collocated lessees or independent contractors to maintain while performing work on Premises, the minimum insurance coverages and limits in Exhibit C, which may be increased by Borough at its sole discretion:

The Lessee waives all rights against the Borough for the recovery of damages to the extent they are covered by business auto liability or commercial umbrella liability insurance.

6.3 Self-Insurance. In lieu of the coverages required under Exhibit B Insurance "Minimum Coverage Requirements," Borough at its sole discretion, may accept evidence of self-insurance by Lessee, provided Lessee provides the following:

6.3.1 Lessee shall provide a statement by a CPA or actuary; satisfactory to the Borough that demonstrates Lessee's financial condition is satisfactory to self-insure any of the required insurance coverages.

6.3.2 Borough may require Lessee to provide the above yearly to ensure Lessee's continuing ability to self-insure. If at any time Lessee does not satisfy the self-insurance

requirement, Lessee shall immediately purchase insurance as set forth under "Minimum Coverage Requirements".

6.3.4 Aside from any "self-insurance" guaranteed by the Lessee, it is the responsibility of Lessee to ensure that its contractors, agents, employees, guests, invitees, Collocated Authorized Users, or affiliates in, on, under, or above Premises, any adjoining property, or any other property subject to use by Lessee in conjunction with its use of Premises, meet minimum insurance requirements described above.

Section 7. Indemnity

7.1 Lessee assumes all responsibility, risk, and liability for its activities and use of or contact with the Leasehold. The Lessee shall defend, indemnify, save, and hold harmless the Borough, its elected and appointed officials and officers, agents, and employees, from and against any and all demands, causes of action (whether in the nature of an action for damages, indemnity, contribution, government cost recovery, hazardous materials or otherwise), fines, judgments, suits, claims, actions, proceedings, losses, costs (including full reasonable attorney's fees and costs), expenses, charges, forfeitures, liens, liabilities, settlements, penalties, and damages of any kind or nature whatsoever, including, but not limited to those alleging personal injury, wrongful death, nuisance property damage, economic loss, damages, violation of statutes, ordinances, constitutions, or other laws, rules, or regulations, contractual claims, environmental contamination (including any disposal, release, spill or discharge or any threatened disposal, release, spill, or discharge of, or contamination by hazardous materials), and environmental noncompliance (including the Lessee's failure to provide all information, make all submissions, and take all steps required by the authority under the environmental laws or any other law concerning any spill, discharge, or contamination), or any other kind of loss, tangible or intangible, sustained by any person, or property arising out of, in connection with, directly or indirectly from, or otherwise incident to Lessee's, Lessee's officers, agents, employees, partners, attorneys, suppliers, and subcontractors' Leasehold activities or performance related to this lease in any way whatsoever or use of or contact with the Leasehold, except to the extent the sole legal cause of injury or damage is the negligence or willful misconduct of the Lessor or anyone acting on the Lessor's behalf. This defense and indemnification responsibility includes claims alleging acts or omission by the Lessor or its agents which are said to have contributed to the losses, failure, violations, or damage. However, the Lessee shall not be responsible for any damages or claim arising from the sole negligence or willful misconduct of the Lessor, its agents, or employees.

7.1.1 The obligations of the Lessee to indemnify the Lessor under the terms of this lease shall survive transfer, assignment, or other disposition of an interest in this lease as well as the expiration, forfeiture, relinquishment, abandonment, or other termination of this lease.

7.1.2 The Lessee shall name the Lessor as an additional insured on all insurance policies obtained and maintained by the Lessee. Any insurance purchased by the Lessee under this section will not be construed to limit in any way the Lessee's liabilities or responsibilities under this lease.

7.2 If any portion of this clause is voided by law or a court of competent jurisdiction the remainder of the clause shall remain enforceable.

Section 8. Default and Termination.

8.1 Breach by Lessee. In the event of any breach of any provision of this Lease by Lessee, the breach, whether material or not, shall be deemed a default entitling Borough to cancel this Lease and seek any other remedies set forth in this Lease or otherwise available at law or equity, after Borough has delivered to Lessee notice of the breach and a demand that the same be remedied immediately. Lessee shall not be in default if the breach pertains to the payment of money and Lessee cures the breach within twenty (20) days of receipt of the notice, or if the breach pertains to a matter other than the payment of any monies due under this lease, and Lessee promptly commences to cure the breach and cures the breach within forty-five (45) days after receipt of the notice.

8.2 Re-entry. In the event of any default by Lessee, Borough shall have the right, with or without canceling the Lease, to re-enter the Premises and remove all persons and property from Premises and take whatever actions may be necessary or advisable to relet, protect or preserve the Premises. Borough shall not be responsible for any damages or losses suffered by Lessee as a result of such re-entry, removal, storage, or other disposition, and no such action shall be construed as an election to terminate this Lease unless a written notice of termination is given to Lessee.

8.3 Termination of Agreements. Borough may terminate this lease for default by Lessee and subject to any non-disturbance and attornment agreements, if any, Borough shall have a right to terminate any and all subpermits, licenses, concessions, or other arrangement for possession affecting Premises.

8.4 Right to Cure. If Lessee fails to perform any undertaking or promise contained herein, Borough shall have the right but not the obligation to make such performance thirty (30) days after expiration of the notice to cure defaults stated above. Borough's expenditures to correct Lessee's failure to perform shall be reimbursed by Lessee.

8.5 Remedies Cumulative. The specified remedies to which Borough or Lessee may resort under the terms of this permit are cumulative and are not intended to be exclusive of any other remedies or means of redress to which Borough or Lessee may lawfully be entitled in case of any breach or threatened breach by Borough or Lessee of any provision of this permit.

8.6 Insolvency. If a receiver or trustee is appointed to take possession of all or substantially all of the assets of Lessee; or if any action is taken or suffered by Lessee pursuant to an insolvency, bankruptcy or reorganization act; or if Lessee makes a general assignment for the benefit of its creditors; and if such appointment, action or assignment continues for a period of thirty (30) days, it shall, at Borough's option, constitute a material breach by Lessee.

8.7 Termination Upon Notice. Lessor or Lessee may terminate this agreement for any reason or

for no reason upon 180 days prior written notice.

Section 9. Access and Driveway Maintenance.

9.1 Access. Provisions for access to Premises are as follows:

9.1.1 No Access. Access to this site will be from Talkeetna Spur Road. Lessee is solely responsible for constructing legal driveway access to Premises. All driveway construction will be in compliance with current Matanuska Susitna Borough road construction standards. Lessee is responsible for obtaining any necessary permits for driveway construction. Such access must contain a provision that entitles Borough to use the access as a licensee to the extent necessary to administer this lease.

9.1.2 Restricting Access. Lessee will, at its sole expense, restrict public access to the Premises and Tower by construction of at least a 6-foot chain link gated fence around the cell tower site. Access to borough property and tower site property outside the fence will be limited by a locked, gated driveway.

9.2 Driveway Repair/Maintenance. Lessee shall repair or cause to be repaired at its sole cost and expense that damage to said driveway.

9.3 Improvements. Lessee shall construct no improvements to roads where access has been provided by Borough without the prior written consent of Borough, which shall not be unreasonably withheld. Unless Borough agrees to share in the cost of the improvement in writing, the improvements shall be at the sole cost of the improver.

9.4 Insurance. The provisions under Section 6 – Assignment, Insurance, and Indemnity- shall apply to Lessee's use of roads or driveways authorized herein.

9.5 Time Restrictions. Road or driveway maintenance shall take place after June 15 and prior to October 15 of each year. Lessee shall provide Borough with a driveway or road (for any borough roads involved) maintenance plan to be accepted by Borough prior to June 1 of each year. MTA Communications, LLC plans to use snowmachines for winter access, as needed.

Section 10. Improvements.

10.1 Site Plan. Lessee has submitted and Borough has accepted a site plan, which is attached as Exhibit C. Lessee shall not construct any improvement unless such improvements are authorized in an approved site plan. The plan shall not be changed without prior written acceptance by Borough.

10.2 Utilities. Prior to excavation, clearing, or construction, Lessee will employ a utility locator service, at no cost to Borough, to check the permit area for buried utilities.

10.3 Unauthorized Improvements. All improvements made on Premises without the written

consent of Borough are unauthorized and shall, at the option of Borough, be removed by Lessee, be removed by Borough at the cost to Lessee, or become the property of Borough.

10.4 Maintenance and Repair of Improvements. Lessee shall maintain and repair all improvements owned by Lessee, at its own cost.

10.5 Removal of Improvements. Lessee shall remove all Lessee owned improvements, including fixtures, from Premises within sixty (60) days from the Termination Date unless otherwise provided herein. In the event Borough authorizes Lessee owned improvements to remain past the sixty-day period, Lessee shall pay to Borough the contract rent then in effect from the Termination Date until the improvements are removed. If Lessee fails to remove the improvements at the end of the sixty day period where no extension has been granted or at the end of such other period authorized by Borough, Lessee shall be in trespass, and such improvements shall be deemed unauthorized improvements subject to disposition as set forth in Section 9.3.

10.6 As-Built Drawing. Within 30 days after the completion of construction, Lessee shall provide Borough with an 8-1/2 x 11 inch as-built drawing of the site stamped by a licensed surveyor or engineer. As-built drawing must establish the location and dimensions of all improvements constructed or installed, including tower, tower footings, surface structures (cabinets), fences, and utilities, and must provide bearings and distances to an established survey point in a form consistent with generally accepted professional standards and any special survey instructions issued. This As-Built is in addition to the required Record of Survey for the site.

Section 11. Miscellaneous.

11.1 No Partnership. Borough is not a partner nor a joint venturer with Lessee in connection with the business carried on under this permit and shall have no obligation with respect to Lessee's debts or other liabilities.

11.2 Non-Waiver. Waiver by either party of strict performance or any provisions of this permit shall not be a waiver of nor prejudice the party's right to require strict performance of the same provision in the future or of any other provision.

11.3 Venue and Choice of Law. Any dispute arising out of this Lease shall be governed by the laws of the State of Alaska. Venue for resolving such disputes shall be in State of Alaska, Third Judicial District at Palmer and not elsewhere.

11.4 Interpretation and Numbering. This lease has been submitted to the scrutiny of all parties hereto and their counsel if desired, and shall be given a fair and reasonable interpretation in accordance with the words hereof, without consideration or weight being given to its having been drafted by any party hereto or its counsel. Section numbers or titles are not to be considered in interpreting this permit.

11.5 Notices.

11.5.1 Any notice given under this lease shall be deemed received when delivered by hand or three (3) days after deposit in the United States mail with proper first class postage affixed addressed to the parties authorized representatives.

11.5.2 Changes of address may be given in accordance with this section. Lessee shall notify Borough within seven (7) calendar days of any change of address, business name, contact person's name or other changes that may affect the permit.

11.6 Liens. Lessee shall not suffer nor permit any lien to be filed against Lessee's interest in Premises or any improvement thereon by reason of work, labor, services or materials performed or supplied to Lessee or anyone holding Premises or any part thereof under the lease. If any such lien is filed against Lessee's interest or any improvements thereon, Lessee shall cause the same to be discharged of record within thirty (30) days after the date of filing the same unless other arrangements are authorized in writing by Borough. Lessee shall indemnify Borough for any costs, damages or expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred as a result of the filing of such liens or in obtaining their discharge whether such costs, damages or expenses were incurred prior or subsequent to permit termination.

11.7 Force Majeure. Borough's or Lessee's failure to perform any of its obligations under this lease shall be excused if due to causes beyond its control and without the fault or negligence of Borough or Lessee, including but not restricted to acts of God, acts of the public enemy, vandalism, fires, lightning, floods, epidemics or labor strikes.

11.8 Preservation of Markers. Any legal land subdivision survey corners, reference points or monuments are to be preserved. If such are destroyed or disturbed by Lessee, Lessee shall re-establish them by a licensed land surveyor in accordance with U. S. General Land Office standards at their own expense. Corners, reference points, or monuments that must necessarily be disturbed or destroyed in the process of carrying out the operations allowed by this lease must be adequately referenced and/or replaced. Such references must be approved by Borough prior to removal of said corners, reference points, or monuments.

11.9 Condemnation. If all of Premises is taken by any public authority under the power of eminent domain, this lease shall terminate as of the date possession was taken by said public authority pursuant to such condemnation. If any part of Premises is so taken and, in the opinion of either Borough or Lessee, it is not economically feasible to continue this lease in effect, either party may terminate this lease. Such termination by either party shall be made by notice to the other given not later than thirty (30) days after possession is so taken, the termination to be effective as of the later of thirty (30) days after said notice or the date possession is taken. If part of Premises is so taken and neither Borough nor Lessee elects to terminate this lease, or until termination is effective, as the case may be, the rental shall be abated in the same proportion as the portion of Premises so taken bears to the whole of Premises. All damages awarded for the taking or damaging of all or any part of Premises, or Borough-owned improvements thereon, shall belong to and become the property of Borough and Lessee hereby assigns to Borough any and all claims to such award. However,

Borough shall not claim any interest in or to personal property or authorized improvements belonging to Lessee.

11.10 Discriminatory Acts Prohibited. Lessee in its use or occupancy of the Leased Premises, shall not discriminate against any person or class of persons by reason of sex, race, color, creed, or national origin and shall comply with all federal regulations and laws in regard to discrimination.

11.11 Recordation of Lease. This Lease shall be recorded, along with all Exhibits and attachments therefrom, and which recording expense shall be borne by the Lessee.

11.12 Proprietary Information/Public Disclosure. Materials or information submitted as required in this Agreement shall become public records within the meaning MSB 1.50.030 and A.S. 40.25.110.

Any submitted materials or information that the Lessee claims as exempt from disclosure under the provisions of MSB 1.50.040 and A.S. 40.25.110 must be clearly designated. The page must be identified and the particular exemption from disclosure upon which the Lessee will rely upon in making the claim for exemption must be identified. Making the entire submitted materials or information exempt from disclosure is not acceptable unless warranted.

The Borough will consider a Lessee's request for documents to be exempt from disclosure; however, the Borough will make an independent decision on the applicability of any claimed exemption. If a public records request is made regarding materials that the Lessee has requested be exempt, the affected Lessee will be given notice of the request and allowed to seek a court injunction against the requested disclosure prior to the Borough fulfilling the public records request.

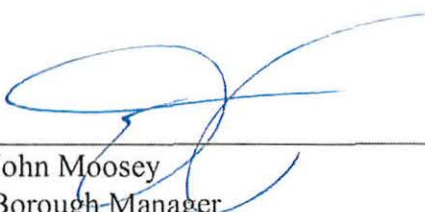
Section 12. Exhibits. This Lease is subject to the terms and conditions of exhibits referenced herein, which are attached hereto and by this reference, made a part hereof.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A	Legal Description
Exhibit B	Driveway and Site
Exhibit C	Insurance
Exhibit D	Record of Survey to Amend Exhibit A

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Lessor and Lessee have duly executed and acknowledged this Lease for on the dates indicated below.

MATANUSKA SUSITNA BOROUGH




John Moosey
Borough Manager

STATE OF ALASKA)
)ss.
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 11th day of August, 2016, by John Moosey, the Manager of MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH, on behalf of the municipal corporation.




Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: April 20, 2020

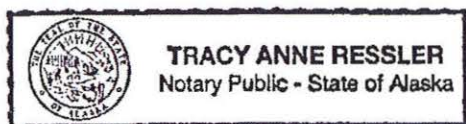
MTA COMMUNICATIONS, LLC

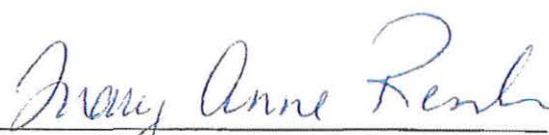


ERIC ANDERSON
DIRECTOR, MTA COMMUNICATIONS LLC

STATE OF ALASKA)
)ss.
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 11 day of August 2016, by Eric Anderson, the authorized representative of MTA Communications, LLC, on behalf of the limited liability company.




Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 3-23-19

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EXHIBIT A

The Leased Premises are legally described as follows:

Parcel 1:

Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Seward Meridian

Section 19: SE1/4SE1/4NW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4NE1/4.

Containing 20 acres, more or less,

According to the official U.S. Survey Plat of a portion of Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Seward Meridian, examined and approved by the U.S. Surveyor General's Office in Juneau, Alaska on January 15, 1919.; and

Parcel 2:

Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Seward Meridian

Section 19: SW1/4SW1/4NE1/4

Containing 10 acres, more or less,

According to the official U.S. Survey Plat of a portion of Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Seward Meridian, examined and approved by the U.S. Surveyor General's Office in Juneau, Alaska on January 15, 1919.

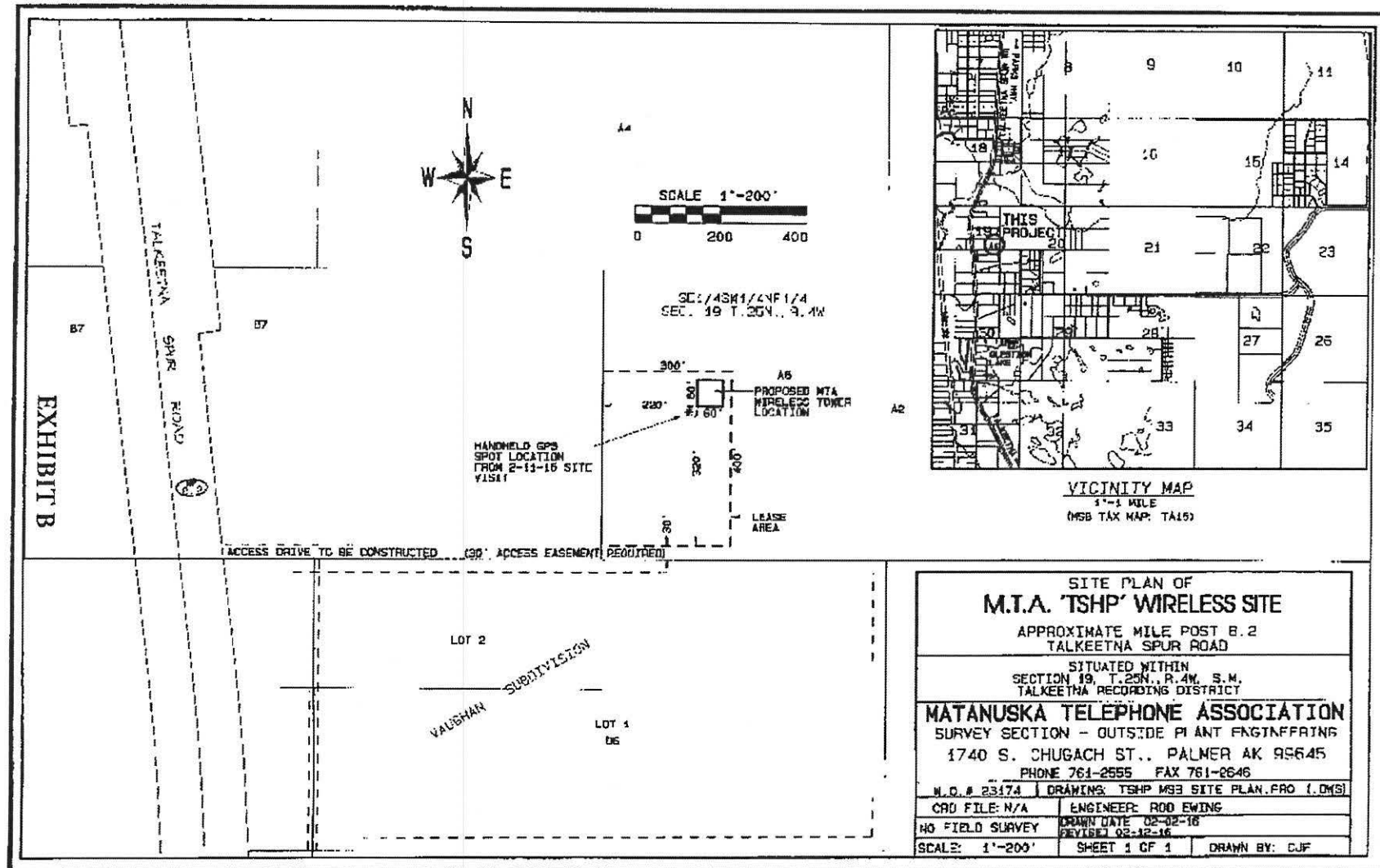


EXHIBIT C

INSURANCE
(Lessee/Permittee/Manager)

It is specifically agreed between the parties executing this Agreement that it is not intended by any of the provisions of the Agreement to create in the public or any member thereof a third party benefit hereunder, or to authorize anyone not a party to this Agreement to maintain a suit for personal injuries or property damage pursuant to the terms or provisions of this Agreement.

