

January 14, 2014

Ms. Erika McConnell  
Planning Section Manager  
Department of Planning and Community Development  
PO Box 196650  
Anchorage, AK 99519-6650

Subject: Ship Creek Framework Plan

Dear Ms. McConnell:

Attached is the Ship Creek Framework Plan, dated 14 January 2014, which replaces the previous Ship Creek Development Plan dated 5 September 2013 that we submitted to you last Fall.

The intent of the previous Ship Creek Development Plan was to amend the 1991 Ship Creek/Waterfront Land Use Plan (1991 Plan), as requested by the Mayor's Office and the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation and as recommended by Staff. This request was denied by the Planning and Zoning Commission in the hearing of 4 November 2013 as documented in Planning and Zoning Commission Resolution No. 2013-043.

As requested by the Planning and Zoning Commission and recommended by staff, the title of the current Plan has been changed from a Development Plan to a Framework Plan and is not intended to replace or amend the 1991 Plan, but rather will augment that Plan and provide a vision as to how physical development may take place in the Ship Creek area and the Cook Inlet waterfront.

This report incorporates numerous revisions, as follows:

- Revisions based on questions and comments from the Planning and Zoning Commission hearing of 4 November 2013 and Resolution No. 2013-043.
- Text edits and corrections in response to Staff input included in the Staff Packet Memorandum dated 4 November 2013, on pages 43-45.
- Revisions based on Staff comments included in the Staff Packet Memorandum dated 4 November 2013, on pages 45-48.

333 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1150  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
27601

P 919.334.3111  
F 919.334.3122

Erika McConnell

14 January 2014

Page 2

We want to emphasize that the current Framework Plan is highly consistent with the Goals and Objectives of the 1991 Ship Creek/Waterfront Land Use Plan, including the following:

*1991 Goal #1: To revitalize portions of the Ship Creek/Waterfront area and support its growth into a viable, tourist-related, people-oriented commercial development.*

*1991 Goal #2: To respond to the needs of local residents and tourists for public access to the water, night as well and daytime activities and year-round activities to maximize the use and enjoyment of the Creek and Waterfront for all.*

*1991 Goal #6: To integrate the waterfront and Ship Creek into the fabric of the Municipality.*

The current Plan is also consistent with the specific Recommendations contained within the 1991 Plan. Most notably, the 1991 Plan also included significant areas of land fill in the Cook Inlet mud flats, and to an even greater extent than the current Framework Plan does. The current Plan also maintains the current Planned Community (PC) zoning district in the Ship Creek basin, including the height limits for new buildings.

During our planning effort we have engaged the Alaska Railroad to understand their concerns, and the current Plan addresses the concerns they have expressed to us in meetings and in writing. As stated in the report, any planning and development in the Ship Creek area must preserve the Railroad's freight and passenger operations, and reduce conflicts between rail, trucking, pedestrians, bikes and cars wherever possible.

This Framework Plan attempts to address the long-term opportunities that are presented in the Ship Creek area, not only focusing on the valley itself, but also creating *A Gateway to Alaska, Anchorage's New Waterfront*. As such the plan is visionary and extends into the next 50 years. We remain convinced that such a bold vision will benefit Anchorage in the coming years and will provide stimulus for growth and investment for the next century of the city's evolution.

We are grateful for the opportunity to have met with the Planning and Zoning Commission, and your staff on a number of occasions, and we understand that both the Department and the Commission have legitimate interests in ensuring that growth is appropriate and done in a methodical and reasonable level. Our first phase in particular is geared at creating the infrastructure and amenities that will create an environment that will stimulate that methodical and reasonable growth.

Erika McConnell

14 January 2014

Page 3

Still, our plan also looks to the future of the community, the drivers of economic development in other communities, and the assets that are available to create a world-class waterfront appropriate for Anchorage for future generations. As such, we hope that you will share the enthusiasm we have for what this plan offers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' followed by a horizontal line and a vertical stroke.

Michael Stevenson, FAIA, LEED AP

Design Principal

c: Mayor Dan Sullivan