

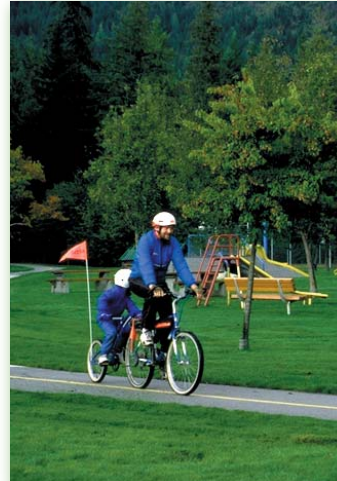


Healthy Parks &

Healthy People



Mayor
Mark Begich
Municipality of
Anchorage



June 2005

Prepared by
Land Design North
Eppley Institute

for a

Healthy Future

-- **DRAFT** -- Strategic Action Plan 2005-2008



***"The decisions we make today
are generational in nature"***

Mark Begich, Mayor



Early Anchorage Skiers

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the many individuals who have contributed toward making Anchorage's park system what it is today, and to those helping us to plan and act for a better system tomorrow.

This Anchorage Strategic Action Plan is the culmination of three years of dedicated work by the Anchorage community. The Anchorage Parks Department would like to thank the following key groups and individuals for participating in this process:

The hundreds of people who gave their time and input at meetings, on committees, in interviews, or by sending us feedback and ideas

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Strategic Action Plan

Anchorage Parks & Recreation Department

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Draft-in-Progress 2005-2008 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Anchorage Parks and Recreation
Healthy Parks, Healthy People
Healthy Future



<http://www.muni.org/parks/index.cfm>

1. Introduction



Early Anchorage golfers

Since Anchorage's earliest days as a tent city, residents have been serious about recreation. Undeterred by the mud or frontier conditions, settlers organized foot races, skiing, baseball—women and men's series—and golf events.

Decades later, Anchorage has a great parks legacy that has grown directly out of residents' enduring commitment. We have 10,000 acres of parkland (15% of the city's land base), 120 miles of paved trails, a diversity of recreation options in every season, and well established community events and sports leagues.

This Strategic Action Plan is intended to help Anchorage maintain and build on this legacy. As a companion to the updated *Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource, and Recreation Facility Plan* this document provides a short list of actions—consistent with the comprehensive plan—that the public, parks staff, and park professionals in the field think are the most do-able and timely. The actions should be

viewed as flexible recommendations that can evolve in response to changing conditions.

Our Parks Legacy

Parks and recreation facilities and services emerged as a responsibility of government in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It occurred as greater densities of residents moved into cities and towns and as open space for spontaneous play, social gatherings, and healthful activities diminished. Communities came to believe that parks and recreation, like community libraries and schools, provided broad social benefits to their residents.

Today on average, Anchorage Bowl residents pay \$64.78 toward Parks per person total per year (in fees and taxes) and they receive it all back through services, access to open space, facilities, and programming provided by the Municipal Parks and Recreation Department.



Although the benefits of parks and recreation are many—and become even clearer as epidemics in obesity and childhood diabetes balloon—communities sometimes find it hard to adequately fund their parks systems. In truth, parks are needed today more than ever. Preventative health care and youth-at-risk recreation programs cost very little compared with the cost of failed health or incarceration.



"Recreation is not a luxury; it is an essential in the life of the community, and opportunities for engaging in it rank substantially in the same order of importance as opportunities for education. Providing recreation for the whole community is the responsibility of the people of Anchorage".

*Anchorage Recreation Plan, 1954,
Vic Fischer, Planning Director*

To mobilize funding, parks agencies must visibly serve the broad public, work cost-effectively, and demonstrate public dividends. Citizens and elected officials have to be convinced, as they were in an earlier era, that parks and recreation agencies deliver collective or "public" benefits that are as important to peoples' lives as roads and schools.

Today's Opportunities and Challenges

Building a great park system is hard work, but Anchorage has a great foundation to build from. One of the major legacies that our community founders left to the present generation are large tracts of land and connections between these along streams via greenbelts. These large tracts are now major urban parks (the Park Strip, Kincaid, Russian Jack) and the greenbelts like Chester Creek, form the trail system that significantly contribute to Anchorage's quality of life and our overall economic and physical well-being.

Anchorage also has a great resource and opportunity in the people (many of them volunteers) who have set aside lands and worked to develop spaces, leagues, and events that benefit individuals and the community.

It is the responsibility of our generation to take advantage of these opportunities, and then to do all we can to enable future generations to benefit from our great park system 20 and 100 years from today.

Yet we have challenges ahead. Parks has a limited budget to meet a wide variety of demands and community



Anchorage has a great trail system, but some sections are in obvious need of repair

needs. With a \$13 million budget supported by property tax (\$11 million) and cost recovery fees (\$1.6 million), our department has approximately \$50.00 per person in tax support (\$64.78 if you add cost recovery fees). This level of funding, due in part to Anchorage's tax cap is inadequate to provide many of the services expected by the public.

For example, we now spend twelve cents of every dollar on maintenance. If we have heard one thing loud and clear, it is that we are not taking care of our parks even at a minimal level of service. The public has told us to spend more—between 30 to 40 cents of every dollar—on taking better care of what we have.

The average cost of providing parks and recreation services per person in the United States is approximately \$95.00. Although we are making do with less than the average, Anchorage has a can-do spirit and we need to stretch ourselves to meet these basic park maintenance needs.

Our challenge will be to look carefully at our funding priorities and better link services with direct costs through cost accounting practices. We also have already started working hard to do a better job of leveraging funds and volunteer labor.

Finally, we are responding to this challenge by realigning the agency to be more effective. The Parks Department has undergone a number of reorganizations over the past 15 years and has lost focus and connection to the public. This time, our efforts are guided by a comprehensive plan, fiscal accountability, public feedback, and a more responsive community service model.

Specifically, we now have new Park Districts, with a "Park District Manager" who will be responsible for working with the entire community in their district including Community Councils, user groups, special need populations, and individuals.



Improved basic park maintenance across Anchorage will require stepped-up staffing and volunteer partnerships



Success! A cleaner park and community pride came out of this day's volunteer clean-up event.

With our District Manager's ear to the ground, our challenge and hope is that you will work with us to find new and better ways to help us respond to community needs, and to find the funding or volunteer labor and donations to act on District priorities.

Making change is not easy, especially in government where strict guidelines and policies work against fast and sudden change. The only constant in today's world is change. Those businesses that survive and thrive have learned to adapt and make incremental course corrections in mid-stream. We as a department are trying to become a more responsive and service-oriented organization, but it will take us some time to implement this shift and to correct problems.

This Strategic Action Plan gives a snapshot of how we propose to start moving in this direction based on what we heard during our many conversations across the community. We think we have heard what

direction we need to go and specific actions we can take immediately to improve performance and meet public expectations.

Our department's effort to initiate constructive change is being responded to with a healthy dose of skepticism. The public says, "Show me"; actions speak louder than words. Starting immediately our intention is to implement projects and solutions that the community feels are important.