It is highly recommended that the Lessee/Permittee/Manager confer with their respective insurance companies or brokers to determine if their insurance program complies with the Lessor's Insurance requirements.

The Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall procure and maintain the following insurance:

A. Minimum Scope of Insurance

Coverage shall be at least as broad as:

1. Insurance Services office form number CG 0001 (Edition 10/01) covering Commercial General Liability.
2. Insurance Services office form number CA 0001 (Edition 10/99) covering Automobile Liability, symbol 1 "any auto."
3. Worker's Compensation insurance as required by the State of Alaska and Employers Liability Insurance.
4. Builders risk for any leasehold development to cover:
 - a. building materials (installed and uninstalled) and supplies on the job site, in storage, and in transit;
 - b. temporary structures, foundations, and excavation sites;
 - c. equipment, scaffolding, and fences;
 - d. theft, flood, sinkholes, fire, earthquakes, and other weather-related damage; and
 - e. design error, faulty workmanship, changes in laws;
5. Protection and Indemnity Insurance if operating a vessel or engaged in any activities creating liability traditionally covered by maritime insurance, if applicable. Insurance shall cover crew and third-party liability and coverage shall not be less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.
6. Environmental/Pollution Liability insurance to cover any activities arising out of the Lessee's operations.

B. Minimum Limits of Insurance

Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall maintain limits no less than:

1. General Liability:

\$1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, property damage, personal injury and advertising injury. The general aggregate limit shall be \$1,000,000 minimum. The general aggregate limits shall apply separately to each project.

General liability insurance shall be maintained in effect throughout the term of the Agreement.

If the general liability insurance is written on a claim made form, the Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall provide insurance for a period of two years after termination or expiration of this Agreement. The policy(s) shall evidence a retroactive date, no later than the beginning of this Agreement.

2. Auto Liability:

\$1,000,000 combined single limit per accident for bodily injury and property damage.

3. Worker's Compensation and Employers Liability:

Worker's Compensation shall be statutory as required by the State of Alaska. Employer's liability shall be endorsed to the following minimum limits:

Bodily injury by Accident -	\$100,000 each accident
Bodily injury by Disease -	\$100,000 each employee
Bodily injury by Disease -	\$500,000 policy limit

4. Builders risk: Minimum would be determined by cost of project. This insurance may be provided by the Lessee or Lessee's contractor.

5. Protection and Indemnity (P&I),
If applicable, minimum \$1,000,000.

6. Environmental/Pollution Liability.

A policy providing coverage for claims involving transport, remediation, storage, disposal, or other handling of hazardous materials or waste arising out of the Lessee's operations. Such Pollution Liability policy shall provide at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence/aggregate coverage for bodily injury and property damage.

7. Excess Liability:

In order to meet the required minimum limits of insurance it is permissible for the Lessee/Permittee/Manager to combine an excess liability or umbrella policy with the general liability, auto liability or employer's liability. In the instance where the Lessee/ Permittee/ Manager purchases an excess liability or umbrella policy the occurrence limit and the aggregate limit may be of the same amount.

C. Deductibles and Self-Insured Retention

Prior to occupancy, any deductible or self-insured retention must be declared and approved by the Lessor. Lessee/Permittee/Manager may be requested to demonstrate how the deductible or self-insured retention will be funded in the event of a claim. At the option of the Lessor, the Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall reduce or eliminate such deductibles or self-insured retention as respects the Lessor, its officers, officials, employees and volunteers; or the Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall procure a bond guaranteeing payment of losses and related investigations, claim administration, and defense expenses.

D. Other Insurance Provisions

The policies are to contain, or be endorsed to contain, the following provisions:

1. General Liability, Automobile Liability

- a. The Lessor, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers shall be covered as additional insured as respects: liability arising out of activities performed by or on behalf of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager; products and completed operations of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager; premises owned, occupied or used by the Lessee/ Permittee/ Manager or automobiles owned, leased, hired or borrowed by the Lessee/Permittee/Manager. The coverage shall contain no special limitation on the scope of protection afforded to the Lessor, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers.
- b. The Lessee/Permittee/Manager's insurance coverage shall be primary insurance as respects the Lessor, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers. Any insurance or self-insurance maintained by the Lessor, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers shall be excess of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager insurance and shall not contribute to it.
- c. The Lessee/Permittee/Manager insurance shall apply separately to each insured against whom claim is made or suit is brought, except with respect to the limits of the insurer's liability.

2. Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability

The insurer shall agree to waive all rights of subrogation against the Lessors, its Administrator, officers, officials, employees, and volunteers for losses arising from work performed by the Lessee/Permittee/Manager or any subcontractor of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager in relation to this Agreement.

3. All Insurance

Each insurance policy required by this Agreement shall be endorsed to state that coverage shall not be suspended, voided, canceled by either party, reduced in coverage or in limits except after 30 days prior written notice for nonpayment of premium or fraud on the part of the Lessee/Permittee/Manager or 60 days prior written notice for any other reason by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the Lessors. *Such notice shall be mailed to the attention of the Lessors's Land Management representative.*

E. Acceptability of Insurers

Insurance is to be placed with insurers with a Best's rating of no less than A-VII.

F. Verification of Coverage

Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall furnish the Lessors with certificates of insurance and with certified copies of all endorsements effecting coverage required by this clause. The certificates and endorsements for each insurance policy are to be signed by a person authorized by that insurer to bind coverage on its behalf. The certificates are to be on forms acceptable to the Lessors. All certificates are to be received and approved by the Lessors before occupancy commences. The Lessors reserves the rights to require complete, certified copies of all required insurance policies, at any time.

G. Subcontractors

Lessee/Permittee/Manager shall include all subcontractors and as insured under its policies or shall furnish separate certificates and endorsements for each subcontractor. All coverage for subcontractors shall be subject to all requirements stated herein.

H. Lapse in Insurance Coverage

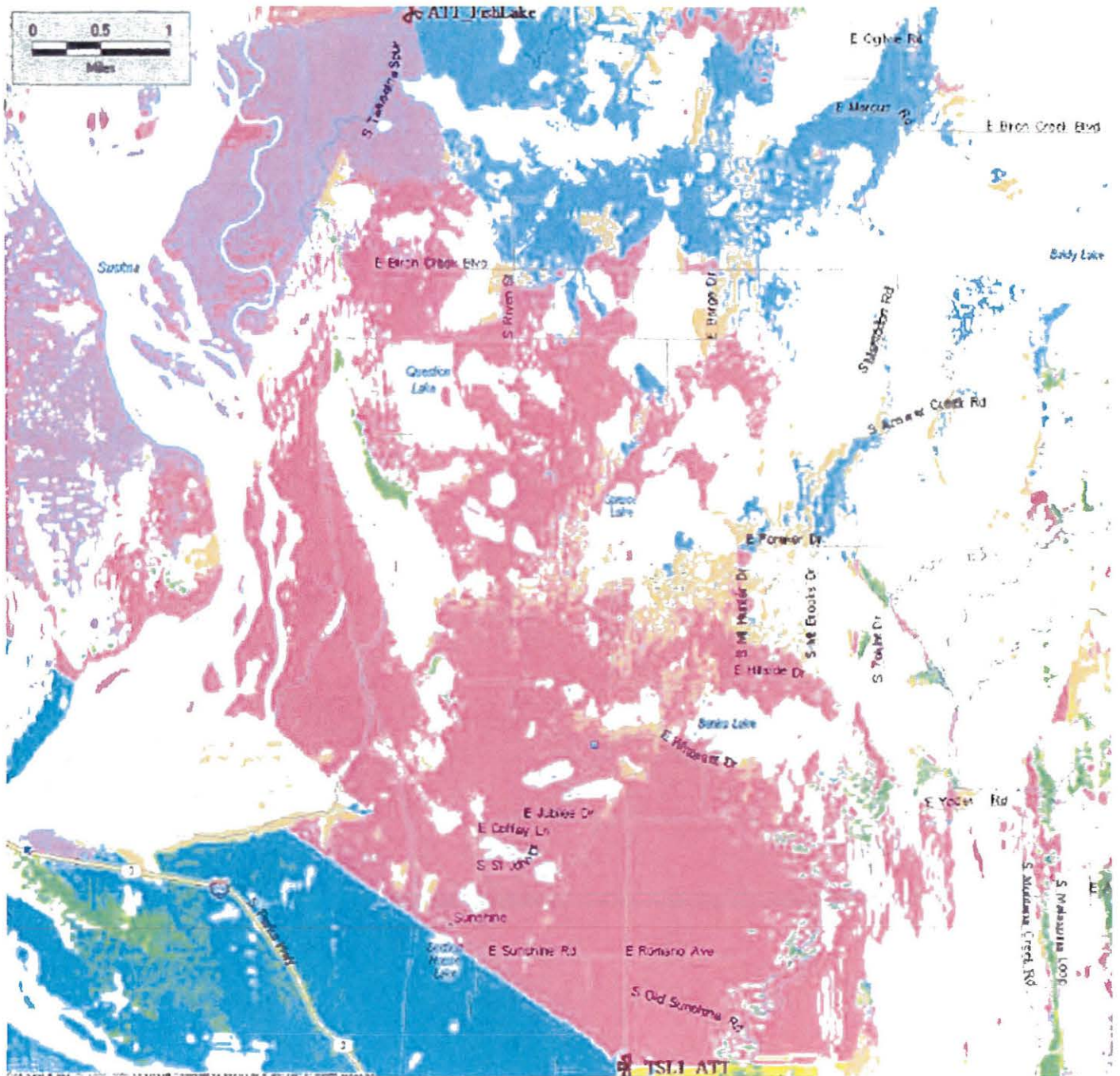
A lapse in insurance coverage, any change that restricts, reduces insurance provided, or changes name of insured without Lessors approval is a material breach of this agreement, which shall result in immediate termination of the agreement.

EXHIBIT D – RECORD OF SURVEY TO AMEND EXHIBIT A

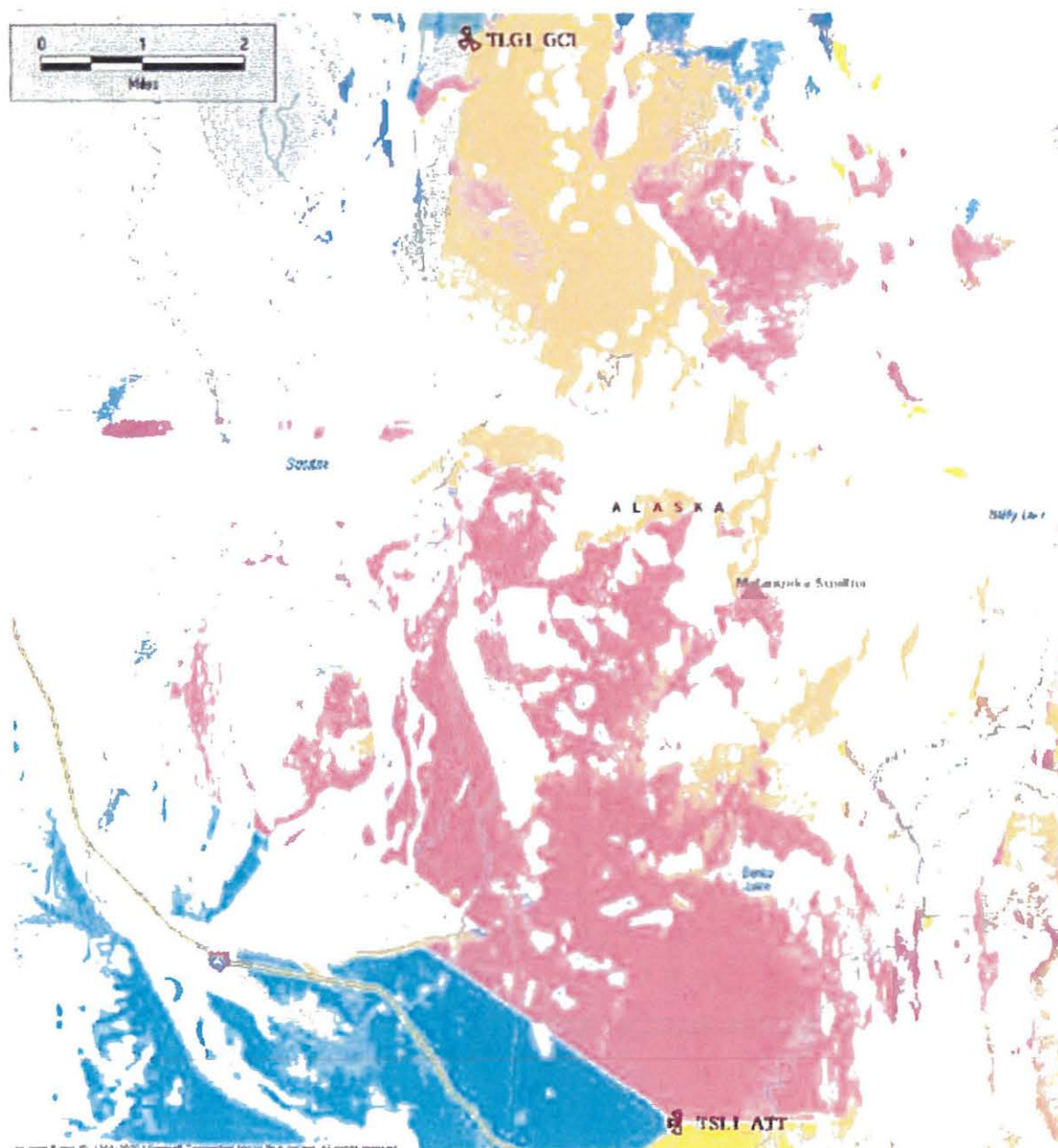
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Exhibit E

