



# *Midtown* DISTRICT PLAN

**Public Hearing Draft 2/14/25**

***PZC Case No. 2025-0023***

***PZC Public Hearing date 5/5/25***



### ***Midtown Area Alaska Native Peoples History***

Anchorage is part of the *Dena'ina* traditional land, *Dena'ina Elnena*, of the indigenous Alaska Native Athabaskan people, *Dena'ina*. Alaska Native people have continuously occupied the area for thousands of years and are still here today. The Eklutna and Knik tribes of *Dena'ina Elnena* established seasonal camps along *Ch'atanaltsegh Liq'aka Betnu* (Fish Creek) 1,500 years before the 1900s settlement (*Spenard Road Statement of Significance, DOT&PF*).

Fish, wildlife, and berries were gathered throughout the district area. A *Dena'ina* settlement, *Chanshtnu*, was located west of what was surveyed and called South Addition near the mouth of Chester Creek, *Dgheyay Kaq'* (*Shem Pete 2003, 334*).

*Shem Pete's Alaska* states, "Before the 1950s, the area was Black spruce forest and marshlands with a single lake, "O'Connell." O'Connell Lake was located approximately between what is now C Street and Cordova Street, just south of Northern Lights Boulevard. O'Connell Lake was not identified with a *Dena'ina* place name; however, according to the Friends of Fish Creek ([Friends of Fish Creek | Spenard, Alaska \(daylightfishcreek.org\)](https://www.friendsoffishcreek.org/)), O'Connell Lake may also be called Blueberry Lake, and part of the Fish Creek headwaters.

***It is with gratefulness and respect the Planning Team wishes to acknowledge the traditional homeland of Dena'ina Athabaskans and the contributions Alaska Native Peoples make to our community and society today.***

**Map #1 – Midtown District Area within the Anchorage Bowl**



# **ACDA LETTER**

# **ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

### ***Mayor Suzanne LaFrance***

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### ***Community Council Acknowledgement – Midtown, North Star, and Spenard***

The Planning Team wishes to acknowledge all who participated in the planning process, including the community council Steering Team members, without whose volunteerism and support this plan would not be possible. you!

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# I. Executive Summary

## Midtown District Assets

The central location of the Midtown District (District), within the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), provides the highest concentration of jobs, shopping, hotels, and restaurants. The District is the headquarters for Alaska's banks, Native Corporations, oil and gas providers, property management and development companies, specialized health care services, retail offerings, and social service providers. This central location gives access to transit, trails, local commuter routes, and the state highway system. Eleven thousand nine hundred twenty-five people (4% of the MOA's population) live in the District. Midtown is an "essential destination" providing a convenient place to work, shop, eat, do business, and live.<sup>i</sup>

## Planning Area Issues

Issues identified by the public and the community councils included public safety, housing needs, MOA development code requirements, and access for all roadway users, including vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists, planning for and developing natural and park resources including Cuddy Family Park in the Midtown area, Valley of the Moon Park adjacent to the North Star area, and Fish Creek in the Spenard area. Several MOA departments, State of Alaska divisions, and the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) are directly responsible for resolving many of the issues addressed with this plan. These government agencies will implement the *MTDP* by working with community councils and the public to fund and complete the action items.

The MOA remains in the throes of recovery from both the Great Recession, the 2018 Earthquake, and the Covid-19 Pandemic. The MOA's population continues to decline (1.2% per year from 2014 to present) despite thousands of job openings, and ever-present Federal funding (ARPA, INFRA, EPA, HUD, and DOD).<sup>ii</sup> The MOA is in a housing crisis with housing-starts significantly below the good years (2000-2010).<sup>iii</sup> New low- and attainable-priced housing is in dire need to accommodate skilled workers, professionals, young families, aging population, and the growing number of homeless neighbors. This plan is intended to provide policies and actions to help meet some of the MOA's housing needs.

The Mayor's 10,000 housing units in 10 years initiative will result in new housing.<sup>iv</sup> This plan will guide us to how and where that housing can be built. The plan also identifies issues in the development code that should be addressed beyond what the 10,000 in 10 Initiative will do.

## Planning Process and Planning Area

The Midtown District planning process is part of a 3-Step process initiated by the Anchorage Community Development Authority (ACDA). Step 1 included a Business Improvement District Study. Step 2 is the completion and adoption of this plan. Step 3 will initiate a future working group process to discuss and develop potential recommendations for development code revisions.

ACDA and three community councils comprising the District planning area (Midtown, North Star, Spenard) (**See Map 1**) directed the formation of the Midtown District Plan (*MTDP*). The consultant planning team and MOA planners provided guidance and recommendations toward their efforts.

Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC) Title 21 (*AMC 21.03.130 Neighborhood or District Plans*) require district plans to include several elements as listed below. Plans may also include a housing target and recommendations to meet the target.

## Plan Timeline

This district plan will guide development for the next 20-25 years. Adoption of this plan may also amend certain sections of the *2040 Land Use Plan Map*. The MOA will need to present those amendments in a subsequent Planning and Zoning Commission and Assembly action.



## Plan Elements

This plan includes the following elements consistent with code requirements for a neighborhood or district plan.

- Issue Discussion.
- Public Engagement Process.
- Land Use Plan Map – Includes revisions to 2040 LUP land use boundary and designations.
  - Proposed development guidelines and implementing zoning districts.
- Community Council specific goals, objectives, and action items.
- Demographic Analysis.
- Housing Analysis and Housing Target.
- Proposed Roadway Improvements.
- Park and Creek Planning Projects.

## Economic and Housing Analysis

Housing needs data gathered by Agnew::Beck through several recent planning efforts (Downtown Anchorage, Girdwood, and Midtown) indicates Anchorage needs an estimated 9,600 housing units in the next 10 years to meet lagging current demand and estimated 5-10-year growth. The *MTDP* includes a **housing target** with other recommendations included in **Chapter II**.

**HOUSING TARGET: Five hundred fifty (550) new housing units are recommended for this plan.**

## Guiding Vision and Themes

*Midtown is the vibrant center of our city's economic landscape, where business, innovation, and community converge. It's a dynamic district where enterprises thrive, residents engage, and visitors experience the unique blend of commerce that defines our community.*

*The future-focused approach of this plan will foster sustainability, inclusivity, and engagement, guiding Midtown as a thriving, diverse district that welcomes all.*

*We will build on Midtown's current dynamic urban environment that includes green spaces, innovative design, and a multitude of amenities ensuring every resident enjoys a high quality of life in a beautiful, connected, and welcoming district.*



## Guiding Themes

- **Economy**
- **Sense of Place**
- **Community Resilience**
- **Safety and Crime**

## **Goals, Objectives, Action Items**

Goals, Objectives, and Action Items related to the guiding vision and themes run the gamut between support for new and renovated housing, sustaining commercial businesses, development code alignment to the proposed amendment of the *2040 Land Use Plan*, multi-modal street policy and improvements (pedestrian, bicycle, motorized vehicles), and actionable community resilience and safety measures.

## **MTDP Steering Team**

A *MTDP* Steering Team was formed from the three councils to provide plan visions, goals, objectives, and action items. These elements were developed with community council and public input. Steering team members agreed on most elements of this plan finding common ground on the need for housing, safer streets, and the activation of Cuddy Park. Differing opinions led to language compromises to bring consensus and support between the steering team members. Future roadway function and improvements received the most discussion and differing opinions. Goals, objectives, and actions related to roadways reflect specific community council aspirations for improvement and future uses.

## **Steering Team Priority Early Actions - 1–3-year funding and implementation**

The three community councils provided several early action recommendations for funding and completion within the next three to five years. It is anticipated that the community councils will work with MOA departments and DOT&PF to determine funding opportunities and timing for implementation of the following Early Action items. **Chapter X** provides the table of all recommended actions, implementers, and timelines.

### **Midtown Community Council:**

- *MT-4: Create a Cuddy Park master plan to encourage greater public use through festivals, markets, recreation, and general use.*
- *MT-10: Create more stringent “use-specific standards” within the Midtown Core Area for the following uses: Correctional Community Residential Center, Habilitative Care Facility (Small, Medium, Large), Transitional Living Facility, Homeless and Transient Shelter and Social Service Facility.*
- *MT-11: Create more stringent parameters and greater enforcement fines within the Midtown Core Area for Alcohol-Special Land Use Permits and Marijuana-Special Land Use Permits.*
- *MT-16: Eliminate all illegal camping, including illegal street camping, within Midtown.*
- *MT-15: Strengthen crime prevention tools and activities within the Midtown area to help alleviate panhandling, loitering, vandalism, property crime, and illegal street parking.*

### **North Star Community Council:**

- *NS-1: Leverage re-striping and quick-build infrastructure changes to make small improvements such as narrowed lanes, bump outs, planter boxes, and additional crosswalks to balance road usage and prevent vehicles from blocking existing pedestrian infrastructure.*
- *NS-2: Use temporary pilot solutions such as curbs and planters along roadways in areas identified as problems by community members to increase safety and collect community feedback for future permanent projects.*
- *NS-4: Encourage city and DOT to triage minimum usability ASAP for snow removal, such as prioritizing one side of the sidewalk over complete coverage.*

- **NS-7:** Fund community efforts to install murals and placemaking signage such as the repainting of the Spenard and Hillcrest mural.
- **NS-10:** Work with the Muni on installation of additional bus shelters and benches, and additional infrastructure in Valley of the Moon park to incentivize year-round use.

### **Spenard Community Council:**

- **SP-6:** Put all parcels in the Spenard Corridor on the Municipal water system
- **SP14:** Update all intersections to allow for non-motorized crossing at all points (see details in Chapter VI).
- **SP19:** Seek funding to complete an engineering and development plan to daylight Fish Creek.
- **SP-18:** Redesignate functional classifications where classifications are inappropriate to how the roadways are currently functioning and being used.

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<sup>i</sup> MTDP Public Meeting #1 Public Comments

<sup>ii</sup> Federal funding approved for Anchorage includes 2018 Earthquake – CDBGDR \$38M+. Infra \$8M+ for TSAIA and Don Young Port of Alaska.

<sup>iii</sup> List housing starts from permit data (2000-present over 1,000 to less than 200 respectively, with 2014-2015 having the highest numbers.

<sup>iv</sup> Mayor's 10,000 homes in 10 years initiative, December 18, 2024.

## II. Introduction

### Planning Boundary

Three community council areas are incorporated into the planning boundary. This includes all of Midtown, most of North Star, and the portion of Spenard not included in the *West Anchorage District Plan* but covered by the *Spenard Corridor Plan*. Major district streets and Chester Creek were used to define this boundary. These streets include Seward Highway to the east, Spenard Road and Walter Hickel Parkway to the west, Tudor Road and International Airport Road to the south, and Chester Creek to the north. **Map # 2: Midtown District Planning Area**—depicts the boundary of district planning area.

### Community Council Boundaries

**Map #1** depicts the separate community council areas included in the District plan. Area-specific maps are provided within the specific community council chapters (**Chapters IV, V, VI**). The three community councils provided a vision, objectives, goals, and action items specific to their council areas for this plan. Please see Chapters IV, V, and VI for the community council area specific visions, objectives, goals, and actions as noted in the Executive Summary.

### Midtown District Plan Purpose

The purpose of the Midtown District Plan (*MTDP*) is to adopt planning area-specific vision, goals, and action items to address the issues and recommendations received from the community councils and the public during the planning process.

The plan is required to meet code requirements by providing certain policies and recommendations. This may include land use recommendations through a new land use plan map and narrative. The plan may also offer a housing target with recommendations within its action items for meeting those housing targets. The plan will be recommended for adoption by the Anchorage Planning & Zoning Commission and then ultimately adopted by the Anchorage Assembly. As noted in the Executive Summary, the Anchorage Assembly supported completing the plan and planning process by awarding American Recovery Act funding to the Planning Department in 2022.

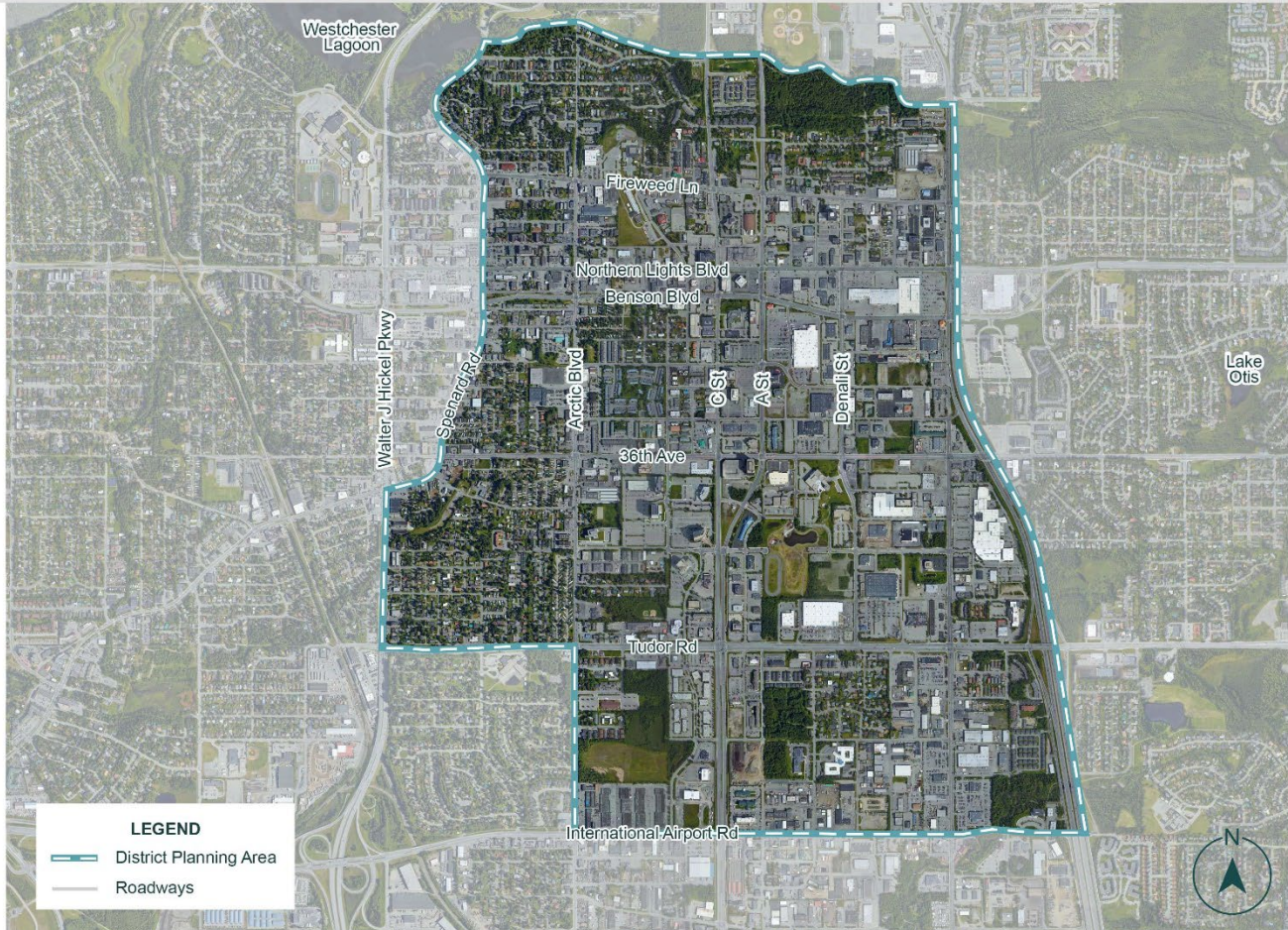
### Midtown District Issues

Issues identified during the planning process by the public and the community councils included the following:

- Public safety – specifically illegal public camping, property damage, theft.
- Lack of all types of housing.
- MOA development codes requirements that limit the use of property and the ability to provide higher-density housing on certain zoned lots.
- MOA development code related to the reconstruction and reuse of existing buildings.
- Accessibility and safety for all roadway users, including vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- Cuddy Park, planning, development and use.
- Planning for Fish Creek.
- Sustaining commercial development and keeping businesses operational.
- Grants and MOA Capital Improvement Program funding.



# Midtown District Planning Area



**Map #2 – Midtown District Planning Area**

## District Plan Results

The purpose and issues identified during the planning process implement the visions, goals, and actions to achieve the following:

- Provide **Long-term focus** by providing goals and action items achievable now and into the future with early action items will give quick wins.
- Be **Forward-looking**, anticipating trends, opportunities, and challenges to chart a path for future success.
- Be **Inspiring**, as it conveys a desirable future that motivates councils and agencies to work towards realizing the plan's visions, objectives, goals, and actions items.
- As a **Guide** for future department or agency planning projects, while also supporting land use and zoning decisions through the community's long-term objectives and values.
- Be **Inclusive** providing a path for continued collaborative efforts to help build consensus and commitment throughout the district between the neighboring community councils, government agencies, and the public.

## Planning Process

The planning process comprised steering team meetings, existing conditions reporting, public meetings, online surveys, in-person interviews, community council briefings, a project webpage, and social media outreach. The process followed the steps depicted in Illustration #1 adopted into the municipal code (**Figure #1 (on the right)** from AMC 21.03.170.C).

