

# Section 1: Vision

## Goals, Forecasts, and Policies for Growth



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## 1.1 Guiding Anchorage's Growth

*Where will new residents settle over the next two decades? Where will people work, shop, and play? Will there be enough room to grow?*

*How will Anchorage look? Will growth support strong neighborhoods, and preserve natural assets? Will Anchorage be an attractive place to live?*

Section 1 of this plan outlines the land use framework for answering these questions.

The *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan (2040 LUP)* is a visual guide for growth and development in the Anchorage Bowl over the next 25 years aligned with the vision and goals of the *Anchorage 2020—Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan (Anchorage 2020)*.

*Anchorage 2020*, adopted in 2001, set a new direction for growth and development. Its policies anticipated the evolution of Anchorage toward reinvestment in existing business districts and neighborhoods with new patterns of infill and redevelopment. *Anchorage 2020* envisioned a more compact and efficient land use pattern in and around mixed-use centers, while preserving lower-intensity uses elsewhere, such as established neighborhoods and natural open spaces.

The *2040 LUP* is a targeted amendment to the land use element of *Anchorage 2020*. It updates the forecasts for growth and land needs through the year 2040 and provides a map with more specific guidance for future uses throughout the Bowl. Accompanying the map are policies and strategies to achieve that growth in response to

today's challenges. The *2040 LUP* is a part of the *Comprehensive Plan* and carries the same weight and authority.

### Economic Challenges

With one-third of Alaska's population and nearly half of its jobs in a 100-square-mile area, the Anchorage Bowl is the urban center of an emerging metropolitan region. Anchorage hosts many of the region's cultural attractions, businesses, and services and is the hub for air, road, maritime, and rail transportation, which help drive the local and statewide economy.

Despite the current economic downturn, Anchorage's longer-term vital signs remain positive. This plan prepares for a brighter future, economic success, and the forecast growth through 2040. Although Anchorage can do little to affect the price of oil, there is a lot it can do with its land use policies.

For example, land use strategies can reduce the cost of housing and alleviate the workforce housing deficit. Strategies are also needed to ensure there will be a predictable land supply for key industries and other economic anchors. Land use strategies can also attract reinvestment into city centers and revitalize older neighborhoods.

Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce is essential to a resilient, growing economy. This Plan recognizes that talent is mobile and seeks a high-quality place and lifestyle. Anchorage's natural assets are attractive, but creating and improving the types of places where people will want to live, work, and play is also important.

### Plan Objectives

The *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan* visualizes and guides the future pattern of development and distribution of land uses across the Anchorage Bowl. It shows where different land uses, intensities of use, and urban form characteristics are planned to occur by 2040. This is the blueprint for how Anchorage will accommodate economic growth and meet the forecast employment and housing needs of current and future residents.

However, its land use categories are more than just a strategy for absorbing growth. They represent the kinds of *places* that will define Anchorage as a great city in which to live: its neighborhoods, commercial centers, industrial employment areas, institutional campuses, public facilities, streets, parks, and natural open spaces. The core purpose of the *2040 LUP* is to manage land uses to improve the quality of life for all residents during times of change.

This Land Use Plan is the first step toward an update of *Anchorage 2020*. It supplements *Anchorage 2020* and provides a baseline from which land use decisions can proceed, by:

- Providing greater land use predictability and clearer policy direction.
- Coordinating recommended land uses from various adopted area-specific plans.
- Clarifying the framework for making zoning and development decisions.
- Aligning land use regulations and public investments in transportation, utilities, and other infrastructure.

## Relationship to Other Plans

Since the *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan* guides how land is to be used throughout the Anchorage Bowl, it has an important relationship to policies contained in the other elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*, including functional plans and area-specific plans. The goals and policies of these plans have shaped the *2040 LUP*. Figure 1-1 on page 4 illustrates the relationship between the *2040 LUP* and other elements of *Anchorage 2020*.

### Functional Plans

Functional plans provide specific policy direction for transportation and infrastructure. Examples of functional plans include:

- Metropolitan Transportation Plan <sup>1</sup>
- Anchorage Bike and Pedestrian Plans
- Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan
- Utility Corridor Plan
- Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan

These plans focus on their respective functions and establish priorities for infrastructure improvements, natural resource management, and levels of service. The goals, objectives, and infrastructure priorities of functional plans are developed in compliance with the overall *Comprehensive Plan*, including the *2040 LUP*.

<sup>1</sup> The *Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)* and the *Transportation Improvements Program (TIP)* are adopted by Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, or *AMATS*.

## Anchorage 2020—Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan Guidance



To develop *Anchorage 2020*, the Municipality involved a broad cross section of stakeholders. While some of the particulars have changed and new challenges have arisen, the core goals and principles that emerged from those meetings are as relevant today as when first incorporated into the Plan. Subsequent area-specific and other plans have reconfirmed and elaborated on these goals. The *2040 LUP* builds on the following goals abridged from *Anchorage 2020* and other adopted elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*:

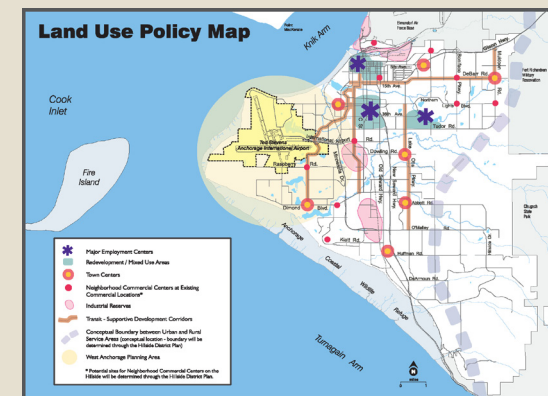
**Future Growth.** Take a forward-looking approach to community growth and redevelopment, embodied in the *Anchorage 2020 Land Use Concept Plan* and *Land Use Policy Map*, by pursuing innovative ways to accommodate and encourage growth in population, housing, and employment.

**Building Community.** Build on existing commercial districts and neighborhood strengths through reinvestment.

**Diverse, Healthy Economy.** Capitalize on Anchorage's unique strengths and its regional, statewide, and global position, as well as its key economic sectors and well-paying jobs.

**Economic Viability with Placemaking.** Strive to create a built environment comprising great places, streets, and spaces that together generate a positive city image, support lasting economic viability, attract new residents and workforce talent, and promote affordable development.

**Compact Development.** Use infill and redevelopment with a more compact land use pattern that supports efficient use of land,



*Anchorage 2020 Land Use Policy Map* sets the preferred growth concept within which *2040 LUP* provides more specific, updated guidance.



## Anchorage 2020—Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan Guidance, continued

lowers the cost of public services and utilities, improves the performance of transportation networks, and preserves open space.

**Natural Open Spaces and Wildlife.** Preserve and enhance the network of natural open spaces that provides Anchorage's scenery, ecological functions such as water drainage and re-charge, diversity of fish and wildlife habitats, and recreational opportunities.

**Strong, Resilient Community.** Manage future growth and development to minimize risks to life safety and property from natural hazards and disasters.

**Balance of Commercial and Industrial Land.** Preserve a balanced supply of commercial and industrial land that is compatible with surrounding uses and has access to transportation networks.

**Housing.** Provide a diverse supply of quality housing that meets the needs and preferences of city residents, for all income levels, in safe and livable neighborhoods.

**Neighborhood Identity and Vitality.** Encourage distinctive neighborhoods that are responsive to the diverse needs of residents in urban, suburban, and rural settings, with amenities and infrastructure to absorb growth, such as good access to schools, recreation, natural areas, and services.

**Compatible Development.** Promote devel-

opment that respects the scale and character of existing neighborhoods, contributes to neighborhoods of lasting value and vitality, and is supported by investment in local amenities and services.

**Harmony with Natural Setting.** Develop in harmony with the natural setting and capitalize on retaining Anchorage's advantage as an attractive place to live and work which is mindful of critical environmental lands, its northern climate, and natural hazards.

**Community Facilities.** Provide a well-planned mix of public, utility, and institutional facilities that coordinate with private-sector development to meet the health, educational, civic, cultural, recreational, utility, governmental, and public safety needs of all citizens, businesses, and neighborhoods.

**Mobility and Access.** Develop an efficient transportation system that is based on land use, moves people and goods safely with minimal impact on surrounding uses and the community, and maximizes choices among various modes of travel including walking, bicycling, and public transit.

**Walkable Community.** Develop a community that allows for living, working, shopping, and recreation within convenient travel distances, in a pedestrian-oriented development pattern that supports healthy, active lifestyles.

The *2040 LUP* also coordinates other facility and operational plans. This includes water and wastewater facilities, public transit, and municipal and state roadway improvements. The *Comprehensive Plan*, including the *2040 LUP*, helps other agencies understand long-term city goals and the way their work shapes the Plan, even if the agencies must focus on short-term needs that are out of step with the long-term Plan.

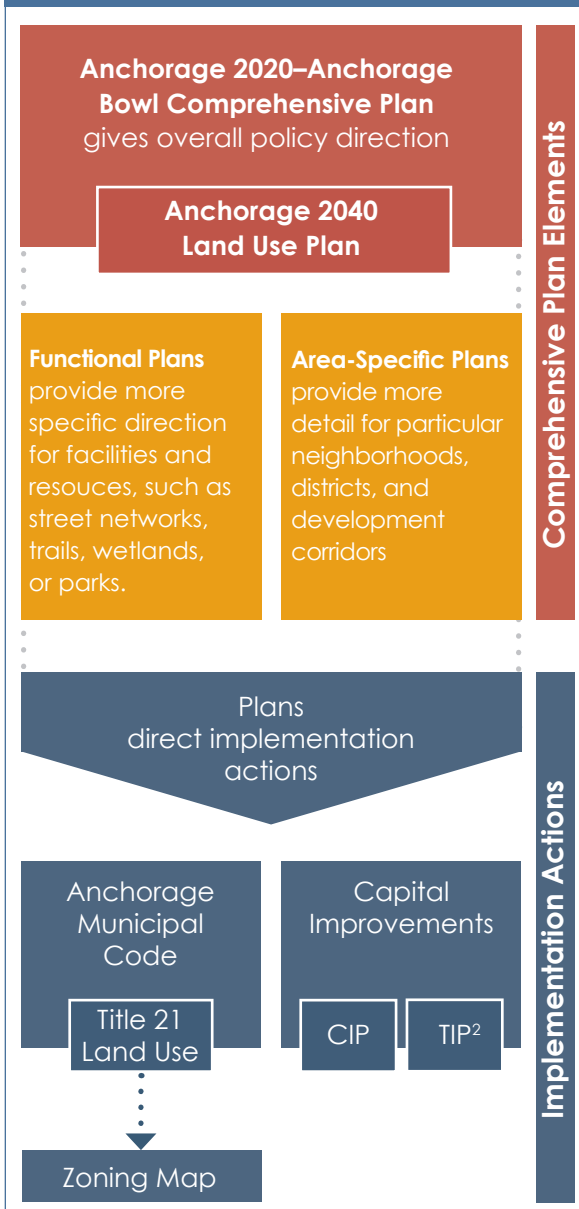
For example, the long-term vision for public transit in the *Comprehensive Plan* is to build a high frequency transit network operating along many street corridors. In the short term, however, Public Transportation must focus its operations planning on a fewer number of high-frequency routes where most of its riders are. Eventually, transit operations should merge with the long-range vision. But it will take years to build the infrastructure and housing to support extending the high-frequency network to all areas envisioned in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

The *2040 LUP* assumes that over time, infrastructure improvements identified in the functional plans, including the *Metropolitan Transportation Plan*, will be constructed. As these improvements come on line, the areas served can be fully developed as envisioned under the *2040 LUP*.

### Neighborhood and District Plans

*Anchorage 2020* called for neighborhood and district plans to accomplish *Comprehensive Plan* policies, and respond to area-specific issues.