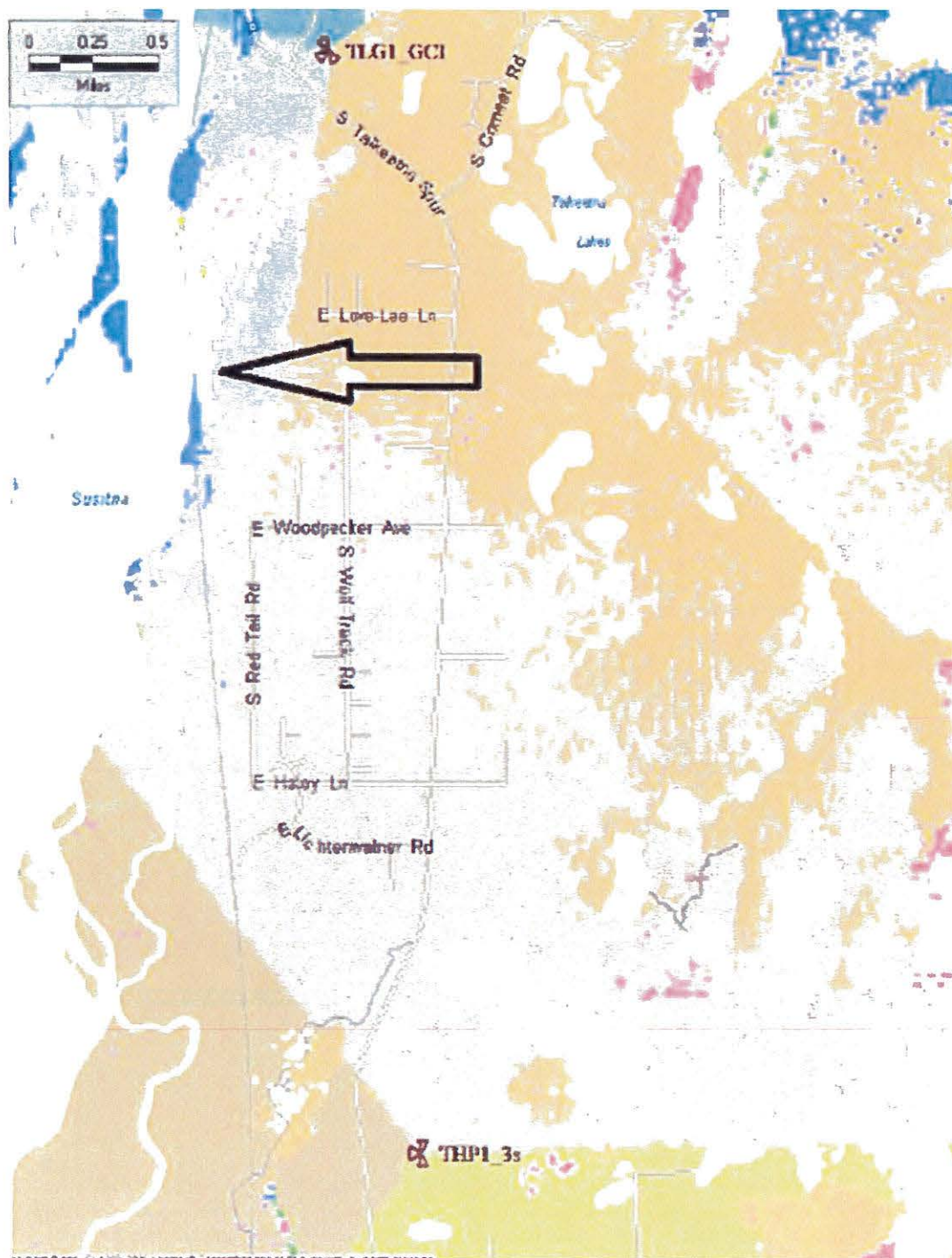
Propagation Maps



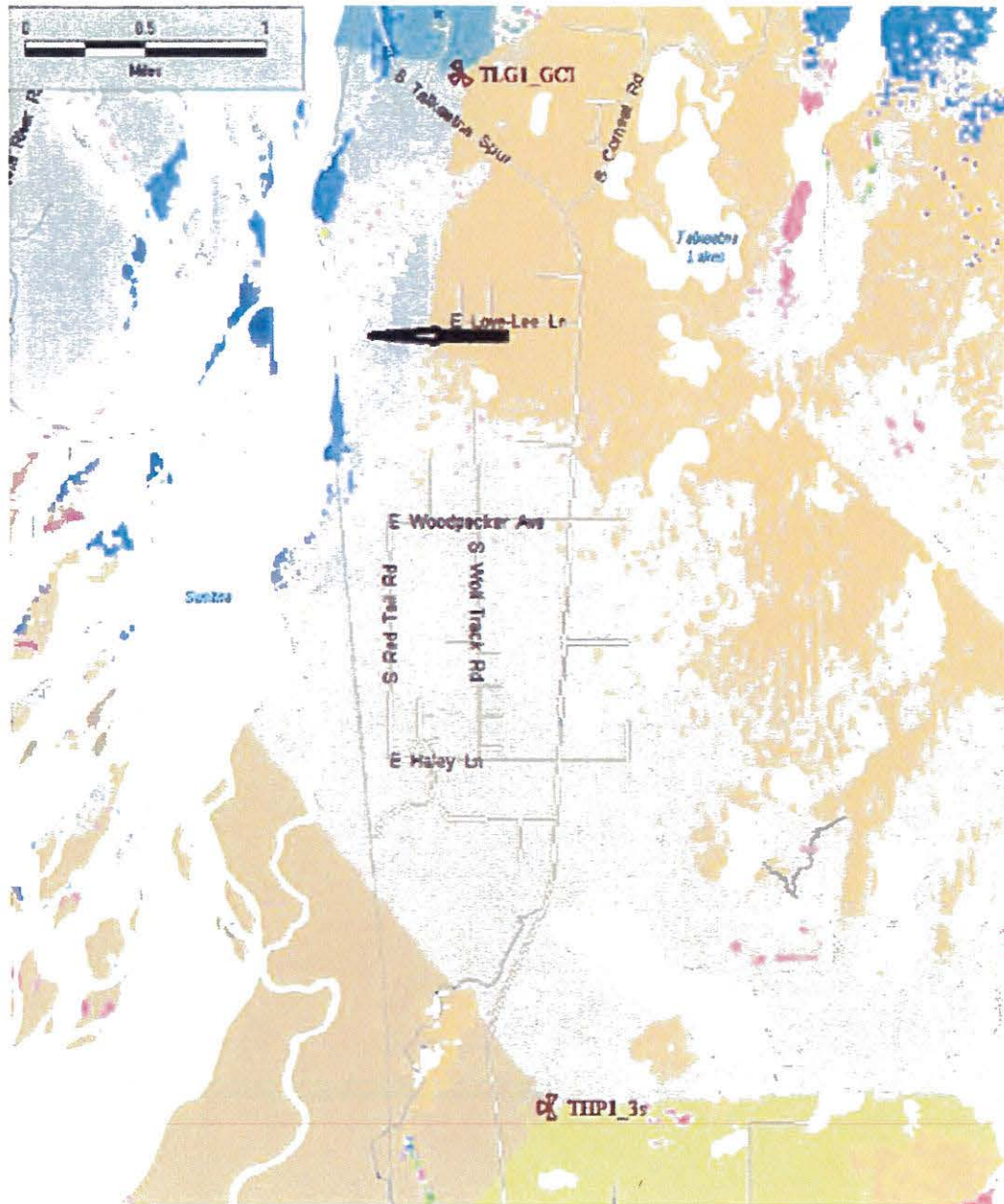
Fish Lake South Existing Monopole Co-Lo Evaluation



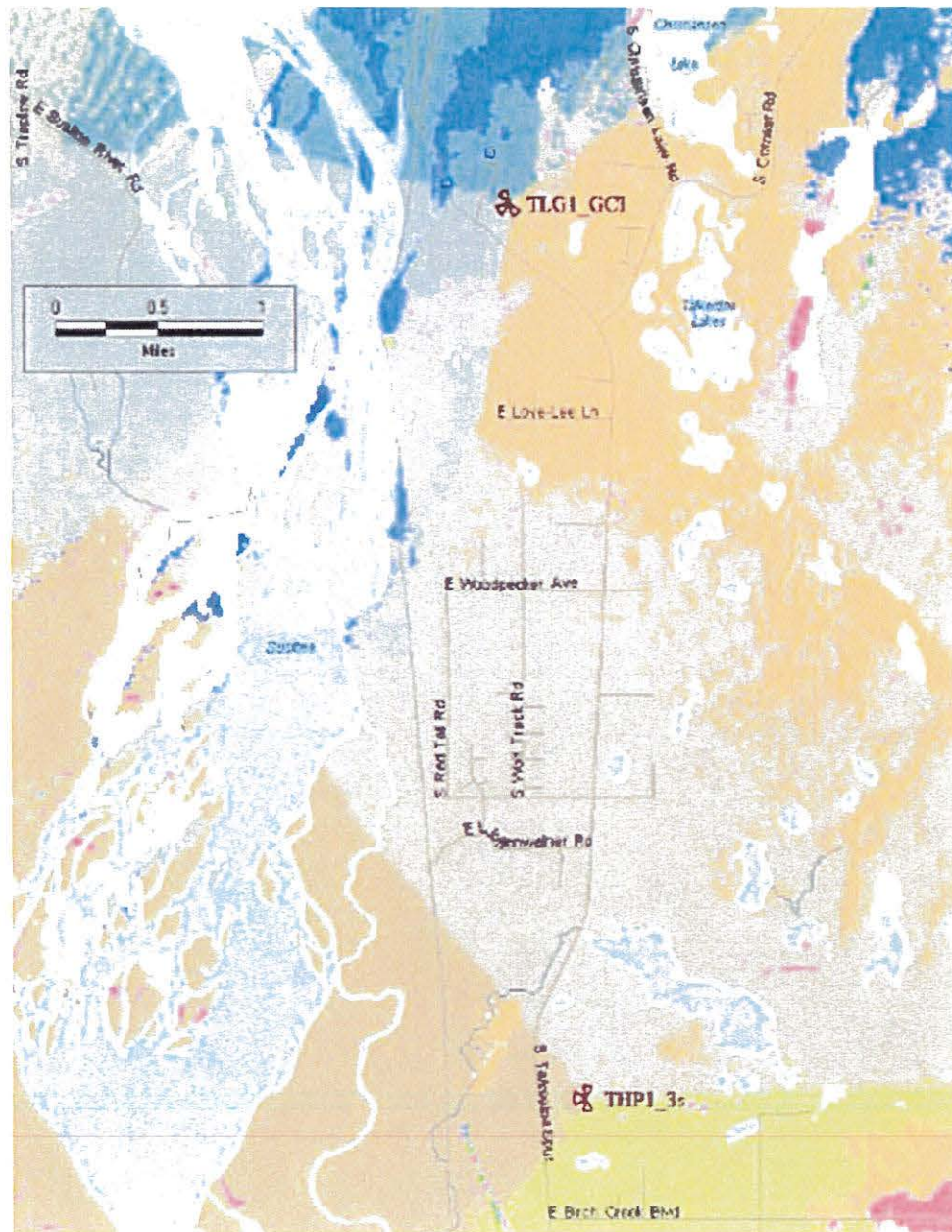
THP1 Site – Inactive (current coverage)