## Steering Team

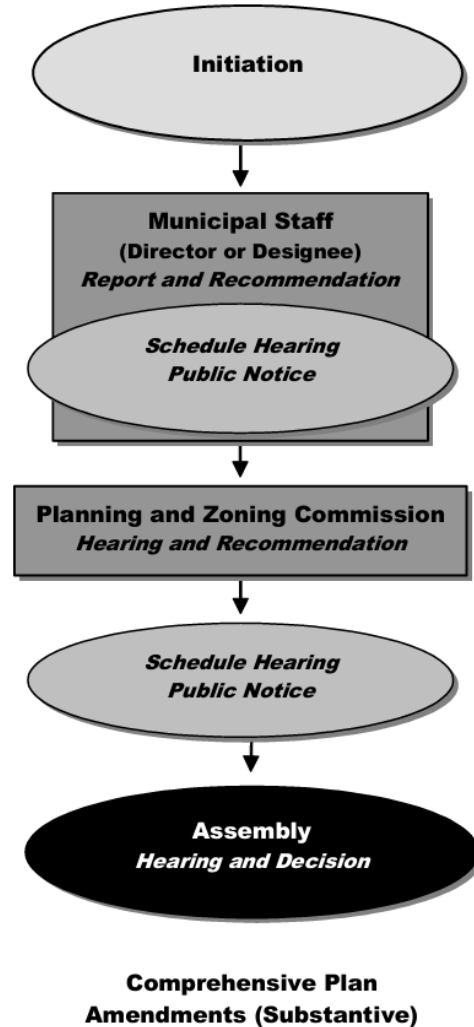
In March 2024, ACDA launched an exciting and pivotal planning process with the inaugural meeting of the *MTDP* steering team. At this initial meeting, the consultant team presented essential background information, offering an overview of the planning process, timeline, and key milestones. This marked the beginning of a dynamic and collaborative process. Through the steering team, who faithfully met every month to provide invaluable input, shaping key elements of the plan, including the vision, goals, action items, and a land use plan map. The monthly meetings played a crucial role in refining the direction to ensure they reflect the collective expertise and forward-thinking approach of all involved.

The steering team received an outline of the planning process, timeline, and milestones at the March meeting. They hit the ground running with immediate input on issues, ideas for fixes, and how their councils could support the process. This timely and active process garnered substantial support from the steering team as they relayed plan content, visions, objectives, action items directed toward institutional changes that could bring new development, road updates, management and enjoyment of park and natural resources, and the importance of the Midtown District to the economy.

## Meeting Neighborhood and District Plan Requirements

Anchorage's Title 21 code allows for the most recently adopted plan to govern should there be conflicts with past plans. Municipal code states in AMC 21.01.080.D.5 that the most recently adopted plan shall govern where comprehensive plan elements conflict. The *MTDP's* goals, objectives, policies, action items, and land use plan map will be the guiding criteria for land use decisions, including zoning district amendments and proposals for infrastructure improvements in the Midtown District upon adoption. *All amendments to Anchorage 2040, as noted in the following, will be completed by the Planning Department after this plan is adopted.*

The Midtown District Plan planning process met Title 21 requirements (21.03.130 Neighborhood or District Plans) for neighborhood or district planning. The Plan provides for and addresses the following issues not addressed in *Anchorage 2020* or the *Anchorage 2040 LUP*:



**Figure #1: AMC 21.03.170.C**

- Represents a broad public interest.
- Complies with “standards” in section (21.01.080) through:
- Provides up-to-date demographic and housing projections from those previously used; **See Agnew::Beck Housing Analysis and excerpts included in this plan.**
- Identifies new issues, needs, and opportunities that were not previously adequately addressed; **See Existing Conditions Report** and various data provided in the plan.
- Addresses issues included the number and types of housing needed, crime and safety issues, decline in commercial building occupancy, limited infrastructure provision for alternative travel including pedestrian and bicyclists, and lack of homeless services.
- Provides for changes in the current policies or standards governing the physical development of the Midtown District area. **See community council specific visions, goals, objectives, and action items.**
- Maintains consistency with *Anchorage 2020 Plan* and the *2040 LUP* with its vision, goals, action items, and land use plan map maintains. **See vision, objectives, goals, and action items, recommendations for new housing, proposed land use plan map, proposed Title 21 code amendments.**
- Will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the community. **Overall, the plan and its recommendations provides for the improvement of the Midtown District Area and the Anchorage community.**
- Amends the *2040 LUP* to provide equally or more supportive direction to land use development in the Midtown District area by expanding certain land use designations and allowing access to alternative Title 21 regulations. **See vision, goals, and action items, recommendations for new housing, proposed land use plan map, proposed Title 21 code changes.**
- Amends the *2040 LUP* for the Midtown District area to meet or exceed the *2040 LUP* land use descriptions and locational criteria as more physically suitable to the desired development patterns and proposed housing target. **See vision, goals, and action items, recommendations for new housing, proposed land use plan map, proposed Title 21 code changes.**

**The planning team received many comments referring to Midtown as an “essential destination.” This district plan lays out a bright future for businesses, suggests incentives and public agency support for new and renovated housing, looks to make streets pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, provides a forum for discussing Title 21 code changes, and wishes to create a safer place for its residents and visitors to live, work, and enjoy.**

**Public Engagement**

Public Engagement is part of a robust public process to seek input and support of the planning process. The team engaged in a year’s-long effort to garner public input and support, while advising the public, community councils, businesses, and interested parties throughout the process. Public engagement elements employed during the completion of the MTDP include the following:

- Project website at *ACDA.net*.
- Public meetings, social media, one-on-one interviews, and community council attendance and presentations. ACDA hosted the project webpage at *ACDA.net*. All relevant documents, links to surveys and survey results, along with meeting announcements and steering team documents, are also posted at *ACDA.net*.



- Two online public surveys were conducted (one by the consultant team and one by ACDA). Hundreds of people responded to both surveys. Respondents provided valuable insight into the community's desires for the district's future.
- ACDA staff also attended the Midtown, Spenard, and North Start monthly community council meetings to share the progress of the planning process and milestones.
- Pop-ups in the Loussac Library.

**Public Meeting #1- May 14, 2024, Natural Pantry**



**Public Meeting #2 September 17, 2024, BP Energy Center**





## Public Meetings

Three public meetings were also held during the planning process (May 2024, September 2024, and March 2025). Close to 50 people attended each meeting. Question and Answer sessions were held at all meetings allowing those attending online to fully participate.

**Hold for photos of public meeting #3 – March 3, 2025, BP Energy Center:**

## Join us for the Midtown District Plan Public Meeting #3!

- March 3, 2025
- 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM
- BP Energy Center  
1014 Energy Ct. Anchorage, AK 99508  
*Project Presentation will begin at 6:15 PM*



**Public Meeting will also be available via Zoom.**

Visit the Project Website for more information,  
or visit <https://www.acda.net/acda-midtown-district-plan>

Contact: Melinda Gant [mgant@acda.net](mailto:mgant@acda.net)

## Using the Plan

The MTDP visions, goals, and action items will be used as the supporting criteria for:

- Prioritizing crime prevention.
- Changing Use-Specific Standards and Special Land Use Permits.
- Approving zoning amendments.
- Supporting tax incentives.
- Approval and funding of building projects and renovation improvements.
- Prioritizing and funding capital improvements.
- Applying for grant applications.
- Prioritizing and funding transportation network improvements.
- Fish Creek planning.
- Prioritizing Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield program reviews and grant funding.
- Grant applications.
- Prioritizing All-Hazards mitigation projects or emergency/hazardous event recovery.
- The Planning Department will refer to the plan to recommend amendments to the Title 21 Land Use Code.
- The Development Services Department will refer to the plan to recommend amendments to the Title 23 Development Code.

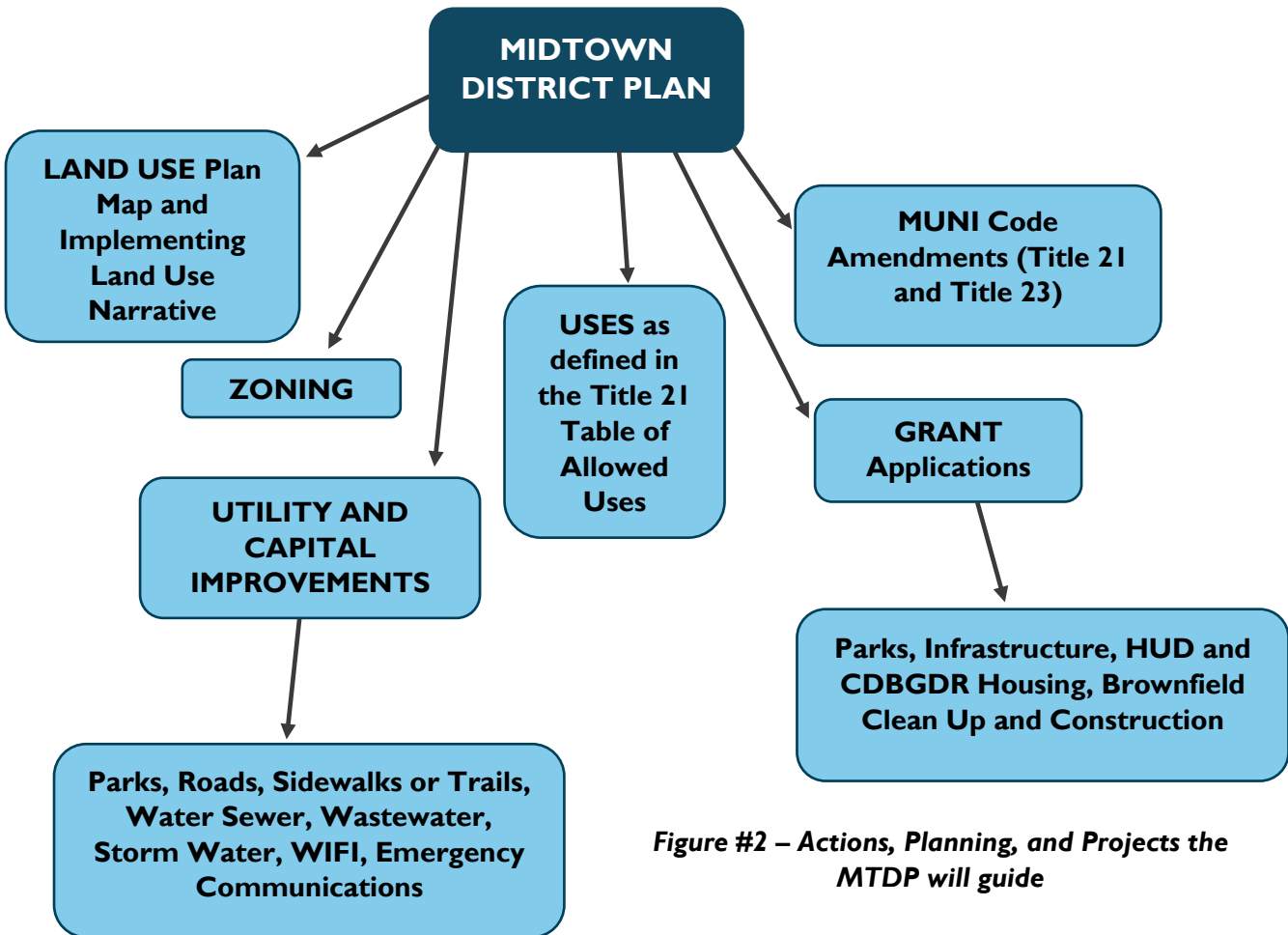


Figure #2 – Actions, Planning, and Projects the MTDP will guide

## Existing Conditions Report

The *MTDP* Existing Conditions Report (final draft) describes the resources and the different types of residential and business areas that make up Midtown and establishes a foundation and baseline for recommendations included in the Midtown District Plan. These areas include the Midtown commercial core area and residential neighborhoods to the west (from the commercial core westerly to Spenard Road (Spenard area) and northerly to the Chester Creek Greenbelt (North Star area).

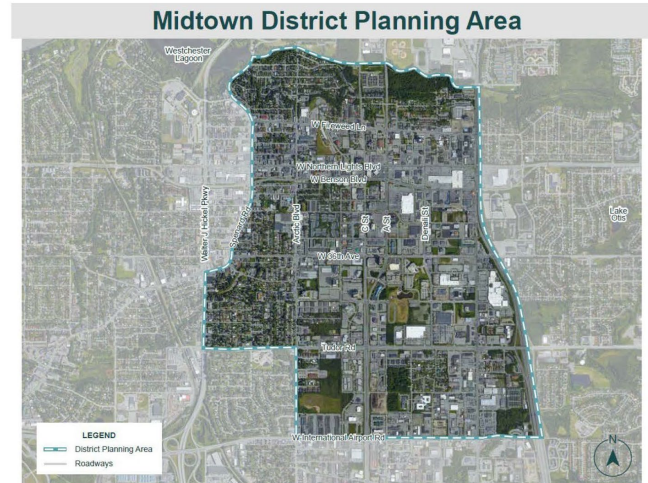
The report also gives an overview of the area's prehistory, settlement history, subsequent development, current uses, and current issues experienced by residents, visitors, businesses, and landowners. The report provides a point-in-time snapshot of what is occurring in the Midtown District planning area. The report includes an overview of the Title 21 and Title 23 codes, land use mapping, housing and economic development incentives, transportation systems including roadways and trails, safety, and crime.

The report also provides recommendations for actions as "Planning Team Notes." The Notes encourage the reader to identify existing characteristics of Midtown, opportunities for change within issues such as economic development, quality of life, travel choices, amendments to Title 21 and Title 23, and land use mapping. The report is available at [ACDA.net](http://ACDA.net) and is structured as follows:

Alaska Native People's prehistory, settlement, including homesteading, and the subdivisions that followed, the Oil Boom, and the Alaska Native Settlement Claims Act (ANSCA) all contribute to the Midtown area's story. Census demographic information informs the reader about who lives in the region, including their income versus the cost of living. Property ownership data from the previous Midtown Business Improvement District Study informs us about commercial offerings and the current state of business operations. Municipal Geographic Information Systems data includes zoning, buildings, and uses.

State and local government agencies also own property and facilities, provide services, and are expected to maintain the parks, trails, sidewalks, and roads to a standard that makes Midtown livable and contributes to the quality of life. These agencies are expected to keep their properties and facilities safe; therefore, data is included on how the agencies perform, and private service providers, including utility companies, are discussed, as well as their contributions.

Lastly, this report discusses the many adopted plans and programs directly linked to Midtown and how these plans and programs may factor into the *MTDP* planning process. With the adoption of the *MTDP*, these existing plans and programs may need to be updated and changed to reflect the desires of the Midtown District Plan participants and what they see as the future of the Midtown area. This planning process allows the community to shape a bright future for the Midtown area.



## Midtown DISTRICT PLAN

### Existing Conditions Report – 11/2024 (final draft)





# Midtown District Plan Economic + Housing Analysis

## Economic and Housing Analysis

Agnew::Beck completed the Economic and Housing Analysis at the initiation of the *MTDP* planning process. The complete report is included as an attachment to this plan. The following provides a brief overview of the report, a recommended

housing target for this plan, and recommendations on how to bring new housing to the District (*See the full report as an attachment and online at ACDA.net*)

### Jobs Drive Housing Needs

Anchorage faces a housing deficit like no other time in our history according to numerous recent news articles and ongoing statistical analysis by several Anchorage area groups (Alaska Association of Realtors, State of Alaska Commerce Department, and at UAA). State and local agencies track housing and jobs data every quarter. In the *2024 Q1 Real-Time Jobs Intelligence Report*, this Anchorage Economic Development Corporation report showed a snapshot of employment sites with over **56,000 job postings**. The primary reason these positions go unfilled is the lack of all types of housing (*See the 2025 Economic Forecast published by Anchorage Economic Development Authority at AEDCweb.com*).

The *MTDP* identifies and targets how much housing is required in the district area in 5-10 years. The *MTDP* also explains what housing types may be financially feasible and what percentage is needed based on the prevailing income levels of our neighbors living or desiring to live in the Midtown District. The housing target will fill housing needs based on the medium-growth estimate proposed for this plan. Historical growth rates for census tracts 14.01, 14.02, 19, and 20 (AAGR 0.6%) are the foundation for the medium growth rate per this analysis.

### MTDP Housing Analysis and Housing Growth Estimate

Three modest population growth scenarios were developed for the *MTDP* planning process by Agnew::Beck. The medium-growth estimate found that residents will need **393 new housing units** due to population change and **143 new housing units** due to overcrowding totaling, **536**. A proposed housing target of **550** sets a high bar for Midtown housing development in the next 5-10 years. The housing needs study also showed that **1344 existing housing units** need rehabilitation due to age and other factors.

According to local housing market experts who answered a housing survey completed for this study, the analysis found that townhouses and condos (75% more feasible) were the most financially feasible to develop. Mixed-use or Live-Work Units are also economically feasible (63%). At the same time, **Missing Middle Housing**, including duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and multiplexes, were also recommended as financially feasible (63%).



### Assembly Code Amendments

The Anchorage Assembly recently adopted (A.O. 2024-83S) new approval standards for the Planned Unit Development (PUD) subdivision. With relaxed development standards and a shortened entitlement process, building a PUD on lots sized one acre or larger is now possible. This new PUD ordinance opens the door for more **missing middle housing** in Midtown and could help fill the gap between the median and attainable housing needs.