**Figure 1-1. How the 2040 Land Use Plan Relates to Other Plans and to Zoning**



More than 12 neighborhood, district, and other area-specific plans have been adopted in the Anchorage Bowl. The *Area-specific Plans Map* on the next page depicts the current adopted plans.

These plans provide tailored land use designations and development guidance that is too detailed for planning at the citywide scale. Potential investors, new development projects, and public investments within these areas should refer to these area-specific plans for more in-depth policy direction and area-specific development guidelines.

The *2040 LUP* provides a citywide land use policy framework and layout plan that incorporates the land use designations provided by each of the area-specific plans.

#### Where 2040 Plan Recommendations Differ from Adopted Area-specific Plans

The Municipality's *Comprehensive Plan* is the sum of its area-wide comprehensive plans, district-level and neighborhood plans, and its many functional plans. Because they have been adopted during different time periods, existing conditions, and trends, there can be inconsistencies between these *Comprehensive Plan* elements.

For example, in some locations, the *2040 LUP* recommends different uses or intensities of use from those adopted in area-specific plans. These areas are shown with a green outline on **Map 1-2, Areas of Growth and Change**, on page 27.

<sup>2</sup> The Transportation Improvements Program (TIP) is adopted by Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, or AMATS

These changes are recommended from the following analyses and public outreach process for the *2040 LUP*:

- Updated studies linking Anchorage's land supply and its housing capacity.
- Updated forecasts for population growth and housing and employment needs.
- Updated or improved information about existing and anticipated uses.
- Emerging issues and public input during the *2040 LUP* public involvement process.
- Citywide land use issues that became evident but have not been addressed by individual area-specific plans.

Where the *2040 Land Use Plan's* land use designations differ from those found in the applicable area-specific plan, AMC Title 21 Land Use Regulations provides guidance on resolving these situations. It states that, where comprehensive plan elements conflict, the most recently adopted shall govern. This principle will apply when one plan element, such as the *2040 LUP*, lists a different land use designation than another plan element, such as a neighborhood or district plan. The *2040 LUP* governs if it was adopted more recently than the neighborhood or district plan.

When a new neighborhood or district plan is adopted after the *2040 LUP*, it is expected that these plans will be consistent with the overall policy framework and goals of the *Anchorage 2020–Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan* and the *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan*. This approach provides consistency on Bowl-wide issues, such

as growth and employment needs, and in the implementation of these two overarching *Comprehensive Plan* elements.

To determine the land use designation for a specific parcel within the Anchorage Bowl, users should reference **Map 1-1, Area-specific Plans**, as a reference point for making decisions on land use and zoning.

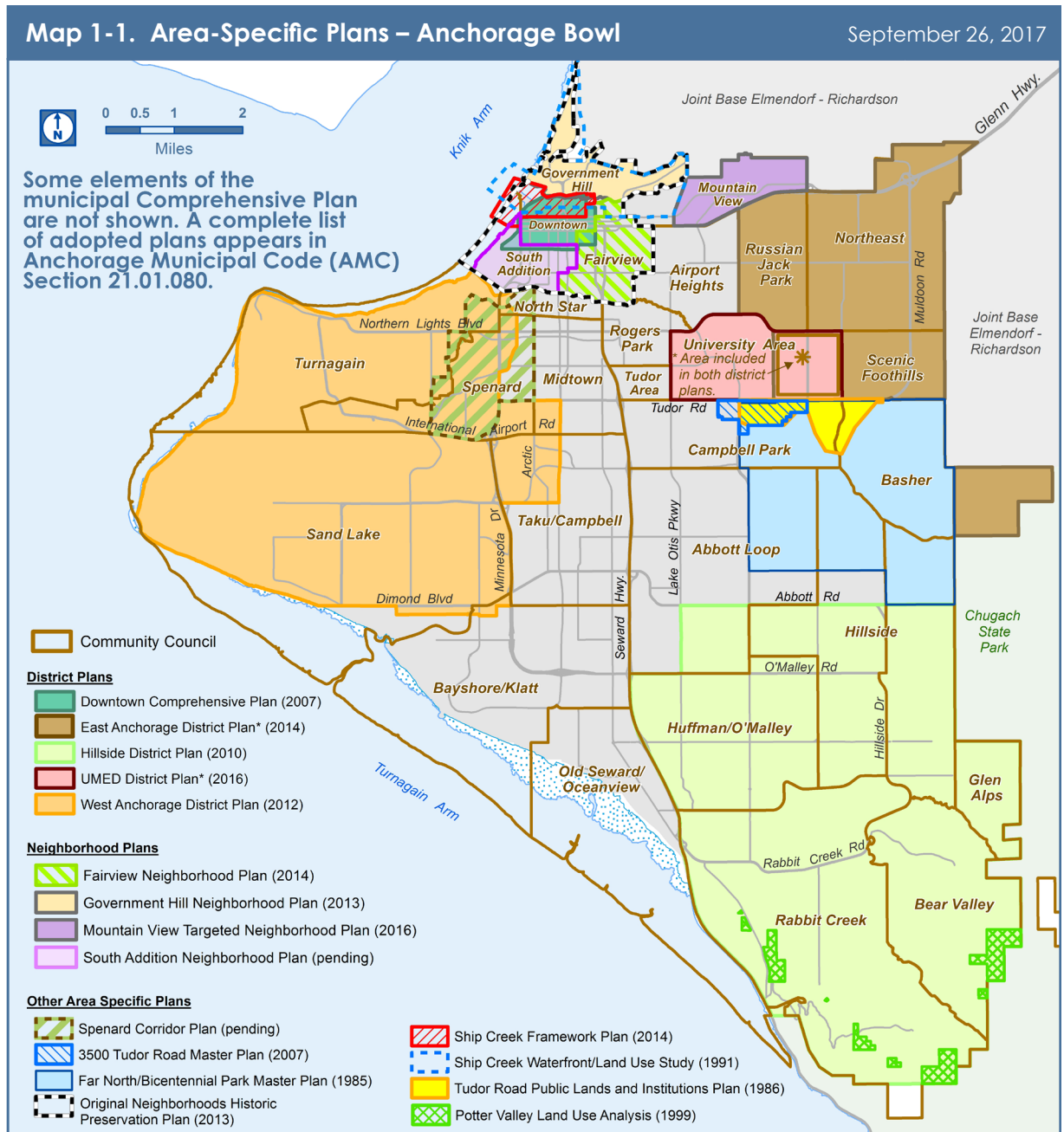
### Area-specific Plan Updates

Some area-specific plans will be updated and new plans adopted in the future. When adopted, these plans will amend the *Comprehensive Plan* and may refine the 2040 Land Use Plan Map. To that end, the *Area-specific Plans* map at right should be updated as new plans are approved.

New and updated plans are expected to maintain or increase housing and employment capacity and help achieve the citywide goals, policies, and growth strategies. Proposed departures from the 2040 LUP should be evaluated using the guidance of *Comprehensive Plan* goals and policies for land use, transportation, infrastructure, allocation of future growth, and impacts to other parts of the community. See Section 3.2 Strategy 12 for further guidance on updates and amendments to the *Comprehensive Plan*.



Search online with "Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan" to go to the zoom-in interactive version of this map.



### Relationship to the Zoning Map and Other Implementation Actions

The *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan*, along with other elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*, provides policy direction for future land use decisions, such as rezonings, changes to development regulations, public facility site selections, and infrastructure investments. Future actions like these will implement the *Comprehensive Plan*.

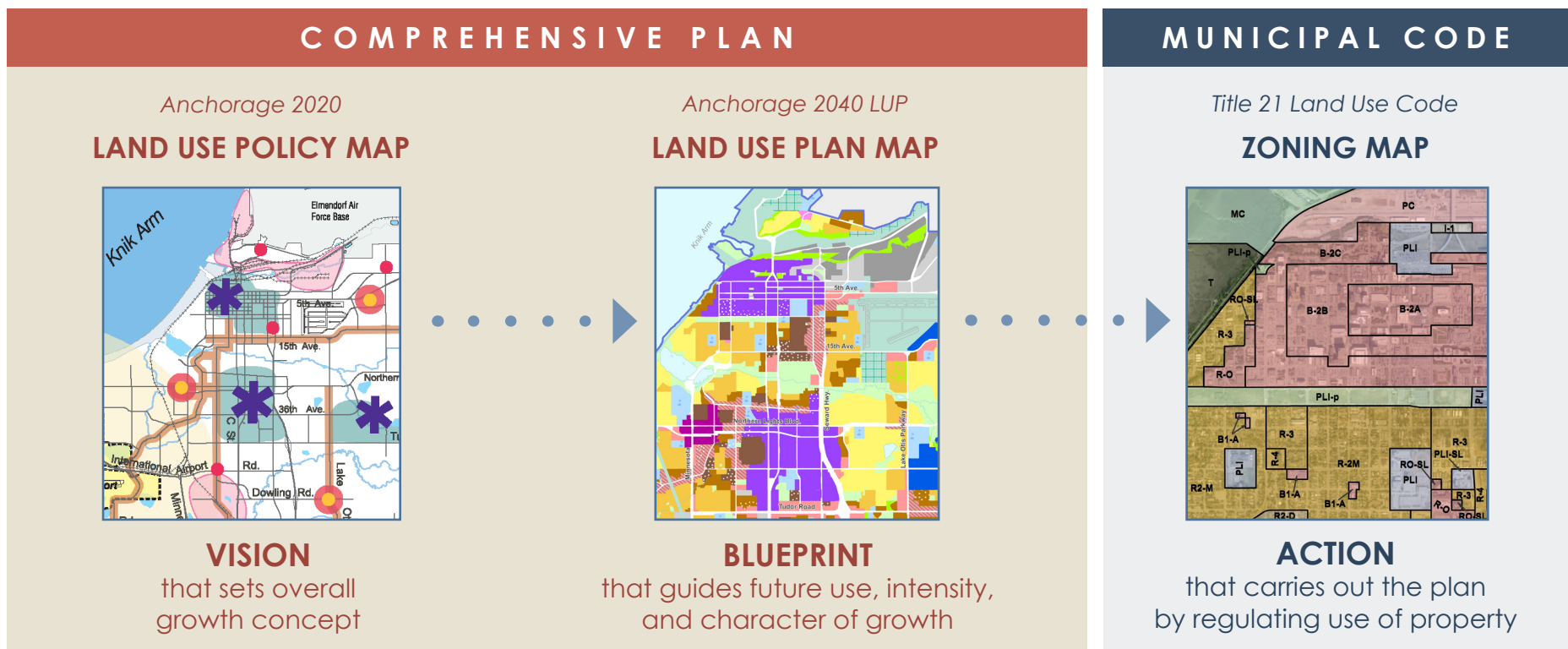
The *2040 LUP* by itself does not alter existing

zoning or change the land use regulations that apply to a parcel of land. The rights of property owners to use land as zoned at the time of this Plan’s adoption remain unaffected. Many recommendations of the *2040 LUP* that could lead to rezonings will take years to implement. While the *2040 LUP* recommends future land uses and a range of potential intensities of use, it is zoning that sets the rules for the use of property, lot size, setbacks, building heights, and other site attributes. These land use regulations (Title 21 of

the Anchorage Municipal Code) apply as *zoning districts* delineated on the municipal Zoning Map. Changes to the Zoning Map (rezonings) or to Title 21 land use regulations are separate public processes that include community input.

Amendments to Title 21, the Zoning Map, and other discretionary municipal actions will be consistent with the *2040 LUP* and other *Comprehensive Plan* policies. Section 3 provides more detail regarding the strategies and actions to carry out the *2040 LUP*.

**Figure 1-2. Vision, Plan, and Action**





## Public Engagement in Making the Plan

This Plan is based on extensive input and consultation with many stakeholders. Its guiding public involvement principles and process were posted online (Appendix D, *Public Involvement Process*).

The public process that produced this Plan involved a variety of public meetings, open houses, workshops, and expert focus groups. It included more than 150 consultations with more than 110 organizations: community councils, stakeholder groups, public agencies, businesses and organizations, landowners, industry experts, and residents. More than 500 pages of comments were received and posted online (Appendix E, *Public Comments*).