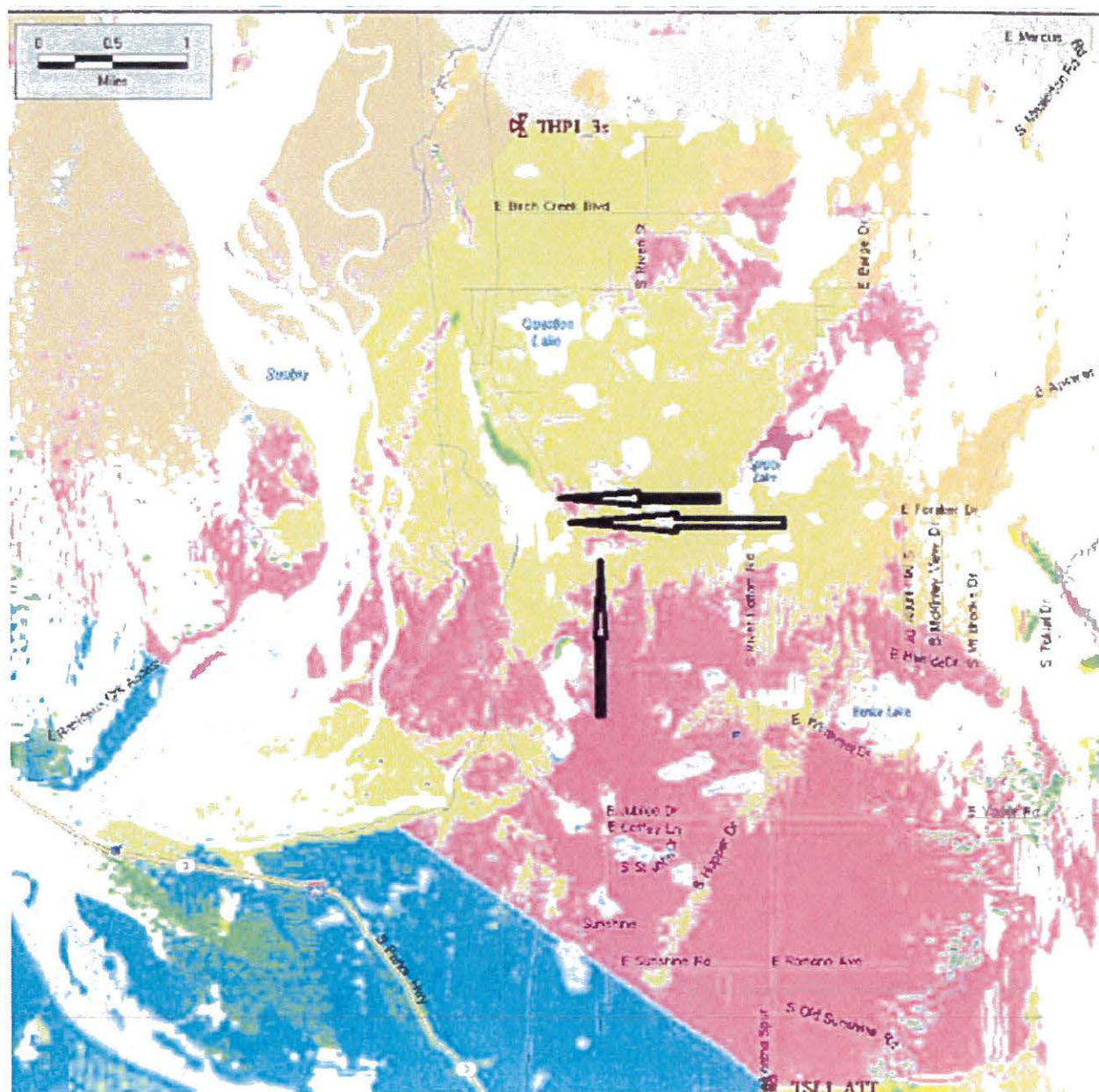
THP1 Site – 120 feet North



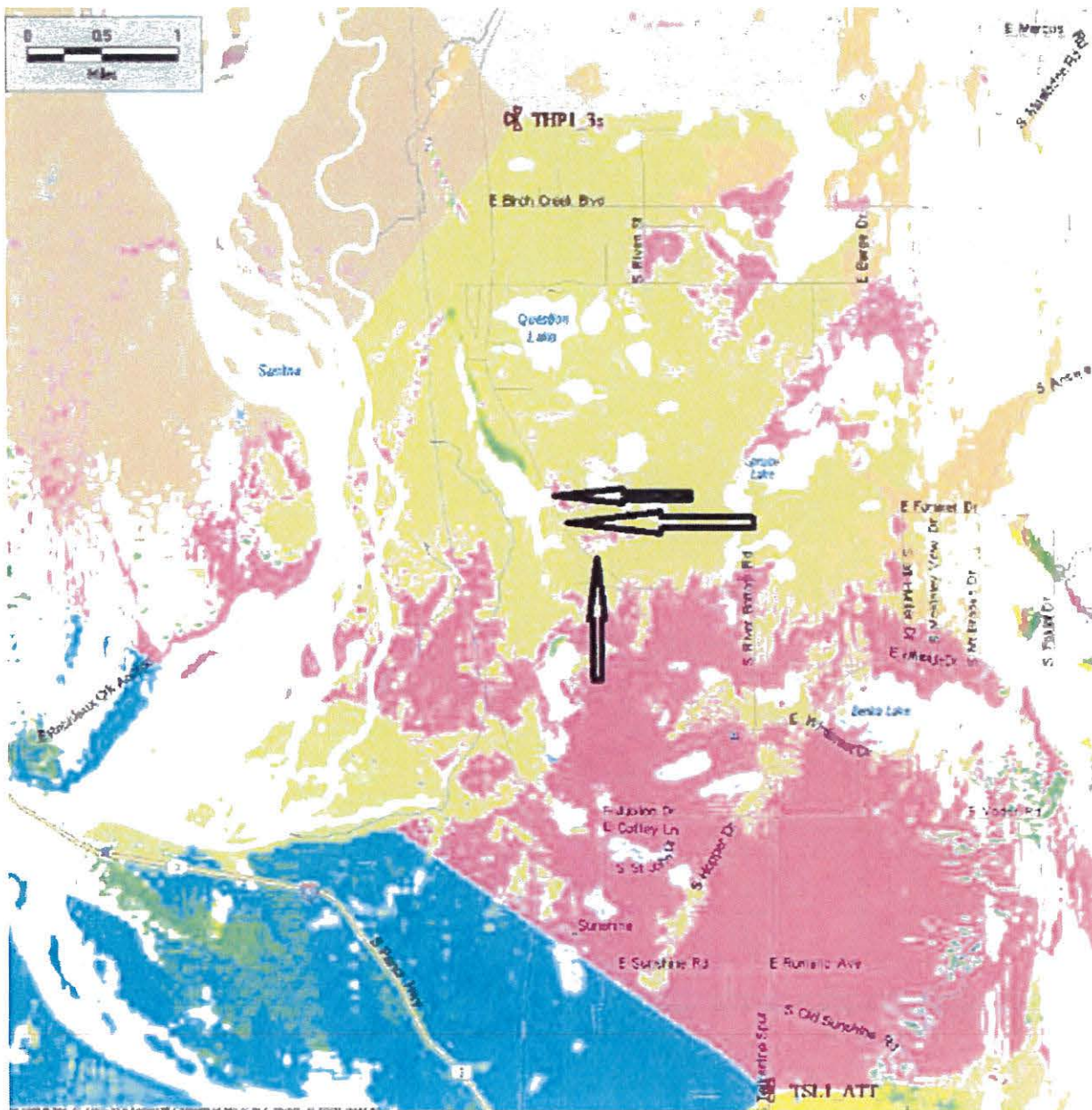
THP1 Site – 150 feet North



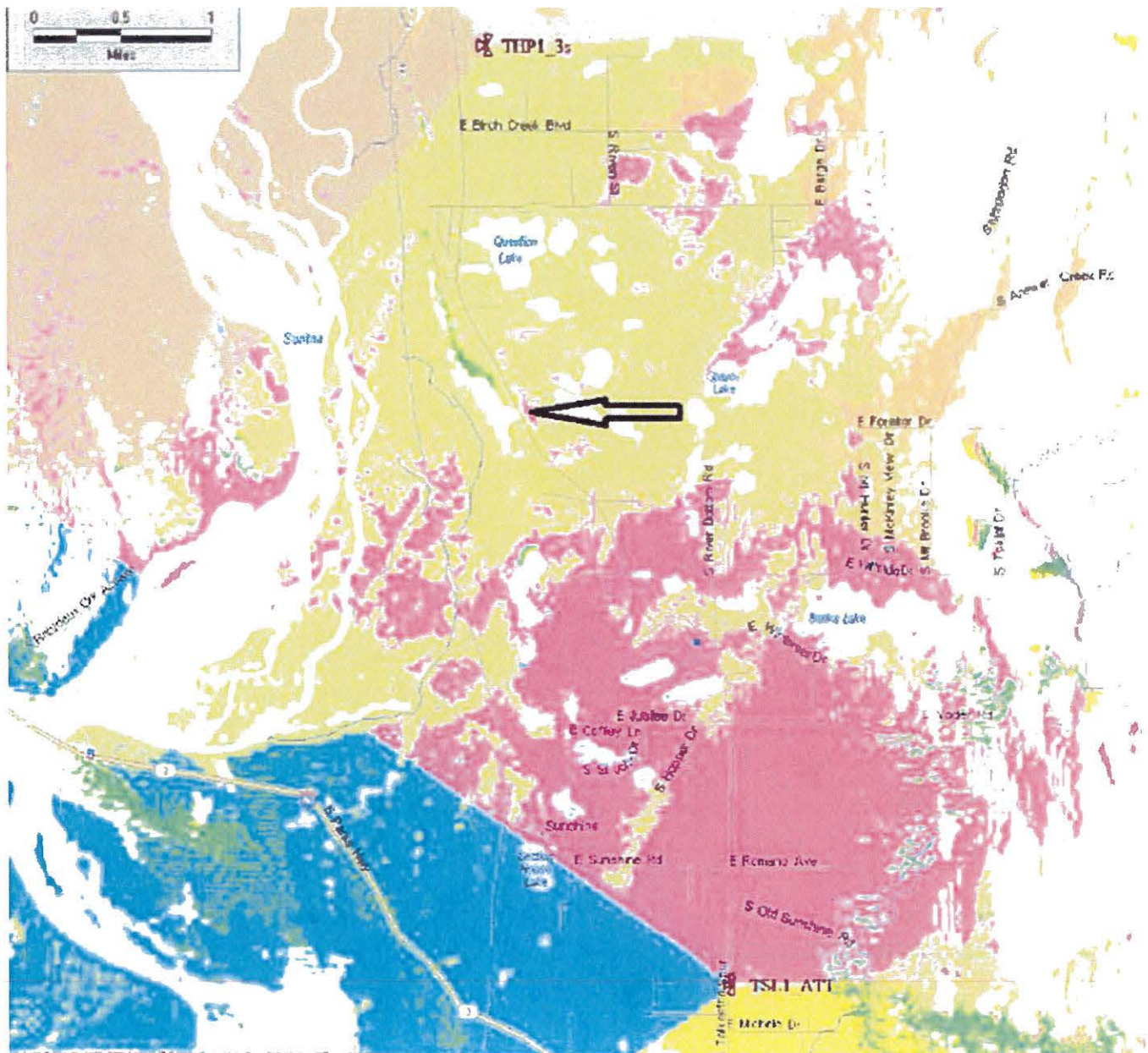
THP1 Site – 200 Feet North



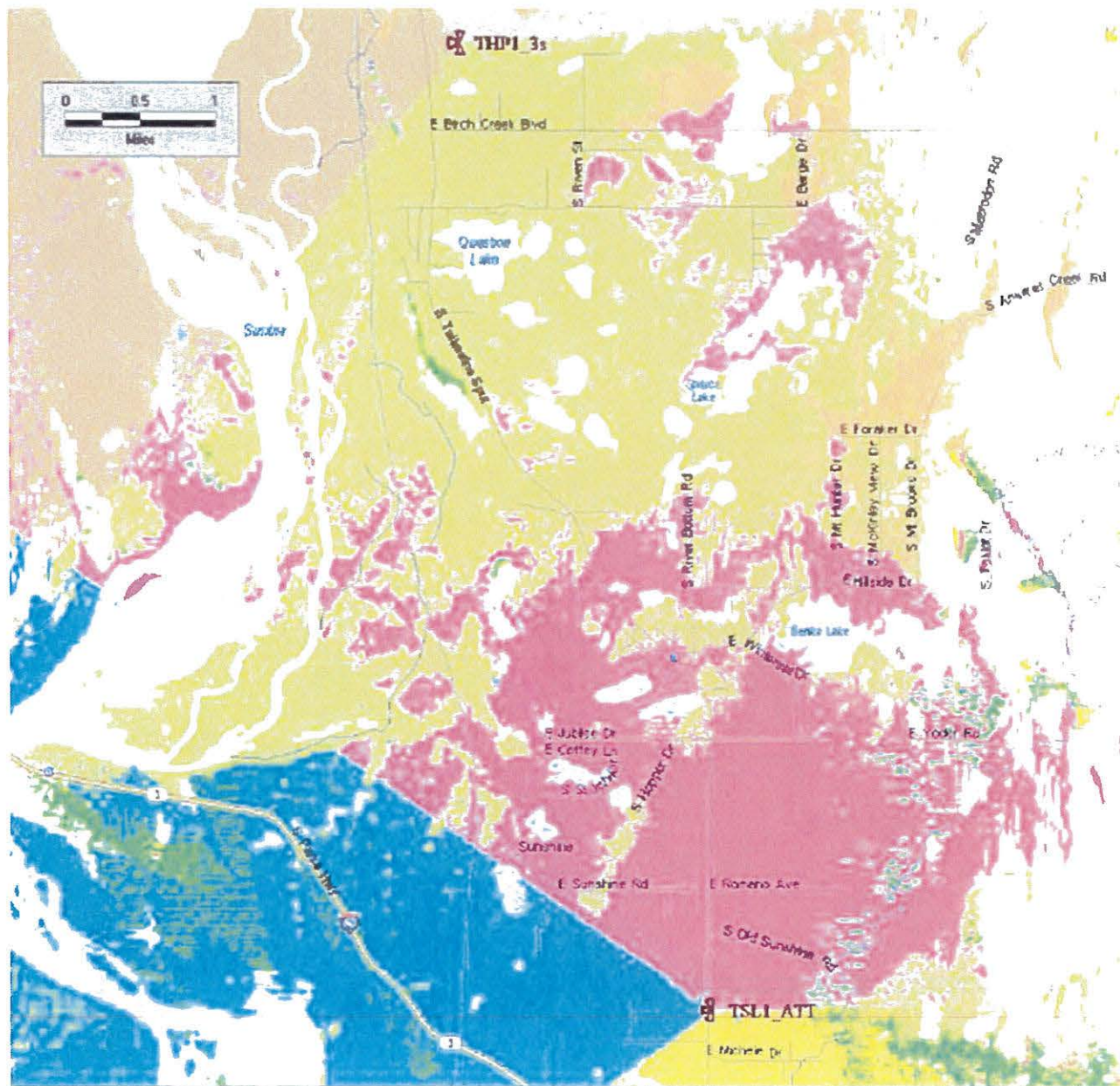
THP1 Site – 120 feet South



THP1 Site – 150 feet South



THP1 Site – 180 Feet South

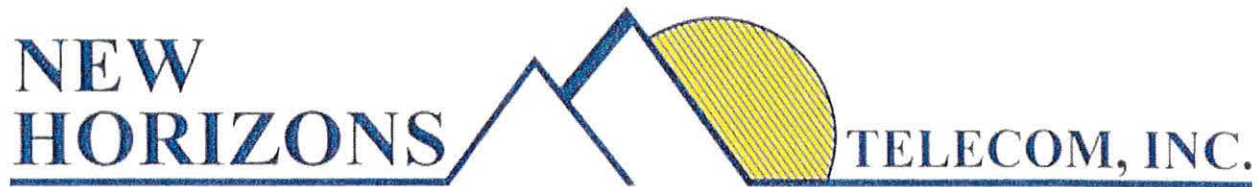


THP1 Site – 200 Feet South

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Exhibit F

Notification Letter, Mailing List,
Meeting Sign in, and Meeting Summary



*Program & Project Management, Engineering Design, Permitting, Construction, Installation, Integration
- Your Turnkey Providers -*

June 3, 2016

TO: Neighbors of 29625 S Talkeetna Spur
Legal Description - Township 25N Range 4W Section 19 Lot A6

This letter is to notify area Neighbors that MTA Communications (MTAC) will be making an application for Site THP1 a Conditional Use Permit for the placement of a 205 foot tall lattice type self-supporting antenna structure (200 foot tower and 5 foot lightning rod) on the parcel referenced above. The attached Matanuska-Susitna Borough Land Information Parcel Report and google earth image, show both the parcel location and the proposed tower placement. Site access will be from a proposed driveway off Talkeetna Spur Road.

MTAC will present the proposed placement on Monday, June 20, 2016, at the at the Talkeetna Public Library. The meeting begins at 6PM and the address is 24645 Talkeetna Spur Road, Talkeetna, Alaska.

The construction of this antenna structure will provide enhanced and improved wireless communications for personal, business and emergency service in the area. Representatives from MTAC will be present to answer questions or concerns from the community.

As a nearby property owner to the proposed facility you are entitled to this information pursuant to Matanuska Susitna Borough, Chapter 17.67.050 Borough Municipal Code. For your convenience, the language provided for this notification is as follows:

Prior to applying for a conditional use permit for a new tall structure, the potential applicant shall hold at least one community meeting.

New Horizons Telecom, Inc. is the agent for MTAC for this conditional use application. If you have any questions pertaining to the proposed notification, please contact Sherrie Greenshields; Site Acquisition Consultant, with New Horizons Telecom Inc., 901 Cope Industrial Way, Palmer, AK 99645, at the information below.

Respectfully,

Sherrie Greenshields, Site Acquisition Consultant
sgreenshields@nhtusa.com
907-761-6057 office; 907-315-3201 cell

Attachments: Mat-Su Borough Comment Form; Permit Center ½ mile offset from Parcel; Antenna Structure Proposed Site Location



FIRST CLASS MAIL

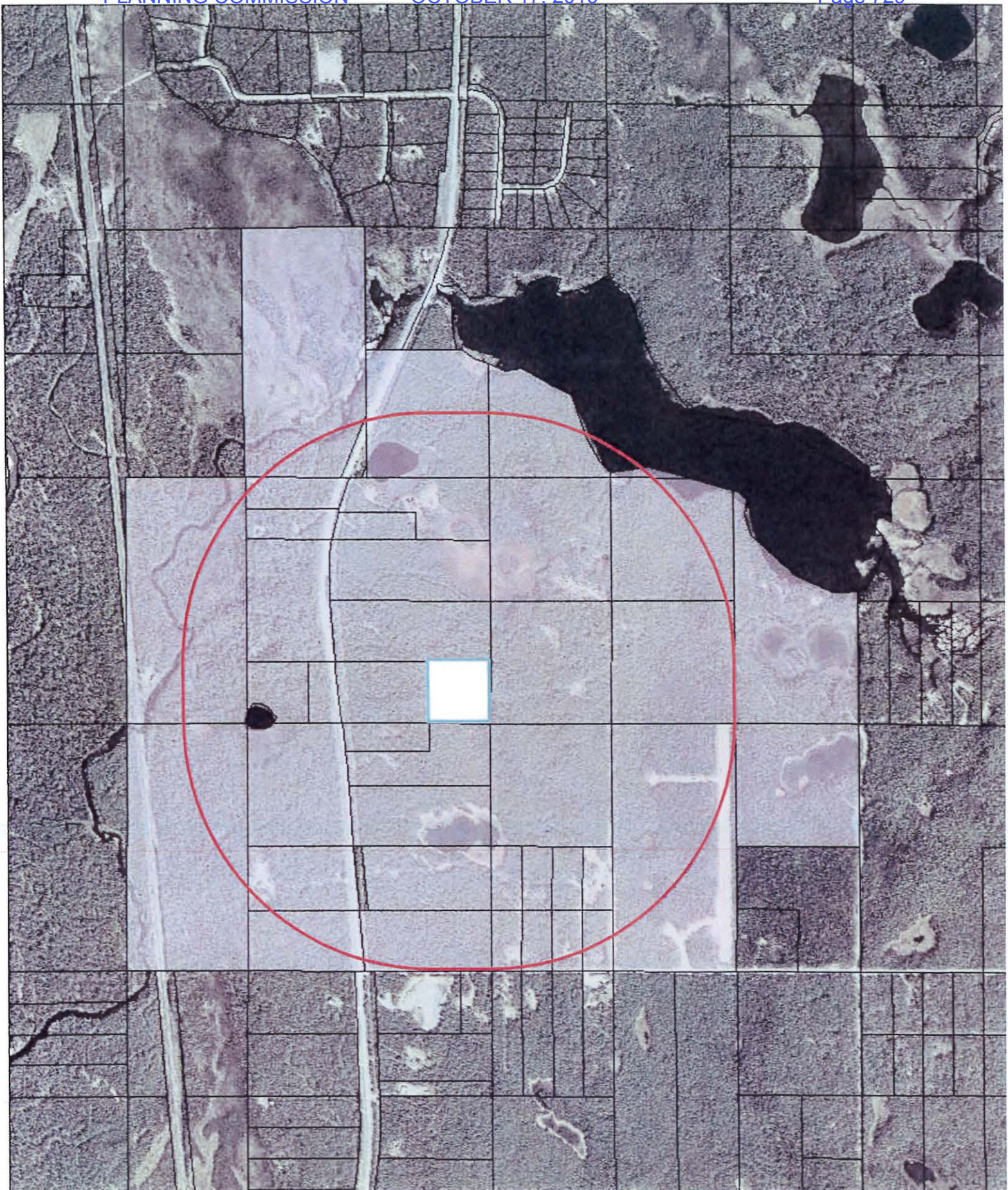
Comment form for Citizen Participation Process

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Code Section: MSB 17.67 – TALL STRUCTURES**Application or Item:** Site Name THP1, Conditional Use Permit - 205 ft lattice self supporting antenna structure**Applicant:** MTA Communications (Agent - New Horizons Telecom, Inc. - Sherrie Greenshields)**Applicant Phone#:** 907-760-6057 office; 907-315-3201 cell**Applicant Address:** New Horizons Telecom, Inc. - 901 Cope Industrial Way, Palmer, AK 99645**Meeting Date & Time:** Monday, June 20, 2016, 6 to 8 PM**Meeting Location:** Talkeetna Public Library, 24645 Talkeetna Spur Road, Talkeetna, Alaska**Legal Description of Project:** Township 25N Range 4W Section 19 Lot A6*Description of the proposed development including height, design, lighting, potential access to the site and proposed service:*

MTA Communications (MTAC) is making an application for Site THP1 a Conditional Use Permit for the placement of a 205 foot tall lattice type self-supporting antenna structure (200 ft tower with 5 ft lightning rod) on the parcel referenced above. The attached MatSu Borough Land Info Parcel Report and google earth image, show the parcel location and proposed tower placement. Site access will be from a proposed driveway off of Talkeetna Spur Road.

If you have any questions or, would like to send us comments, concerning the proposed action, this form may be used for your convenience by filling in the information below and mailing it to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Development Services Division, 350 East Dahlia, Palmer, Alaska 99645. You may fax comments to 861-7876 or e-mail to permitcenter@matsugov.us. Comments received prior to the meeting date will be included in the citizen participation report. Please be advised that comments received from the public after that date will not be included in the citizen participation report but will be included in the staff report to the Planning Commission. If there is not enough room below, please attach this sheet to another piece of paper.

Name: _____ **Address:** _____**Location/Legal Description of your property:** _____**Comments:** __________



Matanuska Susitna Borough Permit Center

Date: 5/31/2016

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This map is solely for informational purposes only. The Borough makes no express or implied warranties with respect to the character, function, or capabilities of the map or the suitability of the map for any particular purpose beyond those originally intended by the Borough. For information regarding the full disclaimer and policies related to acceptable uses of this map, please contact

THP1 – Proposed MTA Communication Site Location



Yellow Pin depicts proposed antenna structure on property



Certificate of Mailing — Firm (Domestic)

[illegible]

225N04W19D009
ALBEE SUSAN
C/O SUSAN BARRETT
PO BOX 297
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0297

225N04W19D010
BARRETT JOHN R JR & SUSAN A
PO BOX 297
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0297

225N04W19D012
BARRETT SUSAN A
PO BOX 297
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0297

225N04W19C003
BENSON SARA
C/O DEAN BADERSTSCHER
1724 TWP RD 28
BLUFFTON, OH 45817

225N04W19A007
BESECE CARL C & BRENDA G
PO BOX 173
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0173

57118000L002
BLOMBERG ANDREW & MEGHAAN
PO BOX 146
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0146

225N04W19A002
BONNETT BRENDAN
ANDREWS MARIKA
1615 BIRCHWOOD ST
ANCHORAGE, AK 99508-2920

225N04W19D016
COOK MARION
PO BOX 422
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0422

225N04W19B005
CO5TELLO TIMOTHY M TR
CO5TELLO TIMOTHY M TRE
PO BOX 1023
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-1023

225N04W20C007
CREATIVE DEVELOPMENTS LLC
PO BOX 1023
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-1023

225N04W19C002
CUMMINS RANDY C & KIMBERLY L
PO BOX 235
TALKEETNA, AK 9976-0235

225N04W18D003
FISH LAKE PROPERTIES LLC
PO BOX 190867
ANCHORAGE, AK 99519-0867

225N04W18D004
FISH LAKE PROPERTIES LLC
PO BOX 190867
ANCHORAGE, AK 99519-0867

225N04W19D001
JORDON ANTHONY J & M K
4013 BALCHEN DR
ANCHORAGE, AK 99517

225N04W20B005
LETTNER MONICA
VOGEL JASON
PO BOX 231232
ANCHORAGE, AK 99523-1232

225N04W19A008
LONDDN MICHAEL
PO BOX 912
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0912

225N04W19A006
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
350 E DAHLIA AVE
PALMER, AK 99645-6488

225N04W18C003
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
350 E DAHLIA AVE
PALMER, AK 99645-6488

225N04W19B007
350 E DAHLIA AVE
PALMER, AK 99645-6488

225N04W19A001
MCKEE ANNA MARI
HC 89 BOX 8515
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-9705

225N04W19D014
PARISEAU WM
HC 89 BOX 8105
TALKEETNA, AK 99676

225N04W19D002
PIJUAN MARIA M
PO BOX 1125
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-1125

22504W19C004
POWELL WM 5
1501 GWENN DR
ANCHORAGE, AK 99515-3951

225N04W19C001
POWELL WM 5 & NANCY L
1501 GWENN DR
ANCHORAGE, AK 99515-3951

225N04W19B003
POWELL WM & NANCY L
1501 GWENN DR
ANCHORAGE, AK 99515-3951

225N04W19B006
POWELL WM 5 & NANCY L
1501 GWENN DR
ANCHORAGE, AK 99515-3951

225N04W19B002
POWELL WM 5 & NANCY L
1501 GWENN DR
ANCHORAGE, AK 99515-3951

225N04W19A003
QUILLIAM RONALD A & MABEL
HC 89 BOX 8103
TALKEETNA, AK 99676

225N04W19A004
QUILLIAM RONALD & MABEL
HC 89 BOX 8103
TALKEETNA, AK 99676

225N04W19D015
RADANO PETER M & ANJA S
PO BOX 341
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0341

225N04W19D013
ROBINSON LUETTA L TR TRE
PO BOX 224
TALKEETNA AK 99676-0224

225N04W20B006
SANDERS EDW R #205
222 E 7TH AVE
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

225N04W20B003
SOUSA GERALD & HOLDEN K
MCKAY PATRICK SALMON MARGARET
1755 LINGENBERRY CT
PALMER, AK 99645-9059

225N04W17C001
SOUSA GERALD L
PO BOX 922
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0922

225N04W19D004
THOMAS MAURICE R
PO BOX 28
VOLCANO, HI 99785-0028

225N04W19D011
TOWNE DAVID C
PO BOX 944
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0944

57118000001
VAUGHAN DEBORAH A
PO BOX 146
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0146

225N04W20C004
WALDHAUS KIRK F & SUSAN M
13126 CAPE CIR
ANCHORAGE, AK 99515

225N04W19B004
WILTON SCOTT E & SALLY
PO BOX 299
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-0299

225N04W19D003
YADON FRANK E & ANN M
PO BOX 1022
TALKEETNA, AK 99676-1022

TALKEETNA COMMUNITY COUNCIL
PO BOX 608
TALKEETNA, AK 99676

MTA Communications – THP1 Proposed Tower Site Community Meeting – June 20, 2016

Name	Address	Phone number	Email
Ron Williams	Talketna mile 8.4 spur	733-4574	ra.williams@seko.com
Deborah Vaughan	Mile 8.1 Talketna Spur	733-2485	dvaughan@mtaonline.net
Kathleen Fleming	Mile 9.8 TKA Spur	733-7827	
Andy Blomby	29685 S. Talketna Spur	733-1722	
Ruth Wood	PO BOX 766, TALKETNA	733-6874	tothedogs@mtaonline.net
Laura Wright	PO Box 120, TKA	733-2510	laurawright99@hotmail.com
Whitney Wiff	POB 96 TKA	733-2711	traleika@alaska.net

Monday 6/20/16

**MTA Communications Site THP1
Township 25N Range 4W Section 19 Lot A6
29625 S Talkeetna Spur**

Pre-Application Meeting at Talkeetna Public Library

Talkeetna Public Library Attendees

Julie Rowse (MTA), Ruvin Lerman (MTA), Sherrie Greenshields (NHTI)

Ron Quillian, Deborah Vaughan, Kathleen Fleming, Andy Blomberg, Ruth Wood, Laura Wright, Whitney Wolff (Local Landowners)

Purpose of meeting

The MTA Communications team sent notification letters as required under Matanuska Susitna Borough, Chapter 17.67.050 Borough Municipal Code for a proposed tall tower, site name of THP1.