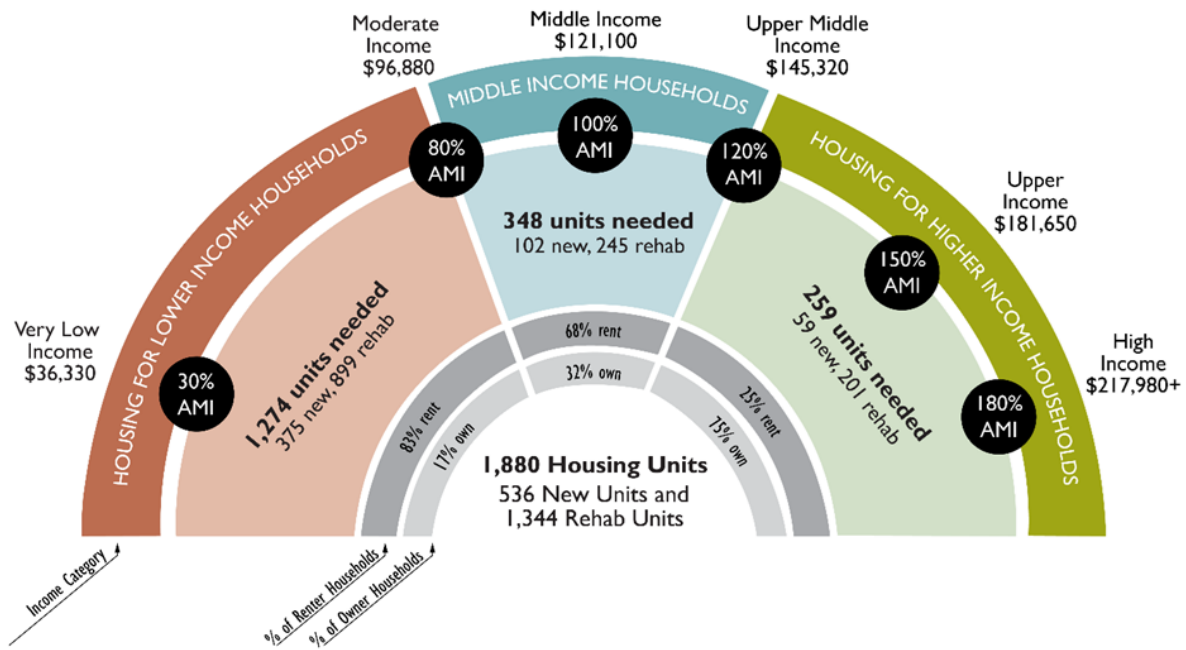
### What is Cost Burdened

Our cost-burdened neighbors (85% of Midtown residents survive on an annual income under \$50K) would benefit the most from the decisions and support our elected officials provide. These two tables share the housing needs and types (renter/owners) by income group specifically estimated for the Midtown District area.

Item	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income
Annual Household Income [1]	Less than \$96K	Between \$96K and \$145K	Greater than \$145K
Housing Need: New Units [2]	240	66	29
Affordable Monthly Housing Costs [3]	\$2,400 or less	\$2,400-\$3,600	More than \$3,600
Ownership/Rental	63/312 units or 17%/83%	33/69 units or 32%/68%	44/33 or 75%/25%

[1] Based on HUD FY2024 Income Limits for the Municipality of Anchorage (\$121,000 Median Family Income)  
 [2] Only showing housing need for year-round residents.  
 [3] Assuming households spend is 30% or less of their gross income.

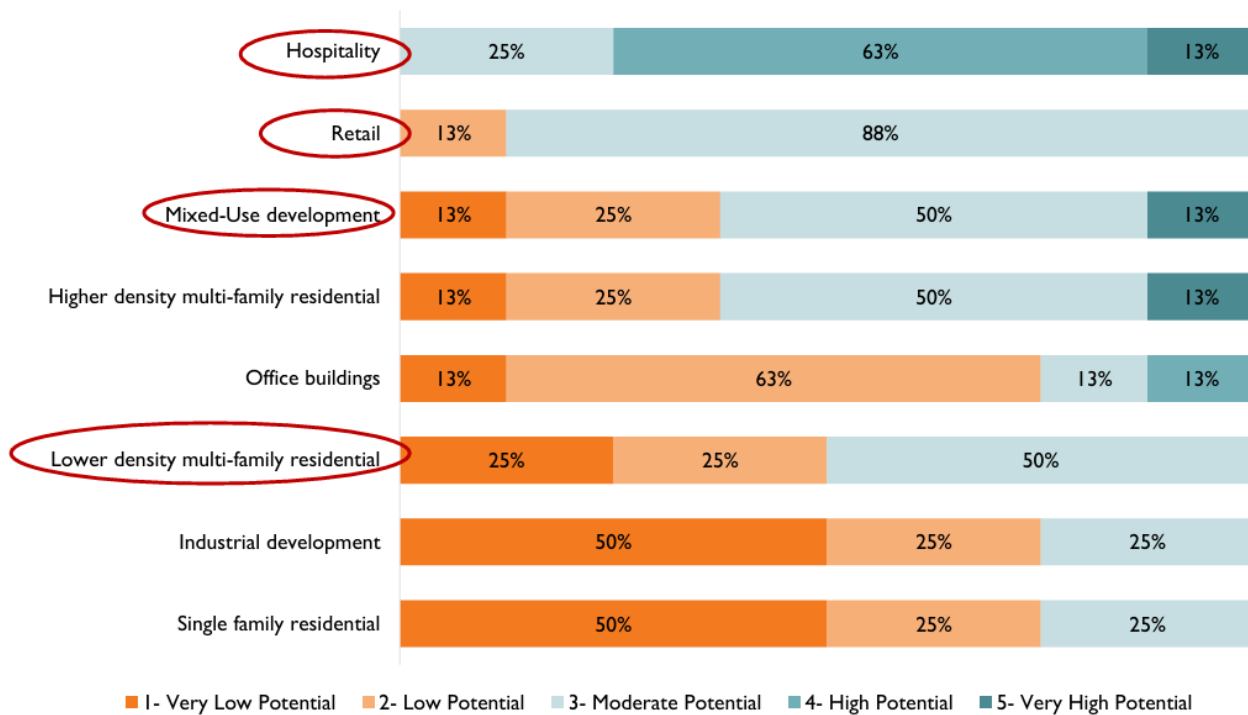
**Figure #3 – Housing Need by Income Group and Tenure (New Units)**



**Figure #4 – Housing Need by Income Type – Mid Scenario**

# Midtown Development Potential (Next 10-Years)

Questionnaire Answers from Local Market Experts



**Figure #5 – Midtown Development Potential By Development Type**

## Midtown Development Potential

More median and attainable housing will help grow Midtown's population. New medium- to high-density residential housing built on large vacant lots in Midtown can provide the growth opportunities this community needs. When Agnew::Beck reached out to commercial developers, building owners, and managers for this plan, there was a consensus that more housing would benefit businesses in Midtown while supplying the workforce businesses need to grow and thrive.

## Key Takeaways

Key Takeaways from the Agnew::Beck housing study:

- The Midtown population grew after a slump in 2019.
- Housing for lower and mid-income households is in high demand.
- There is less demand for office space. However, local retail and hospitality offerings continue to be in high demand.
- Development for medium-density housing projects has the most potential. 5.) Residential projects are especially challenged from a financial feasibility perspective.



✓ **HOUSING TARGET** - This plan aims to build **550** new housing units in the next 5-10 years.

## Housing Analysis Recommendations

Some of the following actions are discussed in the Agnew::Beck analysis for Midtown. The steering team is especially supportive of any new housing in the District supporting the following goal and action items to address the need for all types of housing. Current limitations, whatever they may be, imposed on the development community, must be resolved for this plan to be implemented. New incentives, programs, and funding is needed to help developers bridge the financial feasibility gap.

### MTDP Housing Goal and HP-1 Action Item

**Goal:** Increase all types of housing whenever possible.

- **Action:** HP-1: Apply the following tool to new and rehabilitation housing projects:
  - Use up all the infill lots.
  - Use larger tracts of land in single ownership.
  - Renovate and add existing residential and commercial buildings.
  - Target strategies to add housing for all income levels.
  - Adopt new property tax incentives.
  - Provide publicly-funded infrastructure.
  - State and local governments or agencies will provide land for free or at reduced cost for low- and median-income housing.
  - Create development agreements with developers to streamline and expedite housing development.
  - Seek EPA Brownfield clean-up grant funding through the MOA Planning Department to assist in clean-ups on properties prime for housing.
  - Seek Federal grant funding grants or low-interest loans including Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Department of Defense (DOD), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to fund new housing.
  - Seek Federal historic preservation tax credits through the State of Alaska from the National Park Service to assist in historic building renovation and reuse to provide new options for funding new housing.
  - Consider Planned Unit Developments on lots 1 acre or more to allow for small-lot developments and smaller entry-level homes.
  - Seek CPACER and other clean energy and economic development funding to 100% upfront reduce costs for new housing (*See Alaska C-PACE – Alaska's Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Administrative Platform*).
  - Waive all MOA fees including dump fees, entitlement fees, and utility fees within certain parameters, on public properties and private properties when a substantial amount of housing will be built.
  - Utility providers should be approached early in a project to determine fee waivers, construction timing, and utility capacity, necessary upgrades, and location to ensure no unknown financial impacts will occur.

- Redevelop existing mobile home parks transitioning them into a resident ownership model.
- Inform potential willing sellers of their relocation rights and benefits in redevelopment projects using either public or private funding (See *Alaska Right of Way Manual*).
- Preapprove in-state modular constructed small house options that build to IBC and HUD standards.



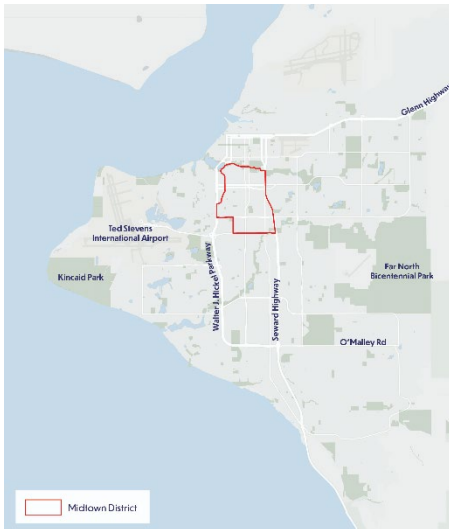
**Photo Credits: Archdaily.com,  
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### III. Planning Context

#### District Plan Defined



**Map #3 – Midtown District**

The *MTDP* addresses issues, values, and actions in the second largest district-planned area within the Anchorage Bowl. Second only to the West Anchorage District planning area (**Map #3 – Midtown District**).

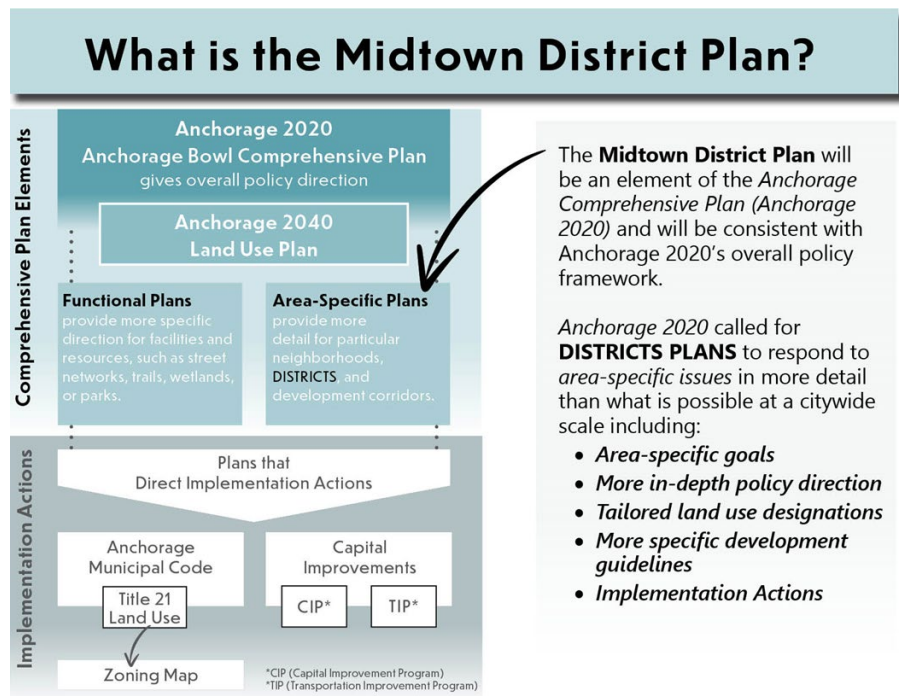
This is good news for our city and those from other areas that are looking to invest. The *MTDP* is supportive of new investments and indicates to others that Anchorage is “open for business.”

The *MTDP* will fit into a long list of plans and studies adopted by the Anchorage Assembly. This plan will guide growth and development for the next 15-20 years. This plan will amend the *2040 LUP* with its area-specific land use plan map and associated land use plan map designations (see *Chapter VII*). All new plans provide the most up-to-date demographic and economic information to ensure a plan is relevant to existing conditions.

Our community has grown and contracted at various times with booms and declines. Therefore, a plan that reflects current issues and opportunities will lead and promote changes that respond to current times (see *Modernizing Family sidebar*). With respect to housing demand, this plan relies solely on the Agnew::Beck *Economic and Housing Analysis* for housing recommendations.

The *MTDP*, and studies like the *Spenard Corridor Study*, should be funded and implemented in a timely manner by the responsible agencies and government departments. Successes in plan implementation contribute to the economy, safety, and quality of life for all.

As with any plan or study adopted by the MOA, designated funding should be sought to implement the goals, objectives, and actions in this plan to position the District to provide projected new and renovated housing, support for new and existing commercial, give support to an area with convenient and safe access by vehicle and pedestrian, and that conserves and cares about the natural assets unique to the three community council areas in the District.



## Foundational Documents

The planning process looked to existing plans, studies, and code for consistency and in some cases to incorporate certain portions. The *Spenard Corridor Plan* is included to address the Spenard Community Council area within the District in *Chapter VI – Spenard Corridor Planning Area*. The Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation System (AMATS) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes several funded projects and studies within the District. Those are listed in *Chapter VIII – District Roadway System*. The Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Planning and Environmental Linkages studies (PEL studies) will influence long-term growth and traffic impacts in the District. References to the PELs are also included in *Chapter VIII*. All plans and studies listed below are available from the MOA Planning Department except for the *Midtown Business Improvement District Study*, which is available at [ACDA.net](http://ACDA.net).

- *Anchorage 2020 and Anchorage.*
- *AMC Title 21 and Title 23.*
- *West Anchorage District Plan.*
- *Spenard Corridor Plan.*
- *AMATS Official Streets & Highways Plan.*
- *Chugach Way Reconnaissance Study.*
- *AMATS (TIP) and DOT&PF (PEL studies).*
- *Midtown Business Improvement District Study.*

## Midtown Development In Context

Historical aerial photos, local newspaper stories, and websites depict Midtown's progress in development. In the *History of Anchorage's Chains, Franchises, and National Retailers*,<sup>i</sup> local historian David Reamer shares interesting facts about the coming and going of various retailers. The aerial photo from Reamer's story helps depict the construction of major streets (Northern Lights and Seward Highway, both 2-way streets at the time) and residential housing built near the Sears Mall. New developments in Midtown provided employment, shopping, and housing in a central and easily accessible area of Anchorage with a diverse mix of private and public offerings, many of which differed from the downtown area.

The transition from homesteads to subdivisions created the essential residential and commercial opportunities provided by large tracts located in the district which helped establish a new future for Anchorage. Significant public and private investment occurred in the Midtown area during the 70s-80s Oil Boom including relocation of the MOA's main library from Downtown Anchorage (J.Z Loussac Library at 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue) and the Planning and Development Department (4700 Elmore Road). Not all investments had positive outcomes. While A and C streets, and Benson Boulevard and Northern Lights help move traffic and contribute to the Anchorage economy, hundreds of low-income housing units were demolished to these roadway improvements. It's time for the community, federal, state, and local officials to recognize that housing is also economic development, and as such should be prioritized.

**Modernizing Family – Brookings Institute 2020:** *America's demographics are transforming—Our housing supply is not!*

*Today's under-40 population is a major driver of housing demand with different needs than their predecessors. Millennials (24-39 in 2020) are a market-shaping demographic as the largest generation by population in America. As credit-strapped, newly-educated adults seeking housing, the single-family starter home is no longer a financial possibility for this population. These young people are competing with seniors searching to downsize to walkable, affordable smaller-lot neighborhoods.*

*Most homes left by seniors are in large-lot suburban areas outside of desirable convenient and accessible locales.*

*Oversupply of this type of single-family development is impacting major metropolitan areas across the United States. It's time for a change!*

## **Community Council Input within the Planning Context**

In the mid-70s community councils were established throughout Anchorage with the unification of the Greater Anchorage Area Borough and the City of Anchorage (*communitycouncils.org*). Community Councils were established to be advisory to the Anchorage Assembly and the Anchorage Mayor. The councils provide an essential governing function and voice in our community, which is why this planning process is engaged with the three councils for direction and support of this plan. Both the Anchorage Planning & Zoning Commission and the Anchorage Assembly look to council input and participation in their decision-making processes on items such as the *MTDP*.

## **Zoning Districts**

The Title 21 development code (*AMC 21.04: Zoning Districts*) establishes Anchorage area zoning districts and the associated “general provisions.” The zoning districts contribute to the planning context for the *MTDP* as one of the “drivers” that direct development. The *MTDP* planning area comprises three distinctly different community council areas. These areas differ substantially due to the types of development, whether residential or commercial, roadway accessibility, how the areas are subdivided (small or large lots), and zoning districts (*Map #4 Midtown – Zoning*).