2. Parks for People



Our mission at the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department is to provide a network of public spaces and programs throughout the community that preserve and enhance Anchorage's heritage, lifestyle, special places and natural areas for future generations:

"Healthy Parks, Healthy People,
Healthy Future"

Our vision for Anchorage is a sustainable and accessible system of recreational facilities, parks, programs, trails and natural resource areas that meet year-round neighborhood and community-wide needs and are a catalyst for bringing these direct benefits to individuals, families and the community:

1 Better Health and Quality of Life: Individuals directly benefit as they exercise, play, and enjoy time outdoors, have better health, and build self esteem.

2 Community Building: Parks build our sense of community, lend identity to an area or neighborhood, and improve our quality of life. Parks channel positive community participation by getting a diverse population to work together towards a shared vision.

3 Economic Enhancement: Parks improve real property values, attract well-educated workers to live in the community and entice retirees to stay in the area. Economic revitalization of neighborhoods and town centers is enhanced by an investment in parks, which attract private investment capital. Parks and trails encourage visitors to extend their stay and contribute to the local tourism markets.

4 Environmental Stewardship: Natural resource use areas retain and filter storm water, improve





air quality, serve as buffers between incompatible land uses, lend definition to neighborhoods, provide links between residential areas, parks and schools, and protect wildlife and fish habitat, while providing recreation opportunities close to home.

Public Involvement

Based on what we have heard consistently from across the community, our Department's vision is very much in line with what residents, volunteers, organizers and stakeholders want to see.

During planning for *Anchorage Bowl Parks, Natural Resources, and Recreation Facilities Plan* (completed in 2003) many important issues, concerns, and ideas were raised. More recently, as the department began to move forward with implementation of the plan and reorganization, a public engagement process was initiated in March of 2005.

The process included stakeholder interviews; a series of public meetings and workshops; and a random mail survey to registered voters who are residents of Anchorage. Participation included:

- A total of 74 stakeholders were interviewed
- A total of 144 members of the public participated in the initial Public Issues Meetings in March
- 127 participated in the Public Solutions Workshops in April
- over 71 people attended a citywide open house on April 30th at the Loussac Library where all the results of public input were presented
- 310 registered voters returned responses from a random survey mailed to 1,600 households of registered (for a return rate of 22 percent and a confidence level of plus or minus 5 percent).

The primary purpose of the public involvement process was to listen to concerns and discuss opportunities and solutions at the park district and citywide level.

The process was developed and staffed by representatives from the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands and Anchorage Parks and Recreation staff. A complete report on each public outreach effort is posted on the Parks Web Page at <http://www.muni.org/parks/index.cfm>.

The public process helped the Parks and Recreation Department to "triangulate" using a variety of

reference points and methods, and to gauge what a number of people in Anchorage are thinking about parks and recreation. For example, when asked what they liked *most* about our parks and recreation facilities, many participants talked about:

Trails – With over 120 miles of paved trails and hundreds of miles of soft surface trails, Anchorage residents felt that they were lucky to have good access out their back door.

Existing park infrastructure – Residents appreciate our 200+ parks with playgrounds, athletic fields, picnic areas, recreation centers and other amenities.

Accessibility of parks and trails – Residents like the variety of recreation opportunities close to home.

Opportunities for programming – Residents like the many choices available (public and private).

When asked what they liked *least*, many participants focused on:

Maintenance and the day to day management of parks – Residents expressed many concerns about the lack of cleanliness and enforcement, about not feeling safe or seeing fixable problems that are not being addressed, like cracks in trails that are dangerous to cyclists.

Planning—Residents want agencies and government well coordinated when it comes to developing and managing our parks system. In some major areas (Chugach Park access for example) great recreation opportunities are being compromised because of incomplete planning and coordination.

*"I now understand
the Park Districts;*

*I have someone I can go to if I have
a question, complaint or idea."*

*Citizen at Southwest District
Workshop at Kincaid Park*

Community Involvement Process—Members of the community want to be included in the discussion of the future of parks.

Partnerships—People expressed frustration at the lack of a fair and clear process for working with parks. As one resident commented, "The Parks and Recreation Department needs to foster entrepreneurship around parks and become an enabler rather than a hurdle"

Use of Anchorage School District facilities – Residents often live near schools and some voiced concern that they do not see schools and parks working together to eliminate redundancy and improve cooperation.

Financial Access—Residents want recreation opportunities to be open to all, including low-income families. They also want reasonable fees and transparency in financial matters.

Park Amenities—A number of residents want the department to do a better job of providing drinking water fountains, benches, and toilets and other things that support users.





Signage—Residents want more basic information posted for users to clearly communicate rules and regulations, provide directions, and mark entryways. Interpretive signs are also appreciated.

Communication – A number of residents said that Parks and Recreation needs to do better at informing the public about what park programs and services are available.

Trail Access—People want better access to large parks and to complete missing links in the system.

Stewardship of Natural Resources—Many residents who participated want the department to place a higher value on minimally developed natural green spaces.

Parks & Recreation Department Image—Residents who take the time to participate in public involvement, or to call the parks department because of a local problem want to see tangible results; “Parks & Recreation must be perceived as integral to people’s lives”

Customer Service—Residents pay directly and indirectly for parks and programs and better customer service would go a long way. People want Parks and Recreation staff to be friendly, responsive and efficient.

Beyond all the talk about opportunities and concerns, the public process also accomplished other very timely things. It introduced Anchorage to the Park District concept and brought District residents and user groups face to face with their new managers.

It also helped get Community Councils’ capital project requests out into a broader public arena where the merits, issues, and costs of specific projects could be raised for broader discussion. As a result, an appendix includes a Capital Improvement Plan “draft-in-progress”.

Each project on this list was initiated by a Community Council, a participant from the public process, or by parks or city staff. With this list in circulation, project concepts can be better developed and truth tested. Partnerships and can be formed around the best and most timely projects

Staying Involved

What we heard during public input this spring has not changed much since the public engagement in 2003 associated with the Anchorage Bowl Parks, Natural Resources, and Recreation Facilities Plan.

Perhaps Anchorage residents over nine decades have not changed their ideas much. They are passionate about their sports and parks, with a strong desire to see things well maintained. We hope that moving forward into the next stage—implementation—that this inborn passion can be channeled into meaningful action, working partnerships, and concrete solutions on behalf of our parks and community.

3. Framework Plan



Anchorage Baseball game circa 1915

This section sets out a framework for clear action. It builds on our mission and vision, and describes how we propose to act on what the majority of residents have said are their priorities.

The framework consists of eight goal areas and some specific measurable objectives and actions that we will begin action on immediately (if we are not already!). The goals were originally coined “core values” during the comprehensive planning public involvement, but today they still ring true as sound organizing principles for action.

Following this framework, Chapter Four covers Implementation Strategies, and an appendix presents a Capital Improvement Plan draft-in-progress that ties each line item to this framework of goals, objectives, and strategies or actions.