The Planning Department goal was to make sure that all stakeholders knew that, despite any differences, the community's thoughts and ideas were always heard and considered. A *Comment Issue-Response Summary* (Appendix F) documented each issue raised, the team's response, and the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation.

**Fig. 1-3. 2040 LUP Public Process Timeline**



## A Broad Project Team

The 2040 LUP was created by a multi-departmental team with significant contributions by private-sector consulting firms. It was also shaped by a broader group of agencies, utilities, topical and area-specific experts, and knowledgeable citizens.

To ensure the Plan is feasible to carry out, municipal, state, and federal agencies, local utilities, and developers were consulted and invited to comment at each stage of the process.

## Public Process Timeline

As Figure 1-3 indicates, this Plan was grounded in *Anchorage 2020*, Neighborhood and District Plans, and updated forecasts of housing, commercial, and industrial land needs.

Development of the 2040 LUP began in July 2015. Initial consultations with a range of stakeholders made evident a high level of public interest in their city's future. These conversations shaped the February 2016 Community Discussion Draft.



Regional Workshops

A three-month public-review period followed. Meetings, workshops, and consultations yielded thousands of comments, helping to transform the plan into the September 2016 Public Hearing Draft.

After taking in comments and testimony, the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) deliberated over the course of 13 meetings. PZC concluded its deliberations in early June 2017, recommending approval of the Plan with changes.

The PZC Recommended Draft was forwarded to the Anchorage Assembly in August 2017 for public hearing and action.

## 1.2 Forecasting Growth

A land use plan and growth forecast cannot precisely predict 25 years into the future, nor can it influence macro-economic factors, such as the price of oil or its production volumes. The Plan can determine how Anchorage provides space for and guides development toward scenarios in which the Municipality attracts talent, investment, and economic growth as the hub for commercial and industrial growth in Alaska.

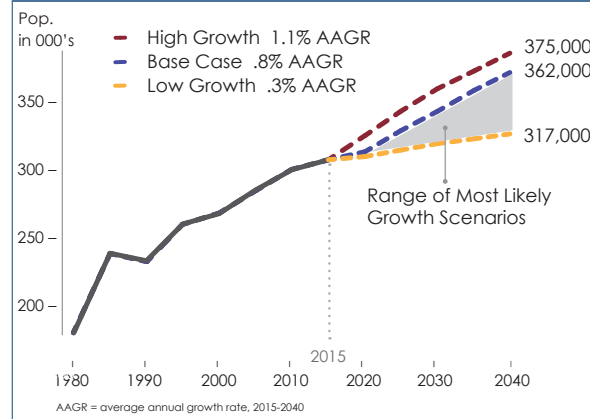
The *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan* is designed to accommodate a healthy yet moderate forecast average annual population growth rate of 0.8 percent, and an employment growth rate of 0.9 percent, between 2015 and 2040. It balances the needs of the residential, commercial, and industrial land markets, and anticipates sustained, equitable, and orderly growth beyond 2040.

Section 1.2 summarizes the forecast for population, households, and employment growth in the Anchorage Bowl in the context of surrounding communities; compares the future demand for housing and employment sites with Anchorage's land supply; and explains how the *2040 LUP* performs to reconcile gaps in the land market between demand and supply.

### Anchorage 2040 Growth Forecast

Over the next 25 years, the Anchorage Bowl is forecast to add as many as 47,000 people and 21,000 households. This represents the Anchorage Bowl's share of the metropolitan region's projected growth through 2040.

**Fig. 1-4. Population Growth Forecasts**  
Municipality of Anchorage, 2015-2040

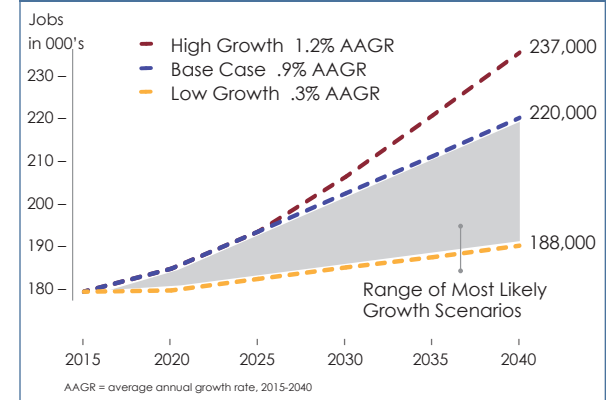


This expected growth represents an average annual population growth rate of 0.8%, adding 64,000 residents in the Municipality overall. This would yield a population of 362,000 in the Municipality by 2040. The majority of the additional residents (47,000 more people) would live in the Anchorage Bowl.

The continued role of Anchorage as Alaska's commerce and industry hub is forecast to drive an average annual employment growth rate of up to 0.9%, adding 44,000 jobs, yielding total employment of 220,280 in the Municipality by 2040.

The *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan* considers this growth scenario as its baseline forecast for land planning. It also considers several lower and higher scenarios for growth given economic uncertainty. Figures 1-4 and 1-5 show that the baseline forecast for population and employment

**Fig. 1-5. Employment Growth Forecasts**  
Municipality of Anchorage, 2015-2040



is only one of several growth scenarios. It is at the upper end of a range of "most likely" growth scenarios. The Plan provides capacity to perform well under any of the most likely growth scenarios shaded in Figures 1-4 and 1-5.

When considering future land needs in Anchorage, particularly in the middle of economic uncertainty, the Municipality can either plan for lower expectations of growth, or it can plan for a higher volume and types of growth it sees as preferable or optimal.

The biggest risk faced by Anchorage as it plans for growth is to expect too little, plan for less, but then realize unexpected higher growth. That scenario would make current land capacity shortages and housing prices worse. Alternatively, planning for desired growth and ensuring adequate land capacity does not worsen current shortage and cost problems. If growth falls short

of projections, higher planned capacity will likely improve current availability problems, including high land costs, as Figure 1-6 illustrates.

Accordingly, the *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan* considers a primary Base Case growth scenario for land needs planning that is modest compared to historical growth, especially in the nearer term, and yet anticipates a return to normal growth rates after the current economic challenges subside.

Challenges do remain, some of which municipal land use policy can measurably address and improve:

- Housing choice availability at different affordability levels and types.

- Diversification of the Anchorage economy with emphasis on sustainable, family-wage jobs.
- Greater availability and diversity of commercial goods and services.

The *2040 LUP* seeks to improve capacity and types of housing to alleviate costs. It seeks to balance the need to retain and even add industrial land and site availability—given the high-value business investment and higher-wage jobs in key industrial sectors—with needed commercial goods and services offerings in the Anchorage Bowl.

**Growing within the Regional Context**

The *2040 LUP* accommodates the Anchorage Bowl’s share of growth forecast in the metropolitan region. It coordinates with the anticipated share of additional population and jobs to go to other parts of the region, including Chugiak-Eagle River, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), and Turnagain Arm communities within the Municipality, and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB). (See sidebar with regional map inset on page 14.)

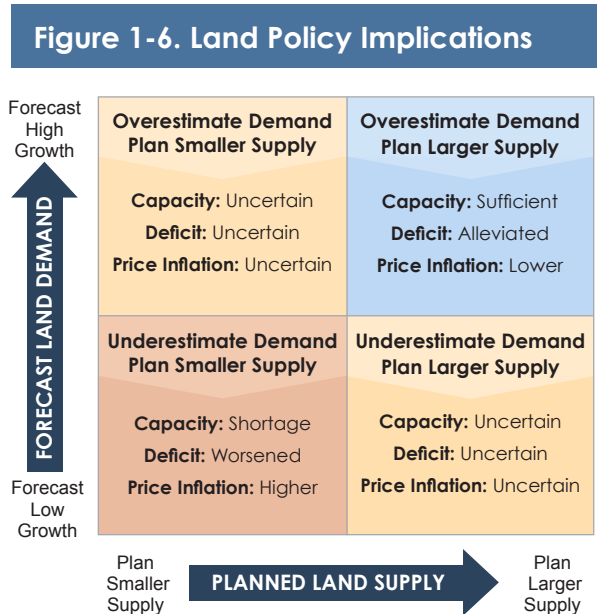
Chugiak-Eagle River is the Municipality’s second largest settlement area, and includes most of the remaining vacant land reserves in the Municipality. The *Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan* accommodates additional population, residences, and businesses, while preserving open space and neighborhood character. It envisions new neighborhoods developing in phases, bringing streets and water and wastewater services to develop-

ment areas of the Powder Reserve and other land reserves further north.

The *2040 LUP* recognizes the Chugiak-Eagle River Plan’s anticipated population growth at a somewhat higher rate than the rest of the Municipality. The *Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan* designates substantial land reserves for future single-family housing, as well as areas suited for more compact development. When developed, these areas will help meet the demand for this housing type within the Municipality. For these reasons, Chugiak-Eagle River is expected to accommodate 15 percent of the Municipality’s population by 2040.

The *2040 LUP* growth forecast accounts for a Knik Arm Crossing (KAC) to the MSB that may become operational within the latter part of the 2040 planning horizon. It accounts for growth and movement of some housing and jobs into MSB as a result of a KAC. The likelihood and/or time frame of the Knik Arm Crossing has become uncertain. The Knik Arm Crossing was removed from consideration in the *2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan*.

If a KAC does not become operational within the 2040 time frame, then the Anchorage Bowl and Chugiak-Eagle River could be expected to accommodate a somewhat greater share of regional growth than in the *2040 LUP* baseline forecast. Either way, the KAC is expected to have only a moderate effect on overall jobs and housing demand in the Bowl, as it would most likely come later in the 2040 planning horizon.



## Who Are We Planning For?

The 2040 LUP provides for the people who live and work in Anchorage today, and for those who will make up Anchorage in 2040. This includes children and newcomers who will arrive for education, family, job, and quality-of-life opportunities.

While it is difficult to predict the specific community composition in age, income, and household structures, recent Anchorage trends provide a general picture of the future population, including:

- Accelerated growth in aging households and smaller households with fewer children.
- Continued evolution into one of the most racially and ethnically diverse communities in the U.S.
- Diverse households and income levels that need more affordable housing options and more transportation choices.
- Talented professionals from all fields that are attracted to Anchorage’s unique setting.
- A growing number of multigenerational families and less transient population.

Over the next 25 years, more people will be in “starter home,” moderate income, or downsizing households. As a result, people will be looking for smaller, more urban residences with walkable neighborhood amenities nearby.

## Land Capacity for Housing and Employment

While Anchorage’s population is diverse, it is a “community of place,” where all people and

activities share the same land space bounded by Cook Inlet, the Chugach Mountains, and military lands. Land with residences on it—whether a big apartment building or a small house—is called **residential**. Land used for activities like offices, shops, restaurants, warehouses, or factories is called **non-residential**. Land that is awaiting development may be called **vacant**, particularly if it has been untouched by development. Land that has previously been developed but could see new uses of greater intensity, including potentially taller buildings, is called **redevelopable**. Land that is reserved or serves as outdoor recreation area is called **open space**. How land uses relate to one another is often a source of considerable conflict, particularly as those uses change over time and the supply of vacant land becomes more constrained.

**Development capacity** is an estimate of the amount of new residential or non-residential development (homes, apartments, stores, factories, etc.) that could occur in a space under current zoning and development patterns. It can be compared to how much demand for development is likely from the population and employment growth forecasts. This provides a basis for evaluating changes in land use. Capacity is influenced by market, zoning, and site characteristics and available infrastructure.

## Housing Space Needs

As Figure 1-7 illustrates, the Anchorage Bowl has an identified need for 21,000 new residential units to meet the base case forecast population

growth through 2040. For a comparison, this is roughly the amount of housing existing today in all of Northeast Anchorage including Russian Jack Park, Northeast, and Scenic Foothills Community Councils. The 21,000 new households translates into a need for an average net gain of 840 housing units per year in the Anchorage Bowl, nearly triple the net gain of recent years.