Steering team members conveyed there is also differing social, quality of life, and economic issues impacting each area. Through the steering team members, each community council was encouraged to summarize their specific issues into a corresponding and unique set of visions, objectives, goals, and implementation actions for these distinctly different community council areas. A robust discussion with the steering team on how development has occurred within the varying zoning districts led to a greater understanding of how certain zones could provide new medium- to high-density housing and mixed-use development. Corresponding goals, policies, and action items developed from this greater understanding.

## **Midtown Community Council Area**

Midtown Community Council development includes large city-block-sized lots with several mid- and high-rise commercial buildings. Residential mid- and high-density housing is also found in Midtown, mostly located to the west, abutting Arctic Road. B3 is the primary zoning district in Midtown along with some higher-density residential zoning of R3 and R4.

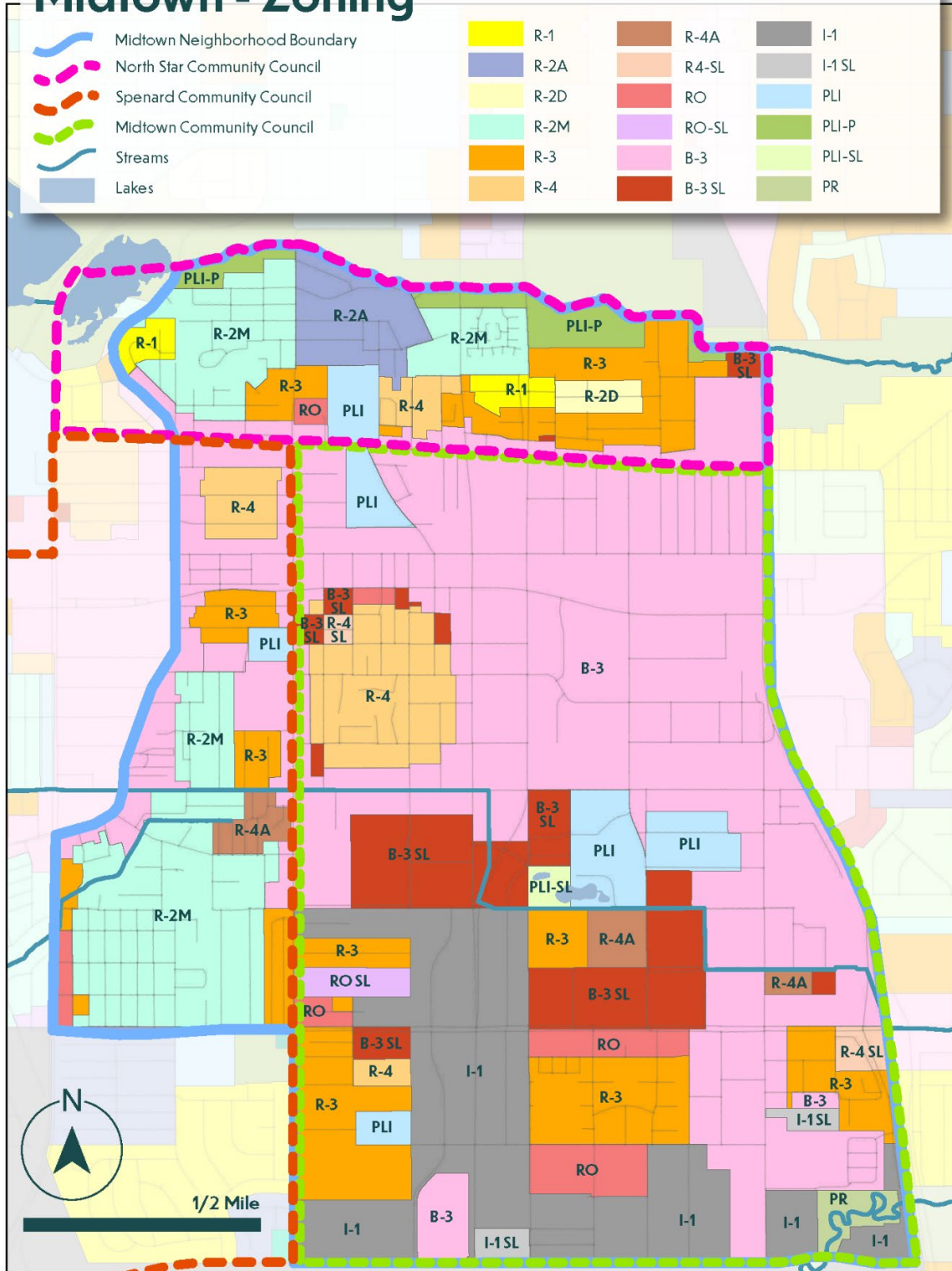
## **North Star Community Council Area**

North Star Community Council commercial is in 80’s-era strip malls on Fireweed Lane. Residential includes small neighborhoods of single-family (R-1, R-2A, R-2M, R-2D) and smaller pockets of multi-family (R-3) built on the plateau overlooking the Chester Creek Greenbelt. North Star is connected to the trail system with paved pedestrian pathways. Residential zoning districts prevail throughout North Star with B3 supporting the commercial on Fireweed Lane.

## **Spenard Community Council Area**

The Spenard Corridor from Spenard Road to Arctic Avenue and Chester Creek to Tudor Road retains low-density residential areas (R-1, R-2M). Medium- to high-density with 60’s-era mobile home parks (R-4A), and multi-family condo or apartment buildings (R-3, R-4, B3). Spenard Road Corridor is primarily B-3 with high-density residential centered around 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Chugach Way.

# Midtown - Zoning

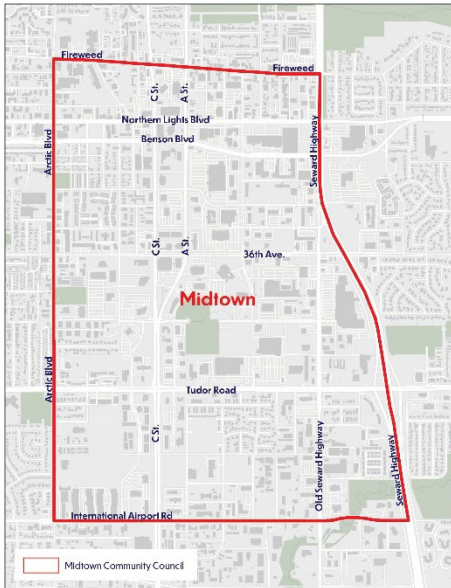


**Map #4 – Midtown Zoning w/Community Council Boundaries and Planning Area Boundary**

<sup>i</sup> [A history of Anchorage restaurant chains, franchises and national retailers, Part I - Anchorage Daily News](#)



## IV. Midtown Planning Area



The Midtown planning area is defined by the community council boundary and is bounded by Seward Highway, Arctic Boulevard, International Airport Road, and from the centerline of the south side of west Fireweed Lane.

Midtown properties are primarily zoned for business uses—residential neighborhoods are located west of C Street and south of Tudor Road. Single- and 2-3 story multi-family prevail throughout the area. Large windowed commercial buildings contribute to a glistening skyline. Commuters and visitors to the area use easily accessed roads and transit services connecting with most of Anchorage. Cuddy Family Park is central to outdoor celebrations in winter and summer. Midtown has several developable properties, presenting large and small infill opportunities for new businesses and housing. The vision, goals, objectives, and action items included in this section only apply to the parcels and streets within this community council area and are not relevant to the parcels and streets within other community council boundary areas.

### Character Summary

The late 1970's brought substantial commercial development to Midtown as oil money flowed to Anchorage. Investing in Midtown transitioned large homestead tracts to a new place for modern office buildings outside of downtown Anchorage. Oil companies, Alaska Native Tribal Corporations, medical, banking, and higher-density housing flourished on flat ground, benefitting from larger lots and cheaper tax obligations. Midtown surpassed Downtown in employee numbers by the year 2000. Midtown's many small retail spaces proliferated, finding more affordable rents and encouraging small business and restaurant development.

### Commercial Landscape

Midtown's large office buildings, strip malls, major hotels and motels, big box stores, and major shopping centers characterize this auto-oriented southward expansion of the city.

Architectural styles of private and public buildings encompass a broad spectrum from Zamarello's strip development to modern multi-story glass showpieces, including the ASRC building with its green glass cladding, J.L. Tower with its nightly Northern Lights display, and the late post-modern era Denali Towers. Stellar Secondary School is a low-rise Midcentury Modern beauty. Both Stellar and Willow Crest Elementary School were built during the Oil Boom. Loussac Library was constructed in Brutalist architecture. Before the 2016-2017 renovation, Loussac Library retained one of the most notable concrete waffle slabs in Alaska.

### Residential Landscape

The residential populations of the Midtown community council area are almost exclusively concentrated in the western and northern regions. Subdivisions are primarily small- to medium-scale residential developments, including single-family homes, multi-family apartments, and condominiums in various architectural styles, including Log Houses, Vernacular Cottages, and Ranches. All subdivided areas are developed on a standard grid pattern except for Heather Meadows, which has curvilinear streets. As noted from the Agnew::Beck demographic analysis, this area houses 4% of Anchorage's population in densely developed multi-family neighborhoods.

The Agnew::Beck housing analysis indicated there are over 1200 buildings in the area needing potential upgrades or renovations. While single-family units are the greatest percentage, Midtown has a greater share of medium- and high-density multi-family housing along with mobile home housing stock. Nearly a third of this existing housing was built over 50 years ago, prior to 1970. Another third of the housing was built from 1970-1979. The typical lifespan of a housing structure is around 50 years. Without substantial rehabilitation and reinvestment these older housing units face the risk of falling off the housing market. Incentives for owners to maintain and rehab this primary housing stock throughout the District is recommended in this plan.

## Streetscapes

Streets within Midtown include 36th Avenue, Tudor Road, Northern Lights Boulevard, and Benson Boulevard. North and South arterials include A and C Streets, Arctic Boulevard, and Old Seward Highway. All but Arctic are high-speed roadways with narrow sidewalks. C Street has broad shoulders south of 40th Avenue. Striped bicycle lanes do not exist in this area. DOT&PF rebuilt Arctic Boulevard from Fireweed Lane to International Airport Road in the past few years. Arctic Boulevard has two center-turn lanes and bike lanes with new sidewalks. Some residential and commercial streets have rolled curbs. Alleys are typical throughout much of the district's residential areas.



## Midtown Community Council

Small and large businesses and property owners attend the noon monthly meeting. The council represents their community's voice, addressing various issues important to commercial businesses and residents. Councils "provide a direct and continuing means of citizen participation in government and local affairs."<sup>19</sup>

To that end, two Midtown Community Council members represented the council on the *MTDP* Steering Team throughout this planning process, as noted previously in this plan. Council members are currently involved in many issues requiring outreach with municipal departments, including the mayor's office, assembly, and the planning department. The council provided the following visions, objectives, goals, and actions based on the issues the area is experiencing.

## VISION

***Midtown grows its premier commercial center by creating a safe, clean environment where thriving commercial spaces blend with new residential development, creating exciting spaces.***

**GOAL 1 (Sense of Place): Midtown has a clearly identified Sense of Place.**

***Objective 1: Analyze Midtown Traffic Needs.***

- ***MT-1: Identify which traffic corridors should remain the same to maintain ease of ingress and egress for individual properties and the MTDP area.***
- ***MT-2: Identify which traffic corridors should be transformed to better facilitate Midtown residential housing.***
- ***MT-3: Establish limitations on road projects by requiring an economic impact analysis for each project and greater consensus with the community council.***

**Objective 2: Better activate Cuddy Park through enhanced safety, more public activities, and an adjacent catalyst residential development.**

- **MT-4:** Create a Cuddy Park master plan to encourage greater public use through festivals, markets, recreation, and general use.
- **MT-5:** Establish incentives to encourage a catalyst residential housing development at the “archive” site.
- **MT-6:** Limit uses on the “archive” site by only allowing a small amount of commercial space and not permitting the following uses: correctional community residential center, habilitative care facility (Small/Medium/Large), transitional living facility, homeless and transient shelter, and social services facility.

**GOAL 2 (Economy): Midtown transforms into a robust mixed-use destination.**

**Objective 3: Create a mix of uses that create an exciting live, work, and play environment.**

- **MT-7:** Exempt Title 21 provisions that prevent mixed-use development.

**Objective 4: Convert surplus commercial space to residential.**

- **MT-8:** Identify and change barriers to commercial-to-residential conversions within Titles 21 and 23.

**Objective 5: Provide missing infrastructure that will help support housing and redevelopment projects.**

- **MT-9:** Advocate for infrastructure sufficient to support new residential construction within the Midtown area.

**Objective 6: The “Core Midtown Area” will be strengthened by limiting activities and uses that might negatively impact the area.**

- **MT-10:** Create more stringent “use-specific standards” within the Midtown Core Area for the following uses: Correctional Community Residential Center, Habilitative Care Facility (Small, Medium, Large), Transitional Living Facility, Homeless and Transient Shelter and Social Service Facility.
- **MT-11:** Create more stringent parameters and greater enforcement fines within the Midtown Core Area for Alcohol-Special Land Use Permits and Marijuana-Special Land Use Permits.

**Objective 7: Provide incentives for new housing opportunities.**

- **MT-12:** Implement a 20-year property tax abatement for new housing within Midtown.
- **MT-13:** Identify and exempt Title 21 land use policies that disincentivize new Midtown housing.
- **MT-14:** Fund and Complete a MTDP Step 3.



**GOAL 3 (Safety & Crime): Create a safe environment in which people and businesses can thrive.**

*Objective 8: Safety and property crime prevention are prioritized.*

- *MT-15: Strengthen crime prevention tools and activities within the Midtown area to help alleviate panhandling, loitering, vandalism, property crime, and illegal street parking.*

*Objective 9: Establish tools to mitigate crime and homelessness within Midtown.*

- *MT-16: Eliminate all illegal camping, including illegal street camping, within Midtown.*

*Objective 10: Have more 24-7 commercial businesses that provides more eyes on the street.*

- *MT-17: Create an incentive program to bring new businesses into the Midtown District that may provide 24-7 operations.*

*Objective 11: Maintain property rights.*

- *MT-18: Continue to work to ensure current property rights are not reduced through zoning action, land use code, and any other land use plans or actions.*

*Objective 12: Outdoor private and public spaces where the community can gather are encouraged.*

- *MT-19: Create provisions within the Midtown Core Area that encourage restaurants, entertainment spaces and shopping venues to use outdoor spaces.*

**Midtown Area Early Action Items (1-3 Years):**

- *MT-4: Create a Cuddy Park master plan to encourage greater public use through festivals, markets, recreation, and general use.*
- *MT-10: Create more stringent “use-specific standards” within the Midtown Core Area for the following uses: Correctional Community Residential Center, Habilitative Care Facility (Small, Medium, Large), Transitional Living Facility, Homeless and Transient Shelter and Social Service Facility.*
- *MT-11: Create more stringent parameters and greater enforcement fines within the Midtown Core Area for Alcohol-Special Land Use Permits and Marijuana-Special Land Use Permits.*
- *MT-16: Eliminate all illegal camping, including illegal street camping, within Midtown.*
- *MT-15: Strengthen crime prevention tools and activities within the Midtown area to help alleviate panhandling, loitering, vandalism, property crime, and illegal street parking.*

## V. North Star Planning Area



North Star is located between the south centerline of west Fireweed Lane, Seward Highway, Chester Creek and Minnesota Drive as noted by the location map. North Star is primarily residential neighborhoods of single family and multifamily housing. Small business commercial and medical is located on Fireweed Lane, Arctic Road, and Spenard Road. North Star schools provide education and community events. North Star has one of the newest glass towers built in the District planning area located on the old outdoor movie site. North Star residents can easily walk or ride their bikes to restaurants and local shopping within their neighborhoods. Infill housing opportunities are available on vacant and

underused lots located along Fireweed Lane and scattered in the neighborhoods. The vision, goals, objectives, and action items included in this section only apply to this community council area to the parcels and streets within this community council area and are not relevant to the parcels and streets within other community council boundary areas and are not relevant to other community councils.

### Character Summary

Homesteaders, Oscar Neilson, Charles W. Smith, and Chester Lempert established and guided the development in North Star as they subdivided their 40-acre homestead parcels into housing and commercial properties in the early 60s. Upon their arrival in the late 1940s, these homesteaders were young men, some with families looking for new adventures after World War II. Homesteading was a helpful tool that presented a dream of a new life and a new home. Subdivision names given for family members are sprinkled throughout North Star, reminding us of the past and those who came before, as they worked to settle many prime areas of Anchorage. Our community owes a debt of gratitude to their adventurous spirit. Incredible views and easy access make the North Star Bluff area a desirable place to live and do business in this present day. North Star is recognized as a walkable neighborhood with a unique quality of life.

### Commercial Landscape

North Star commercial development also profited from the oil boom. Buildings range from Quonset huts to strip malls to many midcentury modern-influenced structures built with glass curtain walls and concrete. Most buildings along Fireweed Lane were constructed during the late 60's through the 90's. Past-their-useful-life, restaurants, and strip malls line Fireweed Lane, continuing to provide lower-rental commercial space for small businesses, attracting locals to an eclectic mix of services, shopping, and food offerings.

### Residential Landscape

By 1919, 40-acre parcels were surveyed and platted along the western and northern edges of the Midtown area. In 1926, Charles W. Smith, a railroad employee, and his wife Pearl homesteaded 160 acres near C Street and Fireweed Lane. According to the BLM GLO records, few other settlers lived along the Fireweed plateau area in the early 1920s. Chester P. Lampert was another homesteader in this location. He developed large swaths of property, including the corner of Northern Lights and Seward Highway, north, east, and south of Rogers Park.