MTAC was present to hear concerns about the proposed tower structure.

Comments received

Discussion items included the following items.

Comments made regarding leasing Borough land to MTAC for construction of a cell tower. Borough land is in short supply and several meeting participants opined that the land could be used for other community interests to include future park or sport field (soccer, ballfield).

Concerns voiced about the proposed tower height. Several landowners voiced concerns that the tower would be visible from their homes. ***Response - MTAC will conduct a balloon flight and collect photographs from all four compass directions and varying distances from the proposed tower.***

Concerns voiced about the lighting requirement. The tower is proposed at 205 feet (200 foot tower and 5 foot lightning rod) and lighting would be mandatory.

Discussion on why the site was needed. ***Response - Ruvin Lerman, MTAC Engineer, gave an explanation of the propagation maps in the power point presentation explaining significant gaps in coverage and why the site was needed.***

Question asked about placing antenna's along the Talkeetna Spur route on existing buildings. ***Response – FCC separation requirements from the ground on transmitting antennas is approximately 30 feet. There are no buildings that meet height requirement.***

Question regarding co-location on the existing AT&T tower near Fish Lake.

Response – Ruvin Lerman explained that the height available on the existing tower did not meet requirements to cover significant gaps. MTAC did investigate using this site since preference is to co-locate on existing towers where possible.

Exhibit G

Summary Page & Written Public Comments

Date	Comment Received	Commenter	Land Parcel	Concerns	Comments	Response
4/12/2016	Letter	Talkeetna Community Council	No Site Specified	Concerns that the proposed tower is to close to the boundary of the Talkeetna Special use District (SPUD) and will impact views along the road. Concerns the proposed tower will impact aviation activities on Fish Lake 1/2 mile from the proposed location. Not sure if this is the best use of land, considering there growing community. Concerned that not having a gate on the property will encourage trespassing and illegal activities. Concerned how the tower will impact the neighbors on surrounding properties.	This was a letter written on behalf of the entire TCCI Board.	The ballon flight conducted showed that views directly from Talkeetna Spur Road where blocked due to the existing tree line. FAA Determination of No Hazard to air navigation if the strucutre is lighted. A gate should prevent access to the site.
6/10/2016	E-mail	Melitta White	No Site Specified	Does not want more towers up in the Willow area.	No tower identified, concerns apply to all proposed sites.	Tower is required to fill significant gap in service.
6/15/2016	E-mail	Bonnie Church	No Site Specified	Does not want more towers up in the Willow area.	No tower identified, concerns apply to all proposed sites.	Tower is required to fill significant gap in service.
6/20/2016	Phone Call	Susan Barrett	25N 4W Section 19 Lots 9, 10 & 12	Concerned with the height of the light on tower and it shining in her windows and obstructing views.	Concerns are for all 3 lots.	Susan Barrett lots are located off of E. Birch Blvd. The lots are lower in elevation. Photographs were collected along this road during the balloon flight. Due to existing trees the ballon (top of tower) was not visible.
6/20/2016	Comment form from Letter	Ron Quilliam	Mile 8.4 T. Spur	Has the lot adjoining to the south and would like to be able to use the access road to get to his lot.		MTAC lease agreement does not allow access to the driveway. MTAC proposed site plan includes a gate to restrict driveway access. The plan also calls for a fence with locked gate surrounding the tower and equipment shelter.
6/21/2016	Letter	Ruth Wood	Not Mentioned	Does not think the tower will be beneficial in current location. Mention of co-lo status at Talkeetna Lodge. Worried proposed tower will obstruct views of the mountains.	Letter written after meeting in Talkeetna	MTAC has not been denied a colocation opportunity on an existing tower at the Talkeetna Lodge. This site remains under consideration, but even if successful this site would not provide sufficient coverage to the area that the THP1 site will cover. MTAC conducted a balloon flight at 200 feet. From photographs taken from public access points it is difficult to see the tower. From Talkeetna Spur road the existing tree line screens the tower. The attached balloon flight exhibit shows the location of photographs taken and the balloon.

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From: Laura Wright [<mailto:lauraw@mtaonline.net>]
Sent: Sunday, July 03, 2016 7:46 PM
To: Permit Center
Subject: Comments for Tall Structures/MTA communications

COMMENTS FOR:

Mat SU Borough Code Section: MSB 17.67 TALL STRUCTURES

Matanuska - Susitna Borough
Development Services

Site Name THP1 205 ft lattice self supporting antenna structure

Applicant: MTA Communications

0 2016

Received

Hello,

I am disheartened to learn that this tower is proceeding. It is unfortunate all around. The lease of this property should not have been held separately from the tower construction. I have many questions that were not answered at the June 20 public meeting. They are below followed by my comments.

Questions not able to be answered at the public meeting I attended on 6/20/16:

How wide is the road that will be built to access the tower?

The access road is 20 feet wide.

Is there a gate and where will the gate be located... at the beginning of the road or near the tower?

There will be two gates. One is proposed at the beginning of the access road outside the existing powerline easement. Another gate will be located within the fence surrounding the proposed tower.

What is the lighting on the tower; how much, what wattage, what color, flashing?

The required lighting is a FAA L-864/L-865 Dual Medium Intensity E Type Flashing System. With a top mounted LED light that flashes a white light by day and red by night. At the mid-level point on the tower are three LED red night-time marker lights, one per leg. Each marker light uses 2 watts. The top mounted daytime white light uses 80 watts and at night the red LED light uses 40 watts.

Is MTA leasing the entire 10-acre parcel or only the 60x60 foot area needed for the pad and tower?

Please find attached the communication site lease from Matanuska-Susitna Borough for the proposed site.

Has there been a cost benefit analysis done for building the tower versus customers using the cell signal?

MTAC has determine significate gaps in coverage existing in the general area. The proposed site will close these coverage gaps.

How much is the Borough getting for this lease and for how long... again a Cost benefit analysis.

Please find attached the communication site lease from Matanuska-Susitna Borough for the proposed site.

Reasons the Borough should not approve this Condition Use Permit:

#1. The dramatic increase in height (existing towers are 100-125 feet tall) is not enough of an increase in coverage. I looked at the maps (shown at the public meeting) and the increase in height from 100 to 125 to 150 to 180 to 205... did not dramatically increase the cell coverage. None of the cell reception coverage increase from the height of this tower is on the Spur Road. There are very few residents in the alleged 'non-cell reception' area.

The proposed tower will close areas of significant gaps.

#2. A 205-foot tower would be in the view shed of many landowners as well as people recreating in the Numbered Lakes Natural area and Question Lake areas. I do not want to see a cell tower in front of Denali!

MTAC conducted a balloon flight to determine visual impact of the proposed tower. Photographs were collected from public access points at varying distances. The majority of photographs show that the natural foliage will help screen the proposed tower.

#3. It should not be the business of the Mat Su borough to lease land for commerce... plain and simple.

MTAC made application to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough for a lease.

#4. This is not a good use of borough lands! There is very little borough land in the upper Susitna valley that is road accessible. This could be a future school, ball field, fire station, community center.

MTAC made application to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough for a lease.

#5. The defense of MTA representatives is that the increased coverage is for safety but really it is about competition between cell phone carriers.

The area of Matanuska-Susitna Borough in the vicinity of the proposed cell site is currently underserved by MTAC for both voice and data coverage, which results in a significant gap in coverage for the MTAC system.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was enacted to encourage the rapid deployment of new telecommunications technologies, while also preserving state and local control over zoning matters. The Act generally preserves state and local authority over the placement and construction of telecommunication tower facilities. The Act places several limitations on local control. Specifically, the Act dictates that:

- (1) A local government cannot unreasonably discriminate among providers of functionally equivalent services; and*
- (2) A local government cannot prohibit or effectively prohibit the provision of personal wireless services; and*
- (3) A local government cannot deny or limit an application for the construction of a wireless tower on the basis of the health or environmental effects of radio frequency emissions, as long as the proposed tower complies with FCC requirements for emissions; and*
- (4) Any local government decision to deny a request to construct personal wireless facilities must be in writing and supported by substantial evidence.*

The Act precludes a municipality from restricting the construction of new infrastructure required by a provider to fill a gap in its network, even if coverage is available from other providers in the area. The fact that coverage is provided by another carrier in the area cannot be relied upon by a local land use commission to deny a permit application for a new tower.

#6. This project puts another driveway entrance onto the Spur Road and wherever there is a road people will drive down it. This could become a dumping place for garbage and moose carcasses.

The driveway to the proposed site will have a locked gate which will keep access to the site limited to MTAC.

#7. Not enough effort was made to co-locate the tower. There is a tall tower at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge. MTA should work harder with them to add their antennas to the tower.

The proposed tower is part of a system improvement buildout which includes new towers and co-locations where possible. MTAC is in negotiations to co-locate at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge tower. However, co-location at the Talkeetna Alaska Lodge will not close the significant gap in service which currently exists.

Regards,
Laura Wright

From: **Whitney Wolff** wolffwhit@gmail.com
Subject: Comments from TCCI re. CUP app. Site THP1 / MTAC
Date: June 20, 2016 at 1:35 PM
To: permitcenter@mat.gov.us

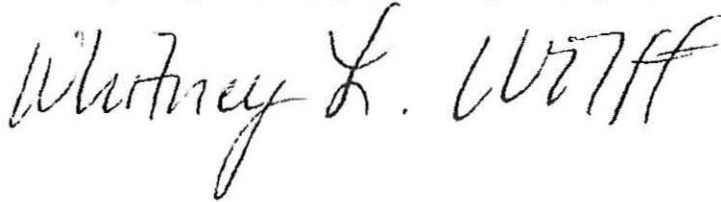
Please see the attached comments from the Talkeetna Community Council, Inc. (TCCI) regarding the application for Site THP1 Conditional Use Permit for a 205 foot tall cell tower by MTAC.

Note: TCCI received the public notice for this application by USPS mail after our regular monthly June 6th meeting. (notice date 6/3 - received 6/7)

TCCI requests that future public comment notification be sent via email as well as by USPS to insure we receive notices in a timely manner. This will insure meaningful comments from both the TCCI and the public. Please add tccsecretary@yahoo.com to the TCCI notification contact list . This address is officially listed on the MSB web site and is archived with the MSB clerk for any future reference.

The comments we have provided were originally submitted regarding the MSB lease for the tower location in April 2016 . These comments include concerns specifically regarding the tower as well. Due to the delay in receiving the application notification, TCCI could not address the current tall structure information independently while adhering to the Alaska open meeting laws.

Sincerely,
Whitney Wolff
Chair / TCCI





Talkeetna Community Council, Inc.

A non-profit, community service organization

April 12, 2016

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am writing on behalf of Talkeetna Community Council Inc. (TCCI) with regard to the application by MTA (the Matanuska Telephone Association) to lease Parcel A006 of Section 25N04W19 to erect a cell tower. A copy of the required public notice of this proposed action from the borough was postmarked March 31, 2016 and received by Talkeetna Community Council Inc. shortly thereafter.

By unanimous vote at its April 4 regular monthly meeting, the TCCI Board of Directors wishes to go on the record as opposing the lease of borough land in this location for this purpose. The reasons for this are as follows:

- The public notice is lacking many of the particulars of the tower itself that are necessary to allow an informed judgement to be made, such as the size, type and height of the proposed tower, any technical specifications such as signal strength, lighting requirements, etc., the length of the proposed lease, and the amount of revenue that the borough will realize from this lease. Most if not all of this information must have been provided by the utility to the borough as part of their application and we are mystified as to why it has not been provided with the public notice.
- We have since learned that MTA is proposing to erect a 200-foot high tower on the site. This is about 1000 feet from the Spur Road and only about 250 feet from the eastern boundary of the "Spur Road South" section of the Talkeetna Special Use District (SPUD). We are concerned that a tower of this height will adversely affect viewshed along a long stretch of the Spur Road, and further is entirely too close to the boundary of the SPUD, where the limit on towers is 100 feet in height.
- Fish Lake, approximately ½ mile north of the proposed tower site, is a busy seasonal float plane base. We are concerned that a tower of this

Talkeetna Community Council, Inc.
P.O. Box 608, Talkeetna AK 99676

height may represent a substantial safety risk to the nearby aviation activities.

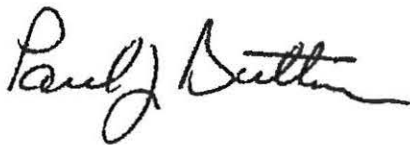
- If a beacon is required atop the tower, either because of the 200-foot height or the proximity to the float plane base, this will have a further adverse impact on both the viewshed of the Spur Road and the residents living nearby.
 - With our chartered interest in ensuring that the community values expressed in the Talkeetna Area SPUD are maintained, we encourage the colocation of this type of communication equipment on shared towers; there is a tower of a similar usage immediately north of Dragonfly Hollow Drive, approximately one mile north of the proposed site. We would urge the borough and MTA to fully explore the possibilities of collocating before allowing erection of a new tower.
 - The proposed lease directly affects two borough-owned parcels with a combined assessed value of \$121,000. The Talkeetna area is experiencing sustained growth in population and with this as the case, publicly-owned land with ready access to the Spur Road will continue to increase in value on both a strictly monetary basis and as an asset for the community either as open space or more community-benefitting development. We do not know the amount of the lease payments the borough is expecting to receive from MTA for the use of these parcels, but we question if a long-term lease as a cell tower site this is the best use of a borough asset of this value.
-
- We are concerned about the construction of an access road along the southern boundary of Parcel B007 and part of the southern boundary of Parcel A006. We understand that this is would be a public easement and as such could not be gated. Without any means of restricting access, we are concerned that this may encourage trespassing and undesirable/illegal activities on not only the borough parcels but those of the adjoining neighbors.
 - The proposed tower site is on a very small parcel, set back only about 300 feet from adjoining private properties. The extreme height of the proposed tower structure coupled with the possible lighting requirements will have a deleterious effect on these neighbors, their livelihood (the owners immediately to the south of the tower site run a B&B whose

primary selling point is the peace and quiet of a stay in an untrammelled birch forest), and the value of their property.

In conclusion we urge the borough to fully explore all alternatives to granting this lease to MTA as currently described, including but not limited to colocation of communications equipment on an already existing tower structure or leasing a larger parcel, with greater setbacks, at a greater distance from the float plane base, the Talkeetna SPUD boundary, and the Spur Road.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to review and comment on this proposed action, and we look forward to working with you and MTA to arrive at a solution that meets the needs of all three parties in this matter – the borough, MTA, and the Talkeetna community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul J. Button". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" and last name "Button" clearly distinguishable.

Paul J. Button
Member, Board of Directors
Talkeetna Community Council, Inc.

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Leann Krey

From: Alex Strawn <Alex.Strawn@matsugov.us>
Sent: Friday, June 10, 2016 9:22 AM
To: Sherrie Greenshields
Cc: Mark Whisenhunt
Subject: FW: Cell towers along the Parks Highway

From: Michelle Olsen **On Behalf Of** Permit Center
Sent: Friday, June 10, 2016 9:17 AM
To: Theresa Taranto
Cc: Alex Strawn
Subject: FW: Cell towers along the Parks Highway

More comments for the file

Michelle Olsen, CFM
Permit Technician
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
350 E Dahlia Ave
Palmer, AK 99645
(907) 861-7871

From: Melitta [<mailto:ted.melitta@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, June 10, 2016 8:57 AM
To: Permit Center; Susan Morgan; Bonnie Imlach Shurtleff
Subject: Cell towers along the Parks Highway

Enough already! I practically live under a recently constructed tower and my cell phone reception is worse than ever and it was not very good to start with.

In addition you are ruining our views. We live here to get away from living in a commercial zone and now you are bringing it to us.

We say NO! more cell tower construction on the Parks Highway. They spoil the view and the rural character of our neighborhood. We don't need or want them.

Sincerely,
Ted and Melitta White
Willow Residents

Leann Krey

From: Mark Whisenhunt <Mark.Whisenhunt@matsugov.us>
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2016 10:50 AM
To: Sherrie Greenshields
Subject: FW: 3 cell towers in Willow

Respectfully,

Mark Whisenhunt
Planner II
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Office: (907) 861-8527
Fax: (907) 861-7876
mark.whisenhunt@matsugov.us

-----Original Message-----

From: Alex Strawn
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2016 10:39 AM
To: Mark Whisenhunt
Subject: FW: 3 cell towers in Willow

-----Original Message-----

From: Michelle Olsen On Behalf Of Permit Center
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2016 10:35 AM
To: Alex Strawn; Theresa Taranto
Subject: FW: 3 cell towers in Willow

For the files

Michelle Olsen, CFM
Permit Technician
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
350 E Dahlia Ave
Palmer, AK 99645
(907) 861-7871

-----Original Message-----

From: Bonnie Church [mailto:getalong@mtaonline.net]
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2016 10:31 AM
To: Permit Center
Subject: 3 cell towers in Willow

I am NOT in favor of 3 MORE cell towers going up in Willow. I don't understand why there have to be so many and I am totally against more being here in our community!!!
Bonnie Church

Leann Krey

From: Sherrie Greenshields
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2016 8:12 PM
To: Sherrie Greenshields
Subject: question on THP1 phone call 8:11PM 6/20

susan barrett sec 19 D 25n 4w sec 19 lot 9 10 and 12

not what is height of light elevation of red light

elev 420 feet
north view mtns and northern lights

concerns about light into
home, she has no curtains all
open windows for view

907-733-1232



Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Planning & Land Use Department
Development Services Division
350 East Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, Alaska 99645

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Comment form for Citizen Participation Process

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Code Section: MSB 17.67 – TALL STRUCTURES**Application or Item:** Site Name THP1, Conditional Use Permit - 205 ft lattice self supporting antenna structure**Applicant:** MTA Communications (Agent - New Horizons Telecom, Inc. - Sherrie Greenshields)**Applicant Phone#:** 907-760-6057 office; 907-315-3201 cell**Applicant Address:** New Horizons Telecom, Inc. - 901 Cope Industrial Way, Palmer, AK 99645**Meeting Date & Time:** Monday, June 20, 2016, 6 to 8 PM**Meeting Location:** Talkeetna Public Library, 24645 Talkeetna Spur Road, Talkeetna, Alaska**Legal Description of Project:** Township 25N Range 4W Section 19 Lot A6*Description of the proposed development including height, design, lighting, potential access to the site and proposed service:*

MTA Communications (MTAC) is making an application for Site THP1 a Conditional Use Permit for the placement of a 205 foot tall lattice type self-supporting antenna structure (200 ft tower with 5 ft lightning rod) on the parcel referenced above. The attached MatSu Borough Land Info Parcel Report and google earth image, show the parcel location and proposed tower placement. Site access will be from a proposed driveway off of Talkeetna Spur Road. Potential tower lighting will be part of the discussion at the meeting.