The Bowl no longer has a vacant land tract the size of Northeast available for new housing. Its existing residential zoned vacant buildable land capacity is estimated to be 9,700 more housing units, assuming historically attained housing construction densities were to continue.

Commercially zoned lands provide some additional housing capacity but do not close the deficit. Based on historical yields per acre, Anchorage’s non-residential vacant lands would provide capacity for an additional 700 housing units, bringing the total vacant land capacity estimate to 10,400 additional units. The expected average housing yield is so low because under current conditions most commercial properties do not develop with housing.

Redevelopment of existing residential lots will also play a role. Recent historical redevelopment rates and the characteristics of lots which redeveloped from 2000 to 2015 indicate a redevelopment capacity of 2,500 additional dwellings, based on current zoning and development trends. Figure 1-7 illustrates that, including redevelopable lands and buildable vacant lands, the Anchorage Bowl as currently zoned has a total capacity shortfall



**Fig. 1-7. Housing Need and Land Capacity**  
Anchorage Bowl, 2015-2040



(deficit) of 7,900 housing units by 2040 under the moderate, baseline growth forecast.

**Space Needs for Employment**

The 2040 LUP also has the challenge of addressing the need to provide both adequate industrial land and commercial land for future employment and business growth in Anchorage. Commercial development includes office and institutional uses, retail goods and services, and hospitality services (e.g., restaurants and hotels).

Figure 1-8 summarizes that, through 2040, Anchorage is estimated to need 630 acres for industrial development. At the same time, Anchorage is estimated to also need 740 acres for commercial development, under current zoning and a continuation of historical development patterns.

Traditional industrial uses include manufacturing and production, warehousing and distribution, and repair enterprises. Examples of non-traditional industrial space users include warehousing for commercial or retail uses, or self-storage facilities.

If Anchorage continues to grow according to traditional development patterns and densities—which include lower-intensity uses and encroachment by commercial uses into industrial zoned lands—then a shortage of both commercial and industrial land and sites for future business expansion will be a certainty. Figure 1-8 illustrates the shortfall.

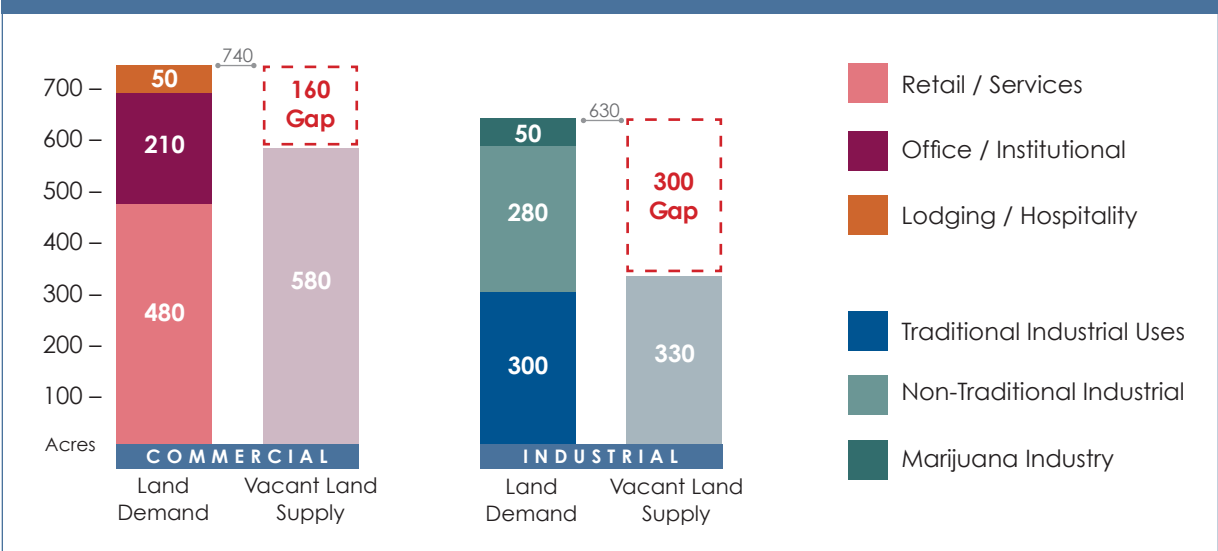
**Space Needs for Industrial Traded Sectors**

The Municipality of Anchorage identified its essential, core industrial sectors which are the foundation of other industry and employment in the local economy. These industrial “Traded Sectors” use industrial land and pay significantly higher wages than do other sectors because they export goods and services both domestically and internationally. They also purchase significant volumes of goods and services from other local businesses in Anchorage, driving other local commerce and employment.

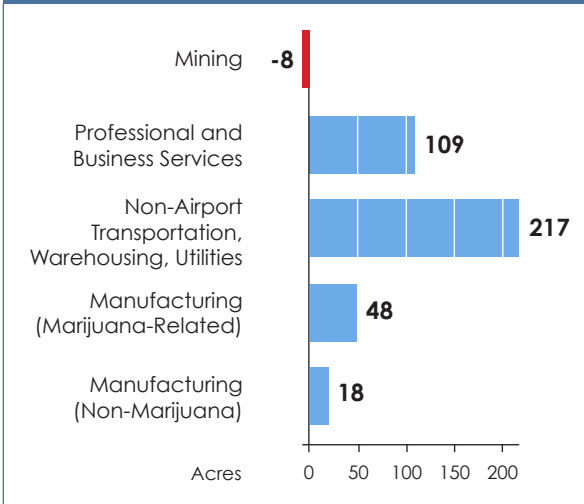
Traded Sectors were identified as:

- Various Manufacturing Businesses
- Power Generation

**Fig. 1-8. Commercial and Industrial Land Needs as Compared to Vacant Buildable Land**  
In Acres. Anchorage Bowl, 2015-2040.



**Fig. 1-9. Anchorage Industrial Traded Sector Land Need to 2040**



- Non-Metal Mineral Mining
- Air & Water Transportation
- Professional & Technical Services

The 2040 LUP prioritizes these Traded Sectors and their site and land needs to preserve and grow fundamental industries in the local economy. Figure 1-9 illustrates that an estimated 384 acres of industrial land will be required by these types of businesses by 2040, representing approximately 60 percent of all industrial land demand in Anchorage.

Strategies are established in the 2040 LUP to ensure adequate land capacity for these essential businesses to grow in the necessary locations, particularly in the Anchorage Bowl, and with the necessary infrastructure and utilities that they specifically require.

**Growth Capacity of 2040 LUP**

The 2040 LUP relieves the housing capacity shortfall for most but not all housing types, as Figure 1-10 shows. It does so by reclassifying some lands to allow more housing than under current zoning. It focuses more housing production in commercial mixed-use centers. It would also increase housing capacity by resulting in changes that would allow and encourage more compact infill housing development.

For example, the near-term implementation Actions include allowing and encouraging property owners to build accessory dwellings (aka., “grandmother apartments”). The 2040 LUP housing capacity estimate for “Compact Housing Types” in Figure 1-10 includes 1,000 new accessory units in the Bowl by 2040. In general, Figure

1-10 also reflects an adjustment of single-family housing demand over time toward more compact housing and multifamily types, as single-family lots become more scarce.

Redevelopable lands also play a larger role under the 2040 LUP to alleviate part of the housing capacity shortfall. The 2040 LUP would increase forecast redevelopment to nearly 9,100 housing units. This is a redevelopment rate of 40 percent of all new housing capacity shown in Figure 1-10.

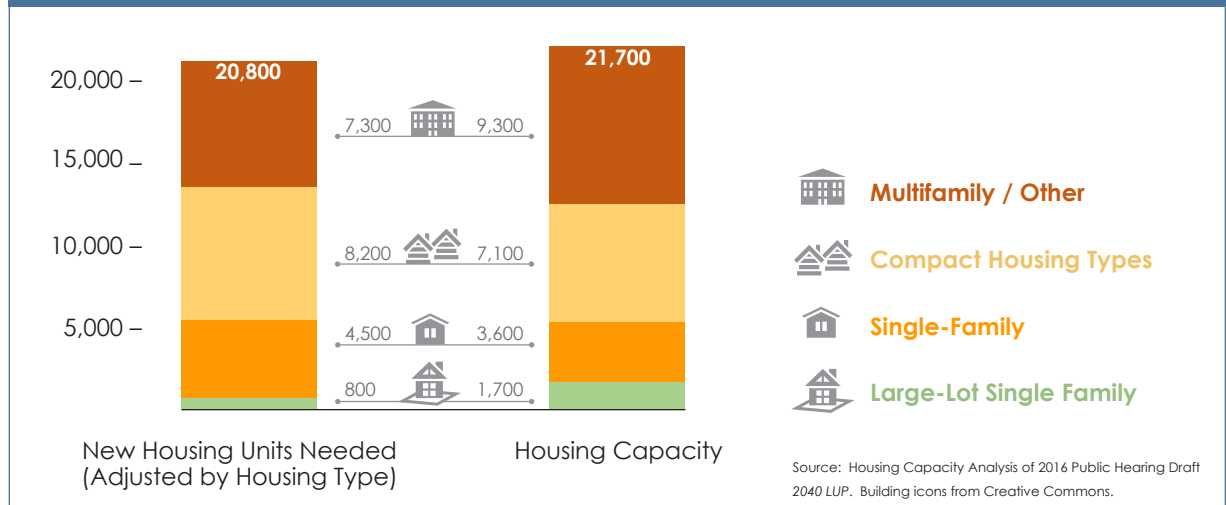
More information regarding housing capacity and needs by housing type is provided in Appendix B.

**2040 LUP Employment Capacity**

The 2040 LUP satisfies the commercial land demand by encouraging more efficient use of

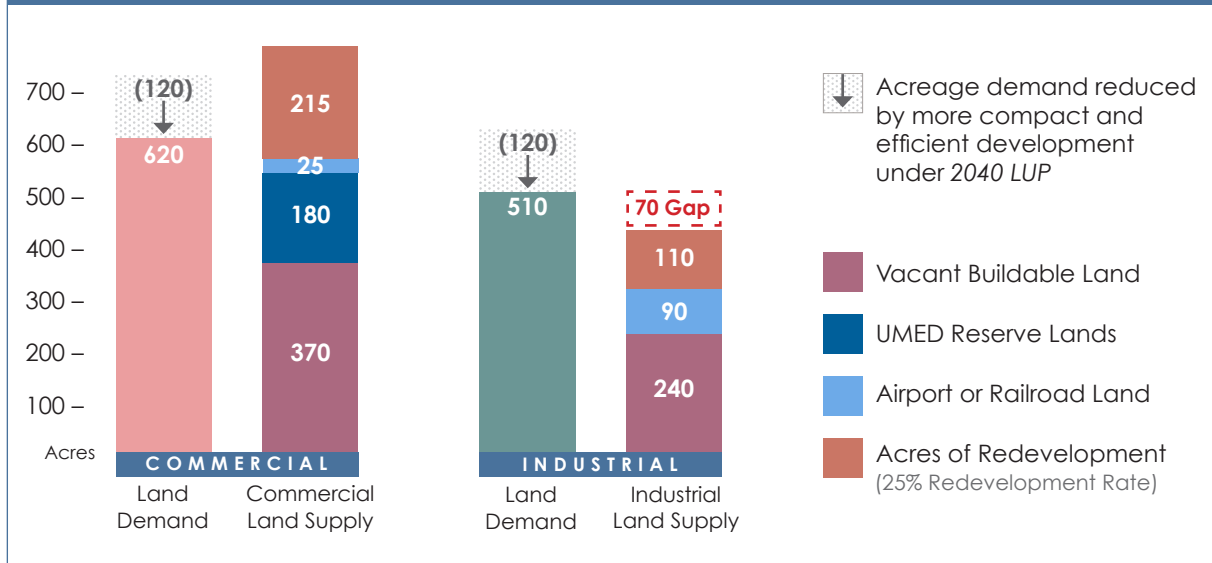
**Figure 1-10. Housing Need and Land Capacity for Housing under 2040 LUP**

By Housing Type. Anchorage Bowl, 2015-2040.