The Lampert homestead address at 1952 Fireweed Lane connected the newly built Old Seward Highway/Homer Road with Spenard Road, helping to define the northern edge. With the onset of the Seward Highway, these and other homesteaders subdivided their lands for new housing and commercial development.

Most neighborhoods developed, including North Star before the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) lending requirements in building standards. Residents were allowed to build what worked for them as federal and local building regulations had not been adopted or required. Therefore, the architecture is a true reflection of that unrefined past. You'll find a diverse mix of low-rise commercial and residential buildings from this early development, with the occasional midcentury commercial structure still standing tall along the main roads.

Neighborhoods in North Star have a mix of minimal traditional, contemporary, ranch, and split-level and bi-level houses mixed alongside multi-family complexes. Building setbacks are consistent, with streets paved with rolled curbs and no sidewalks.

Carports are more prevalent than garages, mainly west of Spenard. Surveyors laid out neighborhood streets on a north-south and east-west curvilinear grid. The early homesteaders named subdivisions and streets after their family members, including Smith, Lampert, and Eide. People describe North Star as a “peaceful place” to live within its smaller neighborhoods set back in the woods of the North Star bluff and along the bordering green-belt trail.

Overall, the North Star area is family-friendly, with smaller grid-patterned neighborhoods and great Chugach, Talkeetnas, and Alaska range views. There is easy access into and out of the neighborhood on Fireweed Lane. Fireweed Lane provides various food and employment options that contribute to a place to live where you can walk to work, school, or the world-class trail system.

## Streetscape

Fireweed Lane is the primary collector street traversing through North Star east to west, connecting the council area to Spenard Road and Seward Highway. A and C Streets bisect North Star for north-south travel between Midtown and Downtown. Fireweed has narrow sidewalks with two travel- and one middle-turn lanes. No other streets bisect North Star due to the Chester Creek Greenbelt below the bluff. Fireweed Lane was renamed Blue Berry Lake Road at some point and continues to function as the primary street in and out of the connecting neighborhoods. A Fireweed Engineering Study is underway, by DOT&PF, there is potential for the wider multi-use sidewalks, reduced travel lanes (from 4 to 3), and slower traffic the neighborhood desires. The roadway study, including preliminary design concepts, is funded with public engagement ongoing by the state and the municipality



## North Star Community Council

Community Council members have been active for decades, minding commercial businesses, volunteering at their schools, and participating in essential planning processes that impact this area. The number one priority from the council's website is the reconstruction of Fireweed Lane. North Star was represented by two community council residents on the MTDP steering team. One member is also a current community council board member.

## Vision

***North Star is a quiet, vibrant, connected neighborhood with a variety of housing options, that flows naturally into the rest of the Midtown District. Streets are pleasant, serve residents walking and rolling in neighborhoods, and are intentionally designed to allow for balanced connectivity of all travel modes within the neighborhood. North Star is a desirable neighborhood ideally positioned between Midtown and Downtown, with a cohesive identity. Neighbors can walk, bike, bus, and drive to each other's homes, and to the many amenities offered nearby and within the neighborhood from bakeries to childcare to recreation areas.***

**Goal 1: (Quality of Life) Take immediate, short-term action to improve the identity and safety of the area.**

**Objective 1: Quickly implement low cost/low complexity changes to increase safety and comfort for all road users in the area and eliminate excessive speeding.**

- **NS-1:** Leverage re-striping and quick-build infrastructure changes to make small improvements such as narrowed lanes, bump outs, planter boxes, and additional crosswalks to balance road usage and prevent vehicles from blocking existing pedestrian infrastructure.
  - Examples of potential projects identified by community members include Additional crosswalks on Spenard and Hillcrest, change to a 4-way stop on 23<sup>rd</sup> and North Star, protection for sidewalk on W 20<sup>th</sup> to prevent cars parking in the way of pedestrians, and speed bumps or raised crosswalks on Arctic Blvd. Neighborhood bikeways that update 2/4 way stop orientations.
- **NS-2:** Use temporary pilot solutions such as curbs and planters along roadways in areas identified as problems by community members to increase safety and collect community feedback for future permanent projects.
  - Examples of potential projects identified by community members include Temporary blockage of slip lane and relocation of sidewalk on 19th and Spenard and pilot projects such as temporary protected bike lanes and traffic calming improvements.

**Objective 2: Work with responsible entities to improve snow and landscaping maintenance.**

- **NS-3:** Provide the community council with the drafted map of snow clearing and landscaping priorities for sidewalks such as those near schools, care facilities, and bus stops.
- **NS-4:** Encourage city and DOT to triage minimum usability ASAP, such as prioritizing one side of the sidewalk over complete coverage.

**Objective 3: Develop actionable strategies to increase the quality of life and safety for those walking and living on neighborhood streets.**

- **NS-5:** Establish expectations for regular trash removal near camps with the municipality.
- **NS-6:** Engage the municipality and service providers to leverage community member “eyes on the street” to direct resources towards camps in the area and mitigate their impact.

**Objective 4: Raise the profile of North Star as a distinct and desirable neighborhood in Anchorage.**

- **NS-7:** Fund community efforts to install murals and placemaking signage such as the repainting of the Spenard and Hillcrest mural.
- **NS-8:** NSCC will work with the City, Visit Anchorage, The Chamber of Commerce, and other entities to plan for developing the identity of North Star.



**Wayfinding Example – Juneau, AK**

- *NS-9: Install way-finding routes to connect Midtown, North Star, and Spenard business locations, and encourage use of walking routes through core area.*

**Objective 5: Add additional supportive infrastructure to improve quality of life for all.**

- *NS-10: Work with the Muni on installation of additional bus shelters and benches, and additional infrastructure in Valley of the Moon park to incentivize year-round use.*
- *NS-11: Work with local organizations, the Muni, and business to fund/incentivize and install additional bike parking in parks such as Mulcahy Park and at local businesses, schools, and other destinations.*

**Goal 2: (Quality of Life and Sense of Place) Guide long-term infrastructure and housing development towards a vision that prioritizes neighborhood connectivity, safety, and comfort and supports a more dense, walkable community.**

**Objective 6: Lean into our key identity as a mixed use, primarily residential neighborhood within walking distance of the Midtown District’s many amenities.**

- *NS-12: Update code to incentivize conversion to new builds of mixed-use properties relevant to area such as daycare facilities, bakeries, etc.*
- *NS-13: Evaluation of new stairs or pathways on easements or acquired property to better connect upper and lower NSCC.*
- *NS-14: Design for lower speeds to create inviting, and accessible streets that encourage pedestrians and drivers to linger, congregate, and patronize local businesses.*
- *NS-15: Add additional infrastructure and signage to schools’ crossings following “Safe Routes to Schools” model.*
- *NS-16: Addition of protected bike lanes and pedestrian facilities designed to NACTO Complete Streets manuals adopted by the Muni to ensure connectivity for both vehicles and pedestrians.*
- *NS-17: Continued support for facilities serving vulnerable residents such as the MACK House and CSS Complex Care, and for programs that increase the safety and livability of the community such as trail grooming, needle exchanges, diaper exchanges, mobile crisis teams, Anchorage Safety Patrol, litter clearance, and public restrooms.*

**Objective 7: Implement road diets and speed reductions on roads to slow down excessive speeding and prioritize safety and comfort for all users.**

- *NS-18: Require adequate width in non-motorized facilities to allow year-round use by both pedestrians and cyclists and ease of maintenance. (e.g. consider the use of full-width shared use pathways used in other winter cities that allow for plow truck access, reducing the need for specialized and lower speed equipment).*
- *NS-19: Where possible, use physical buffers between traffic and non-motorized users to increase the comfort level of pedestrians such as trees and/or other landscaping that may also serve as winter snow storage.*
- *NS-20: Prioritize actively designed streets that carefully consider the use of each section of road resulting in a profile that may allow for higher volume access to areas such as schools*



or turns onto arterials but may taper down elsewhere that larger traffic volumes are not needed (e.g. Bayshore Dr.).

- **NS-21:** Add raised crosswalks to crosswalks within CC area and surrounding roads where possible (e.g. Latouche street in Rogers Park). Such as but not limited to 19th and Arctic, 23rd and Barrow, 19th and Spenard, Stellar and North Star Connection
- **NS-22:** Phase in widened sidewalks and additional crossings on Seward Highway.
- **NS-23:** Add pedestrian access to trail underpass connected to sidewalks along Seward Highway, and C Street.
- **NS-24:** Study implementation of red-light cameras, sound meters, and other automated traffic enforcement methods to reduce the rates of red-light violations and excessive speeding.
- **NS-25:** Evaluate the impacts of a right-on-red ban in the NSCC area.

✦ **Objective 8: Develop new housing that fits into a vision of a dense, cohesive, and close-knit neighborhood.**

- **NS-26:** Implement policy changes that add additional housing in the NSCC through up-zoning, infill development, and other changes to improve economics of denser housing developments.
- **NS-27:** Support residents of mobile home communities through community and policy efforts that consider the impact of new developments on these uniquely dense and affordable housing options, through both careful consideration of potential re-development development and policies that minimize impacts of potential re-development.
  - Examples of these potential efforts include supporting robust self-governance and resident involvement in the future of properties, incentivization of housing development focused on lots that do not displace low-income renters, requiring closure notice periods of at least one year, prohibiting rental increases during closure notice periods, and consideration of equity-buyouts or displacement payments.

**North Star Early Action Items (1-3 years):**

- **NS-1:** Leverage re-striping and quick-build infrastructure changes to make small improvements such as narrowed lanes, bump outs, planter boxes, and additional crosswalks to balance road usage and prevent vehicles from blocking existing pedestrian infrastructure.
- **NS-2:** Use temporary pilot solutions such as curbs and planters along roadways in areas identified as problems by community members to increase safety and collect community feedback for future permanent projects.
- **NS-4:** Encourage city and DOT to triage minimum usability ASAP for snow removal, such as prioritizing one side of the sidewalk over complete coverage.
- **NS-7:** Fund community efforts to install murals and placemaking signage such as the repainting of the Spenard and Hillcrest mural.
- **NS-10:** Work with the Muni on installation of additional bus shelters and benches, and additional infrastructure in Valley of the Moon park to incentivize year-round use.

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## VI. Spenard Corridor Planning Area



Arctic Boulevard, Tudor Road, Minnesota Drive, and Chester Creek provide the boundaries of the Spenard Corridor area included within the Midtown District. The corridor has an adopted plan (Spenard Corridor Plan, 2020) to guide new housing and commercial development and reuse of existing commercial buildings. The MTDP incorporates elements of that adopted plan to continue the funding and implementation projects the area has seen since 2020. Infill housing opportunities are available on vacant and underused lots located along the corridor and scattered in the neighborhoods. Chugach Way between Spenard Road and Wilson Park is a prime area for new mixed-use and high-density housing leveraging the new Cook Inlet Housing Authority projects. The adaptive reuse of Spenard area towers has recent successes with the latest Emerald building (senior care housing) and Wells Fargo building (Alaska Legislative Building), located on Benson Boulevard. The vision, goals, objectives, and action items included in this section only apply to parcels

and streets within this community council area and are not relevant to the parcels and streets within other community council boundary areas and are not relevant to other community councils.

### Character Summary

Joe Spenard arrived in Anchorage with one of the few automobiles in the area in 1916, establishing a delivery business hauling wood. Spenard set up a homestead on 160 acres near Lake Hood (formerly Lake Jeter on Forest Service land), constructing a resort with a dance pavilion and swimming beach. Spenard cleared and created a trail to the lake from the city's boundary at 9th Avenue and L Street, eventually becoming Spenard Road and the area's name. In the 1960s and 1970s, some subdivisions were designated for commercial zoning, allowing for an eclectic mix of uses and activities over time. Many residential areas have no sidewalks or pedestrian amenities. Like North Star, Spenard is convenient to downtown and midtown for employment, restaurants, and shopping, adding to a desirable quality of life in Spenard.

### Commercial Landscape

There was no "Spenard community" per se until Earl Hillstrand (the grandfather of the guys from *Deadliest Catch*) platted the corner of Spenard and Fireweed (the same subdivision where Chilkoot Charlie's sits today) in 1946. The exception was a collection of cabins and fur farms near the mouth of Campbell Creek, also known as Romig Hill.

The oil boom also brought new midcentury modern commercial mid-rise buildings to Spenard for public agencies and utility service providers. A large swath of multi-family, lower-income apartment buildings were sacrificed for the widening of Benson Boulevard during the 1980s. This low-income attainable housing was never replaced by the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, contributing to the present-day housing crisis in Anchorage.

### Residential Landscape

Surveyors platted the original neighborhoods along the Spenard corridor in a traditional grid pattern of narrow streets, alleys, and small rectangular lots. The Spenard neighborhood is a mix of primarily low-rise commercial and residential development with some multi-story midcentury commercial buildings along the primary roads.



*Patterns of the Past* (Patterns), published by the municipality, documented Anchorage's early settlement and development stages. Patterns speculated this is due to most of Spenard's development occurring before Federal Housing Authority (FHA) lending requirements in building standards, coupled with the absence of local building regulations.

Residences are generally designed in the vernacular log style, contemporary folk (Quonset huts and mobile homes), minimal traditional, early modern, and ranch styles. Of historical note, the first trailer home shipped to Alaska in 1945 found its home in Spenard. The Spenard neighborhood holds a fascinating layer of history embedded in its streets and structures, making it a prime example of the city's evolution from frontier settlement to a thriving, urban community. This neighborhood has lived a full life cycle and with help from this plan it could be restored to its former glory. When surveyors first mapped out the Spenard corridor, they laid down a traditional grid of narrow streets, alleys, and small rectangular lots. This design speaks to a time when development was generic, unregulated, and highly adaptable—a direct response to Anchorage's early, rapid growth.

Several low-income housing units recently built along Spenard Road at 36th Avenue help to fill the 1000s of units still needed per the housing analysis completed by Agnew::Beck for this planning effort and as noted in the Introduction section of this plan.

## Streetscape

Spenard Road was the only route to the North Star Bluff area in the 1920s. Patterns expounds on the story of homesteader Chester Smith cutting in the road, by borrowing a bulldozer from the railroad, to cut into the east-west road (now Fireweed Lane) to join Spenard Road. Numbered streets access Spenard Road from A Street and Arctic Avenue. These numbered streets are narrow, with sidewalks planned for 42nd Avenue. Arctic Avenue is a primary collector connecting the North Star Bluff.

## Spenard Community Council



The Spenard Community Council celebrates the diversity of the neighborhood where all are welcome. Like its neighboring council areas, Spenard is working on safe streets, housing, business support, and safety issues. In continued work towards the development of the *MTDP*, the Spenard Community Council (SCC) chose to use excerpts including vision, goals, and actions adopted into the *Spenard Corridor Plan* (A.O. 2020-74).<sup>i</sup> The *Spenard Corridor Plan* was authorized by the *West Anchorage District Plan* (AO 2012-47 as amended). The following plan elements were voted by the council to be incorporated into the *MTDP* and apply specifically to the area “where Spenard is geographically represented.”