If you have any questions or, would like to send us comments, concerning the proposed action, this form may be used for your convenience by filling in the information below and mailing it to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Development Services Division, 350 East Dahlia, Palmer, Alaska 99645. You may fax comments to 861-7876 or e-mail to permitcenter@matsugov.us. Comments received prior to the meeting date will be included in the citizen participation report. Please be advised that comments received from the public after that date will not be included in the citizen participation report but will be included in the staff report to the Planning Commission. If there is not enough room below, please attach this sheet to another piece of paper.

6/20/2016

Name: Ron Quillian **Address:** Mile 8.4 T. Spur

Location/Legal Description of your property: The lot adjoining to the south

Comments: Would like the tower Access road to be available to sup off of for a road the the back of my lot.

Why wasn't a borough Rep at meeting?

Best use for Borough Land?

Cc: Nicholas Spiropoulos; John Moosey

Subject: FW: Public hearing MSB OR 16-078 on June 21, 2016

Mayor and Assembly:

Please see attached comments from Ruth Wood re: OR 16-078. A hard copy will be in your red folder tonight.

Thank you,
Lonnie

-----Original Message-----

From: Ruth Wood [mailto:tothedogs@mtaonline.net]

Sent: Monday, June 20, 2016 11:37 PM

To: Lonnie McKechnie

Subject: Public hearing MSB OR 16-078 on June 21, 2016

Please distribute the attached letter to the Assembly for their consideration on June 21st during the public hearing on MSB OR 16-078.

Thanks,
Ruth Wood, Talkeetna

Dear Assemblyman Kowalke,

I am not able to attend the Assembly meeting tomorrow night to testify against Ordinance Serial No. 16-078: An Ordinance To Classify Borough Land As General Purpose Lands And Enter Into A Lease Of Borough-Owned Real Property To Construct, Install, Maintain, Repair, Operate, And Manage A Communication Site.

This Ordinance should not proceed because there is not enough Borough-owned land in Talkeetna to meet our future public needs, and this is a use that will not benefit the residents of Talkeetna nor the Borough.

Tonight, I attended the public meeting that MTA is required to hold for the Conditional Use Permit. The MTA and New Horizons representatives were not able to answer our questions, but we learned some very disturbing things. First, MTA could co-locate on a tower near the Talkeetna Lodge, but the owner of the tower won't let them. Second, they showed us a map that shows the gaps they will cover with this tower. The map wasn't very good, but it looks like the Spur Road is covered already. The gap doesn't appear to be significant. The representatives had no information as to the number of people the tower would serve, just that it would fill a gap. The AT&T towers already fill this gap, and most people up here use AT&T. From the vague responses we heard, it seems that the tower won't really benefit MTA customers, but it will allow MTA to rent space on its tower to Verizon and other companies. I know that I can make these comments when the Conditional Use Permit comes up, but I don't think it should get that far because there are even more compelling reasons not to lease these properties to MTA.

A few years ago, the Borough needed to construct a Cold Storage Building in Talkeetna. The Borough picked a site that was not popular with the community. We recognized the need for the Cold Storage Building, but we did not like the proposed location. I looked at every Borough-owned parcel of land in the Talkeetna Community Council boundary, and there just wasn't another one that would work. This is because there isn't much Borough-owned land that isn't already being used for a public purpose. So, we acquiesced to the public need. We were promised things in the CUP that never happened. Regardless, our community will grow, and we must have Borough property in reserve for future public uses - such as schools and fire halls. .

While the tower itself will be 205 feet (including the lightening rod), it is going to be placed on the highest point MTA could find on the parcel. So, the actual height will be closer to 600 feet. It will be visible for miles, and from some vantage points, it will look like it is right smack in the middle of Denali. This cannot possibly be the best use of these two Borough properties, but we don't know because no one has assessed the situation.

I am sorry that I cannot drive down to Palmer to testify, but hope you will consider my comments and vote against this Ordinance. Thanks for listening.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ruth Wood, Talkeetna

COMMENTS

Mark Whisenhunt

From: Michelle Olsen on behalf of Permit Center
Sent: Tuesday, June 21, 2016 8:22 AM
To: Mark Whisenhunt
Subject: FW: Comments from TCCI re. CUP app. Site THP1 / MTAC
Attachments: TCCI 4-12-16 MTA Cell Tower Letter.pdf

Hi Mark,

Alex said you are the lucky winner of all the tower comments. Let me know if this is not correct, otherwise I will keep sending it all to you.

Happy Tuesday,

Michelle Olsen, CFM
Permit Technician
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
350 E Dahlia Ave
Palmer, AK 99645
(907) 861-7871

-----Original Message-----

From: Whitney Wolff [<mailto:wolffwhit@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2016 1:36 PM
To: Permit Center
Subject: Comments from TCCI re. CUP app. Site THP1 / MTAC

Please see the attached comments from the Talkeetna Community Council, Inc. (TCCI) regarding the application for Site THP1 Conditional Use Permit for a 205 foot tall cell tower by MTAC.

Note: TCCI received the public notice for this application by USPS mail after our regular monthly June 6th meeting. (notice date 6/3 - received 6/7) TCCI requests that future public comment notification be sent via email as well as by USPS to insure we receive notices in a timely manner. This will insure meaningful comments from both the TCCI and the public. Please add tccsecretary@yahoo.com to the TCCI notification contact list . This address is officially listed on the MSB web site and is archived with the MSB clerk for any future reference.

The comments we have provided were originally submitted regarding the MSB lease for the tower location in April 2016 . These comments include concerns specifically regarding the tower as well. Due to the delay in receiving the application notification, TCCI could not address the current tall structure information independently while adhering to the Alaska open meeting laws.

Sincerely,
Whitney Wolff
Chair / TCCI

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April 12, 2016

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am writing on behalf of Talkeetna Community Council Inc. (TCCI) with regard to the application by MTA (the Matanuska Telephone Association) to lease Parcel A006 of Section 25N04W19 to erect a cell tower. A copy of the required public notice of this proposed action from the borough was postmarked March 31, 2016 and received by Talkeetna Community Council Inc. shortly thereafter.

By unanimous vote at its April 4 regular monthly meeting, the TCCI Board of Directors wishes to go on the record as opposing the lease of borough land in this location for this purpose. The reasons for this are as follows:

- The public notice is lacking many of the particulars of the tower itself that are necessary to allow an informed judgement to be made, such as the size, type and height of the proposed tower, any technical specifications such as signal strength, lighting requirements, etc., the length of the proposed lease, and the amount of revenue that the borough will realize from this lease. Most if not all of this information must have been provided by the utility to the borough as part of their application and we are mystified as to why it has not been provided with the public notice.
- We have since learned that MTA is proposing to erect a 200-foot high tower on the site. This is about 1000 feet from the Spur Road and only about 250 feet from the eastern boundary of the "Spur Road South" section of the Talkeetna Special Use District (SPUD). We are concerned that a tower of this height will adversely affect viewshed along a long stretch of the Spur Road, and further is entirely too close to the boundary of the SPUD, where the limit on towers is 100 feet in height.
- Fish Lake, approximately ½ mile north of the proposed tower site, is a busy seasonal float plane base. We are concerned that a tower of this

Talkeetna Community Council, Inc.
P.O. Box 608, Talkeetna AK 99676

height may represent a substantial safety risk to the nearby aviation activities.

- If a beacon is required atop the tower, either because of the 200-foot height or the proximity to the float plane base, this will have a further adverse impact on both the viewshed of the Spur Road and the residents living nearby.
- With our chartered interest in ensuring that the community values expressed in the Talkeetna Area SPUD are maintained, we encourage the colocation of this type of communication equipment on shared towers; there is a tower of a similar usage immediately north of Dragonfly Hollow Drive, approximately one mile north of the proposed site. We would urge the borough and MTA to fully explore the possibilities of collocating before allowing erection of a new tower.
- The proposed lease directly affects two borough-owned parcels with a combined assessed value of \$121,000. The Talkeetna area is experiencing sustained growth in population and with this as the case, publicly-owned land with ready access to the Spur Road will continue to increase in value on both a strictly monetary basis and as an asset for the community either as open space or more community-benefitting development. We do not know the amount of the lease payments the borough is expecting to receive from MTA for the use of these parcels, but we question if a long-term lease as a cell tower site this is the best use of a borough asset of this value.
- We are concerned about the construction of an access road along the southern boundary of Parcel B007 and part of the southern boundary of Parcel A006. We understand that this would be a public easement and as such could not be gated. Without any means of restricting access, we are concerned that this may encourage trespassing and undesirable/illegal activities on not only the borough parcels but those of the adjoining neighbors.
- The proposed tower site is on a very small parcel, set back only about 300 feet from adjoining private properties. The extreme height of the proposed tower structure coupled with the possible lighting requirements will have a deleterious effect on these neighbors, their livelihood (the owners immediately to the south of the tower site run a B&B whose

primary selling point is the peace and quiet of a stay in an untrammelled birch forest), and the value of their property.

In conclusion we urge the borough to fully explore all alternatives to granting this lease to MTA as currently described, including but not limited to colocation of communications equipment on an already existing tower structure or leasing a larger parcel, with greater setbacks, at a greater distance from the float plane base, the Talkeetna SPUD boundary, and the Spur Road.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to review and comment on this proposed action, and we look forward to working with you and MTA to arrive at a solution that meets the needs of all three parties in this matter – the borough, MTA, and the Talkeetna community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul J. Button". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" being more prominent than the last name "Button".

Paul J. Button
Member, Board of Directors
Talkeetna Community Council, Inc.

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Mark Whisenhunt

From: Michelle Olsen on behalf of Permit Center
Sent: Tuesday, July 05, 2016 8:09 AM
To: Mark Whisenhunt; Theresa Taranto
Subject: Comments for Tall Structures/MTA communications

[More tower comments](#)

Michelle Olsen, CFM
Permit Technician
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
350 E Dahlia Ave
Palmer, AK 99645
(907) 861-7871

From: Laura Wright [<mailto:lauraw@mtaonline.net>]
Sent: Sunday, July 03, 2016 7:46 PM
To: Permit Center
Subject: Comments for Tall Structures/MTA communications

COMMENTS FOR:

Mat SU Borough Code Section: MSB 17.67 TALL STRUCTURES

Site Name THP1 205 ft lattice self supporting antenna structure

Applicant: MTA Communications

Hello,

I am disheartened to learn that this tower is proceeding. It is unfortunate all around. The lease of this property should not have been held separately from the tower construction. I have many questions that were not answered at the June 20 public meeting. They are below followed by my comments.

Questions not able to be answered at the public meeting I attended on 6/20/16:

How wide is the road that will be built to access the tower?

Is there a gate and where will the gate be located... at the beginning of the road or near the tower?

What is the lighting on the tower; how much, what wattage, what color, flashing?

Is MTA leasing the entire 10-acre parcel or only the 60x60 foot area needed for the pad and tower?

Has there been a cost benefit analysis done for building the tower versus customers using the cell signal?

How much is the Borough getting for this lease and for how long... again a Cost benefit analysis.

Reasons the Borough should not approve this Condition Use Permit:

#1. The dramatic increase in height (existing towers are 100-125 feet tall) is not enough of an increase in coverage. I looked at the maps (shown at the public meeting) and the increase in height from 100 to 125 to 150 to 180 to 205... did not dramatically increase the cell coverage. None of the cell reception coverage increase from the height of this tower is on the Spur Road. There are very few residents in the alleged 'non-cell reception' area.

#2. A 205-foot tower would be in the view shed of many landowners as well as people recreating in the Numbered Lakes Natural area and Question Lake areas. I do not want to see a cell tower in front of Denali!

#3. It should not be the business of the Mat Su borough to lease land for commerce... plain and simple.

#4. This is not a good use of borough lands! There is very little borough land in the upper Susitna valley that is road accessible. This could be a future school, ball field, fire station, community center...

#5. The defense of MTA representatives is that the increased coverage is for safety but really it is about competition between cell phone carriers.

#6. This project puts another driveway entrance onto the Spur Road and wherever there is a road people will drive down it. This could become a dumping place for garbage and moose carcasses.

#7. Not enough effort was made to co-locate the tower. There is a tall tower at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge. MTA should work harder with them to add their antennas to the tower.

Regards,
Laura Wright



ENSTAR Natural Gas Company
A DIVISION OF SEMCO ENERGY
Engineering Department
Right of Way Section
401 E. International Airport Road
P. O. Box 190288
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-0288
(907) 277-5551
FAX (907) 334-7798

September 12, 2016

Mark Whisenhunt, Planner II
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Planning & Land Use Department
350 East Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, Alaska 99645-6488

Subject: Conditional Use Permit for Construction of a Tall Structure
for Lot A6, located within Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Section 19, Seward
Meridian (29625 S. Talkeetna Spur).

Dear Mr. Whisenhunt:

ENSTAR Natural Gas Company has reviewed the application for the subject Conditional Use Permit Application for Construction of a Tall Structure.

We have no comments or concerns related to this activity.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 907-334-7944 or by email at cassie.wohlgemuth@enstarnaturalgas.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cassie Wohlgemuth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Cassie Wohlgemuth
Right-of-Way and Compliance Technician
ENSTAR Natural Gas Company

Sent via e-mail

Mark Whisenhunt

From: Theresa Taranto
Sent: Tuesday, September 06, 2016 1:31 PM
To: Mark Whisenhunt
Subject: RE: Request for Review: MTA THP1 CUP 25N04W19A006

FIRM 3505, X Zone
No other comments.
Thanks,

Theresa Taranto
Development Services
Administrative Specialist

Mat-Su Borough
350 E Dahlia Ave.
Palmer, Alaska 99645
907-861-8574

From: Mark Whisenhunt
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2016 2:21 PM
To: 'allen.kemplen@alaska.gov' (allen.kemplen@alaska.gov); 'kevin.vakalis@alaska.gov' (kevin.vakalis@alaska.gov); 'tucker.hurn@alaska.gov' (tucker.hurn@alaska.gov); melanie.nichols@alaska.gov; 'steven.banse@alaska.gov' (steven.banse@alaska.gov); usswcd@mtaonline.net; 'mearow@matanuska.com' (mearow@matanuska.com); 'rglenn@mta-telco.com' (rglenn@mta-telco.com); jthompson@mta-telco.com; row@enstarnaturalgas.com; 'ospdesign@gci.com' (ospdesign@gci.com); Platting; Richard Boothby; Elizabeth Weiant; Eric Phillips; regpagemaster@usace.army.mil; Capital Projects; Cindy Corey; Bob Walden; Brad Sworts; Sheila Armstrong; Tracy McDaniel; Nicole Wilkins; Theresa Taranto; Jessica Smith; Frankie Barker; Andy Dean; John Aschenbrenner; randallk_2@msn.com
Subject: Request for Review: MTA THP1 CUP 25N04W19A006

An application for a Conditional Use Permit in accordance with MSB 17.67 - Tall Structures has been submitted to construct a cell tower, 200-feet in height. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on this application on October 17, 2016.

Return written comments on or before **September 23, 2016**. Thank you for your review.

Respectfully,

Mark Whisenhunt
Planner II
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Office: (907) 861-8527
Fax: (907) 861-7876
mark.whisenhunt@matsugov.us

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION

By: Mark Whisenhunt
Introduced: Sept. 19, 2016
Public Hearing: October 17, 2016
Action:

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 16-38

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) IN ACCORDANCE WITH MSB 17.67 - TALL STRUCTURES INCLUDING TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES, WIND ENERGY CONVERSION SYSTEMS, AND OTHER TALL STRUCTURES, FOR A 200 FOOT TALL TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER (THP1), LOCATED AT 29625 S. TALKEETNA SPUR, TAX ID# 25N04W19A006; WITHIN TOWNSHIP 25 NORTH, RANGE 4 WEST, SECTION 19, SEWARD MERIDIAN.