Source: Housing Capacity Analysis of 2016 Public Hearing Draft 2040 LUP. Building icons from Creative Commons.

**Figure 1-11. Commercial and Industrial Land Demand and Supply under 2040 LUP**  
In Acres. Anchorage Bowl, 2015-2040.



business-zoned land, through (a) more compact forms of development and (b) redevelopment. Development is forecast to fit 10 to 20 percent more building floor area per site on average, through implementing 2040 LUP policies, strategies, and actions in designated commercial Centers and Corridors. Figure 1-11 shows the resulting 120-acre reduction in both commercial and industrial land needed to fulfill the employment demand. Redevelopment under the 2040 LUP is forecast to account for more than one-fourth of future development capacity.

The 2040 LUP provides policies, strategies, and actions that will serve to retain and protect industrial family-wage jobs, while facilitating greater intensity of commercial uses. Industrial factories

and warehouse facilities cannot build and operate in multistory structures like office and commercial mixed-uses can do.

The 2040 LUP endeavors to alleviate as much of the industrial land supply deficit as possible. It consolidates and stabilizes the industrial land base, by adding acreage in a few promising areas such as non-aviation use Airport-owned lands. It does reclassify some less-promising industrial zoned lands to non-industrial commercial use, such as in parts of south C Street with poor soils that are trending toward commercial. Implementation Actions in Section 3 will result in greater protection of the remaining industrial areas from displacement by commercial uses.

The 2040 LUP also makes progress in using remaining industrial lands more efficiently. It encourages redevelopment through “brownfields” strategies, and encourages use of industrial land by higher-value industrial “Traded Sectors.”

More information regarding growth forecasts and land capacity is provided in Appendix B.

**Fig. 1-12. Data Contributing to This Plan**

To understand Anchorage's future land needs, the 2040 LUP incorporated recent studies of land demand and supply and updates to population, housing and employment forecasts:



## Community Expansion—Other Options Researched

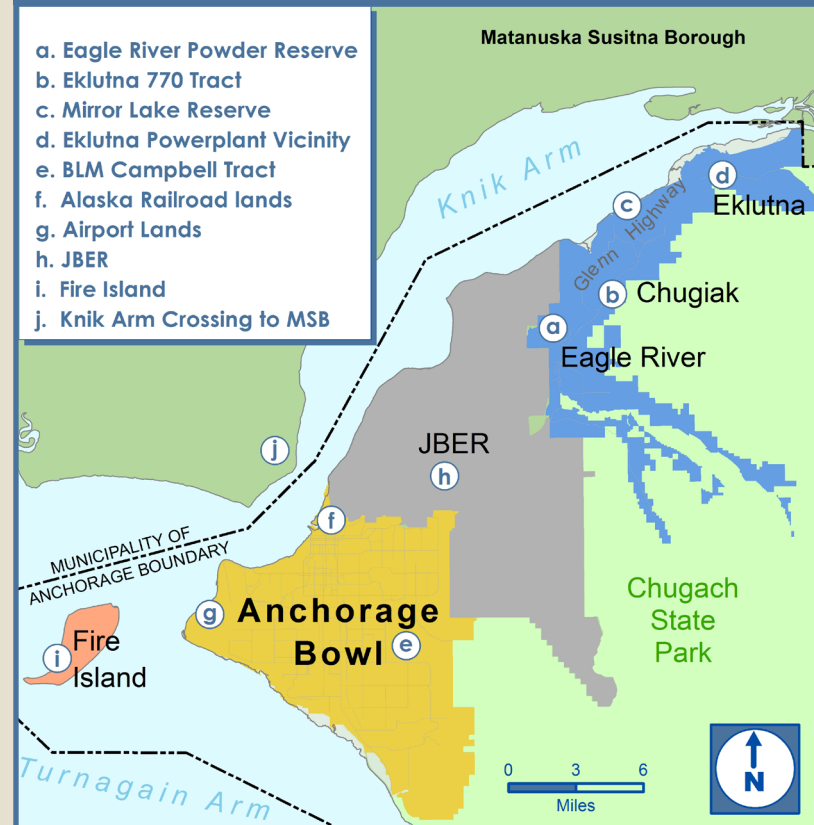
The amount of land available for residential, commercial, and industrial development in the Bowl is finite. Land exchanges or surplusings of military land, construction of a causeway to Fire Island, development in Chugiak-Eagle River, or a Knik Arm Crossing to Point MacKenzie in the Mat-Su Borough could increase the supply of land. However, all of these options remain highly speculative, expensive, and largely outside of local municipal control.

Each option was considered based on an extensive number of consultations with stakeholders, and review of studies and reports. Lands of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), Fire Island, the Chugiak-Eagle River area, and Point MacKenzie were investigated and analyzed to determine whether these land options could become available by 2040.

JBER actively uses most of its lands for operations and training and is not expected to change in the foreseeable future. Construction of a causeway to Fire Island is unlikely because of a host of factors. Chugiak-Eagle River reserve lands of Eklutna, Inc., could potentially be developed during the plan horizon but each reserve area requires significant expansion of the urban road networks and utility infrastructure. The *Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan* and the *Anchorage 2040 LUP* reflect the likely timing and extent of development. Only Powder Reserve and at most Eklutna 770 Tract are likely to be developed at urban residential densities by 2040.

The State of Alaska has stopped planning studies and eliminated funding for construction of the Knik Arm Crossing project. The Knik Arm Crossing was removed from consideration in the *2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan*. Notwithstanding these near term actions, the *2040 LUP* assumes that a Knik Arm Crossing to Point MacKenzie could potentially be constructed during the latter part of the planning time horizon. However, land analyses indicate that it would yield only a modest reduction in land demand in the Anchorage Bowl, while leaving greater effects on Chugiak-Eagle River and eastern Mat-Su Borough including Wasilla and Palmer.

**Fig. 1-13. Areas Researched as Potential Buildable Lands and Reserves for the 2040 LUP**





### 1.3 Anchorage's Growth Strategy

The Goals of this section supplement and build on the goals of *Anchorage 2020* with updated land use-specific guidance for future growth.

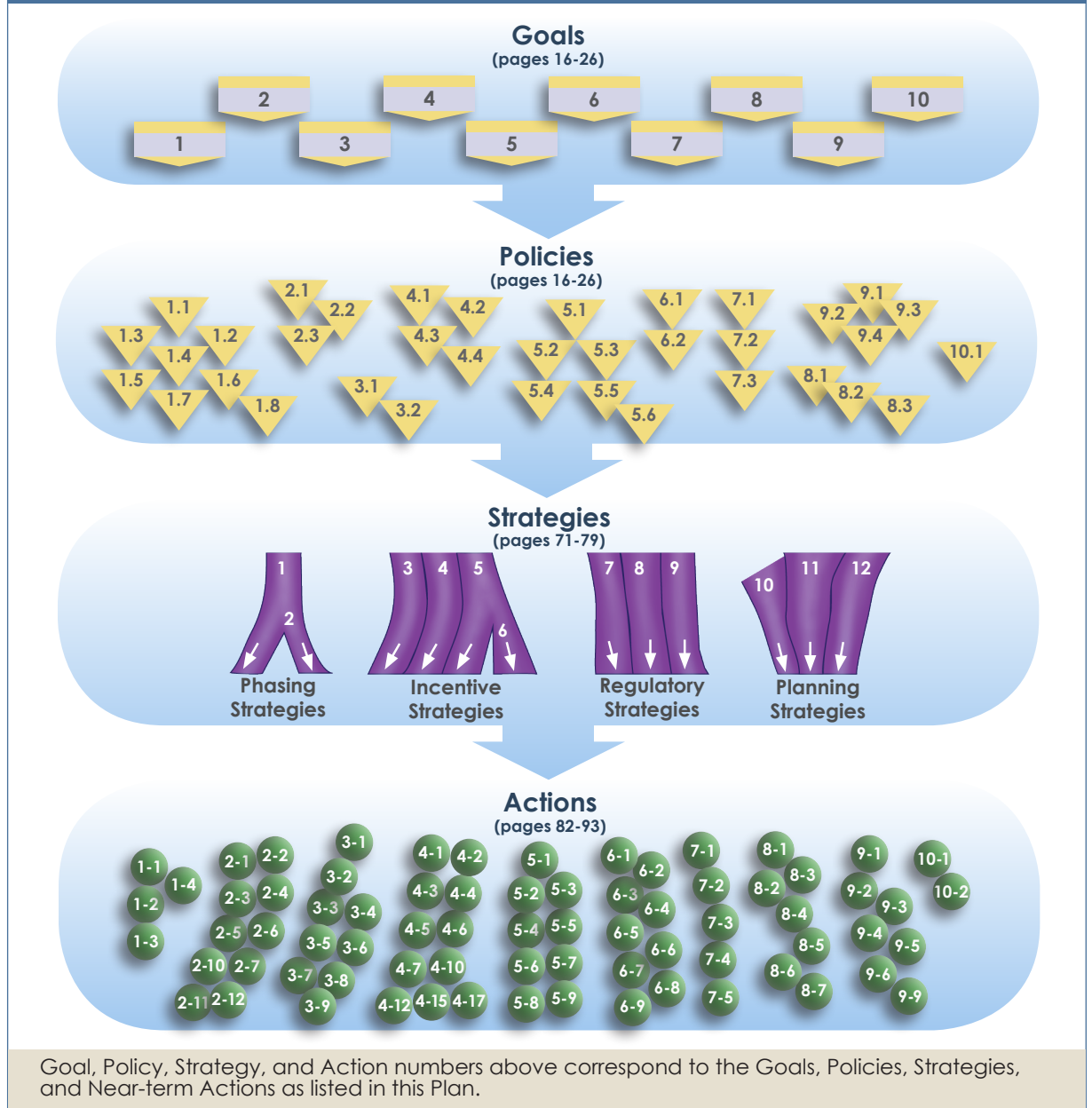
**Goals** set broad direction for the *2040 Land Use Plan*, consistent with the community vision. They identify a desired future condition that the Plan attempts to achieve over time. The discussion of each Goal is followed by a list of *Policies* giving more detail and guidance for decision makers.

**Policies** are statements of principles or guidelines that direct decisions and actions toward achieving the Goals, without specifying which tools to use (a job for Strategies and Actions). Policies are generally open ended as to time frame; they provide ongoing guidance.

For each Goal, related *Anchorage 2020* policies are listed first, and then new *2040 LUP* policies are provided that fill gaps and update the municipal land use policy guidance. The *2040 LUP* policies work in conjunction with *Anchorage 2020* policies and carry the same authority.

The Policies direct the **Strategies** and **Actions** that appear in Section 3. **Strategies** are pathways, or mechanisms, to implement the Policies and often operate over a long term, as a means for accomplishing stated goals. They provide details for ways to achieve the Goals of the Plan. **Actions** are specific measures to carry out the Policies and Strategies to achieve the Goals. Section 3 further defines Strategies and Actions.

Figure 1-14. Goals, Policies, Strategies, and Actions



## Goal 1 Plan for Growth and Livability

Anchorage achieves residential and commercial growth, which improves community resiliency and citizens' quality of life as it supports their vision for the future expressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

The *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan* reflects Anchorage's vision to meet the challenges and opportunities for growth. It provides a blueprint and strategy for how Anchorage should grow in the future to the benefit of all.

This Plan focuses on where and how development should occur to accommodate Anchorage's share of growth forecast for the region and meet its current and future housing and employment needs. Mixed-use, walkable centers will absorb much growth, while infill development is encouraged along multi-modal travel corridors.

The *2040 LUP* extends the city's network of parks, open spaces, and greenways that provide access to nature and preserve natural resources. It identifies and supports the valued characteristics of the Bowl's rural, suburban, and urban neighborhoods. Great neighborhoods and shared spaces in areas of growth will provide the features and infrastructure to retain and attract people, skilled workforce, and reinvestment for Anchorage.