- 1 Improve Maintenance and Stewardship of What We Have**
- 2 Foster Private-Public Partnerships**
- 3 Create and use parks as Community Building Blocks**
- 4 Develop and enhance Parks as Economic Engines**
- 5 Provide Balanced Services and Facilities for a Diverse Community**
- 6 Improve Access & Connections**
- 7 Steward our Natural Resources**
- 8 Create a Strong Parks and Recreation Organization**



1 Improve Maintenance and Stewardship of What We Have



The public's highest desire for Anchorage's parks and recreation system is improved maintenance of existing facilities.

goal:

Provide for the continual maintenance and upgrade of indoor and outdoor facilities to serve all segments of the city.

objectives:

1. Parks and Recreation will spend 30% of its operational revenue derived from taxes on "**Clean and Green**" activities: maintenance, basic upkeep, and beautification. This will enable us to hire more staff to do things like weed whipping fence lines and installing more trash cans.
2. We will provide **Community Clean up Grants** to community councils and neighborhoods for purchasing supplies to allow volunteers to work with park staff on improvement projects (e.g., paint for bollards and benches, garbage bags).
3. We will use our **Community Work Service crews** in partnership with local organizations to clean up parks, and especially focus on clearing homeless camps as they are identified.



2 Foster Private-Public Partnerships



Residents want to see alliances between Parks and a wide variety of organizations, businesses, and the Anchorage School District

goal:

Bring the maximum commitment and benefit to our parks and recreation system by developing win-win private and public partnerships.

objectives:

1. We will expand our popular **Adopt-a-park and trail program** and be more responsive to volunteer needs. This includes creating an easy one-step approach for volunteers to identify projects they want to do and gain approval by park staff.
2. Agencies, organizations and for-profit enterprises using parks and recreation facilities to provide programs of public benefit will be our **partners in seeking funding solutions** to ensure sustainability. For example, we need People for Pools and the many users as partners in developing workable long-term funding solutions (corporate sponsors, private sector cost sharing, donations, fees, closure or retro-fitting).
3. Through the **Anchorage Park Foundation** we will continue to work with donors and foundations to enable projects, acquisitions, and leverage public funds.



3 Create and Use Parks as Community Building Blocks



People want welcoming parks and trails that practically link and connect schools, neighborhoods, and town centers or business areas.

goal:

Provide a variety of safe, pleasant, and distinctive community use parks that are responsive to the diverse needs of its residents, with good access to schools, recreation, natural areas, community facilities and surrounding neighborhoods.

objectives:

1. **Park District Managers** will be placed in facilities to augment staff with the prime responsibility of establishing relationships and figuring out ways to better serve local residents. If there are questions, problems or suggestions about specific parks, each District's Manager will help or find out who can.
2. We will cooperate with the Anchorage Police Department and the existing Trail Watch volunteers to **make parks more safe and secure**. Actions will focus on improving the "eyes on our parks and trails" and include an expanded presence of park staff, and better law and rules enforcement.
3. A **Community Advisory Park Group (CAPG)** for each District will be formed with representatives from each of the appropriate Community Councils as well as local businesses and user groups.
4. The CAPG, District Managers and the Heritage Land Bank and will work with planning staff to develop an **acquisitions priority list and strategies** for acquiring key parcels.



4 Develop and Enhance Parks as Economic Engines



The public wants facilities that serve residents but that also attract visitors and generate revenue.

goal:

Maximize the economic benefits of parks and recreation to the local economy as an attractor for events, tournaments, and new businesses, and as a tool for retaining quality workforce, increasing property values, reducing crime and improving the health of local residents.

objectives:

1. Add **amenities** (benches, attractive trash receptacles) and other improvements to our city's greatest parks and interconnecting trails—Delaney, Kincaid, Far North Bicentennial Park, Coastal Trail, and Chester Creek Trail, etc.
2. Work with the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau to **better brand** Anchorage's Parks and Recreation system by improving signage, visual recognition, and user information especially via the Department's website.
3. **Partner on projects and events** that serve locals and visitors and enliven our parks. A good example of this is the partnership with the Anchorage Downtown Partnership on Music in the Park and the Town Square Ice Rink (with ice carvings, New Years Eve Fireworks and sponsored theme events).



5 Provide Balanced Services and Facilities for a Diverse Community



Residents want facilities and trails well distributed to meet community needs without sacrificing the natural qualities and open space they value.

goal:

Establish, develop, manage and maintain a balanced system of parks, greenbelts, and trails for year-round utilization that meets neighborhood and community-wide needs.

objectives:

1. Develop the Parks and Recreation Department's **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)** in collaboration with future Community Advisory Park Groups, the Anchorage Parks Commission, Community Councils, user groups, and the public in an open, balanced and responsible process.
2. **Connect potential users with the range of opportunities** provided by leagues, user groups, and recreation organizations via the Department's website, activity guides, and through other forms of advocacy.
3. Clarify what funding requirements, operational practices, and public amenities would be required to more fully use **Anchorage School District facilities** to meet public recreational needs.
4. Create **working agreements and relationships with municipal agencies** to help reduce maintenance costs, streamline project/design plan review, and improve accountability and delivery of services.
5. Establish a **joint working group with local governmental agencies responsible for land management issues** (e.g, Chugach State Park, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, BLM, Anchorage International Airport, Department of Transportation, military and other agencies).



6 Improve Access and Connections



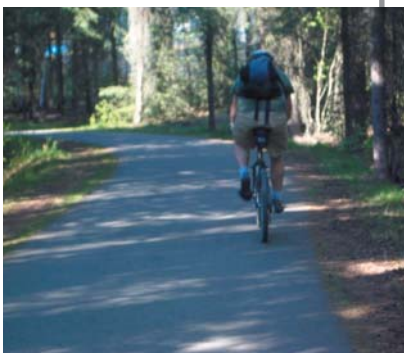
Trails are Anchorage's most valued and treasured park asset. They are used year round for access, exercise, and outings.

goal:

Create a pedestrian-oriented system of parks and greenways linking open spaces, neighborhoods, parks and school sites that furthers implementation of the Areawide Trail Plan.

objectives:

1. Under the increased funds for maintenance, **dedicate a funding stream** to keep our very well-loved and heavily used trails "Clean and Green".
2. Improve trail users' safety by **extending Trail Watch coverage** to Far North, Kincaid, Russian Jack Springs and Goose Lake.
3. **Reach out to remote trail users** (mountain bike clubs, etc.) and interest them in joining Trail Watch.
4. Begin a positive campaign to **educate dog owners** about laws and etiquette on trails, especially regarding waste, and involve private sector businesses.
5. Planning staff, District Managers, and the Anchorage Park Foundation will **proactively work to secure trail easements or acquisitions** using combinations of tools (donations, fundraising, land swaps), especially where development or transportation projects present immediate linking needs and opportunities.