WHEREAS, an application for a Conditional Use Permit was submitted by MTA Communications to construct a 200-foot tall telecommunication tower at 29625 S. Talkeetna Spur (Tax ID# 25N04W19A006); within Township 25 North, Range 4 West, Section 19, Seward Meridian; and

WHEREAS, it is the purpose and intent of MSB Chapter 17.67 to enable the orderly build-out of wireless telecommunication infrastructure, WECS, and other tall structures while promoting the health, safety, and general welfare of the public; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed this application, associated materials, and the staff report, with respect to standards set forth in MSB 17.67; and

WHEREAS, the proposed tall structure is a 200-foot tall telecommunication tower; and

WHEREAS, the subject lot is not within a special land use district;
and

WHEREAS, there are no existing tall structures on the subject property; and

WHEREAS, the applicant held a public meeting on June 20, 2016 at the Talkeetna Public Library; and

WHEREAS, a certified mailing notification showed notice was mailed on June 3, 2016 to all property owners within one-half mile of the subject property and to the Talkeetna Community Council; and

WHEREAS, the notification included a legal description and map of the parcel, a description of the proposed development, the date, time, and location of the informational meeting, contact name, telephone number, and address of the applicant, and comment form created by the borough with a deadline to submit comments and submittal options; and

WHEREAS, exhibit F & G of the application material contains a copy of all received written comments, a written report summarizing the comments received during the public meeting, and a detailed response from the applicant; and

WHEREAS, the proposed tall structure site is approximately 1,090 feet away from the right-of-way line of South Talkeetna Spur; and

WHEREAS, the proposed tall structure is approximately 215 feet from the west side lot line, 325 feet from the north side lot line, 420 feet from the east side lot line, and 370 feet from the south side lot line; and

WHEREAS, the proposed setback to the public use easement is greater than the height of the tower; and

WHEREAS, the subject parcel does not front South Talkeetna Spur; and

WHEREAS, a computer model using topography and surface interference data was used to identify the best locations for the proposed location and tower height; and

WHEREAS, co-locating on existing towers was considered; however, it was determined the available spaces on existing towers did not provide coverage for the identified gaps in service; and

WHEREAS, the proposed access is "dog-legged" to make use of the heavily treed property for screening; and

WHEREAS, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Trail Plan does not identify any trails within the one-half mile notice area; and

WHEREAS, the subject property is heavily treed, which will aid in screening the proposed conditional use; and

WHEREAS, Fish Lake is approximately one-half mile to the north east; and

WHEREAS, a balloon test was conducted on June 27, 2016. It showed the tower was largely obscured from view along the Talkeetna Spur right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the proposed tall structure will be galvanized steel and gray in color; and

WHEREAS, according to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's database of registered airport and landing strips, there are no existing airports or airfields within the one-half mile notice area; and

WHEREAS, according to a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) determination issued on June 20, 2016, the proposed tall structure will not be a hazard to air navigation provided it is marked/lighted in accordance with FAA lighting standards; and

WHEREAS, the proposed tall structure will be lit with a medium intensity dual lighting system; and

WHEREAS, the tower facility is located within a fenced and locked area. The fence is 6-feet in height and topped with barbed wire; and

WHEREAS, a locked gate be will located across the driveway, approximately five feet from the right-of-way line of South Talkeetna Spur; and

WHEREAS, the proposed tower has been engineered in accordance with all state building codes; and

WHEREAS, the applicant submitted documents showing the proposed tower conforms to the Electronic Industries Alliance/Telecommunication Industries Association's EIA/TIA-22-G structures standards; and

WHEREAS, the proposed tower and transmission equipment will operate within radio frequency levels deemed safe by the Federal Communications Commission; and

WHEREAS, signs will be posted that contain: a contact number, owner information, federal antenna structure registration number, and a "no trespassing" notice; and

WHEREAS, signs will be posted on the surrounding 6-foot tall fence; and

WHEREAS, the site requires 240-volts for the operation of the facility; and

WHEREAS, a "high voltage - dangerous" sign will be located at the base of the facility; and

WHEREAS, fencing that surrounds the supporting telecommunication equipment will be approximately 185 feet away from the closest (western) property line; and

WHEREAS, the proposed setback to all property lines is greater than the height of the tower; and

WHEREAS, a 6-foot tall chain link fence topped with barbed wire and locking gate will surround the tower and supporting telecommunication equipment; and

WHEREAS, two parking spaces will be provided at the proposed site.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission hereby adopts the aforementioned findings of fact and makes the following conclusions of law supporting approval of Planning Commission Resolution 16-38:

1. The proposed use meets the criteria to qualify for conditional use permit for the construction of a 200-foot tall structure (MSB 17.67.040 (A) (2)); and
2. The applicant has met the pre-application requirements for new tall structures that require a Conditional Use Permit (MSB 17.67.050); and
3. The location of the tall structure is such that its negative effects on the visual and scenic resources of all surrounding properties have been minimized (MSB 17.67.080 (B) (1)); and
4. The visibility of the proposed tall structures from public parks and trails has been minimized (MSB 17.67.080 (B) (2)); and

5. The proposed tall structure will not interfere with the approaches to any existing airport or airfield that are identified in the Borough's Regional Aviation System Plan or by the Alaska State Aviation System Plan (MSB 17.67.080(B)(3)); and
6. The proposed tower will not be harmful to the public health, safety, convenience, and welfare (MSB 17.67.080(B)(4)); and
7. The proposed use meets the minimum setback distances from all property lines in accordance with MSB 17.55 (MSB 17.67.090(A)(1)); and
8. The proposed setbacks for the tower base are greater than the height of the tower (MSB 17.67.090(A)(2)); and
9. Adequate vehicle parking has been provided (MSB 17.67.090(B)(1)); and
10. Adequate signage has been provided (MSB 17.67.090(C)(1)(a)); and
11. A "high voltage - dangerous" sign will be posted in accordance with code (MSB 17.67.090(C)(1)(b)); and
12. A 24-hour emergency contact number has been provided (MSB 17.67.090(C)(1)(c)); and
13. A fence not less than six feet in height with a secured gate, is being provided (MSB 17.67.090(C)(2)).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission hereby finds this application does meet the standards of MSB 17.67 and does hereby approve the conditional use permit

for the construction of 200-foot tall structure with the following conditions:

1. The operation shall comply with all federal, state, local regulations, and the terms and conditions of the permit.
2. Authorized representatives of the borough shall be allowed to inspect the site and related records, at reasonable times for the purpose of monitoring compliance with all permit conditions. Upon reasonable notice from the borough, the permittee shall provide necessary assistance to facilitate authorized inspections (MSB 17.67.300(D)).
3. The facility shall be removed, at the owner's expense within 90 days after abandonment or termination of the permit in accordance with MSB 17.67.130(A)(1).
4. A fence 6-feet in height and topped with barbed wire shall be constructed and maintained in good working condition. The fence shall surround the base of the tower and supporting telecommunication equipment as indicated on the site plan dated August 24, 2016.
5. The tower shall be lit in accordance with the Federal Aviation Administration's lighting standards.
6. The following informational signage shall be visibly posted at the tower site:

- a. The antenna structure registration number required by the Federal Communications Commission.
- b. The party responsible for the operation and maintenance of the facility.
- c. Warning signs shall be located at the base of the facility and shall display in large, bold, high contrast letters the following: "HIGH VOLTAGE - DANGER".
- d. A 24-Hour emergency contact number.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission
this ____ day of ____, 2016.

JOHN KLAPPERICH, Chair

ATTEST

MARY BRODIGAN, Planning Clerk

(SEAL)

YES:

NO:

**PUBLIC HEARING
LEGISLATIVE**

Resolution No. 16-36

Amendments to MSB 8.45.010
Buildings and Construction

(Page 777 - 790)

PUBLIC HEARING

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MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH INFORMATION MEMORANDUM IM No. 16-154

SUBJECT: AMENDING MSB 8.45.010 BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION;
ADOPTION OF CODES SECTION, TO REFLECT INTERNATIONAL CODES.

AGENDA OF: AUGUST 16, 2016

ASSEMBLY ACTION:

MANAGER RECOMMENDATION: Introduce and set for public hearing.

APPROVED BY JOHN MOOSEY, BOROUGH MANAGER:

Route To:	Department/Individual	Initials	Remarks
	Originator - Emergency Services	BG	
	Capital Projects Director	AP	
	Public Works Director		
	Planning and Land Use Director		
	Community Development Director		
	Finance Director	CH	
	Borough Attorney	RS	
	Borough Clerk	BSA	8-8-16

ATTACHMENT(S): Fiscal Note: YES ☐ NO ☒
Ordinance Serial No. 16-105 (3 pp)
Current 8.45.010 (1 pp)

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The 1997 codes as currently referenced in MSB 8.45.010 were repealed September 15, 2001 by the state of Alaska for all lands within the State and replaced by the International Codes. MSB 8.45.010 has not been updated since the repeal by the State in 1997, and as such refers to code that is now more than 18 years out of date.

The International codes are a consensus type code that gets

updated every three years and by changing the codes to the state adopted codes, we stay in line with Alaska statute and the codes will be automatically updated when the state legislature makes their changes and adopts the newest international codes through the public process.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The administration recommends approval of the attached legislation, which will approve the proposed amendment to MSB 8.45.010 Building and Construction; Adoption of Codes.

8.45.010 ADOPTION OF CODES.

(A) The borough adopts by reference the following codes of technical regulation for buildings and structures which are constructed, improved, or modified by the borough:

- (1) Uniform Mechanical Code, 1997 Edition (including appendices thereto);
- (2) Uniform Building Code, 1997 Edition (including appendices thereto);
- (3) Uniform Plumbing Code, 1997 Edition (including appendices thereto);
- (4) National Electrical Code, 1997 Edition (including appendices thereto); and
- (5) Uniform Fire Code, 1997 Edition (including appendices thereto).

(Ord. 99-086, § 2, 1999; Ord. 94-001AM, § 8 (part), 1994)

Im 16-154
OR 16-105

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CODE ORDINANCE

Sponsored by:
Introduced:
Public Hearing:
Action:

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
ORDINANCE SERIAL NO. 16-105**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY AMENDING MSB 8.45.010 BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION; ADOPTION OF CODES SECTION, TO REFLECT INTERNATIONAL CODES.

WHEREAS, the 1997 codes as currently referenced in MSB 8.45.010 were repealed September 15, 2001, by the state of Alaska for all lands within the State and replaced by the International Codes; and

WHEREAS, MSB 8.45.010 has not been updated since the repeal by the State in 1997, and as such refers to code that is now more than 18 years out of date; and

WHEREAS, the International codes are a consensus type code that gets updated every three years; and

WHEREAS, by changing the codes to the state adopted codes, we stay in line with Alaska statute and the codes will be automatically updated when the state legislature makes their changes and adopts the newest international codes through the public process.

BE IT ENACTED:

Section 1. Classification. This ordinance is of a general and permanent nature and shall become a part of the Borough Code.

Section 2. Amendment of section. MSB 8.45.010 is hereby amended as follows:

(A) The borough adopts by reference the following codes for the [OF TECHNICAL] regulation of [FOR] buildings and structures which are constructed, improved, or modified by the borough:

(1) International Mechanical Code, as adopted by 13 AAC 50.023 [UNIFORM MECHANICAL CODE, 1997 EDITION (INCLUDING APPENDICES THERETO)];

(2) International Building Code, as adopted by 13 AAC 50.020 [UNIFORM BUILDING CODE, 1997 EDITION (INCLUDING APPENDICES THERETO)];

(3) Uniform Plumbing Code, as adopted by 08 AAC 63.010 [UNIFORM PLUMBING CODE, 1997 EDITION (INCLUDING APPENDICES THERETO)];

(4) National Electrical Code, as adopted by 08 AAC 70.025 [NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE, 1997 EDITION (INCLUDING APPENDICES THERETO)];

(5) International Fire Code, as adopted by 13 AAC 50.025 [UNIFORM FIRE CODE, 1997 EDITION (INCLUDING APPENDICES THERETO)];

(6) International Fuel and Gas Code, as adopted by 13 AAC 50.024.

Section 3. Effective date. This ordinance shall take effect

upon adoption.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this -
day of -, 2016.

VERN HALTER, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)

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By: Bill Gamble
Introduced: October 3, 2016
Public Hearing: October 17, 2016
Action:

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 16-36

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING ASSEMBLY APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO MSB 8.45.010 BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION, ADOPTION OF CODES SECTION, TO REFLECT INTERNATIONAL CODES.

WHEREAS, the 1997 codes as currently referenced in MSB 8.45.010 were repealed September 15, 2001 for all lands within the State and replaced by the International Codes; and

WHEREAS, MSB 8.45.010 has not been updated since the repeal by the State in 1997 and as such, refers to code that is now more than 18 years out of date; and

WHEREAS, The International Codes are a consensus type code that gets updated every three years and by changing the codes to the State adopted codes, MSB stays in line with Alaska statute and the codes will be automatically updated when the State legislature makes their changes and adopts the newest International codes through the public process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission hereby recommends assembly approval of amendments to MSB 8.45.010 Buildings and Construction, Adoption of Codes Section, to reflect International codes.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning
Commission this ____ day of ____, 2016.

JOHN KLAPPERICH, Chair

ATTEST

MARY BRODIGAN, Planning Clerk

(SEAL)

YES:

NO:

PUBLIC HEARING
LEGISLATIVE

Resolution No. 16-35

Modifying MSB 17.28 and 17.30
to
Eliminate the Interim Materials District (IMD) Process

(Page 791 - 812)

PUBLIC HEARING

DOCUMENT: An Ordinance Amending MSB 17.28 And MSB 17.30 In Order To Eliminate The Interim Materials District Process.

[illegible]

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MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

IM No. 16-149

SUBJECT: AN ORDINANCE OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY MODIFYING MSB 17.28 AND MSB 17.30 IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THE INTERMIM MATERIALS DISTRICT PROCESS.

AGENDA OF: August 2, 2016

ASSEMBLY ACTION:

MANAGER RECOMMENDATION: Introduce and set for public hearing.

APPROVED BY JOHN MOOSEY, BOROUGH MANAGER:

Route To:	Department/Individual	Initials	Remarks
	Originator - A. Strawn	AS	
	Planning and Land Use Director	EP	
	Borough Attorney	NS	
	Borough Clerk	JMM	7/25/16

ATTACHMENT(S) : Fiscal Note: YES ____ NO X
Ordinance Serial No. 16-102 (9 pp)
Planning Commission Reso. 16-__

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

This ordinance eliminates the process for new interim materials districts (IMDs) while allowing existing districts to continue. All future permitted earth materials extraction activities will be evaluated, and if approved, issued under MSB 17.30.

The Borough has regulated gravel extraction since September 2005. Currently, potential gravel operators have three options when applying for the ability to extract gravel within the Borough. Extraction operations that are 20 acres or less are eligible for either an Administrative Permit or a Conditional Use Permit (CUP), both of which are quasi-judicial in nature. An Administrative Permit, which is adjudicated by the Planning & Land Use Director, is an option if the operation is less than two years or has an annual extraction of less than 7,000 cubic yards. Conditional use Permits, which are adjudicated by the Planning Commission, do not have a cap on the volume extracted or duration of the permit unless placed as a condition of the

permit. Interim materials districts (IMDs), which are legislative in nature, are approved or denied by the Assembly and is the only option available for operations greater than 20 acres.

The IMD process is very similar to a Conditional Use Permit in that it is approval or denial of a specific operation on a single piece of property. Interim Materials Districts are zoning districts. However, they are not characteristic of typical zoning designations which generally are not established for a particular operation on a single parcel, rather they are used to designate appropriate uses for a broader geographic area.

Alaska Statute 29.40.020(b)(2) requires that the Planning Commission review, recommend, and administer measures necessary to implement the comprehensive plan, including land use permits, established by the Assembly, which are designed to encourage or discourage specified uses. Because large gravel operations have similar impacts as other land use permits within the Borough, it is appropriate that they would be adjudicated by the Planning Commission rather than the Assembly.

Despite the similarities between IMD's and CUP's, there are two significant disparities that set the IMD process apart from the CUP and Administrative Permit process. First, because the IMD process is legislative, ex parte contact is arguably allowed. This means Assemblymembers can speak with each other, the applicant, and/or the public outside of a public forum within the bounds of the Open Meetings Act. The other difference between the two processes deals with the right to appeal. Conditional use and Administrative Permits are appealable under MSB 15.39 which is a formalized process adjudicated by the Board of Adjustments and Appeals. Interim materials districts are not appealable by either the applicant or other interested parties. Lack of an appeal process for approval or denial of development applications has potential legal implications dealing with rights to due process.

The existing three-tier system has led to uncertainty and confusion regarding which process applies. This ordinance will clarify and streamline the process and give all parties, residents, and developers an avenue for appeal. Acreage will no longer be a factor in determining which type of permit applies. Projects will be eligible for an Administrative Permit if the duration is under two years or the quantity is 7,000 cubic yards or less annually; otherwise a Conditional Use Permit will be required.

MSB 17.28 cannot easily be eliminated entirely because the

standards within MSB 17.28 apply to permits issued under MSB 17.30, existing Interim Materials Districts, and operations granted pre-existing legal nonconforming status. It is the intent of the Planning Department to consolidate MSB 17.28 and MSB 17.30 in the future as part of the Title 17 consolidation project.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Staff respectfully recommends adoption of this ordinance.

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CODE ORDINANCE

Sponsored by: R. Kowalke
Introduced:
Public Hearing:
Action:

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
ORDINANCE SERIAL NO. 16-102**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY MODIFYING
MSB 17.28 AND MSB 17.30 IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THE INTERMIM
MATERIALS DISTRICT PROCESS.

BE IT ENACTED:

Section 1. Classification. This ordinance is of a general
and permanent nature and shall become a part of the Borough
Code.

Section 2. Amendment of Section. MSB 17.28.020 is hereby
amended as follows:

[(A) THIS DISTRICT SHALL BE ESTABLISHED ON
PRIVATE OR PUBLIC LANDS FOR EARTH MATERIALS EXTRACTION
AND PROCESSING ACTIVITIES GREATER THAN 20 CONTIGUOUS
ACRES IN ALL AREAS OF THE BOROUGH EXCEPT WHERE THE USE
IS PROHIBITED BY ORDINANCE WITHIN A SPECIAL LAND USE
DISTRICT. WHERE THIS CHAPTER IS IN CONFLICT WITH THE
CONDITIONS OF A SPECIAL LAND USE DISTRICT, THE MOST
RESTRICTIVE CONDITIONS SHALL APPLY.]

(B) This chapter does not apply within the cities
of Houston, Palmer, or Wasilla, or the Port MacKenzie
Special Use District.

[(C) AN OWNER OF GREATER THAN 20 CONTIGUOUS ACRES WHERE EARTH MATERIALS EXTRACTION HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED A PERMIT OR PRE-EXISTING LEGAL NONCONFORMING STATUS AS OF THE DATE OF THE ENACTMENT OF THIS CHAPTER IS REQUIRED TO APPLY FOR DESIGNATION AS AN INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS CHAPTER.]

(D) This chapter shall not apply to earth material extraction activities on land owned by the state of Alaska that are in existence as of the date of adoption of the ordinance codified in this chapter except for such operations that extract materials within four feet of the water table. Where a site is exempt under this subsection the exemption is revoked if operations proceed to within four feet of the water table.

(E) Annual extraction of greater than 2,000 cubic yards on any one parcel requires a permit in accordance with MSB 17.30.

Section 3. Amendment of Subsection. MSB 17.28.030(A) is hereby amended as follows:

(A) The extraction of earth materials is an interim use of the land in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. An interim materials district shall [BE

GREATER THAN 20 CONTIGUOUS ACRES IN SIZE,] meet the site development standards specified in MSB 17.28.060, and be in compliance with other applicable regulations as shown in MSB 17.28.040.

Section 4. Amendment of Subsection. MSB 17.28.050(A) is hereby amended as follows:

(A) The application for an [INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT] earth materials extraction permit shall include a site development plan. The site development plan shall include, but not be limited to the following, as required by the conditions of the site, and shall be consistent with the standards in MSB 17.28.060:

Section 5. Amendment of Subsection. MSB 17.28.060(A) is hereby amended as follows:

(A) Standards for the [INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT] earth materials extraction site development plan are as follows:

Section 6. Repeal of Section. MSB 17.28.080 is hereby repealed in its entirety:

[17.28.080 PROCEDURES FOR INITIATING AN INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT (IMD).