The *2040 LUP* coordinates changes in land use, transportation, and other infrastructure to improve the quality of life for all residents. It also prioritizes areas for industrial "traded sectors," like manufacturing, and "anchor institutions," such as the universities.

Goals 2 to 11 elaborate on these aspects. The Goals are organized in a progression of topics, not by order of importance.

This Plan acknowledges and addresses conflicts between uses. The *2040 LUP* alone may not resolve all competing concerns, such as those around the international airport. However, it suggests a framework for making decisions to meet the objectives on page 1 of this Plan.

To express a broadly supported vision for the future, the Municipality will continue to follow inclusive community involvement principles in its planning processes. A broad spectrum of the public will have an informed role in determining the future of its community.

During the public process for the *2040 LUP*, new issues and concerns emerged beyond those reflected in *Anchorage 2020*. These included community resiliency in relation to natural hazards and other disasters, energy efficiency, urban agriculture and food security, economic uncertainties, climate changes, and other shocks and stresses.

This Plan acknowledges these concerns. Community resiliency is infused throughout the

Goals, Policies, Strategies, and Actions of this Plan. Resiliency includes minimizing residents' exposure to risks from natural or man-made hazards. It also supports municipal initiatives that increase energy efficiency, public safety, and lasting economic development, pending a future revision to the *Comprehensive Plan*.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 1, 2, 90, 91, 92, 93, 96, 97, and 98.

### 2040 LUP Policies:

**LUP 1.1.** Use the *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan* in concert with area-specific plans as a framework to guide decisions on future development patterns, land uses, and allocation of growth.

**LUP 1.2.** Employ land use and development strategies for the Anchorage Bowl to accommodate the forecast number of additional residents, households, and jobs through 2040. (Supersedes *Anchorage 2020*: Policy 3)

**LUP 1.3.** Coordinate area-specific plans and updates so that collectively these maintain or improve Anchorage's capacity to accommodate housing, employment needs, and achieve its goals for growth.

**LUP 1.4.** Use the *2040 LUP* and area-specific plans in conjunction with other elements of the *Comprehensive Plan* to determine appropriate zoning in the Bowl, and evaluate proposed changes to land use regulations. (Supersedes *Anchorage 2020*: Policy 4).

**LUP 1.5.** Align Anchorage’s land use, transportation, and infrastructure planning, design guidelines, and investments. Account for existing infrastructure and transportation system capacity and planned facility investments when determining areas of growth. Link capital improvement priorities with the elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*, including the *2040 LUP* and area-specific plans.

**LUP 1.6.** Ensure that municipal incentives, investments, and other land use decisions guide growth in housing, employment, and other uses to minimize risks to life safety and property in hazardous areas.

**LUP 1.7.** Pursue strategies and actions to acquire additional lands within the Municipality and facilitate land assembly by the Municipality to create parcels large enough to be economically feasible for development.

**LUP 1.8.** Engage Anchorage residents, businesses, and property owners in a predictable and transparent process leading to the adoption of plans that guide growth. Engage affected communities when making long-term land use decisions, with particular attention to communities that are historically underrepresented.

## Goal 2 Infill and Redevelopment

Infill and redevelopment meet the housing and employment needs of residents and businesses in Anchorage.

The *2040 LUP* fosters better use of existing lands and already in-place infrastructure as the primary way to meet projected population and employment growth demands. This is facilitated by a city infill and redevelopment strategy that encourages reinvesting in existing business districts and neighborhoods that can support compact urban living with a high quality of life.

Infill and redevelopment can include compact housing, adaptive reuse of older structures, new commercial or residential buildings on former vacant or underused lots, or complete redevelopment of properties. It seeks a compatible mix of uses on the same site or between properties that can use the same parking facilities at different times of day.

Infill development and redevelopment allow more residents to live closer to places of employment and in-town amenities. It reduces the traffic congestion impacts of growth, and reinvests in local businesses and commercial districts.

Achieving compact infill and redevelopment requires that the Municipality:

1. Identify the most appropriate areas that can absorb more intensive use and compact housing;
2. Ensure that infrastructure can serve identified sites, and that public amenities are available nearby; and
3. Support redevelopment and infill projects that can catalyze additional development.

In communities where infill development strategies have been successful, coordinated public-sector investments in infrastructure and public-private partnerships on catalyst sites provided critical support to the market for more compact forms of development.

Successful communities also leverage walkable urban development patterns (e.g., a street-block grid, sidewalks, or alleys), remove barriers to compact development compatible with such areas, and incorporate flexibility in development requirements. One such barrier is the amount of space used by parking lots. Parking can take up more than half of a property, raise its development costs by double-digit percentages, and surround each establishment with “dead space” that precludes an interactive pedestrian environment. Shared parking and reduced parking literally creates “free land.” Less parking also lowers the costs of development and housing.

Keys to lower parking demand include: public transportation, bicycle facilities, continuous pedestrian connections, expanded on-street and district parking, and a built environment evolving toward pedestrian-oriented patterns of

building and site development. Once considered only “amenities,” these are essential infrastructure for Anchorage to realize its potential to grow through more efficient use of land.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 17.

**2040 LUP Policies:**

**LUP 2.1.** Identify and invest in areas best positioned to absorb growth meeting housing and employment needs.

**LUP 2.2.** Coordinate redevelopment incentives and public infrastructure investments with development entitlements to enhance walkability and quality of life, and encourage the market to add new residences, shops, and workplaces.

**LUP 2.3.** Remove barriers to desired infill development and incorporate flexibility in development requirements to promote adaptive reuse of older buildings and compact infill/redevelopment, including that which reflects traditional urban neighborhood design contexts.

LUP Policies 1.5, 3.1, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3, 7.1, 7.2, and 9.3 are also integral to this Goal.

### Goal 3 Centers and Corridors

Mixed-use, walkable commercial centers and corridors thrive within their neighborhood context, offer housing affordable to a range of incomes, and enable business growth.

The 2040 LUP strives for a majority of new jobs and housing to locate in specific areas best able to absorb and capitalize on that growth, especially in and around existing commercial centers. Centers anchor the city’s infill and redevelopment strategy for accommodating growth.

These are the commercial districts that have been serving Anchorage and its neighborhoods for decades. They range from neighborhood-scale centers to city centers like Downtown.

Most business districts historically developed at low densities, with large surface parking lots. Filling in these areas more intensely will make the most efficient use of Anchorage’s commercial lands and public infrastructure.

By encouraging business and housing growth in urban centers, this Plan makes it possible for more people to live near or more easily access job opportunities, social activities, and services for everyday needs.

Focusing on centers:

- Accommodates forecast growth in a strategic and predictable way;
- Strengthens existing businesses and business districts;
- Provides greater return on existing and new public infrastructure investments;
- Improves walking, biking, and transit access to jobs, services, and activities; and
- Preserves open space, industrial use areas, and quieter neighborhoods elsewhere.

Centers vary in size, location, mix of uses, scale, urban form, and intensity. Each center’s uses and scale should fit the surrounding neighborhoods it serves. Centers have close ties to their surrounding neighborhoods. They serve as places where the community comes together for basic needs, shopping, work, or events. They also help to connect different neighborhoods together.

The Municipality will work with residents, businesses, agencies, and institutions to assist each commercial center to evolve and thrive, but will focus in the nearer term on centers where the most growth is expected.

**Corridors** are the connectors between centers, employment hubs, and neighborhoods. Corridors should contain a mix of uses. Many of Anchorage’s existing corridors are automobile dependent; however, this Goal encourages their evolution into mixed use, pedestrian-oriented, and transit-friendly environments.



Strategic public infrastructure investments are integral to centers and corridors. This includes making the street and pedestrian improvements called for in the city's transportation plans (e.g., the *MTP*, *OS&HP*, and *Bike and Pedestrian Plans*). "Placemaking," or reinventing public spaces as the heart of a mixed-use center or main street corridor, is also an important investment. This place-based strategy for creating and improving quality places to live, work, and play can influence the attraction and retention of skilled workers, businesses, and investment. Placemaking is discussed further under Goal 5.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, and 25.

#### **2040 LUP Policies:**

**LUP 3.1.** Target and coordinate investment in the built environment and green infrastructure in and around centers and corridors that are most able to absorb housing and employment growth.

**LUP 3.2.** Promote the development of main street, transit-oriented, and mixed-use corridors that help meet the city's needs for retail, services, jobs, and housing; and that support these uses and adjoining neighborhoods with access to multiple modes of travel and attractive pedestrian environments.

LUP Policies **2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3,** and **8.3** are also integral to this Goal.

### **Goal 4 Neighborhood Housing**

Anchorage's neighborhoods provide a range of places to live, meeting the housing needs of residents at all income levels, household sizes, interests, ages, abilities, and races and ethnicities.

Anchorage residents need affordable places to live. Housing of all types is essential to provide a range of housing opportunities. But this has become harder to find, even as housing preferences are changing with the population.

Over the last 100 years, Anchorage has met a variety of challenges to become a city with great neighborhoods and modern residential construction practices. This has provided a high quality of life for residents—overcoming a subarctic climate with poor soils, remote location, constrained land and labor markets, high construction costs, conflicting or unclear regulations, and boom/bust economic cycles.

However, many of these challenges have intensified as demand grows for more choices of housing types. Millennials, downsizing seniors, and a more diverse population desire smaller homes and compact housing, located in walkable neighborhoods near services, jobs, entertainment, parks and trails, and with less driving and yard maintenance.

Anchorage has relatively few walkable neighborhoods that meet this growing need. Because demand overwhelms supply, only a small number of people who would like to live in these kinds of places can afford to do so. With the cost of housing rising in general, more people are finding it harder to afford a house on a standard-sized lot. These challenges affect the quality of life of residents and the ability of businesses to attract and retain qualified workers.

In response, this Plan advances a number of approaches. Housing is included as a key land use in the Policies, Strategies, and Actions to achieve the infill/redevelopment and growth in mixed-use centers (Goals 2 and 3).

The Plan also identifies where and how existing residential neighborhoods can absorb housing. In areas of anticipated growth, it uses the infill and redevelopment strategies to coordinate infrastructure investments.

It recommends allowing and encouraging more "compact" types of housing choices, including small-lot "cottage" homes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), attached dwellings (duplex/triplex/townhomes), small multifamily buildings, forms of cohousing or shared courtyard homes, and mixed-use housing in commercial developments.

Vacant lots or other spaces for infill vary in size. Large mixed-use and multifamily developments will be important; however, most buildable sites are small. Small infill residential projects are

a big part of the housing strategy. Smaller-scale housing can be designed and situated to fit with existing neighborhood character. Smaller or compact housing can contribute to property values and generate income. It also aligns with the capabilities of many builders and property owners. As a result, neighborhoods are enriched with a greater variety of housing opportunities for all generations.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 56, 57, 58, 59, and 61.

**2040 LUP Policies:**

**LUP 4.1.** Provide sufficient land to meet the diverse housing needs of Anchorage’s citizens, where the integrity of the residential neighborhood area is protected from expanding commercial corridors or non-neighborhood employment activities.

**LUP 4.2.** Allow and encourage innovative compact housing types and a variety of housing options that respond to changing preferences.

**LUP 4.3.** Promote balanced neighborhoods with diverse infill housing, and provide opportunities for development of affordable and accessible housing that avoids creating areas of concentrated low-income housing.

**LUP 4.4.** Encourage property owners to preserve, rehabilitate, or redevelop properties in ways that minimize housing displacement and maintain affordability, health, and safety for residents.

**LUP 4.5.** Consider actions that will affirmatively further fair housing and avoid having the effect of housing discrimination in decisions regarding land use, allocation of housing opportunities, and zoning map or land use regulation amendments.

LUP Policies **1.5, 2.1, 2.3, 5.3, 6.1, 6.3,** and **7.1** are also integral to this Goal.