7 Steward our Natural Resources



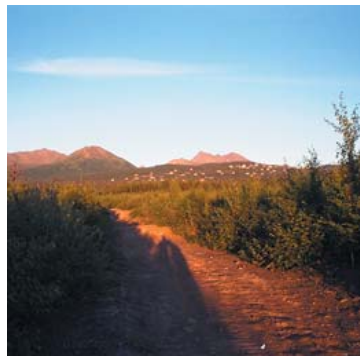
Parks, greenbelts and natural areas contribute to the quality of the local environment and provide a sense of wilderness close to home.

goal:

Establish an integrated open space network throughout the community based upon existing natural patterns and lands which are ecologically valuable and that preserve and enhance Anchorage's scenic vistas, fish, wildlife, and plant habitats and their ecological functions and values.

objectives:

1. **Use the "Living with Wildlife Plan"** as a tool within the Department to improve the design and management of parks.
2. **Work with Chugach State Park** and interested parties (agencies, neighbors and landowners) to resolve access issues and enable residents to fully enjoy and better steward this amazing resource.
3. **Partner with community organizations and agencies** to acquire and/or manage ecologically valuable lands including greenbelts, waterways, and fisheries.
4. Help **sponsor and support** community creek clean-up events, natural resource management planning, land reclamation, and urban forestry efforts.
5. Begin to **measure Anchorage's "green infrastructure"** based on Environmental Best Practices to help maximize economic benefits from improved air and water quality, atmospheric carbon absorption and energy conservation.



8 Create a Strong Parks and Recreation Organization



Residents want Parks staff to answer questions, solve problems, and work with them to implement projects and solutions

goal:

Provide a strong park and recreation organization that is responsive to local community needs and that engages the community in meaningful public process at all levels of park planning, design, implementation and management.

objectives:

1. Implement **service-oriented Park Districts** (see boundaries and contact information, next page) as a way to keep two-way communication lines open, enable better collaborative problem solving, and build constructive relationships.
2. Develop a **revised cost recovery policy** that utilizes the Core Service Model and better enables the department to cover basic essential services.
3. Establish support for park bonds through the **selection of capital projects based on broad community interests** and leveraged funding opportunities.
4. Establish and empower a **parks foundation** to bring focus, leadership and name recognition to the importance of issues related to parks and recreation.
5. Use **public involvement** on an annual basis using a variety of outreach methods (survey, interviews, focus/advisory groups, meetings) to gain feedback and input from citizens and stakeholders.



Anchorage's original Parks and Recreation Headquarters



YOUR PARK DISTRICT

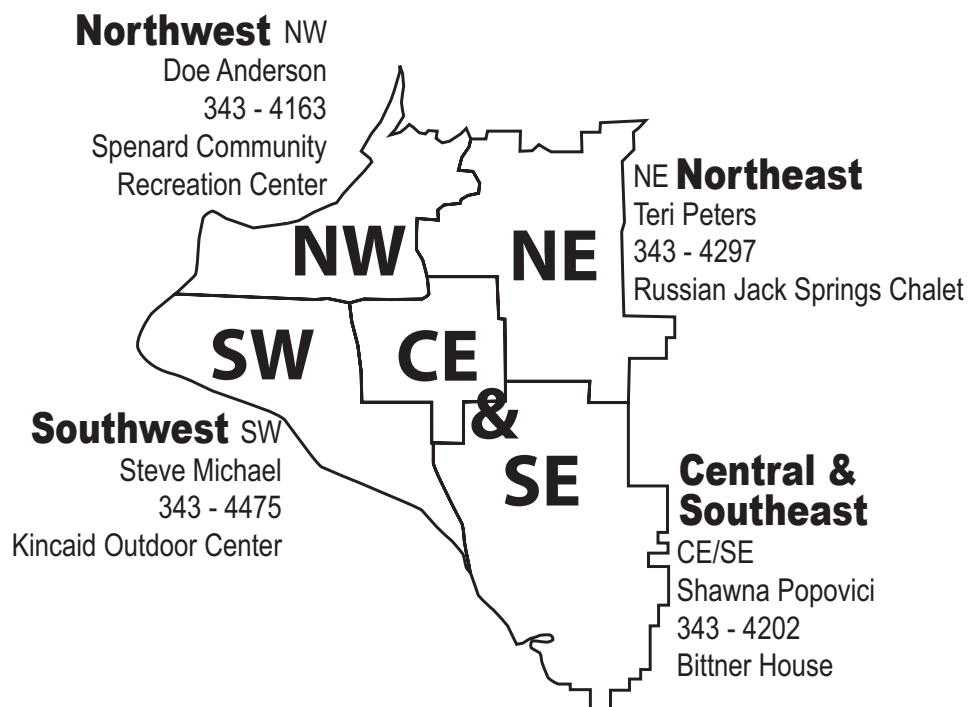
A COMMUNITY - ORIENTED APPROACH TO PARKS & RECREATION

What are Park Districts?

The Anchorage Bowl is a large area with many parks, trails, natural resource use areas and recreation facilities. By dividing the Bowl up into five distinct areas based on their natural features, topography, major roads, and Community Council Boundaries, the Parks & Recreation Department will be able to manage each based on their unique characteristics at the District level. This will allow for the Parks & Recreation Department to be more responsive to the local community's parks and recreation needs.

Your Park District Managers

The decentralizing of customer service to the Districts begins with your Park District Manager. Your Park District Managers, responsible for managing all parks and recreation assets within each Park District, have been hired and are in the Districts now.



You now have someone you can call

If you have an idea, a comment or a concern in your Park District, your Park District Managers are your first point of contact and your ongoing resource for the parks and recreation opportunities that are important to you. Call or stop by their district offices today.

4. Immediate Steps



The statement “Actions speak louder than words” is particularly applicable to Parks Departments’ credibility and success. As this plan is being published, the Parks Department is already acting on goals and projects that can be measured by the greater community as implementation progresses.

Yet how quickly and effectively we are able to succeed is not only on our shoulders. Real success requires that everyone who is passionate about parks work as a critical mass and catalyst to make opportunities happen and to resolve challenges.

Stakeholders, officials, residents, and staff will all be accountable for whether or how quickly we succeed. This is a shared responsibility and we are very much looking forward to working with every user group, every community council member, and the community at large to succeed at implementing our goals.

Steps to Success

Fortunately, to start the ball rolling on implementation, The Rasmuson Foundation has generously agreed to partner with the city in funding projects that fit the following criteria:

Immediate – Projects can be done with minimal preparation.

Do-able – Projects are simple and easy and can be completed in a short time frame.

Wide Support – The community is universally behind the project.

Needed – There is a genuine public need (according to the Level of Service (LOS) model from the Anchorage Parks Plan) and according to specific user groups.

Visible Results – The projects will result in tangible and identifiable positive results that are easily recognized and seen by the larger community.



This Summer's Projects

Our public process and framework plan suggest a number of projects that meet these criteria, and fulfill core service needs. Described below, each element also is listed with estimated costs in Table 1:

1 Clean & Green Strategies

(Goal 1, Objective 1)

A. Community Clean Up Grants

Action: Provide small grant (\$5,000 to \$10,000) to Community Councils for purchasing supplies—such as paint for bollards and benches—that will allow volunteers to work with park staff on improvement projects.

B. Increased Park Maintenance

Action: Fund two positions or use contract labor dedicated to weed-eating for this summer; develop strategies to fund permanently.

Action: Increase funding for trash pick-up, place uniform trash receptacles at key locations and expand the portable restroom service contract.

Action: Use our Community Work Service crews in partnership with local organizations to clean up homeless camps and other areas of concern.

C. Adopt-a-Park

Action: Fund trash pick up and vests for volunteers to help with clean-ups; District Managers are the point of contact and will help schedule and coordinate.