(A) AN INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT MAY BE

INITIATED ON A PROPERTY WHICH MEETS THE STANDARDS FOR DESIGNATION AS AN IMD BY:

(1) THE OWNER OF THE PROPERTY OR THEIR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE;

(2) THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND USE UPON ITS OWN INITIATIVE;

(3) THE PLANNING COMMISSION, UPON ITS OWN MOTION; OR

(4) THE ASSEMBLY, UPON ITS OWN MOTION.

(B) THE APPLICANT FOR AN INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT DESIGNATION UNDER SUBSECTION (A) (1) OF THIS SECTION SHALL SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND USE:

(1) A COMPLETED APPLICATION ON A FORM PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND USE (INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED);

(2) A SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH MSB 17.28.050 AND 17.28.060;

(3) A FEE IN THE AMOUNT DESIGNATED IN MSB 17.99; AND

(4) A RECLAMATION PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH MSB 17.28.063.

(C) THE PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL CONDUCT AT

LEAST ONE PUBLIC HEARING PRIOR TO MAKING A RECOMMENDATION TO THE ASSEMBLY ON DESIGNATION OF AN INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT.

(1) THE PUBLIC HEARING SHALL BE HELD IN CONFORMANCE WITH MSB 15.04.016, AND NOTICE OF THE HEARING SHALL BE MADE PURSUANT TO THE STANDARDS OF MSB 17.03, EXCEPT THAT THE NOTIFICATION AREA WILL BE ONE MILE FROM THE EXTERIOR BOUNDARY OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY.

(2) THE COMMISSION SHALL REPORT TO THE ASSEMBLY ON WHETHER THE APPLICANT HAS MET THE STANDARDS DELINEATED IN MSB 17.28.050 AND 17.28.060 AND WHAT EFFECT THE PROPOSED INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT WOULD HAVE ON THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND GENERAL WELFARE OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH. THE COMMISSION IN ITS REPORT TO THE ASSEMBLY SHALL RECOMMEND TO THE ASSEMBLY APPROVAL, DENIAL, MODIFICATIONS, OR CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION, AND SHALL INCLUDE FINDINGS ON THE FOLLOWING:

(A) WHETHER THE PROPOSED INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN;

(B) WHETHER THE PROPOSED INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT NEGATIVELY AFFECTS PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY OR GENERAL WELFARE; AND

(C) WHETHER THE PROPOSED INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT HAS MET THE SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS OF THIS CHAPTER INCLUDING COMPLIANCE WITH ALL REQUIRED LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL LAWS.

(D) THE ASSEMBLY SHALL REVIEW THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION, HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTE ON WHETHER TO DESIGNATE THE PROPOSED AREA AS AN INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT.]

Section 7. Repeal of Section. MSB 17.28.100 is hereby repealed in its entirety:

[(A) APPLICATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING VARIANCES FROM STANDARDS OF THIS CHAPTER SHALL BE AS PRESCRIBED IN MSB 17.65.]

Section 8. Repeal of Section. MSB 17.28.120 is hereby repealed in its entirety:

[(A) APPLICATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING A DEVELOPMENT PERMIT WITHIN ANY DESIGNATED SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA UNDER THIS CHAPTER SHALL BE AS PRESCRIBED IN MSB 17.29.]

Section 9. Repeal of Section. MSB 17.28.210 is hereby

repealed in its entirety:

[(A) FEES REQUIRED UNDER THIS CHAPTER WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH MSB 17.99.]

Section 10. Amendment of Subsection. MSB 17.30.020(E) is hereby amended as follows:

(E) [AN OWNER OF 20 CONTIGUOUS ACRES] **Annual extraction of more than 2,000 cubic yards of earth materials on property that** [OR LESS WHERE EARTH MATERIALS EXTRACTION] has not been granted a permit or pre-existing legal nonconforming status as of the date of the enactment of this chapter is required to obtain a conditional use permit or administrative permit.

Section 11. Repeal of Paragraph. MSB 17.30.040(A)(1) is hereby repealed in its entirety:

[(1) THE CUMULATIVE CONTINUOUS ACTIVITY IS LESS THAN 40 ACRES IN SIZE;]

Section 12. Amendment of Section. MSB 17.30.050 is hereby amended as follows:

17.30.050 [CRITERIA TO QUALIFY FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT.] **PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL**

[(A) TO QUALIFY FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA MUST BE MET:

(1) THE CUMULATIVE CONTINUOUS ACTIVITY IS LESS

THAN 40 ACRES IN SIZE; AND

(2) EXTRACTION ACTIVITIES MAY BE ONGOING.]

(B) The commission may set conditions of approval for issuance of the conditional use permit, as appropriate for the area in which the development is sited, for the following:

(1) setbacks (no less than minimum setback requirements as established in MSB 17.55; however, may be increased as appropriate for existing surrounding development);

(2) visual screening, noise mitigation, lighting restrictions and roads/access restrictions as appropriate for surrounding development and in accordance with development standards referenced in MSB 17.28.060, site development standards;

(3) road maintenance may be required of the permittee; and

(4) length of time of operation and location of batch plants.

Section 13. Effective date. This ordinance shall take effect upon adoption.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this - day of -, 2016.

VERN HALTER, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)

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By: Alex Strawn
Introduced: October 3, 2016
Public Hearing: October 17, 2016
Action:

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 16-35**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION MODIFYING MSB 17.28 AND MSB 17.30 IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THE INTERIM MATERIALS DISTRICT PROCESS.

WHEREAS, the Borough has regulated gravel extraction since September 2005; and

WHEREAS, currently, potential gravel operators have three options when applying for the ability to extract gravel within the Borough; and

WHEREAS, the existing three-tier system has led to uncertainty and confusion regarding which process applies; and

WHEREAS, while administrative permits and conditional use permits are quasi-judicial in nature, interim materials districts are legislative; and

WHEREAS, the IMD process is very similar to a Conditional Use Permit in that it is approval or denial of a specific operation on a single piece of property; and

WHEREAS, zoning designations generally are not established for a particular operation on a single parcel, rather they are used to designate appropriate uses for a broader geographic area; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Statute 29.40.020(b)(2) requires that the Planning Commission review, recommend, and administer measures necessary to implement the comprehensive plan, including land use permits, established by the Assembly, which are designed to encourage or discourage specified uses; and

WHEREAS, because large gravel operations have similar impacts as other land use permits within the Borough, it is appropriate that they would be adjudicated by the Planning Commission rather than the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, Interim materials districts are not appealable by either the applicant or other interested parties; and

WHEREAS, lack of an appeal process for approval or denial of development applications has potential legal implications dealing with rights to due process; and

WHEREAS, this ordinance will clarify and streamline the process and give all parties, residents, and developers an avenue for appeal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission hereby recommends approval of an ordinance modifying MSB 17.28 and MSB 17.30 in order to eliminate the interim materials district process.

/

/

/

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning
Commission this ____ day of ____, 2016.

JOHN KLAPPERICH, Chair

ATTEST

MARY BRODIGAN, Planning Clerk

(SEAL)

YES:

NO:

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CORRESPONDENCE & INFORMATION

(Page 813 – 818)

CORRESPONDENCE & INFORMATION



PLANNING & LAND USE DEPARTMENT MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Planning Division Newsletter

4th Quarter 2016

Air Quality

Planning Division Personnel

Sara Jansen
Acting Chief Planner.....861-7865

Taunnie Boothby
Planner II.....861-8526

Jessica Smith
Transportation Planner.....861-8514

Frankie Barker
Environmental Planner.....861-8439

Pamela Graham
Grant & Projects Coordinator
.....861-8525

Karol Riese
Administrative Specialist.....861-8556

The Borough and Department of Environmental Conservation staff are meeting regularly to plan ways to address the air quality issues which are primarily in the Butte. A media campaign beginning in mid-October is planned with funding from DEC and MSB. Messages about proper wood burning will be distributed through social media, print and radio. The brochure about clean wood burning is being distributed to the public and included with wood cutting permits.

"Clean Air" information fliers were mailed to the Butte Community Council members the end of September.

Frankie Barker spoke with the Assembly regarding the quality of air in the Butte on September 20.

Air quality is monitored by the DEC. When air quality standards

are exceeded, MSB risks becoming a nonattainment area. This is important financially to the borough because as a nonattainment area certain federal funding like transportation, will require a percentage of those funds be spent on air quality before anything else.

"Nonattainment area is an area considered to have air quality worse than the National Ambient Air Quality Standards as defined in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970 (P.L. 91-604, Sec. 109)."



Wood smoke haze in the Butte,
November 2015

Ways we can all help...

- Only burn dry wood; Reduce wood burning on cold, still days in November, December and January
- Split, stack and store your firewood to dry it out for 1-2 years before burning
- Purchase seasoned wood with a moisture content less than 20%
- Upgrade to a cleaner burning and more efficient wood stove, or other heating source

For more information visit

www.matsugov.us/environment/airquality

APA State Planning Conference

The American Planning Association (APA) Alaska Chapter will host the State Planning Conference in Anchorage, AK November 13 – 15. The conference includes over 150 planners from all over Alaska that present projects, training workshops, and

panel discussions to help keep us connected and informed. The conference also includes a day-long Planning Commissioner Training workshop on Sunday, November 13th from 9 – 4PM. If you are inter-

ested in joining us, please contact Jessica Smith at:

Jessica.smith@matsugov.us or 861-8514.

Community Council Boundaries

The preliminary Project Management Plan has been completed and submitted for review. Letters have been developed and were mailed to the community councils outside of the core area on September 26th.



Brownfields Grant

Matanuska-Susitna Borough was informed in May that we will be receiving \$550,000 from the Environmental Protection Agen-

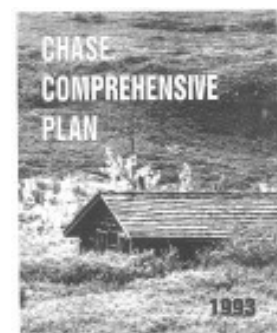
cy (EPA) to assess brownfields. The Borough submitted a work plan to the EPA at the end of June for the 3 year project.

Next steps will be to finalize the grant agreement and send legislature to the Assembly to accept and appropriate the grant funds.

Chase Community Comprehensive Plan

The draft Chase Comprehensive Plan update will be available beginning October. The draft plan will be available for a full 90-day public comment period. The Chase Community Council

will introduce the draft during the October meeting. To view the old version that is being updated go to: <http://www.matsugov.us/plans>



Intersection Analysis

Western Demographics was hired to complete an intersection analysis and update the build-out study. An in-house review team with participants from Assessments, Capital Pro-

jects, O & M, emergency Services and Planning identified approximately 40 key intersections throughout the Borough for further analysis. When complete

the information will help drive key transportation connections and be a solid economic development tool.

2016 Mat-Su Salmon Symposium

The 2016 Mat-Su Salmon Symposium is scheduled for November 17-18 at the Palmer Depot. This is an annual forum to share information about salmon and their habitat in the Mat-Su Basin. The keynote speaker is Dr. Daniel

Schindler, Chair of Conservation in the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences at the University of Washington. Topics will be fish passage restoration projects on Mat-Su streams and assessment of their benefits to salmon; stud-

ies about geology, erosion, and salmon distribution on the Matanuska River; wetlands mapping and management; community assets planning; salmon distribution throughout the Mat-Su Basin; conservation of public lands; and more!

Volunteer Lake Monitoring

Monthly lake monitoring is done for the season. Twenty-five lakes throughout the Borough from Talkeetna to Chickaloon. Volunteers measured water quality, clarity and took

samples which are sent to a lab for nutrient testing. They also noted wildlife activity, human activity and any changes in the lake environment. This summer there were concerns about excessive plant growth in some lakes that may be due

to warm summer temperatures.



Fish and Wildlife Commission

Eleven fish research contracts selected by the Fish and Wildlife Commission and approved by the Assembly are now underway. All contracts must be completed by June 2018.

At their August meeting, com-

missioners discussed the topics of beaver dams, salmon and preparations for the 2017 Board of Fisheries meeting.



Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership

The partnership is soliciting project proposals for its 2017 grant cycle. In 2016, the Partnership received \$215,000 from the National Fish Habitat Partnership through the US Fish and Wildlife Service for six projects in the Mat-Su.



Projects funded include cataloguing anadromous fish streams, treating invasive pike and replacing culverts that block fish passage. The partnership held a tour of project sites on August 23.

2035 Long Range Transportation Plan

The MSB Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is in full swing. This quarter we are working on an internal draft

and anticipate a public review draft to be available in late October. The LRTP Public Review draft will be advertised for a

45-day comment period before a pre-final draft is brought to the Assembly for final approval.

October 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 Planning Commission Meeting	18	19 ARRP Livable Communities Workshop	20 Historical Preservation Commission	21	22
23	24	25 Joint meeting with Assembly	26 Long Range Transportation Plan Meeting	27 Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting	28	29
30	31					

November 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Planning Commission Meeting	8	9 Long Range Transportation Plan Meeting	10	11	12
13 APA Alaska Annual Meeting Anchorage Marriott	14 APA Alaska Annual Meeting Anchorage Marriott	15 APA Alaska Annual Meeting Anchorage Marriott	16	17 Salmon Symposium—Palmer Depot	18 Salmon Symposium—Palmer Depot	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

COMMISSION BUSINESS
Upcoming PC Agenda Items

(Page 819 - 824)

COMMISSION BUSINESS

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH****Planning and Land Use Department**

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-7833 • Fax (907) 861-7876

Email: planning@matsugov.us**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: October 7, 2016

TO: Planning Commissioners

FROM: Eileen Probasco, Director of Planning and Land Use

SUBJECT: Items tentatively scheduled for future PC Meetings or Administrative Actions and Updates on PC items sent to the Assembly

November 7, 2016 (*MSB Assembly Chambers – Half-Chambers Only*)**Introduction for Public Hearing Quasi-Judicial**

- **Resolution 16-41**, remand to the Planning Commission for further consideration of the Central Monofill Services (CMS) application for a Conditional Use Permit under MSB Code 17.60, for the operation of a monofill for the disposal of inert construction and demolition debris, including regulated asbestos-containing material (RACM) and non-regulated asbestos-containing material (non-RACM), and an outdoor storage yard for the sale of salvageable/recyclable materials, located at 2840 S. Glenn Highway (Tax ID: 17N02E18C010) AND 2560 S. Glenn Highway (Tax ID: 17N02E19B006); within Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Sections 18 and 19, Seward Meridian. Public Hearing: December 5, 2016. (*Applicant: Central Monofill Services (CMS), Staff: Mark Whisenhunt*)

Introduction for Public Hearing Legislative*(None)***Agency/Staff Reports***(None)***Land Use Classifications***(None)***Public Hearing Quasi-Judicial**

- **Resolution 16-37**, a request for a Conditional Use Permit in accordance with MSB 17.70, Regulation of Alcoholic Beverage Uses, for the operation of an alcoholic beverage dispensary (bar) at the 907 Club, located at 2541 S. Rosalie Court; MSB Tax ID# 5428000T00A; within Township 17 North, Range 3 West, Section 21, Seward Meridian. (*Applicant: Mark Button (dba RMB, LLC, 907 Club, Staff: Mark Whisenhunt)*)

Public Hearing Legislative

- **Resolution 16-40**, A resolution recommending Assembly approval of amending the City of Houston's Comprehensive Plan in accordance with MSB 15.24.030(B)(5). Public Hearing: November 7, 2016. (*Staff: Van Le, R&M Consultants*)

Unfinished Business

(None)

New Business

(None)

Commission Business

(None)

December 5, 2016 (*MSB Assembly Chambers*)

Introduction for Public Hearing Quasi-Judicial

(None)

Introduction for Public Hearing Legislative

(None)

Agency/Staff Reports

(None)

Land Use Classifications

(None)

Public Hearing Quasi-Judicial

- **Resolution 16-41**, remand to the Planning Commission for further consideration of the Central Monofill Services (CMS) application for a Conditional Use Permit under MSB Code 17.60, for the operation of a monofill for the disposal of inert construction and demolition debris, including regulated asbestos-containing material (RACM) and non-regulated asbestos-containing material (non-RACM), and an outdoor storage yard for the sale of salvageable/recyclable materials, located at 2840 S. Glenn Highway (Tax ID: 17N02E18C010) AND 2560 S. Glenn Highway (Tax ID: 17N02E19B006); within Township 17 North, Range 2 East, Sections 18 and 19, Seward Meridian. (*Applicant: Central Monofill Services (CMS), Staff: Mark Whisenhunt*)

Public Hearing Legislative

(None)

Unfinished Business

(None)

New Business*(None)***Commission Business***(None)*

Upcoming PC ActionsQuasi-Judicial

- Earth Materials Extraction CUP, 18N02W27D009. (*Applicant: T&J Gravel, Staff: Susan Lee*)
- Forks Roadhouse Beverage Dispensary CUP. (*Staff: Mark Whisenhunt*)

Legislative

- Title 17 Consolidation. (*Staff: Sara Jansen*)
- Title 43 Amendments (*Staff: Fred Wagner*)

Other Upcoming Administrative Actions (Not going to the PC)

- Nash/Chijuk Creek NRMU Timber Transportation Permit. (*Staff: Susan Lee*)
- Minnick Earth Materials Extraction Administrative Permit. (*Staff: Mark Whisenhunt*)
- Finger Lake Legal Nonconforming Status Determination for a Structure. (*Staff: Susan Lee*)

PC Decisions Currently Under Appeal

- Central Monofill Services Application for a CUP Remanded to the Planning Commission by Superior Court. (*Staff: Alex Strawn*)

Updates on PC items going to the Assembly (Pending)

Planning Commission		Assembly	
Reso		ORD/Reso #	IM
Resolution 16-05 , A resolution recommending Assembly adoption of the Seldon Road Extension Corridor Access Management Plan. (<i>Staff: Mike Campfield</i>)		ORD # 16-__	IM # 16-__
Actions:	01/08/16 – PC Introduction 02/01/16 – PC Public Hearing – Approved		

Planning Commission		Assembly	
Reso		ORD/Reso #	IM
Resolution 16-27 , recommending Assembly adoption of the FY 2018 – 2023 Capital Improvement Program. (<i>Staff: Sara Jansen</i>)		ORD # 16-__	IM # 16-__
Actions:	08/15/16 – PC Introduction 09/19/16 – PC Public Hearing – Approved		

Updates on PC items that went to the Assembly (Complete)

None