**Goal 5 Infrastructure-Land Use**  
Coordinated and targeted infrastructure investments catalyze new growth, provide an acceptable return on investment, and equitably improve safety and quality of life.

Infrastructure is the part of the built and natural environment that conveys a public service and undergirds daily life. Infrastructure in the built environment includes public buildings, streets, sidewalks, parking, water and sewer pipes, schools, public art, public spaces, and communication networks. Infrastructure is expensive to construct, maintain, and replace.

Parks and the natural environment serve as “green infrastructure” by absorbing storm water; maintaining water and air quality; and managing flooding, wildlife habitat, and access to recreation and nature.

Availability of infrastructure, such as water and sewer, sidewalks, schools and parks, roads, pub-

lic transit, and other services, influences how and where growth occurs.

The *2040 LUP* recognizes that alignment of future land use and infrastructure capacity and investment is integral to achieving the envisioned growth. Anchorage must identify and resolve existing and projected infrastructure deficiencies.

The Municipality must also balance priorities to phase infrastructure investments. Phasing allows for flexibility in the location and timing of public service upgrades. If the city grows more slowly than expected, phasing allows the city to spur substantial progress in at least some mixed-use centers and public transit corridors. The number of areas seeing improvement will be in synch with the location and rate of economic and population growth and will be in harmony with neighborhood-specific plans.

This Plan focuses the resources for expanded infrastructure on projects and areas that will return the greatest public benefit—such as new housing, businesses, and neighborhood revitalization—for the cost of providing the services. Some public investments, such as alley paving, are an opportunity to positively impact neighborhood livability and leverage private investment in housing at a relatively low cost. Others may target key centers or designated mixed-use “main street” corridors. Prioritizing and coordinating these improvements allows equitable decision making.

Coordination of infrastructure projects allows the Municipality to set “Placemaking” in motion as

an economic development strategy. Investment in creating appealing public spaces as if they were an important form of urban infrastructure can catalyze infill and redevelopment. Place-making is a long-term collaboration among citizens, utilities, and public agencies to build great urban places, and facilitate creative, diverse patterns of use in those places. High-quality urban spaces in the city's centers and corridors make the type of city that millennials, downsizing seniors, and future generations will want to inhabit through changing economic cycles, creating a more resilient city.

Anchorage must also provide space and investment for adequate schools, parks, and other facilities to support the growing population. As land becomes even scarcer, acquiring facility sites will continue to become more difficult.

The *2040 Land Use Plan* reaffirms the *Anchorage 2020* policy that the first priority for uncommitted municipal lands is to serve projected needs for municipal facilities, including schools and parks. This Plan also depends on more efficient use of existing public lands and facilities, such as joint-use elementary schools/neighborhood parks, to support Anchorage's continued growth.

This Plan acknowledges that additional funding sources, strategies, and mechanisms will be necessary to accomplish many of the infrastructure needs of its infill growth strategy. However, compact growth patterns are much less expensive to serve than conventional suburban development patterns.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 73, 75, 76, 77, 79, 80, and 90.

### 2040 LUP Policies:

**LUP 5.1.** Implement recommended land use patterns and growth in context with existing infrastructure capacity and planned improvements, for utilities, streets, trails, public transit, parks, green infrastructure, and schools.

**LUP 5.2.** Fund and develop a return on investment (ROI) model to determine municipal prioritization and participation in public and private development projects.

**LUP 5.3.** Accompany infill development with "placemaking" investments in infrastructure, such as walkable streets, enhanced streetscapes, parks and public spaces, and other services that improve the quality of life in targeted growth areas. Coordinate and prioritize capital improvements to upgrade neighborhoods that have capacity to accommodate infill housing near services, centers, public transit, with a walkable street grid and sidewalks.

**LUP 5.4.** Incentivize developments to incorporate "low-impact development" techniques, such as reuse or filtration and use of on-site storm water and wastewater, energy efficiency and renewable energy, urban agriculture, and parking and congestion management strategies, and protection of riparian corridors and natural open spaces.

**LUP 5.5.** Ensure that adequate public facilities such as schools and fire stations are available

when and where they are needed, in an efficient and equitable distribution of services, based on long-term projections for population, student enrollment, and the location of future growth.

**LUP 5.6.** Encourage public joint use, co-location, and efficient use of parks, schools, and other compatible public facilities.

**LUP 5.7.** Pursue alternative strategies and funding mechanisms to support investment in infrastructure, including street networks, public transit, schools, pedestrian facilities, trail connections, parks, greenways, and maintenance and operations.

LUP Policies 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, and 9.3 are also integral to this Goal.

### Goal 6 Accessible Land Use

Anchorage coordinates transportation and land use to provide safe, efficient, and affordable travel choices.

No other form of infrastructure is as closely linked with land use patterns as the way people move around the city. As parts of the Bowl evolve to a more urban form and function, this Plan aligns changes in land use with improvements in the transportation network. Coordinating land use and transportation actions is

especially important in places where a majority of new housing and employment will go.

This Plan advances the concept of *accessibility* to capture the relationship between land use and transportation. *Accessibility* considers how easy it is for people to get to their destinations. It is a broader goal than *mobility*, which is the ability to move people and goods through the city quickly. Accessibility includes mobility but also considers the total distance that must be traveled and the number of destinations within a certain distance.

For example, filling a commercial center with more housing and jobs can be a benefit to accessibility even as it causes congestion, if it provides more destinations within a short distance. Accessibility also includes other ways of getting around, such as walking, riding public transit, and bicycling.

Maximizing all modes of travel, including street, sidewalk, transit, and trail connections, is critical to supporting successful growth. More frequent, predictable public transit service and extensions of the trails system should coincide with mixed-use centers targeted for growth. Transit and trails are critical to growth, while improving quality of life and mitigating road congestion.

This Plan recognizes that some principal roadways may need to be redesigned in the future as land use activities evolve along these roadways. Slowing vehicle speeds and providing safer and more frequent pedestrian crossings will be important in some land use contexts.

The concept of accessibility also allows that some principal roadways will emphasize mobility more than others. To protect the function of principal national highway system routes, the *2040 LUP* recognizes that additional street connections tie directly to the ability to grow in at least some of the commercial centers and corridors. New local and collector street connections and pathways between businesses and adjacent neighborhoods are needed to allow the street network to safely support mixed-use densities.

Anchorage's *Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)* identifies arterial and collector street network deficiencies and needed improvements. Implementation of the *MTP* ties directly to implementation of the *2040 LUP*.

Anchorage will also need to use its existing rights-of-way more efficiently, by adapting streets to give people more travel choices. Integral to this effort is the development and implementation of a "Complete Streets" (see illustrative photo on page 34) policy and land-use-based street typologies that will guide streetscape design. (See page 65 sidebar regarding typologies.)

*Complete Streets* are essential in traditional urban walkable neighborhood contexts, and in parts of Anchorage looking to attract private-sector reinvestment with innovative infill, redevelopment, and mixed uses.

For *Complete Streets* to function, maintenance and operations must be accounted for in the planning, funding, and maintenance stages. Streets

constructed for all transportation modes depend on higher levels of year-round maintenance and snow clearing to support accessibility for walking, bicycling, and riding transit.

Street improvements will be phased and coordinated with other investments in areas designated by this Plan to absorb housing and commercial growth. Focused investments in and around designated centers will be balanced with needed maintenance and upgrades to transportation facilities in all parts of town.

Making Anchorage more accessible also depends on land use patterns and forms of development that support transportation choices. Building and site design will contribute to the walkable *Complete Streets* environment. However, some *Complete Street* projects will be stand-alone road improvement projects.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 12, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 45, 54, 55, 76, 81, and 92.

#### **2040 LUP Policies:**

**LUP 6.1.** Provide sufficient transportation infrastructure to support the growth that the *Comprehensive Plan* anticipates in Centers, Corridors, other employment areas, and neighborhoods.

**LUP 6.2.** Provide new or upgraded pedestrian and local/collector street connections in Centers and Commercial Corridors to improve access to and from surrounding neighborhoods.



**LUP 6.3.** Adopt and execute a *Complete Streets* policy to design streets to serve all users, including pedestrians, transit riders, and bicyclists, and align the design and scale of streets to be compatible with compact, accessible, and walkable land use patterns.

LUP Policies **1.5, 5.1, 5.2,** and **5.7** are also integral to this Goal.

**Goal 7 Compatible Land Use**

Infill development is compatible with the valued characteristics of surrounding properties and neighborhoods.

Anchorage’s neighborhoods and districts have distinct and valued characteristics—e.g., how buildings relate to one another and the street, how tall they are, the noise and traffic levels, or the presence of greenery (Map CC-1, *Neighborhood Contexts*, in Appendix A).

Anchorage residents cherish their neighborhoods and wish to see what they love about them preserved. However, infill development and redevelopment within already built-up areas has become a greater share of total development activity. There are concerns about neighborhood character being harmed through the construction of different or larger-scale projects.

While many people welcome more diverse housing options, current residents of the neighborhood often see new or different housing as being incompatible with their neighborhood’s scale, character, and livability. The form and scale that new developments take—more than its density—is increasingly a primary concern.

This Plan recognizes that compatible design is a key part of growing successfully through infill and redevelopment. The scale or physical appearance of buildings, noise, glare, shadowing effects of taller buildings, parking, and other characteristics can impact neighboring properties.

Tools like neighborhood plans and improved development codes can guide new development in ways that help keep it in character and scale with existing homes. Improving tools that allow neighborhoods to accept new types of housing opportunities without losing their essential character can reduce conflicts between neighbors and developers.

The *2040 LUP* also addresses separations, transitions, and buffering between land uses of differing intensity or incompatible characteristics, such as between heavy industrial or airport facilities and homes.

In addition to regulations, “Placemaking” upgrades—including well-designed and maintained streets, sidewalks, parks, and open spaces—improve cohesion between uses, mitigate the effects of higher densities, and contribute to neighbor-

hood value. Public investments should accompany significant growth to improve: pedestrian connections to nearby shops and employment, opportunities for neighbors to meet and socialize, and development of healthy, safe environments.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 5, 11, 12, 13, 21, 28, 35, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 66, and 79.

**2040 LUP Policies:**

**LUP 7.1.** Preserve, accommodate, and contribute to the character, scale, and identity of established neighborhoods as new infill housing and mixed-use development occurs. Protect and restore the natural environment as development occurs in these neighborhoods.

**LUP 7.2.** Ease the transitions between more intensive uses and adjacent lower-density neighborhoods—in terms of the built scale, height, level of activity, and character.

LUP Policies **1.6, 2.3, 4.3, 5.3,** and **6.3** are also integral to this Goal.

**Goal 8 Open Space and Greenways**

Anchorage maintains, improves, and strategically expands parks, greenbelts, riparian corridors, and trail corridors to enhance land values, public access, neighborhoods, and mixed-use centers.

Anchorage offers the kinds of places that are gone from most other cities. Open spaces, greenbelts, and trail corridors are valued assets of this community. Anchorage recognizes that natural areas are vital infrastructure that sustains neighborhoods and centers experiencing infill and redevelopment.

One of Anchorage’s many competitive advantages for attracting talent and investment in the global economy is its extensive network of greenbelts, trail corridors, and natural open space. These amenities support growth and livability of neighborhoods and centers.

The *Anchorage 2020 Conceptual Natural Open Space Map*, updated as the *Natural Assets Map* (Map CI-7) in Appendix A, informs strategic decisions about preservation priorities and new additions to this green infrastructure.

This Plan recommends adding parks and greenbelt connections to offset neighborhood deficiencies, and to support higher density development.

These new open space features can also function as buffers between incompatible developments.

Critical fish and wildlife habitats and natural areas important to water quality, public access, and recreation are retained in this Plan. Restored greenways and creek corridors support higher density and redevelopment with open space amenities.

Connecting these assets to neighborhoods and employment centers by extending greenbelt trails and other pedestrian connections is also a high community priority.