## Vision

***Spenard will be seamlessly connected to neighboring districts such as Midtown and Turnagain, contributing to the livability of the city. New multi-story buildings that provide retail, employment and housing opportunities for existing and new residents will blend with existing buildings in a manner that maintains the eclectic character of the neighborhood while expanding the vibrancy of Spenard. Growing vitality will contribute to a feeling of safety by providing “eyes on the street” and this, in turn, will support high frequency transit service and potential commuter rail transit (Excerpted along with the following goals and actions from the Spenard Corridor Plan).***

### **Goal 1: (Community Resilience) Support Transit and Increase Ridership**

- *SP-1: Design transit stops and hubs to facilitate efficient and comfortable bus use to include umbrella-style shelter, seating, trash can, and secure bicycle racks.*
- *SP-2: Improve transit service along the Spenard Corridor by increasing the frequency of bus service throughout the Corridor to a minimum of 30 minutes.*

### **Goal 2: (Sense of Place) Recognize Spenard as a Destination.**

- *SP-3: Cope Street & Wilson Street Park Improvements.*
- *SP-4: Promote development of gateways and enhancement of key intersections.*

### **Goal 3: (Community Resilience) Enhance and Protect Neighborhoods Surrounding Spenard Road.**

- *SP-5: Design and upgrade Chugach Way from Spenard Rd to Arctic Blvd as a facility for multimodal transit.*
- *SP-6: Put all parcels in the Spenard Corridor on the Municipal water system.*

### **Goal 4: (Community Resilience) Create Great Public Streets.**

- *SP-7: Place and maintain public trash cans no further than at each intersection in the Spenard Corridor.*
- *SP-8: Design facilities classified as Minor Arterials and smaller as Complete Streets.*
- *SP-9: Participate in the completion of the Fireweed Lane Corridor Study funded by AMATS in 2025 – Amended from SPCP.*

### **Goal 5: (Community Resilience) Create a Safe Pedestrian and Bike Network.**

- *SP-10: Remove Minnesota Drive from the National Highway System.*
- *SP-11: Participate in the completion of the Tudor Road Corridor Study funded by AMATS in 2025 – Amended from SPCP.*
- *SP-12: Participate in the completion of the Northern Lights and Benson Boulevard Corridor Study funded by AMATS in 2025 – Amended from the SPCP.*
- *SP-13: Update all intersections to allow for non-motorized crossing at all points.*
- *SP-14: Create marked and signaled crosswalks across lanes designed for motorized transit at a distance no further than 0.2 miles.*
- *SP-15: Create diagonal crossing opportunities at intersections that involve facilities classified as Minor Arterials or larger.*
- *SP-16: Redesignate functional classifications where classifications are inappropriate to how the roadways are currently functioning and being used.*

### **Goal 6: (Sense of Place) Integrate Fish Creek (Ch'atanaltsegh Liq'aka Betnu) as a Centerpiece for Spenard.**

- *SP-17: Seek funding to complete an engineering and development plan for Fish Creek – Amended from the SPCP.*

**Goal 7: (Sense of Place) Accommodate Safe and Balanced Roadway Access.**

- *SP-18: Design and upgrade Spenard Road from Benson Blvd to Minnesota Dr for multimodal transit, including buffers no smaller than 2 feet between non-motorized and motorized transit lanes.*
- *SP-19: Rehabilitate 36th Avenue to include lower design speed. Redesignate the functional classification if necessary between Arctic and Minnesota.*

**Goal 8: (Economy) Accommodate and Manage Parking.**

- *SP-20: Incentivize shared parking lots in the Spenard Corridor through a tax abatement program.*
- *SP-21: Manage ROW for community priorities.*

**Goal 9: (Community Resilience) Design for Year-Round Use.**

- *SP-22: Transportation routes scheduled for upgrade shall include an enhancement or buffer zone of no less than 4 feet between the lanes for motorized and non-motorized transit to allow for a safe distance between transit modes and snow storage.*

**Goal 10: (Sense of Place) Prioritize Sustainability and Resilience.**

- *SP-23: Mixed-use buildings and other non-residential development along the corridors shall be sited and designed to sensitively transition to adjacent single-family properties. Corridor development must strategically arrange site features, integrate architectural elements and include site design elements that reduce impacts on abutting single-family properties.*
- *SP-24: Reduce operational impacts of noise and odor, minimize the presence of looming walls that impact privacy and ensure adequate solar access to sensitive properties are all key factors to consider.*

**Spenard Early Action Items (1-3 years):**

- *SP-14: Update all intersections to allow for non-motorized crossing at all points. (\*see below)*
- *SP-6: Put all parcels in the Spenard Corridor on the Municipal water system*
- *SP-17: Seek funding to complete an engineering and development plan to daylight Fish Creek*
- *SP-16: Redesignate functional classifications where classifications are inappropriate to how the roadways are currently functioning and being used.*

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<sup>1</sup> [Spenard Corridor Plan](#)

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## VII. District Land Use Plan Maps

### Midtown Land Use Plan

A land use plan map guides development in a planning area and sets the foundation for the implementing zoning districts supported under the various land use designations. The *2040 Land Use Plan (2040 LUP)* (2014) and the *Spensard Corridor Plan (2020)* provide the foundation for the Midtown District land use plan map. The proposed Midtown District map will amend the *2040 LUP*. When adopted, it will be the primary map and implementing narrative for the Midtown District. Not shown on this map are Transit Supportive Corridors or Greenway Supportive Corridors. The MOA is in the process of updating the Transit Supportive Corridors and that update will prevail throughout the district once it is adopted. The Greenway Supportive Corridor as adopted in the *2040 LUP* will also prevail.

- The land use plan map will increase opportunities for all housing types while continuing to support commercial development in the District. Zoning districts will now have increased development capacities. Commercially-zoned districts will favor housing and new commercial development with taller buildings, increased unit capacity, and more flexible development standards.
- New incentive tools, including tax abatement, development agreements, and public/private partnerships adopted by the MOA, are encouraged in the District. Development agreements with residential to commercial zoned districts will help the community understand the full breadth of housing with a proposed rezone. This map will assist the MOA in aligning its incentive tools to bring more housing.
- Expanding the **City Center** land use designation (**dark purple**) in a Midtown Core area across all properties ensures developers' access to the same flexible development code and incentive tools.

### Land Use Plan Map Designations

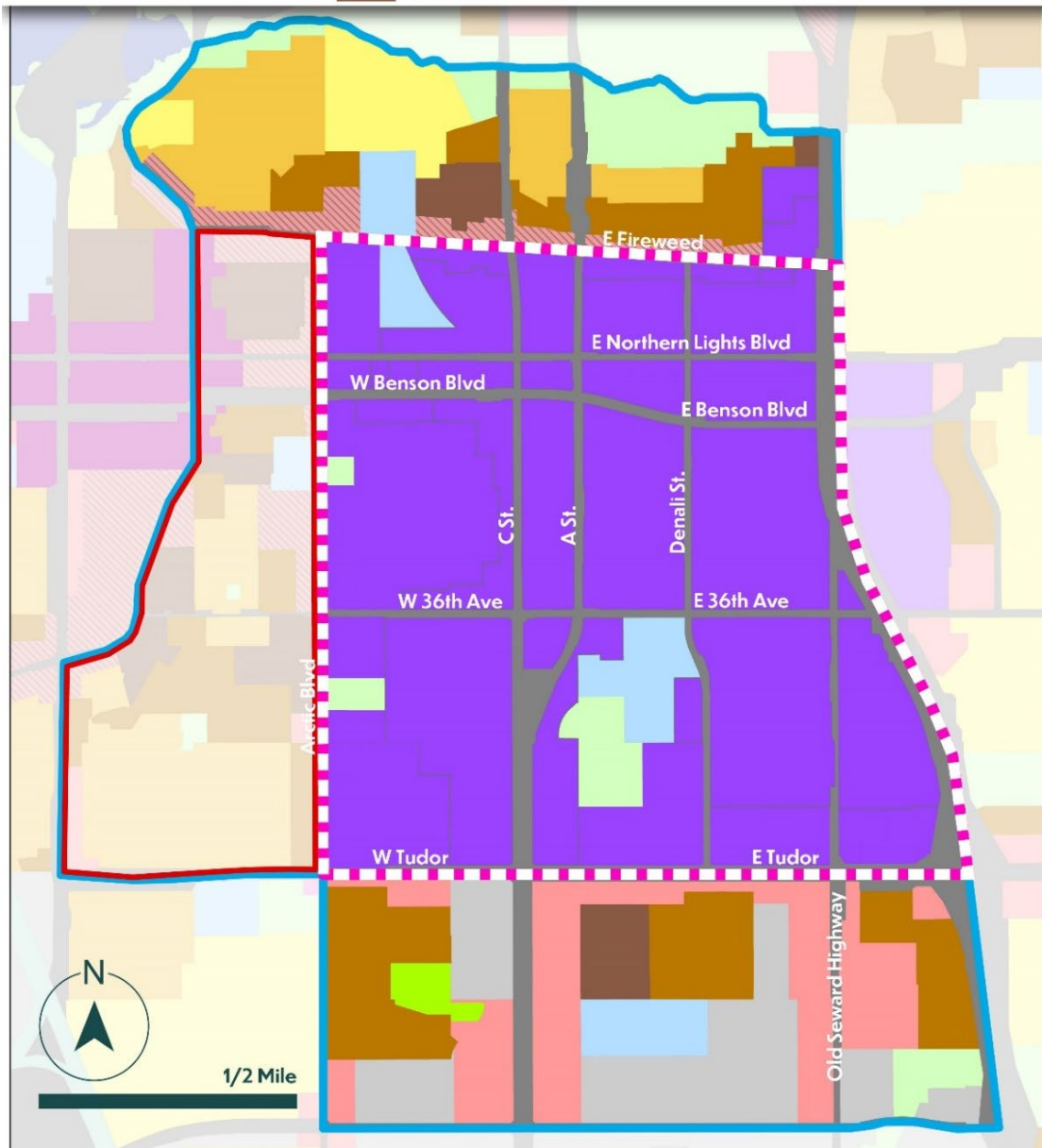
This narrative and land use plan map will govern the Midtown District's land use and zoning decisions

**City Center – Midtown Core (dark purple)** core area located within the boundaries of the Midtown Community Council except for properties south of Tudor Road. The current implementing zoning includes B-3, I-1, R-4, R-4A, R-3, and RO. This area is appropriate for tall buildings, commercial or residential, singular- or mixed-use. High-density residential will not require mixed-use in high-rises. All high-density residential buildings may be built to the front and side property lines. Bulk building dimensional requirements (identified in AMC 21.07) are waived to allow high-density to fit to rectangular lots. Private open space is not required. There is no limit to height in the City Center on properties zoned B-3. I-1 properties with current residential uses should be deemed non-conforming but allowed consistent with what is already occurring in this area.

**Commercial Corridor and Main Street Corridor (salmon and salmon-hatched)** designated properties north of Fireweed and south of Tudor Road. The current implementing zoning includes B3, I-1, R-4, and R-3. I-1 properties with current residential uses should be deemed non-conforming but allowed consistent with what is already occurring in this area. These areas are appropriate for high- to mid-density residential buildings in mid-rise buildings. High- or mid-density residential mid-rise buildings will not require mixed-use. All high- or mid-density residential buildings may be built to the front and side property lines. Bulk building dimensional requirements (identified in AMC 21.07) should be waived to allow high- and mid-density buildings to fit to rectangular lots. Private open space is not required. There is no limit on height when building in B-3.



# Proposed Midtown Land Use Plan Map



Map #5 – Midtown Land Use Plan Map with Midtown Core

## Midtown Core Proposal

Within and adjacent to the Midtown Core, there are prime larger parcels that could be developed. This new development will provide high-density commercial and residential opportunities not seen in Anchorage in the last 20 years. This new development would also provide safe connectivity for pedestrians, convenient access to local shopping and restaurants, with adequate and accessible parking. The center of outdoor events is focused on Cuddy Park. Higher density tall buildings for office, government, cultural, entertainment, housing, tourism, and retail use is expected. This density will help support transit ridership and lower vehicle miles traveled. The re-purpose of older buildings is encouraged to reduce environmental impacts and preserve the existing midcentury modern architectural setting.

## Catalytic Redevelopment Sites

This plan recommends several catalytic sites (**Map #6 – Catalytic Redevelopment Sites**) where new housing and mixed-use could occur with assistance from the MOA and others, and dependent on a focused strategy to align capital improvement funding to utilities, roadway, and other improvements needed for the sites. These catalytic sites would be implementing the Mayor’s Housing-action plan and the housing target proposed in **Chapter II** to better use larger properties and larger buildings than what is currently occurring. Public/private partnerships, government investments, incentives, and code relief will leverage new construction and reconstruction on large tracts and on re-purposed buildings. This core area will provide workforce or attainable housing to those employed in the Midtown area. Not shown on this map are two **Deteriorated Property Designations (A.O. 2015-49 As amended, 2020-97, 2023-89)**.<sup>iiiiii</sup> These properties are located along 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Chugach Way and along Northern Lights Boulevard. All properties are prime for a 10-year tax abatement which must be approved by the MOA’s Chief Financial Officer. The land use plan map enables the following:

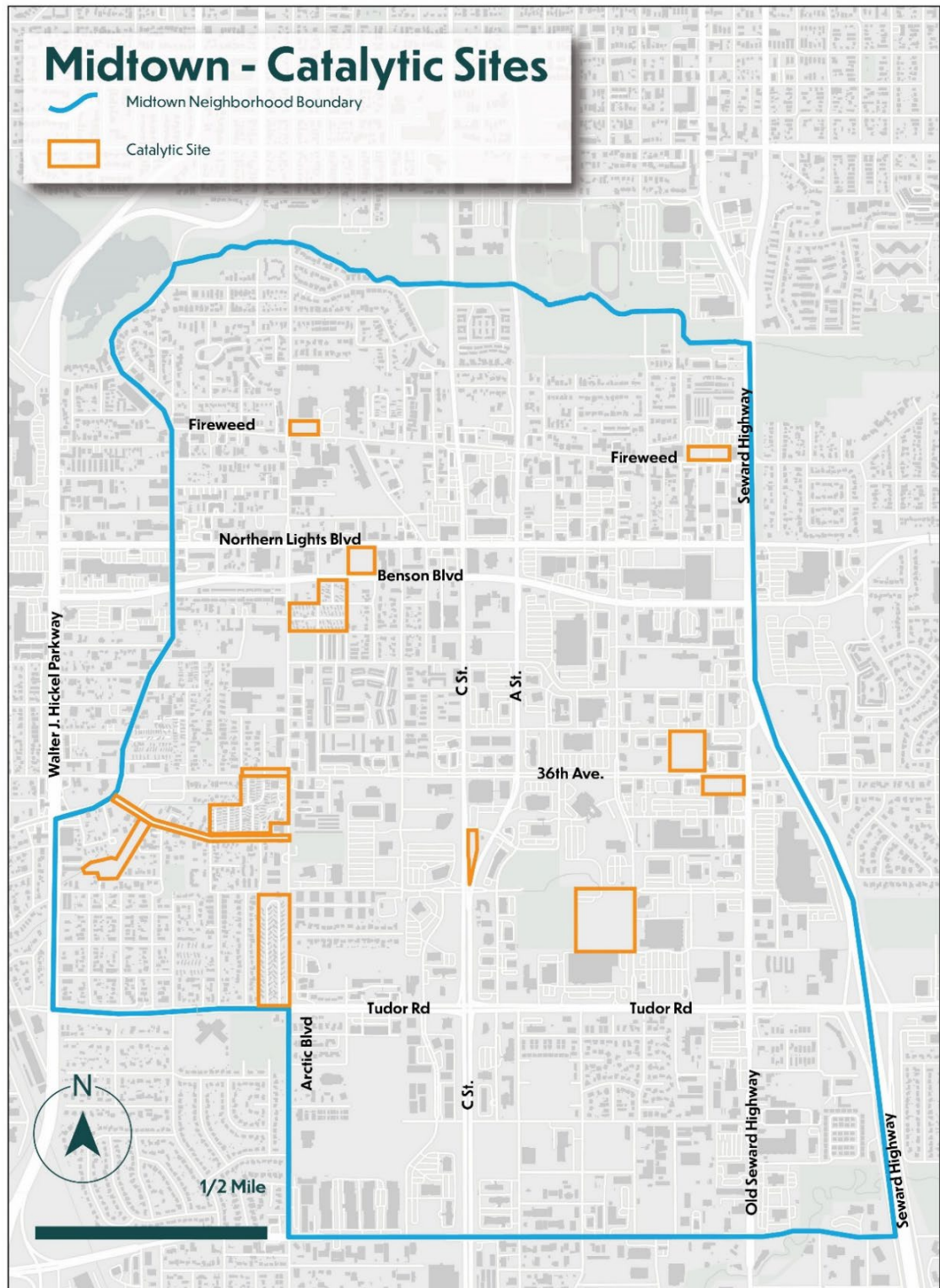
- Leveraged public investments to maximize community benefits.
- Service providers are informed early-on and able to right-size upgrades and improvements to support development.
- Catalytic properties have received a Tax Abatement.
- Development is located within or near a Transit Supportive or Greenway Supportive corridor. *These land use designations are under review by the Planning Department for implementation.*
- Historic properties are saved.
- Supports rezones to gain maximum density housing, mixed-use, or commercial.
- May set up a concentration of public investments in the Midtown Core.
- Sets the character, and potential zoning.
- May increase property value.
- Owners may have a more lenient code available for property development.
- Does not automatically rezone properties.
- Does not stop any developments or uses (residential or commercial) currently occurring.

## Implementation Actions

- **LUPM-1:** MOA will amend the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan to include the proposed land use plan and narrative from the MTDP.
- **LUPM-2:** Fund and Complete a MTDP Step 3 working group process.

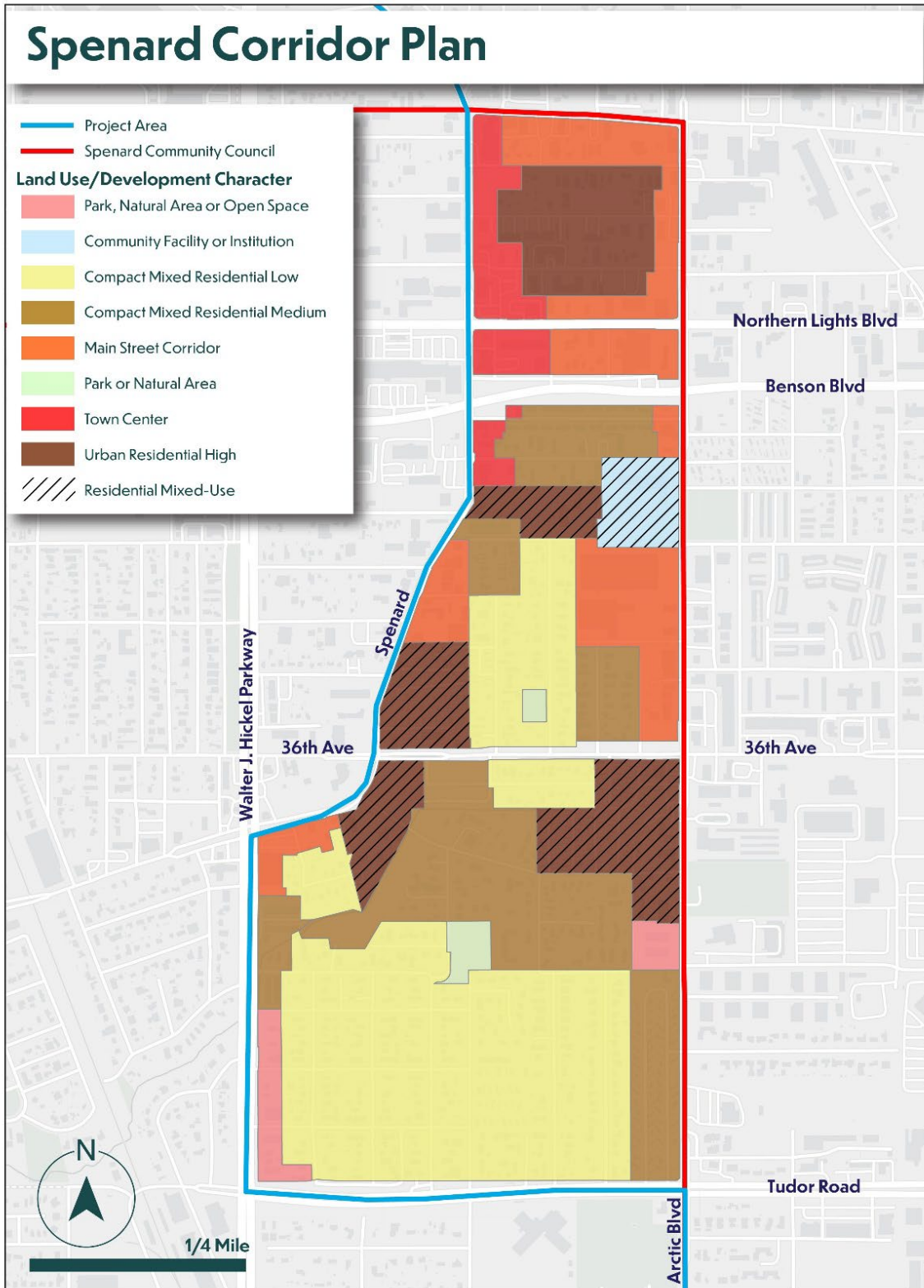
- **LUPM-3:** Fund an outreach process to engage property owners, business owners, developers, and residents regarding the benefits of a revised code for Midtown.
- **LUPM-4:** Streamline the 10-year deteriorated property tax abatement approval process.