D. Amenities

Action: Fund new play equipment such as swings for areas including Roosevelt Park, Bancroft Park and others.

Action: Identify prototype park bench and park trash receptacle and begin to replace in all parks. Individual standards should be set for urban, suburban and rustic areas.



2 Safe & Secure Strategies

(Goal 3, Objective 2)

Action: Identify hot spots and increase patrols where possible working with local law enforcement.

Action: Partner with Animal Control on increasing enforcement of leash laws and educating animal owners.

Action: Expand Trail Watch's coverage to Far North, Kincaid, Russian Jack Springs and Goose Lake.

Action: Work with volunteers, user groups and the community service work crews to remove brush and thin trees at trail locations (especially in remote areas), and increase overall park and trail maintenance with safety and security issues in mind.

Action: Educate ourselves and parents on ways to be more aware of suspicious behavior and be safe, yet still have fun.



3 Great Parks & Destinations Initiative

(Goal 4, Objective 1)

The last generation made investments and preserved land that now gives us a very accessible and truly special array of parks, trails, facilities and spaces.

The final projects we have slated for immediate action are those that acknowledge our "Great Parks" as destinations and as truly special places that attract locals, Alaskans, and visitors and make Anchorage a great city. Enhancing the function and appeal of this Great Park system needs to be our generation's task.

To improve our Parks system we can learn from the form and function of malls and large shopping centers. Like a mall, we can provide large anchor attractions at strategic locations (Delaney Park Strip, Kincaid, Russian Jack Springs, and Far North Bicentennial Park, and the Chugach State Park).

Like a mall, we can strengthen links between our anchor attractions. Where anchor stores are linked by a series of large walkways or boulevards, our Great Parks will be well-linked by our very popular trail system (77 percent of the population uses Anchorage's 250 miles of paved and soft trails at least some time during the year).

Where a mall would stage specialty attractions, seating areas, food courts and other amenities along links, we have neighborhood parks like Lyn Ary, Campbell, Taku, University Lake Park, and schools that sit along the trail system and provide activities close to home and that link to major parks.



"Great Cities are known for their great parks."

One measure of any city's greatness is its ability to provide recreation, natural beauty, and signature open spaces for its citizens. Successful parks pay dividends for cities; they build civic pride, increase tourism and economic investment, and contribute to health and quality of life."

Mayor Mark Begich

Strategic acquisitions and improvements are what we need to make our parks system truly great. Starting us in this direction, we currently have \$2.4 million in remaining bond funds that we can immediately use to acquire new parks, watershed resources, trail links and greenbelts. The public has identified over \$10 million in needed acquisitions. Clearly, we will need to work closely with the new Community Advisory Parks Groups, the Heritage

Land Bank, landowners, organizations, and funders to acquire high priority parcels first, and find ways to leverage and stretch these funds.

Additionally, a number of capital projects and maintenance or access needs have been identified as priorities through the public process, by the Parks and Recreation Commission, and by Community Councils and Parks staff.

Action: Fund specific trail repair and maintenance items identified by the community (listed in draft CIP).

Action: Fund specific park repair, maintenance, and amenity improvements identified by the community (listed in draft CIP).

Action: Identify and acquire critical park land and trail links identified by the community using the \$2.4 million in funds available for acquisition (listed in draft CIP).

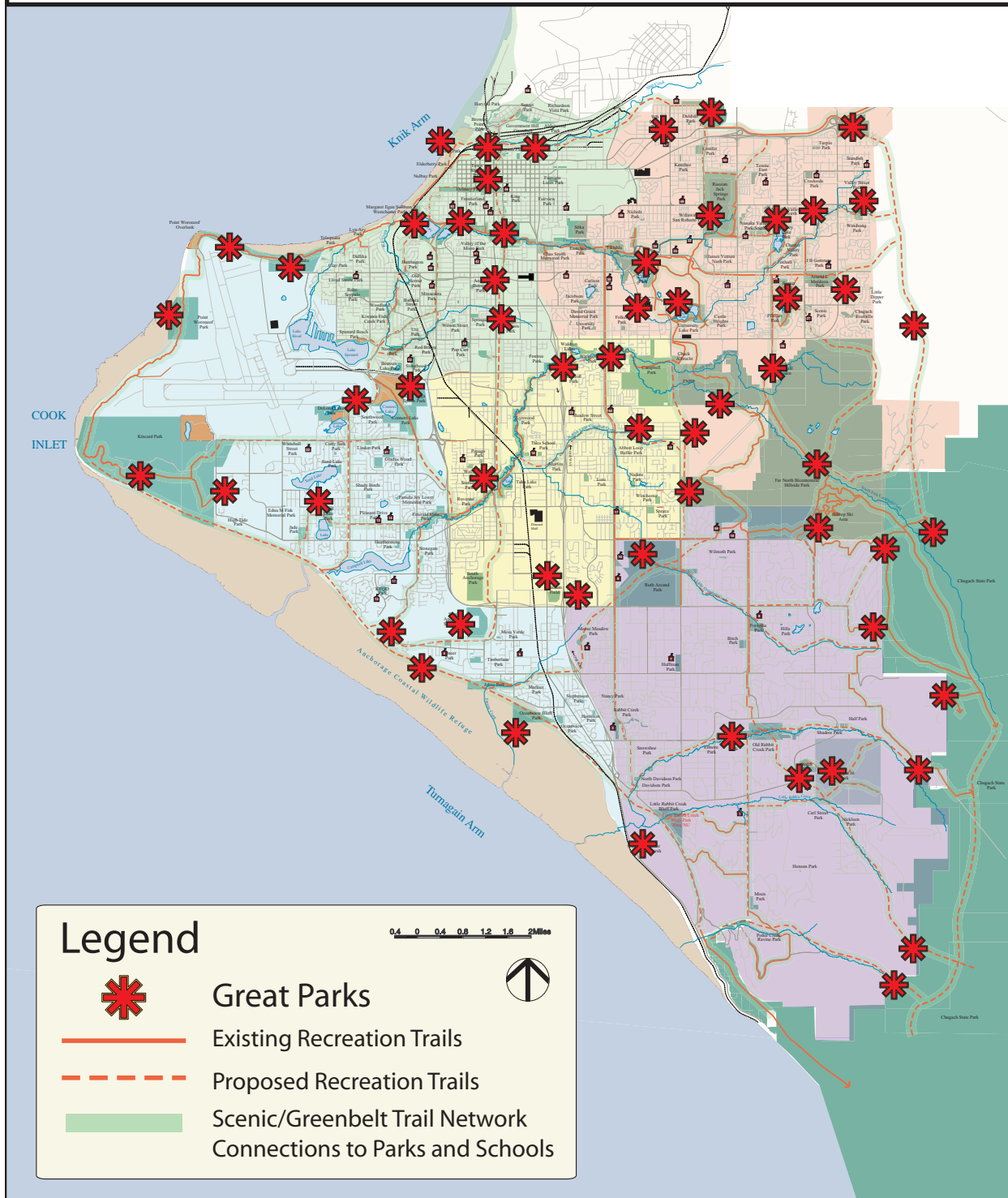
Action: Dust off previously developed Park Development Standards and Guidelines and begin exploring how to simplify the development process without inhibiting creative, affordable and appropriate solutions.