Anchorage will seek to work with partners to identify new acquisition alternatives and improved funding mechanisms for creating and maintaining open space and recreational areas.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 50, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 84, 85, and 86.

**2040 LUP Policies:**

**LUP 8.1.** Ensure all neighborhoods and communities have access to nearby parks and recreational opportunities that support well-being.

**LUP 8.2.** Provide new and improved trails, greenbelts, and other pedestrian facilities as alternative travel ways connecting open spaces, neighborhoods, and centers.

**LUP 8.3.** Provide greenways and trail extensions into designated centers and reinvestment focus

areas, to improve their connectivity with the trails system and overcome barriers to neighborhoods.

LUP Policies 1.5, 5.3, 5.7, and 10.1 are also integral to this Goal.

**Goal 9 Industrial Land**

A sufficient, predictable, and strategically located industrial land supply allows Anchorage’s industrial employment sectors to thrive, protected from non-industrial uses that might displace them.

From its origins near Ship Creek to the development of its airports, Anchorage has grown due to its function as a maritime, air, and land freight distribution center of vital importance to the Alaska economy. Its industrial sectors, strategically clustered on lands with access to the airport, railroad, and port facilities, drive the Anchorage economy and support other economic sectors. Industrial businesses tend to make a disproportionately important contribution to local employment and economic opportunity, paying higher wages and supporting the state’s key industries and population centers.

However, Anchorage does not have sufficient industrial-zoned land to accommodate the forecast economic growth, even considering the Chugiak-Eagle River land supply. Moreover, in-

dustrial lands in the Bowl face well-documented economic pressures to convert to other uses. This is due in part to land scarcity among commercial and residential land uses. Industrial uses are less able to adjust by using land more efficiently, such as multi-story development.

This Plan recommends retention of a sustainable supply of industrial land in strategic areas and recommends limiting incompatible uses to avoid conflicts with industrial activities.

For example, it reclassifies some areas no longer positioned for industrial use out of the industrial land supply and into other land use categories, and conversely identifies several opportunities to transfer new areas from other uses into industrial land designations, to better consolidate and protect the remaining industrial land supply.

The Plan encourages a share of Anchorage's forecast employment growth to occur in these lands. It prioritizes industrial functions, including manufacturing, production, repair, and distribution enterprises, over low-employment uses like outdoor storage. "Traded Sectors" are key industrial land-utilizing sectors that export locally sourced goods and services to markets outside of Anchorage and tend to pay higher wages.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 26.

#### **2040 LUP Policies:**

**LUP 9.1.** Identify and preserve a suitable, predictable supply of industrial land in areas most

appropriate for existing and future high-priority industrial uses.

**LUP 9.2.** Limit non-industrial uses that could displace or conflict with existing or potential industrial functions in industrially designated areas, in order to preserve these areas for primarily industrial development and ensure compatibility of adjacent uses and traffic.

**LUP 9.3.** Encourage the retention and intensification of industrial uses on existing sites via reuse and redevelopment.

**LUP 9.4.** Recognize industrial Traded Sectors as high priority for economic development and industrial land availability, preservation, and infrastructure investment actions.

LUP Policies **1.5, 5.1, 5.2,** and **10.1** are also integral to this Goal.

### **Goal 10 Anchor Institutions**

The community supports its anchor institutions and facilities and recognizes the important local and statewide benefits they provide, while mitigating adverse impacts associated with development and expansion.

Anchor institutions are large organizations that have an established presence by their sheer size, permanence, and stabilizing social ties and services to the surrounding community. They diversify the city's economy by employing large workforces, purchasing goods and services, generating research and technology, and attracting significant investment. They serve the needs of the city's residents and all of Alaska.

Anchor institutions include: University of Alaska Anchorage, Alaska Pacific University, Providence Alaska Medical Center, and Alaska Native Medical Center in the UMED District; Alaska Regional Hospital; Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport; Port of Anchorage; Alaska Railroad; and Merrill Field.

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), while located outside the Anchorage Bowl land use plan area boundary, is also a key contributor to the economic, social, and physical fabric of the city. Anchorage seeks to grow and evolve in ways compatible with JBER's performance of its national security mission.

The universities and medical institutions play important roles delivering vital health and educational services to the residents of Anchorage and Alaska. All these anchor institutions have large campus settings and facilities. Their operations, growth, and expansion can impact surrounding neighborhoods and areas.

This Plan and other elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*, including the *UMED District Plan*, seek to encourage coordinated institutional growth that creates integrated, connected campuses that respect the livability of surrounding residential neighborhoods and natural resources. Conversely, the institutions benefit from strong neighborhoods with workforce housing and a great living environment around them.

The airport, railroad, and port facilities are managed primarily within present facility property boundaries. However, there is a need to prioritize water, sewer, and roadway and runway investments in order for these areas to modernize and grow. Also, transitions and buffers between major facilities and residential neighborhoods are essential. In some cases, the public has enjoyed the use of portions of these institution lands in areas reserved for future growth.

**Related Anchorage 2020 Policies:** 26 and 28.

### **2040 LUP Policies:**

**LUP 10.1.** Encourage and expand partnerships with Anchorage’s anchor institutions and facilities to promote and coordinate growth and develop-

ment compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.

LUP Policies **4.1, 7.2, 8.2** are also integral to Goal 10.

### **Areas of Growth and Change**

**Map 1-2, Areas of Growth and Change**, highlights the relative degree of change guided by the *2040 LUP*. In most locations, the changes on this map reflect existing zoning, development trends, and adopted plans. It depicts the growth that is anticipated to occur through the year 2040, as follows:

*Areas of Significant Growth* are expected to experience new development on vacant parcels, or redevelopment of underused parcels, that transforms the character or activity level of the area. These areas have the most potential to absorb growth. Public infrastructure, such as parks and streets, will be improved to enhance quality of life for residents, employees, and visitors.

*Areas of Moderate Growth* are expected to experience development and evolve in a manner that enhances their form and character. These areas have moderate potential for absorbing growth over time. Some infill and redevelopment is likely to occur, mostly on individual lots or in clusters, and fit with the existing and planned street patterns, setbacks, and building form and scale. Incremental improvement to local infrastructure and street/walkway connectivity may occur.

*Areas of Little Growth* are expected to experience only minor change and retain their existing use and character. These areas have limited potential

for absorbing growth. Infill, reuse, and development will occur on a small number of scattered sites. Maintenance of existing infrastructure or incremental upgrades of street, trail, or other infrastructure should occur.

Map 1-2 also shows where the *2040 LUP* recommends changes from adopted district or neighborhood plans, or changes in land use or intensity of use from what is currently provided by existing zoning. Areas where the *2040 LUP* shows Land Use Designations that are changes or updates from adopted neighborhood or district plans are shown in a thick forest green outline. Section 2.1 explains how the *2040 LUP* designation applies to these areas.

### **How Were Areas of Growth and Change Identified?**

Below are the factors that emerged from analyses, public comments, and workshops during the development of the *2040 Land Use Plan Map*. These factors influence which areas are most likely to change or absorb growth:

1. In or near major commercial or employment centers, including Downtown, Midtown, and UMED.
2. Accessible to public transit, pedestrian, and bicycle routes.
3. Undergoing change, where development and investment is anticipated to continue.
4. Where existing zoning allows for greater intensity of development than occurs today.



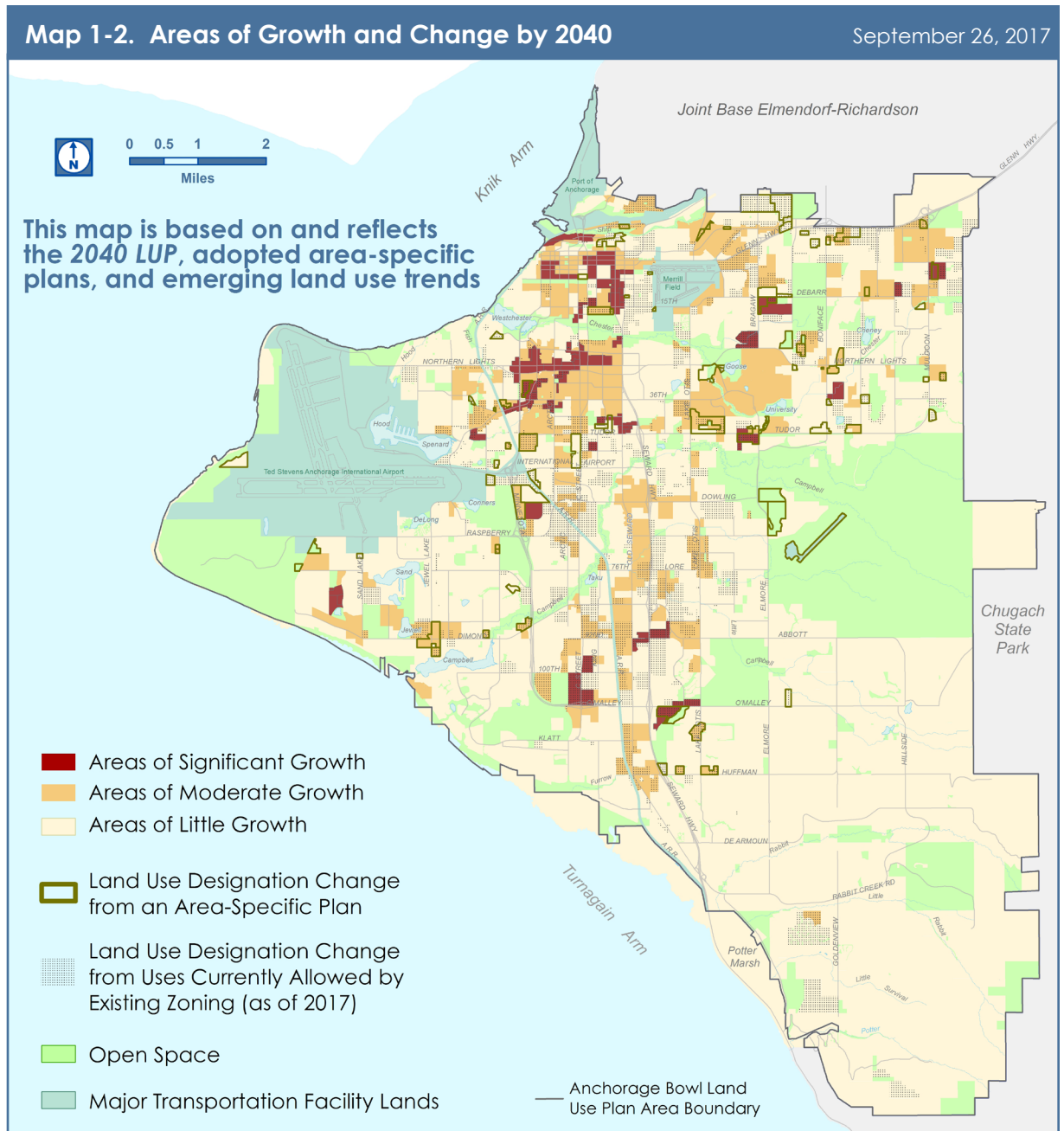
5. Has buildable land or redevelopment opportunities.
6. Near or accessible to stores, jobs, restaurants, and other services, amenities, and attractions.
7. Has existing infrastructure (e.g., streets, parks, water, sewer, sidewalks) or where cost/feasibility of upgrading capacity is there to support additional growth.
8. Where reinvestment in infrastructure is already planned or anticipated, which will support additional growth.
9. Has fewer development constraints, natural hazards, or sensitive natural features.
10. Where capacity for growth has greater potential benefits than burdens for lower-income and vulnerable populations.
11. Prioritized in adopted neighborhood or district plans.

The amount of change reflected on Map 1-2 is based on recent growth forecasts, housing needs, and recommendations of this Plan and other elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*, such as adopted neighborhood and district plans and public facility plans.

Principles for infill design and compatibility in areas of growth are provided in Section 2.1.



Search online with "Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan" to go to the zoom-in interactive version of this map.



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