**Map #6 - Catalytic Redevelopment Sites**





# Spenard Corridor Land Use Plan



Map #6 – Spenard Corridor Land Use Plan Map

## **Spenard Corridor Land Use Plan Map Character Summaries**

This plan brings forward the land use plan map adopted in the Spenard Corridor Plan, its associated land use plan map designations, and area development character policies. The Spenard Corridor Plan does not indicate implementing zoning districts for the land use plan map (**Map #6 – Spenard Corridor Land Use Plan**). This land use plan was loosely based on the *2040 Land Use Plan* like the Midtown area land use plan. The *MTDP* will not replace goals, policies, or actions in the Spenard Corridor Plan. The following character summaries are excerpted from the plan for the north, central, and south districts of the corridor area. A deep discussion on the types of development and design guidelines are included in the plan in addition to support for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities.

### **North District Character**

North Spenard will be the “heart” of the Spenard Corridor. It will be a citywide entertainment destination, a place for culture and events, and that supports a wide range of transit-oriented residential, retail, employment, creative space and dining activities. A year-round indoor/ outdoor market will be an anchor for the District. As Spenard’s “downtown,” North Spenard will be more urban, with taller buildings, pedestrian-oriented streets and active outdoor gathering spaces. Over time, large scale, phased redevelopment that intermingles with existing smaller buildings and housing will provide a critical mass of activity that keeps North Spenard active and safe during daytime and nighttime hours. The long east-west blocks will be broken up with new streets, publicly-accessible private drives or pedestrian and bicycle paths. With few low-scale, sensitive residential edges, North Spenard represents the best opportunity for a concentration of higher-intensity, transit-supportive redevelopment in the Plan Area. A highly active, mixed-use district will be established on the blocks between 27th Avenue and 31st Avenue to the north and south and Lois Drive and Arctic Boulevard to the west and east. New residential infill, including multi-family, single-family and live/work units will develop along the blocks flanking this area, alongside residential properties present there today.

### **Central District Character**

Central Spenard will be the primary local shopping and services area in Spenard. Local-serving businesses, activities, community uses, services, retail amenities and housing will be the primary uses. The scale and character of new development will be designed to be compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods. Small-scale neighborhood, mixed-use and commercial buildings will extend from Spenard Road for a limited distance into the residential areas to provide neighborhood-level activity nodes off the primary corridor. Redevelopment of the properties between Chugach Way and 36th Avenue will add life to the District and establish a strong visual and physical link between Midtown, West Anchorage and Spenard. The Chugach Way area should be considered for a Targeted Area Rezoning to facilitate redevelopment. Redevelopment of the properties between Chugach Way and 36th Avenue should establish a strong visual and physical link between Midtown and Spenard. A development node should be pursued near the Spenard Road/Alaska Railroad interface that provides a focal point for Central Spenard. In the long term, there is potential for a commuter rail transit station at this location. A commuter rail opportunity is a long-term vision that should be explored because this supports the overarching objectives of this Plan. Any such project would require significant coordination with Alaska Railroad, property owners and an array of other agencies.

### **South District Character**

South Spenard will double as a stable local neighborhood and a lively visitor district that leverages its proximity to the airport and Spenard Lake. Tourism-focused development will be designed to benefit nearby residents by incorporating elements that are appealing to both locals and visitors. This includes open space amenities, neighborhood-serving retail and improved connectivity. New mixed-use development along Spenard Road will transition in scale and use between a bustling South Spenard Corridor and the residential districts to the east and west. Spenard Road through the District will exhibit



a “leafy” landscape character to better tie into the lakefront. Some surface parking may be included adjacent to Spenard Road, but it will be well screened and buffered from the street. The Spenard Lakefront will be redesigned as a District-wide open space amenity that supports active transportation and provides a destination for the District, while still ensuring safe aviation activities.

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<sup>i</sup> [Assembly Public Portal to Assembly Documents](#) AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING AS DETERIORATED AREAS THE FOURTH AVENUE THEATRE, REED BUILDING AND ADJACENT REAL PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT, AND THE NORTHERN LIGHTS INN AND ADJACENT REAL PROPERTY LOCATED IN MIDTOWN; SETTING THE DETERIORATED AREA BOUNDARIES PURSUANT TO ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 12.35.005; PROVIDING LANDFILL FEE WAIVERS OR DISCOUNTS FOR DISPOSAL OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS INN IMPROVEMENTS; AND PROVIDING THAT INFORMATION FILED UNDER AMC SUBSECTION 12.35.010A.6. RELATED TO THE AFOREMENTIONED PROPERTIES SHALL BE DEEMED PROPRIETARY UNDER AMC SECTION 3.90.040G.

<sup>ii</sup> [AO 2020-097 OCR.pdf](#) AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING AS DETERIORATED AREA THE CENTRAL SPENARD AREA FROM THE ANCHORAGE 2040 LAND USE PLAN; AND SETTING THE DETERIORATED AREA BOUNDARIES UNDER AMC SECTION 12.35.005 WITHIN WHICH TAX INCENTIVES MAY BE ALLOWED IN THE FUTURE.

<sup>iii</sup> [Assembly Public Portal to Assembly Documents](#) AN ORDINANCE MODIFYING THE CENTRAL SPENARD DETERIORATED AREA; EXPANDING THE DETERIORATED AREA BOUNDARIES UNDER ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE (AMC) SECTION 12.35.005; CONFIRMING ELIGIBILITY FOR TAX INCENTIVES UNDER AMC 12.35.050; AND PROVIDING THAT INFORMATION SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO AMC 12.35.010A.6. OR 12.35.055B.2. RELATED TO THE AFOREMENTIONED PROPERTIES BE DEEMED PROPRIETARY UNDER AMC 3.90.040G.

## VIII. District Roadway System

### Managing the Streets, Roadways, Paths, and Sidewalks

Several high-capacity, high-speed streets in Midtown, classified as major roads, are owned and managed by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). The remainder of the streets shown on this map are owned and maintained by the municipality's Public Works Department (MOAPW). Many roads have sidewalks and pathway connections to the local trail system. DOT&PF and MOAPW coordinate the design and construction of this system and any significant improvements needed.

### Distribution of Street and Roadway Funding

The Anchorage Municipal Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS), a department of the MOA, distributes funding for new facilities and facility improvements through a federally required process. Project lists are developed each year by the MOAPW with input from the community councils. AMATS includes many of the council's projects in the AMATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a 4-year funded program. Projects listed in adopted neighborhood or district plans meet one criterion for inclusion in the TIP. Areas with adopted plans may easily compete for AMATS project funding.

### Funded Projects 2023-2026

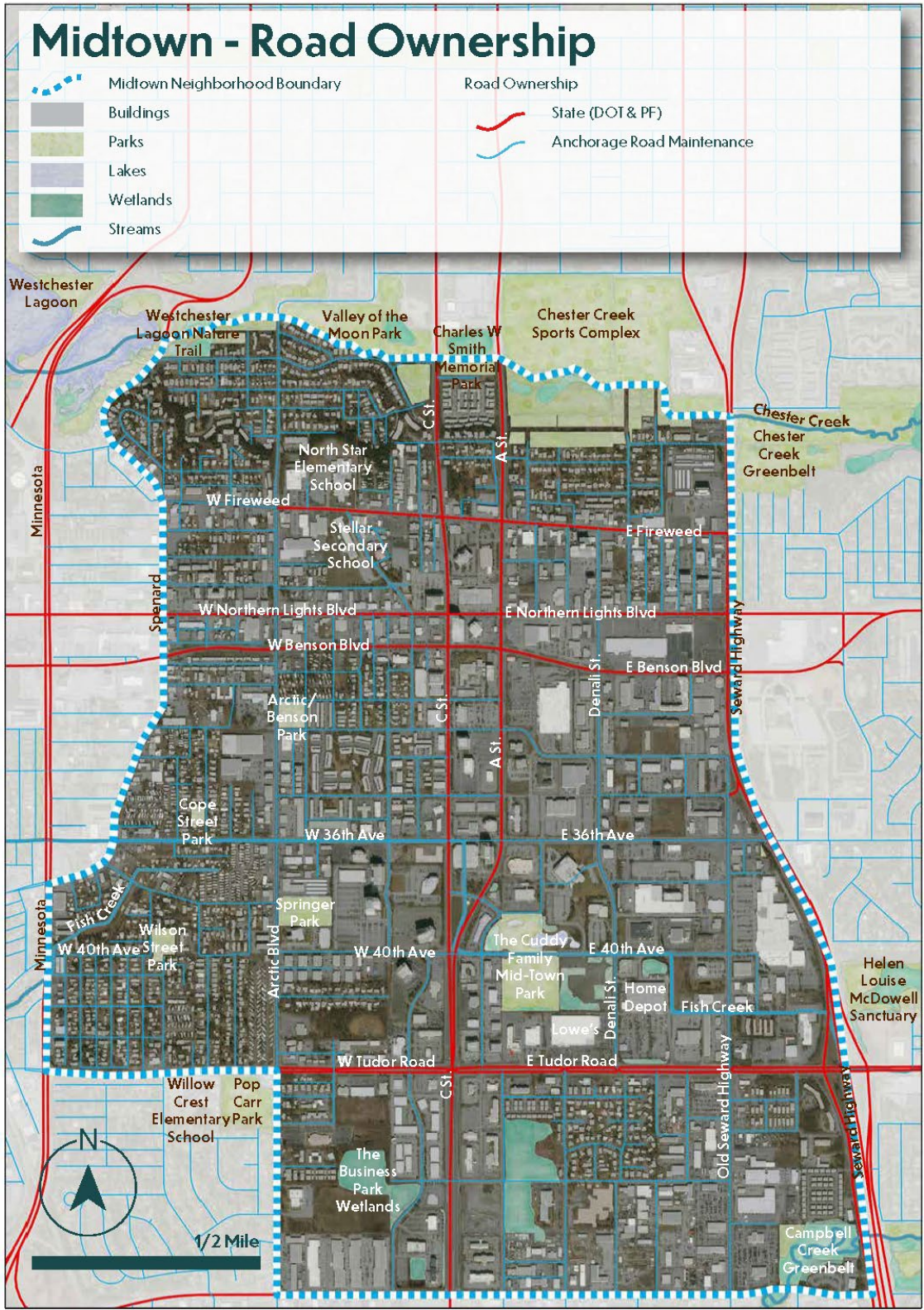
The following projects are currently funded with the 2023-2026 TIP Amendment, approved early 2024 (A.R. 2024-63).<sup>i</sup> Funding may only include planning or design. Not all the following projects are approved with construction funding.

### Roadway Projects and Plans:

- RDY00001: Fireweed Lane Rehabilitation – design and right-of-way 2025-2026.
- DY00003/RDY00015: Spenard Road Rehabilitation (Minnesota Drive to Northwood Drive).
- RDY00016: Chugach Way Rehabilitation – Right-of-Way FY 2026.
- NMO00002: Fish Creek Trail Connection – Project just halted by DOT&PF IN 2024.
- NMO00009: Northern Lights Sidewalk Repairs – FY 2026.
- PLN00011: AMATS Minnesota Drive and I/L Street Corridor Plan.
- PLN00013: AMATS Tudor Road Corridor Plan.
- PLN00014: AMATS Northern Lights Boulevard and Benson Boulevard Corridor Plan.
- PLN00020: A/C Street Corridor Plan (Tudor Road to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue) analysis of current conditions and anticipated growth patterns and their impacts.
- NHS00008: Seward Highway and Tudor Road Interchange Reconstruction – FY 2025.
- NHS00014: Seward Highway and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange.
- TRN00022: Bridge Rehabilitation (AK Railroad Section 5337) \$50K to \$5M.

### Pathway and Trail Pavement Replacement Projects:

- Minnesota Drive - Hillcrest Drive to W. Northern Lights Boulevard
- Minnesota Drive - W. Northern Lights to Tudor Road
- Tudor Road - Seward Highway to Muldoon Road
- Tudor Road - Minnesota Drive to Seward Highway
- International Airport Road - Northwood Drive to Homer Road



**Map #7 – Midtown Road Ownership Map**

## **Midtown Physical Conditions Map**

This map depicts AMATS adopted pathways, sidewalks, on-street bike lanes, Chester Creek and Fish Creek trails. This information is also important to new housing and commercial development and will assist the community councils with prioritizing planning, design, or capital improvement projects. This map may also be used to prioritize grant funding requests.

## **Chapter Recommendations for Roadway System Improvements or Management**

Several roadways traverse across the three council boundaries. The three District councils were careful not to propose roadway projects outside of their boundary area. To that end, the councils wished to work together to propose District-wide goals and projects to guide future capital improvement projects.

**Road-1:** *Roadway redesign and improvements should incorporate NACTO Street Design Guidelines and Principals; Great Streets are Great for Business, Streets Can Be Changed, Design for Safety, Sustainable Design, and Act Now.*

**Road-2:** *All DOT&PF and AMATS planning projects will brief community councils before, during, and after the projects are complete. Community Councils are advisory to the Anchorage Assembly and as such our voices in the planning process must be heard and considered in the final recommendations for design and construction of any project.*

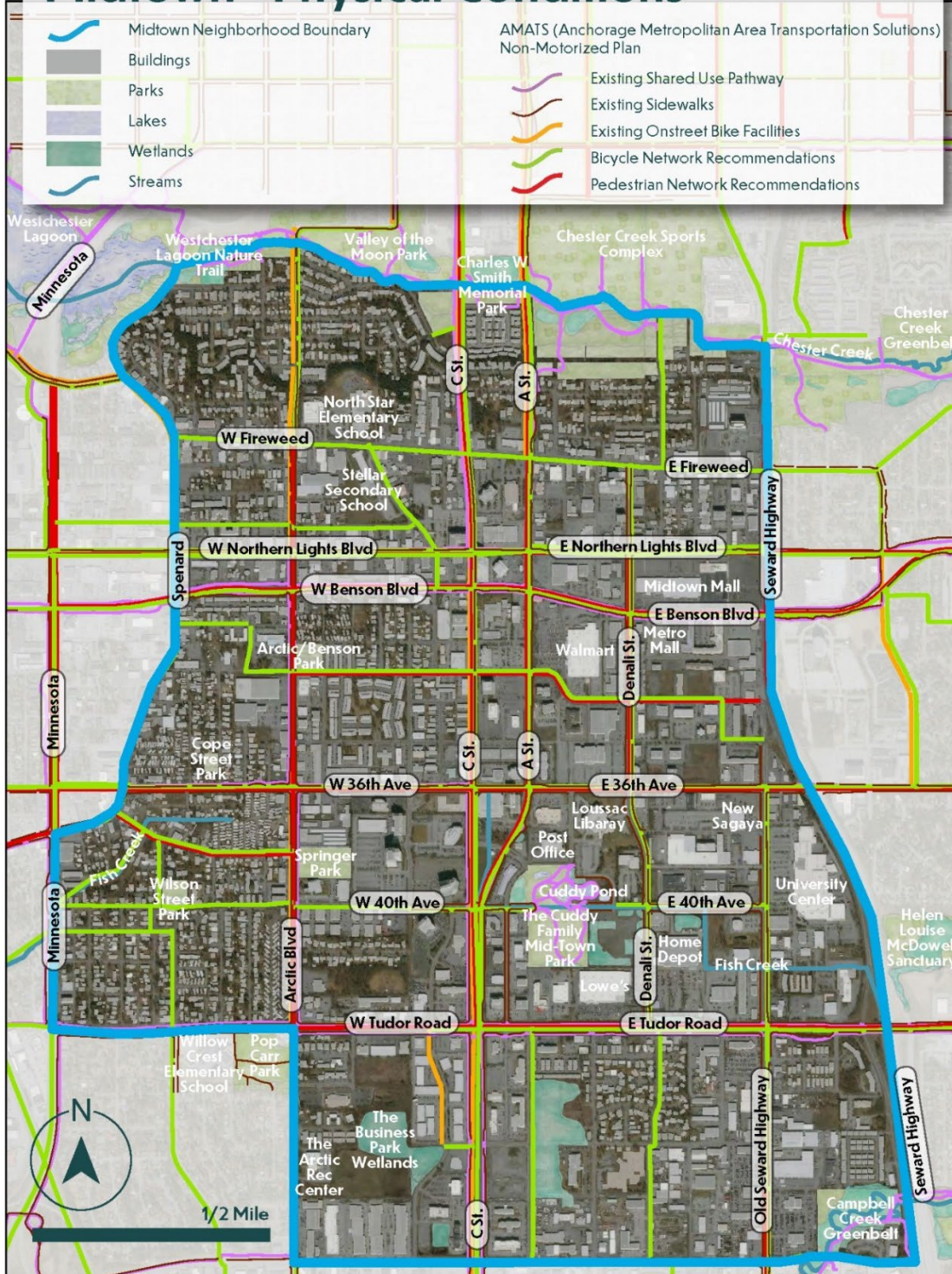
**Road-3:** *Recommendations for future roadway improvements in the MTCC Area:*

It was noted by the MTCC steering team members that most of these streets have never been upgraded and lack lights, sidewalks, storm drain, etc. The MTCC would work with the MOA or DOT&PF to prioritize funding and improvements of those roads through the MOA's annual Capital Improvement Program request.