Action: Improve communication and education by:

- Develop a regular Parks newsletter and web mailer
- Improve circulation of the Quarterly Activity Guide
- Improve the Parks web page
- Develop on-line registration and reporting systems
- Develop marketing materials with the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Update the Anchorage Trail Map in partnership with REI and other partners



Great Parks Initiative



**Table 1: Anchorage Parks Action Plan 2005
Clean & Green and Safe & Secure**

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor
	Northwest Park District	All parks to have general “Clean & Green” and “Safe & Secure” projects including painting bollards, brush clearing, and general clean up.	Park Foundation Volunteers and Bonds source for all projects		
1	Margaret Sullivan Park / Westchester Lagoon	Upgrade facilities, signage, playground, parking and amenities	G. Sullivan	2005-06	G. Sullivan Com. Councils
2	Valley of the Moon Park	Upgrade facilities, benches, trash containers Clean and Green		2005	
3	Lyn Ary Park	Parking and park access issues Park amenities, sledding hill and trail connection improvements Clean and Green northeast entry		2005	
4	Pop Carr Park	Park improvements – signage, benches, trash containers, tree thinning, signage, tennis court, trail and fence repairs	\$40,000 L. Carr	2005-06	L. Carr
5	Minnesota Park	Clean and green, paint bollards and benches, fence repair, repair skate park equipment		2005	Skateboard Yes
6	C Street Community Garden	Clean and Green fall repair garden, fencing, upgrade garden area		2005	
7	Fairview Lions Park	Clean and Green, trash containers, benches,		2005	Fairview Lions
8	Roosevelt Park	Install swings, clean and green, trash and benches		2005	
27	Hanna Cove Park	Install park sculpture and minor upgrades	Bond ?	2005	Cheryl Richards LDN
	Northeast Park District	All parks to have general “Clean & Green” and “Safe & Secure” projects including painting bollards, brush clearing, and general clean up.			
9	Russian Jack Springs Park	Clean and Green, paint bollards, thin forest, upgrade parking for off leash area, practice area and green hole number nine	Park Bond Funds	2005	
10	University Lake Park	Park Master Plan with APU and ANH Park Amenities, parking, landscaping, revegetation of lake edge, and fencing for off leash area		2005	APU, Native Hospital, CC

**Table 1: Anchorage Parks Action Plan 2005
Clean & Green and Safe & Secure**

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor
11	Goose Lake Park	Park upgrades and amenities, electric and safe and secure trail improvements		2005-07	University CC
12	Conifer Park	Clean and Green		2005	
13	Muldoon Park	Clean and Green, Safe and Secure		2005	
14	McPhee Park	Clean and Green		2005	
28	Williwaw Park	Clean and Green, Safe and Secure		2005	Weed & Seed Tim Sullivan
	Southwest Park District				
15	Kincaid Park Trails	Trail maintenance, brushing for fire and line of sight to maintain access		2005	Sand Lake CC Nordic Ski
16	Connors Lake Park	Park improvements signage, erosion control and trail improvements		2005-06	Off Leash
17	Jewel Lake Park	Park Improvements- benches, trash, signage, life guard area, trail connection, fencing and play field improvements		2005-06	Sand Lake CC
18	Oceanview Park	Park upgrades – signage, benches, trash,		2005-06	
19	Cutty Sark Park	Clean and Green, Safe and Secure		2005	
	Central Park District				
20	Taku Lake Park	Park Upgrades – trash, signage, trail connection, benches		2005-06	
21	Bancroft Park	Park Upgrades – trash, signage, trail connection, benches, picnic area and LL ball field		2006-07	East Rotary Campbell Park CC
22	Campbell Park	Park Upgrades – trash, signage, trail connection, benches picnic, play area and parking upgrades		2005-06	Campbell Park CC
23	Meadow Park	Clean and Green, Safe and Secure		2005	
	Southeast Park District				
24	Hilltop and FNBP	Trail maintenance and upgrades		2005-06	Eagle Scouts Hilltop,
25	Stork Park	Park Upgrades – benches, signage, trash plan		2005-06	
26	Forsythe Park	Clean and Green		2005-06	Friends of Forsythe

Appendix A: Anchorage Park Draft Capital Improvement Initiative 2005-2010

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor	Lead Dept.
	Northwest Park District					
1-b	Town Square	Upgrades for public events, ice skating, brick repair, irrigation and signage	Foundation \$500,000	2006	Mayor ADP	Parks
	Down Town District	Public restrooms and increased trash containers and trash collection			Downtown CC	
1-c	Delaney Park Strip	Complete Master Plan – Initial park upgrades Upgrade turf and other facilities, improve hockey rink drainage, and provide electric service to west end of park Relocate softball fields to Albrecht	Master Plan \$265,000 future bonds	2005 2006-07 2006	Downtown CC	Parks
1-d	Community Park Access 9 th & S Street	Access to Tony Knowles Costal Trail from Delaney Park Strip including route study			Downtown CC	Parks
5-a	Margaret Sullivan Park / Westchester Lagoon	Upgrade facilities, signage, and amenities	Foundation \$685 future bond	2005-06	G. Sullivan Spenard CC	Parks
6	Valley of the Moon Park	Upgrade facilities, improve turf, irrigation Clean and Green	Foundation & Bonds	2005		Parks
7-a	Chester Creek Sport Complex	Master Plan – parking, transportation, facility upgrades, ADA improvements, Wheel Chair Games, and skate park	\$100,000 MOA/UAA \$350,000 Skate Park	2005-06	MOA & UAA Spenard CC Fairview CC	Parks
7-c	Charles Smith Park	Develop playground area, improve picnic and playfields	\$265,000 future bonds	2006-08	Fairview CC	Parks
8	Cuddy Midtown Park	Finalize Master Plan Park Improvements Phase I – turf, irrigation, trails, signage, and planting	\$300,000 future bond \$1,275 acquisition (property sold)	2005 2005-06	Midtown CC	Parks
9	Lyn Ary Park	Parking and park access issues Park amenities, bollard replacement, sledding hill and trail connection improvements	\$160,000 future bond	2006-07	Turnagain CC	Parks
10	Pop Carr Park	Park improvements – benches, trash containers, tree thinning, signage, tennis court, trail and fence repairs	\$80,000 Foundation/Staff	2005-06	L. Carr	Parks

Appendix A: Anchorage Park Draft Capital Improvement Initiative 2005-2010

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor	Lead Dept.
	Minnesota Park	Clean and green, paint bollards, benches, fence repair, sound barrier and tennis court upgrades.	Rasmuson	2005	Spenard CC	Parks
	C Street Community Garden	Clean and Green	Rasmuson	2005		Parks
	Fairview Lions Park	Clean and Green	Rasmuson	2005		Parks
	Earthquake Park	Light parking lot	\$195,000 future bond		Turnagain CC	Parks
	Al Miller Memorial Park	Government Hill park improvements including grading and drainage, landscaping, play equipment, and picnic facilities	\$260,000 future bonds	2006-08	Govt. Hill CC	Parks
	Lloyd Steel & Balto Seppla Park	Footbridge over wetland and trail connection between two parks			Turnagain CC	Parks
	Park Acquisition	Coastal Trail buffer acquisition as land becomes available north of Lyn Airy Park			Turnagain CC	Parks
	PM&E PROJECTS					
2	Quyana Park & ARRC Intermodal Facility	Repair to Eisenhower Memorial Park Improvements as part of Parking Structure	\$5,000 ARRC Feds	June 05 2008-09	ARRC ARRC/Parks	PF&M
3-a	Ship Creek Point Trail Connection	Connect Elderberry Park Coastal Trail to Ship Creek Trail	Feds	2006-07	ARRC Port/MOA	PM&E
1-a	E Street Corridor	Pedestrian focus from 9 th to 2 nd Ave link business with tourism for economic development. 2006 design, 2007 construction	\$6.5 million federal	Plan & Design 2005-6	Downtown CC	PM&E OECD Parks
4	Ship Creek Trail	Complete construction of links to Mt. View and Downtown	Feds T-21	2005-2007	MOA	PM&E Transpt.
5-b	Chester Creek Fish Passage Westchester Lagoon	Fish passage and stream improvements Lagoon dredging	Feds F&G \$685,000 future bonds	2006-08	Federal	PM&E
7-b	Chester Creek Skate Park	Develop permanent facility at central location	\$370,000 future bond		Spenard CC	PM&E
7-d	Chester Creek Trail and I Street	Reconstruct stairs at I Street	\$210,000		South Addition	PM&E
	Chester Creek Greenbelt and Trail	General improvements and completion of links			Fairview CC	
	Fish Creek Improvements	Old Seward to Lake Otis for design and construct erosion, fish habitat, flooding and storm drain improvements	\$2 million future bonds		Spenard CC Turnagain CC	PM&E

Appendix A: Anchorage Park Draft Capital Improvement Initiative 2005-2010

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor	Lead Dept.
	Fish Creek Improvements – Phase IVC-water quality	Construct water quality improvements from Hermit Park to Midtown Park	\$1.2 million future bonds		Spenard CC	PM&E
	Fish Creek Trail	Trail connection between Northwood and Spenard			Turnagain CC	PM&E
	Fairview Recreation Center Upgrades	Design for upgrades to increase use and reduce operating costs			Fairview CC	
	Northeast Park District					
14	Davis Park	Park land use agreement Airforce Park upgrades picnic areas, shelter and paved pathways	\$210,000 future bonds	2005 2006-07	Mt. View CC	HLB Parks
15-a	Mt. View Town Center & Park Acquisition	Streetscape, pedestrian and trail access	\$30,000 State Grant Habitat Humanity	2005-07	Mt. View CC	EOCD HLB
15-b	Mt. View Multi-use Greenbelt and Trail	Connection from Tyson Elementary School to Davis Park	\$1,600,000 future bond		Mt. View CC	Parks EOCD
16	Russian Jack Springs Park	Upgrade to golf course to grass greens, irrigation, park amenities and signage	\$ xx existing bond \$735,000 future bond \$535,000 future bond \$475,000 future bond	2005-07	First Tee Northeast CC RJP CC RJP CC	Parks
	RJSP Reka Drive	Develop for neighborhood play area for children in high density neighborhood	\$265,000 future bond		RJP CC	Parks
17	Cheney Lake Park	Park upgrades per master plan – trails and picnic area	\$370,000 future bond	2006-07	Northeast CC	Parks
18	Muldoon Community Center (Kroc)	Grant Award July Design and Construction, recreation center, library, ice arena and indoor soccer	\$30 million Grant KROC Foundation	July 05 2007	MOA, ASD, Salvation Army	EOCD PM&E Parks
19	Muldoon Park Acquisition East Anchorage Neighborhood Park	Minimum 5 acres up to 12 acres along Chester Creek and greenbelt	\$370,000 future bonds	2005	Parks	HLB Parks
20	Totem Sport Field (ASD Partnership)	Develop soccer field(s), parking and reserve access road to future school site	\$ State Grant	2005-06	H. Crawford	Parks ASD

Appendix A: Anchorage Park Draft Capital Improvement Initiative 2005-2010

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor	Lead Dept.
22	University Lake Park	Park Master Plan Park Amenities, parking, landscape		2005-07	APU, Native Hospital, CC	Parks
23	Goose Lake Park	Park upgrades and amenities for Phase II construct picnic area, playfield and playground	\$370,000 future bond	2005-07	University CC	Parks
25	Alaska Botanical Garden	Garden upgrades, fencing, irrigation Transfer land to parks	\$ Fed. Grant	2005-06 2006-07	ABG	ABG HLB
26	Environmental Loop Trail	RJSP to Baxter to Botanic Garden to CC Science Center to Univ. and Goose Lake	\$ Foundation	2005-06		Parks
28-a	Improved Access FBNP	Park access to lighted ski loops and Chugach State Park	\$	2006-07		Parks
	Tikishla Park Access	Acquire single lot or easement to the south to provide neighborhood access to the park	\$160,000 future bond		Airport Hts CC	Parks
	Tikishla Park Improvements	Install trail lighting and connections	\$185,000 future bonds		Airport Hts CC	Parks
	Chester Valley Park	Upgrade park pathways and construct two new trail bridges across creek between Baxter and Paterson	\$500,000 future bond		Northeast CC	Parks
	Nunaka Valley Park	Playfield, parking and paving improvements	\$240,000 future bonds		Northeast CC	Parks
	Eastchester / Sitka Park	Develop site improvement plan and construct picnic shelter, trail connection and facilities	\$380,000 future bond		Rogers Pk CC	Parks
	Conifer Park	Clean and Green	Rasmuson	2005		Parks
	Muldoon Park	Clean and Green, Safe and Secure	Rasmuson	2005		Parks
	McPhee Park	Clean and Green	Rasmuson	2005		Parks
	PM&E PROJECTS					
	Goose Lake Park	Electrical Upgrades		2005		PM&E
13	Centennial Park	Upgrades to camper park – sewer, electric, water, gas hook ups for RV, restrooms, showers, and laundry	\$xxx old bond \$735,000 future bond	2005-06	MOA Northeast CC RJP CC	PM&E
21	Baxter Bog Trail and Interpretive Signs	Improve trail, bridge, Alicia Iden interpretive trail, signage and drainage improvements	\$250,000 State \$285,000 future bonds	2005-06	Northeast CC	PM&E
24	University – Chester Creek Trail Connection	Connect Tudor trail crossing to Chester Creek Trail and Universities	\$2 million state \$2.45 million Federal	2005-07	Airport Hts CC Rogers Pk CC RJP CC University CC	PM&E Transpt.

Appendix A: Anchorage Park Draft Capital Improvement Initiative 2005-2010

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor	Lead Dept.
	Chester Creek Improvements	Boniface Pkwy to Military Reservation, creek improvements, flood and erosion control, water quality	\$1million future bonds		Northeast CC Scenic Foothills CC University CC	PM&E
28-b	Campbell Creek Trail Grade Separation	Grade separated crossing at Lake Otis near Campbell Creek	\$4.3 million federal		Basher CC Campbell Park CC	PM&E
27.	N/S Connector Trail					
	Fish Creek Improvements	Old Sewrd to Lake Otis to design and construct erosion, fish habitat, flooding and storm drain improvements to Fish Creek	\$2 million new bond		Tudor Area	PM&E
	TEA21 Municipal Contributions	Local match for federal funds	\$1,750,000 future bonds		Airport Hts CC Rogers Pk CC	PM&E
	Chester Trail Rehab	Connections at Tikishla and C Street underpass	\$265,000 future bonds		Airport Hts CC	PM&E
	Chester & Fish Creek Trail Improvements	Connection, lighting and C Street underpass	\$700,000 future bonds		Airport Hts CC	PM&E
	N.L. Trail south side	Connection Goose Lake to Boniface			Rogers Park CC	PM&E
	Southwest Park District					
29-b	Kincaid Soccer & Ski Trail Improvements	Phase One: Biathlon relocation and field grading	\$6 million \$500K federal \$730K state	2005-08	Nordic Ski Soccer Clubs	Parks
29-d	Kincaid Park Outdoor Center	Continue upgrades to building and Park	\$290,000 future bond		Sand Lake CC	Parks
30	Connors Lake Park	Park improvements signage, erosion control and trail improvements Land Transfer with Airport		2005-06 2006		Parks
31	Sand Lake Park Acquisition	New Neighborhood Use Park 5-10 acres in development and associated with new elem. School site	\$1,000,000 \$ 370,000 future bond	2006-07	Sand Lake CC	HLB Parks
32	Jewel Lake Park	Park Improvements- benches, trash, signage, life guard area, trail connection, fencing and play field improvements	\$210,000 future bond	2005-06	Sand Lake CC	Parks

Appendix A: Anchorage Park Draft Capital Improvement Initiative 2005-2010

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor	Lead Dept.
33	Dela Vega Park	Park Upgrades – irrigation, signage, trail connection	\$	2006-08		Parks
34	Southport Parks	Park Master Plans for new land	\$50,000	2006		Parks
36	Oceanview Bluff Park	Park upgrades – signage, benches, trash,	\$	2005-06		Parks
	Johns Road Park Acquisition	Acquire parkland at south coastal bluff at the end of Johns Road	\$500,000 state (pending)		Old Seward / Oceanview CC	
	Playground Upgrades	Consumer Product Safety Commission upgrades to meet guidelines	\$250,000 federal		Sand Lake CC	
	Cutty Sark Park	Clean and Green, Safe and Secure	Rasmuson	2005		Parks
	PM&E PROJECTS					
29-a	Kincaid Park & Trail Connection	Trail along entry road connecting Raspberry Road/Campbell Trail with Coastal Trail	\$900,000 future bond Federal	2005-06	Bayshore/Klatt CC Sand Lake CC	PM&E
29-c	Kincaid Road Improvements	Upgrade to entry road, parking, utilities	\$3.5 million state	2006-07	Sand Lake CC	PM&E
35	South Anchorage Sports Park	New American Legion major league stadium with seating and concessions, irrigation, water, sewer, electric, and parking lot paving	\$450,000 state \$160,000 future bond	2005-07	American Legion Bayshore/Klatt CC	PM&E
37	Coastal Trail Route Study (location pending)	Complete trail alignment study	\$			PM&E Transpt.
	Campbell Creek Water Quality Enhancement	Water quality enhancements as part of Campbell Creek Drainage Study	\$2.3 million future bond		Sand Lake CC	PM&E

Appendix A: Anchorage Park Draft Capital Improvement Initiative 2005-2010

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor	Lead Dept.
	Central Park District					
38	Taku Lake Park	Park Upgrades – trash, signage, trail connection, benches	\$	2005-06		Parks
39	Bancroft Park	Park Upgrades – trash, signage, trail connection, benches, picnic area and LL ball field	\$150,000 future bond	2006-07	Campbell Park CC	Parks
40	Campbell Park	Park Upgrades – trash, signage, trail connection, benches picnic, play area and parking upgrades	\$315,000 future bond	2005-06	Campbell Park CC	Parks
41	HLB Park Acquisition Abbott Loop Area Zodiak Area	Natural Resource lands associated with PLI in FNB Neighborhood Park in PLI land	\$470,000	2005-06	Abbott Loop CC	HLB Parks
42-a	FNB	Trail Plan to resolve growing use issues and trail user conflicts, signage, trash plan Continue upgrades	\$75,000 \$290,000 future bonds	2006-07	Mid-Hillside CC	Parks
42-b	Sled Dog & Festival Area	Relocation of ASDRA and development of new track and potential festival area	\$	2006-07		HLB Parks
44	Old Seward Acquisition	Neighborhood Use Park 5 acres between Dimond and O'Malley	\$1,000,000	2005-07		HLB
45	Independence Park Acquisition	Neighborhood Use Park 10 acres along O'Malley	\$1,000,000	2005-06		HLB
46	Ruth Arcand Park	Park upgrades – signage, trails, playground, picnic area and equestrian facilities	\$	2006-08		
	Meadow Park	Clean and Green, Safe and Secure	Rasmuson	2005		Parks
	PM&E PROJECTS					
42-c	Chuck Albrecht Fields	Continue field improvements	\$790,000 future bond		Campbell Park CC	PM&E
43	Abbott Loop Park	Development of Community Park – Shelter, picnic area, playground, sled hill, signage, landscape and parking. Completion of LL Fields	\$500,000 state \$250,000 Wells Fargo \$232,000 past bonds	2005-07		PM&E

Appendix A: Anchorage Park Draft Capital Improvement Initiative 2005-2010

Map #	Park Unit	Description	Cost Funding Source	Time Line	Sponsor	Lead Dept.
	Southeast Park District					
47	Hilltop Ski & Nordic Center	Development of winter recreation area including Nordic Skiing, Skating, and Down Hill Skiing. Parking lot improvements, trail connections	\$155,000 trail future bonds	2005-07	Mid Hillside CC	Parks OECD
48	Rabbit Creek Greenbelt	Trail improvements Land acquisition				Parks HLB
49	Section 36 Planning	Master Plan	\$125,000	2005-06		Parks HLB
50	Stork Park	Park Upgrades – benches, signage, trash plan		2005-06		Parks
51	Chugach State Park Access	Trail access and signage, FNBP connection, Trail Head upper Huffman		2006-07	Mid Hillside	State Parks
52	Potter Marsh (State)	Trailhead			Rabbit Creek CC	State Parks
	Greenbelt and Open Space Acquisition	Acquire parcels to preserve areas as greenbelts or open space. Acquisition may occur in the following areas – Fish Creek, Little Campbell Creek, Little Rabbit Creek, Rabbit Creek	\$210,000 future bonds		Hillside East CC Rabbit Creek CC Mid Hillside CC	Parks HLB
	Forsythe Park	Clean and Green, covered picnic area		2005-06	Friends of Forsythe, Mid Hillside CC	Parks
	O'Malley Trail	North side connection to O'Malley Elem. School,			Mid Hillside	
	Abbott Trail	Abbott Road, Hillside to Rabbit Creek Road			Mid Hillside CC	