- 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Spenard Road and C Street
- 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue between Spenard Road and C Street
- 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue between Spenard Road and C Street
- 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue between Denali Street and New Seward Highway
- 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Denali and New Seward Highway
- Bering Street between Benson Boulevard and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Cheechako Street between Benson Boulevard and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Eureka Street between Benson and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue



# Midtown - Physical Conditions



Map #8 – Midtown Physical Conditions

[AR 2024-063 TIP Amendment 2-13-24.pdf](#)



## **IX. Hazard Mitigation**

### **Anchorage All Hazards Mitigation Plan**

*This section was excerpted from the Anchorage All Hazards Mitigation Plan published by the Anchorage Office of Emergency Management.<sup>i</sup>*

The following chapter is included to meet municipal recommendations to provide information from the Anchorage All Hazards Mitigation Plan, recently updated in 2022. The MTDP planning area is susceptible to several natural and technological hazards. The chapter includes a brief description of each hazard. Hazard narratives discuss what the hazard "means to Midtown." The chapter ends with several strategies anyone can implement. Individuals, family units, businesses, and agencies may readily implement these strategies to prepare for the next disaster. The chapter also includes the location of the nearest Emergency Shelter (Willow Crest Elementary School on Tudor Road) and the two Anchorage Fire Department locations (McInnes and McRae Roads – addresses noted below).

The hazard analysis completed for the all-hazards plan finds the MOA is vulnerable to a wide range of natural, technological, and human/societal hazards including, earthquakes, avalanches, landslides, seismic ground failures, flooding, or hazardous materials accidents. The following information from the all-hazards plan is incorporated into the MTDP to raise awareness and identify projects for funding mitigation. Some of these hazards are more prevalent in Midtown due to the geographic region and socioeconomic importance of Midtown. These hazards have the potential to endanger the health and safety of this district and greater population as well as harm the economic and environmental vitality of the region.

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2002 requires that local governments have a mitigation plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which is the Municipality's All Hazards Mitigation Plan Update, henceforth referred to as the "All Hazards Plan." The All-Hazards Plan has both natural and technological hazards mapped in a Hazard Probability and Priority Ranking Chart for the Municipality of Anchorage, which summarizes the probability of any given hazard with its priority ranking and impact. This Plan is subject to ongoing updates and risk assessments and should be referred to directly for new information and mitigation best practice.

This section provides an assessment of natural hazards and technological (human-made) hazards that affect Midtown and the mitigation assets and strategies currently in place. It concludes with goals and strategies for consideration in district planning. Information from this section supports the integration of hazard mitigation into the policy goals and implementation strategies of this Plan.

### **Natural Hazards**

Natural hazards are unexpected or uncontrollable events caused by nature, such as earthquakes, floods, or volcanic eruptions. While natural, the impact of these hazards can be exacerbated by human development and changes to the landscape.

### **Earthquake and Ground Failure**

The active geology of Alaska guarantees that earthquakes will be a continuous part of life in Anchorage. While earthquakes cannot be predicted, scientists can estimate where large earthquakes will do the most catastrophic damage. Earthquakes have a higher potential for injuries and fatalities than many other hazards present in the Municipality. Secondary hazards including tsunamis, landslides, and seismically induced ground failure are a major concern for the Midtown planning area. The MOA Hazard Probability and Priority Ranking Chart ranks minor earthquakes to have a high probability, occurring every 1-4 years. Severe earthquakes have a low probability, at 11-100 years.

The noted Hardy-Lawson study defines minor earthquakes as having a negligible impact, resulting in only minor injuries, no deaths, and less than 10% property damage whereas severe earthquakes have a catastrophic impact, with more than 50 deaths/injuries and more than 50% property damage.

The Harding-Lawson Map (Harding-Lawson Associates Maps Geotechnical Hazards Assessment Study, June 1979) provides a definition of zones that are sensitive to seismically induced ground failure. The majority of Midtown is Seismic Ground Failure Zones 2 and 3, Moderately-Low and Moderate Ground Failure Susceptibility, respectively. On the northern boundary of the planning area is a relatively small segment of land classified as Seismic Zone 4 and 5, High and Very High Ground Failure Susceptibility. The areas within Zones 4 and 5 have a hazard of all types of seismically-induced ground failure, including liquefaction, translational sliding, lurching, land-spreading, cracking, and subsidence. Unreinforced masonry buildings are at a higher risk to earthquake damage than wood framed buildings. Modern building codes and construction materials and methods also reduce the severity of earthquake damage to structures and property value. Human activities that trigger landslides are usually associated with construction, such as grading, which alters the slope of an area. Changing drainage patterns, groundwater level, or surface water can also increase the risk of landslides.

### **Severe Erosion**

The Midtown area is not at risk of coastal erosion, the wearing away and movement of land. This region may, however, be impacted by riverine erosion, the wearing away of riverbanks and riverbeds over the passing of time, posing a larger risk to property than life. Erosion rates can vary significantly and can occur rapidly because of other hazards mentioned such as flooding and storms. Riverine erosion is not a significant threat to the rivers that bisect Midtown, but riverine erosion will always happen at some scale due to the flow of waterbodies constantly altering their course. There is a low probability of this hazard with negligible impact.

### **Tsunami**

Alaska Earthquake Center, Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys, and the Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency management conducted research into the tsunami risk in upper Cook Inlet. The study revealed that under specific circumstances of an earthquake and specific tide depths, the Upper Cook Inlet is subject to a tsunami hazard. A tsunami may also be a secondary hazard to a landslide, if large enough.

### **Extreme Weather**

Extreme weather includes heavy snow and rain, extreme cold and heat, ice storms, high wind, and fog. The risk of extreme weather has a high probability with limited impact.

Anchorage experiences 1-2 heavy snowfalls each winter, which consists of more than six inches of accumulation in less than 12 hours. Heavy rain has a high probability across the greater Municipality of Anchorage, depending on various weather conditions. Heavy snow and rain increase the chance of a secondary hazard of flooding in the spring, making vulnerable portions of Midtown near Campbell Creek. The biggest threat of extreme cold is to people, in the form of frostbite and hypothermia; a secondary hazard is to infrastructure failure or interruption.

### **Flooding**

Flooding occurs when weather, geology, and hydrology combine to create conditions where river and stream waters overflow outside of their usual course and spill beyond their banks. Anchorage has a high variability in annual precipitation from less than 15 inches to over 70 inches. Snowmelt provides a continuous water source throughout the spring and summer. The risk of flooding has a high probability with a negligible impact. Flooding may increase the risk of landslides.

The areas of Midtown that are flood-prone are along South Fork Little Campbell Creek, the Campbell Creek Greenbelt, and the Chester Creek Greenbelt. Flood risk is primarily during severe storms or spring breakup, worsened by years with higher-than-average snowfall. On an annual basis, the Municipality of Anchorage sends an informational letter to property owners within a floodplain with resources, safety tips, and contact where additional information can be obtained.

### **Wildfire (Urban Fire- Technological Hazard)**

Wildfires are defined as fires that rage out of control in the wilderness, such as a forest or countryside. While wildfires may not present a significant threat to Midtown, urban fires (conflagration) pose a more-present risk. Urban fires involve a structure or property within the urban or development area, which affect multiple properties. Urban fires may be associated with another disaster such as earthquakes. Every parcel within the Municipality has the potential to become a major urban fire. Modern building codes and construction materials reduce the probability and impact of urban fires. Fires have a high probability, with a limited-to-critical impact. Midtown is not within a potentially hazardous region identified by the All-Hazards Plan. However, the Anchorage Fire Department offers home assessments with specific fire mitigation recommendations.

### **Volcanic Ash Fall**

While Alaska is home to over 130 volcanoes with 90 of them being active, none of them are located within 50 miles of the Municipality of Anchorage. Volcanic ash fall is the primary hazard, which consists of small pieces of rocks, minerals, and volcanic glass sent into the air by the volcano. The risk of volcanic ash is medium, with a negligible impact. The biggest risk of volcanic activity is to aircraft and pollution to local populations.

### **Communicable Disease**

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the All-Hazards Plan included communicable diseases as a hazard to be aware of and plan for. Future updates to the All-Hazards Plan are anticipated to expand local guidance and strategies to respond to the hazard of communicable disease.

### **Technological Hazards**

Technological hazards originate from technological or industrial accidents, dangerous procedures, infrastructure failures, or human error.

### **Dam Failure**

A dam is an “artificial barrier and its appurtenant works, which may impound or divert water” (Alaska Statute 46.17.900(3)). Dam failures involve the unintended release of impounded water, either by mechanical/structural failure or improper dam release, and may be a secondary hazard to earthquakes. Dam failure poses a significant risk to property and life downstream of the dam. There are no dams or reservoirs in Midtown, posing this area to be at a very low risk for any negative consequences to nearby infrastructure failure.

### **Transportation Accident**

The transportation system in the Municipality includes air, road, rail, and marine systems. The Midtown district supports road and passenger/freight train infrastructure. While the biggest hazards for road accidents are on highways and larger capacity roads, there are several higher traffic volume roads along the boundaries and intersecting Midtown, including A and C Streets, 36th Avenue, and Dowling Road. Segments of these roads pass through both commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods of Midtown, where proximity of well-used pedestrian facilities to high volume motor vehicle roadways increases the risk of motor vehicle-pedestrian accidents. Transportation accidents have a high probability with a limited impact (See Maps #7 and Map #8, Chapter VIII).

## **Hazardous Materials Release**

Hazardous materials are any substance or material that has the potential to harm humans, animals, or the environment. Hazards associated with hazmat release are more likely to occur where they are stored and located, with a lower risk in the Midtown region due to land use patterns. Pipelines, such as the pipeline used to transport fuel from the Port of Alaska to Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, are another potential source of a hazardous materials incident. Smaller scale risks of hazmat release include gasoline leaks; while Midtown does have a few fuel stations, the number is relatively low. The probability of a hazardous materials release hazards is low with a negligible impact.

## **Energy Emergency**

The Municipality is vulnerable to localized short-term energy emergencies, with power failure being the biggest concern. The All-Hazards Plan identifies potential natural gas shortages due to the state of the Cook Inlet Gas fields and supporting infrastructure, and cites that as demand for energy increases, so does the vulnerability to this hazard. An energy emergency is predicted to have a limited impact, and the probability is not calculated as there is no historical basis for the event.

## **Communications Failure**

A communications failure is the interruption or total loss of communication systems including transmission lines, communication satellites, and associated hardware and software. A communications failure can be the result of equipment failure, human acts (deliberate or accidental), or a secondary hazard to an initial event. Widespread communications failure is anticipated during an earthquake, and the effects can be varying. Modern reliance on cellular phones and Wi-Fi communications increase vulnerability to communication failure, especially in response to an initial hazard when networks become overwhelmed. These failures can escalate minor emergencies into a disaster situation. A communications failure has a high probability with critical impact.

## **Cyber Attack**

As a result of an increased occurrence of infrastructure related cyber-attacks, the All-Hazards Plan included this hazard. Future updates to the All-Hazards Plan are anticipated to expand local guidance and strategies in responding to the hazard of cyber-attacks.

## **Preparedness and Mitigation Strategies in Place**

This subsection describes the current public facility assets in the neighborhood, mitigation strategies or programs in place, and the importance of hazard mitigation and preparedness to the public.

### **All-Hazard Plan Mitigation Assets**

Midtown has the following Emergency Shelter and Emergency Response Assets:

- **Willow Crest Elementary School:** located at 1004 W. Tudor Road, 907-742-1000 is identified as an emergency shelter by the All-Hazards Plan.
- **Anchorage Fire Department Fire Stations:**
  - Station 4: located at 4350 MacInnes Street.
  - Station 5: located at 2207 McRae Road.

The MOA's Emergency Operations Center at 1305 E Street is the central point at which all municipal departments and agencies coordinate the response to a major disaster, managed by the Office of Emergency Management (OEM). OEM provides several services including emergency updates, preparedness planning, mitigation, response, and recovery to the hazards mentioned in this section, and are more detailed in the All-Hazards Plan.

## All-Hazard Plan Goals

The All-Hazards Plan includes goals for all potential dangers that the Municipality faces, detailed below.

- **Goal 1:** Implement and maintain the MOA All Hazards Mitigation Plan.
- **Goal 2:** Inform the community on the local hazards and ways to be prepared if a hazard event occurs.
- **Goal 3:** Increase the survivability and resiliency of municipal structures and functions for local hazards.
- **Goal 4:** Improve the resiliency of essential private sector functions.
- **Goal 5:** Land Use Planning: Develop land use regulations to reduce the hazard risk to the general population and property.
- **Goal 6:** Reduce the flood risk to the community.
- **Goal 7:** Emergency Management: Create and maintain a community where people and property are safe.
- **Goal 8:** Reduce the urban and rural wildfire risk.

## Goals Relevant to the Midtown District

The goals that are most relevant to the Midtown District planning area are Goals 4 and 7. These items can be addressed at a relatively small-scale and in a realistic timeframe.

- **Goal 4:** Improve the resiliency of essential private sector functions.
- **Goal 7:** Emergency Management: Create and maintain a community where people and property are safe.

## MTDP Action Items

Hazard mitigation action items developed for this plan can be employed at a small or large scale by businesses and households. Action 4 will require participation with the MOA Emergency Office to complete:

- **AHZP-1:** Conduct fire-wise home assessments. This may include outreach to AFD for information and support.
- **AHZP-2:** Develop an emergency response plan for your business with employee training. Ensure employees know where gas and water turnoffs are located. Include an off-site gathering area for counting heads once the building has been evacuated.
- **AHZP-3:** Develop a household emergency response plan. Establish a meeting place for all family members. Compile adequate water and food to last five days for each family member
- **AHZP-4:** Work with MOA Emergency Response Team to create a plan to: Identify additional emergency shelter options within the Midtown District. An Emergency Exit Plan. Emergency Signage and Warning System.

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<sup>i</sup> [Draft MOA All Hazards Mitigation Plan 2022 v3.pdf](#)



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## X. Implementation Plan

The following includes all actions from the plan with funding, timeframes, and implementers.

**Early Action Items (1-3 Year Funding and Implementation – Identified in shaded sections (green, blue, orange) in the following tables.** Early Action items are intended for funding and implementation within the first 1-3 years of this plan. Community Council leadership will help facilitate the completion of the Early Action items by working directly with MOA departments and MOA administration to ensure these actions are funded and accomplished within the timeframe identified.

### Acronyms:

- Assembly – MOA Assembly Members
- AFD – Anchorage Fire Department
- ACDA – Anchorage Community Development Authority
- AHFC – Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
- AHZP – All-Hazards Plan
- AIDEA – Alaska Industrial Development Engineering Authority
- AMATS – Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation System (Indicates in most instances the AMATS TIP funding)
- APD – Anchorage Police Department
- ASAP – As Soon As Possible
- CIP – Capital Improvement Program (indicates MOA's annual capital improvement program)
- CPACER - Alaska C-PACE – Alaska's Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Administrative Platform
- DHHS – MOA Health Department
- DOT&PF or DOT – Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- EPA Brownfield – Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Program
- Grants – Any number of grants that could be available for a project
- HLB – MOA Real Estate or Heritage Land Bank
- HUD – Federal Housing & Urban Development
- Mayor – MOA Administration
- Muni – Municipality of Anchorage
- MTCC or MT- Midtown Community Council
- MTDP – Midtown District Plan
- NACTO – National Association of City Transportation Officials
- NGO – Various non-profit, non-government organizations that may assist in implementation
- PLN – MOA Planning Department
- PM&E – MOA Project Management & Engineering
- PR – MOA Parks
- PRIV – Private funders
- PW or PM&E – MOA Public Works
- NPS – National Park Service Historic Preservation Program
- NSCC or NS – North Star Community Council
- SOA – State of Alaska (could be several different offices within the state)
- SPCC or SP – Spenard Community Council
- SPCP – Spenard Corridor Plan
- SWS – Solid Waste Services
- TIP – Transportation Improvement Program funding approved through AMATS
- TLO – Alaska State Trust Land Office
- TRAFFIC – MOA Traffic Department
- USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

### Midtown Area Early Action Items:

- **MT-4:** Create a Cuddy Park master plan to encourage greater public use through festivals, markets, recreation, and general use.
- **MT-10:** Create more stringent “use-specific standards” within the Midtown Core Area for the following uses: Correctional Community Residential Center, Habilitative Care Facility (Small, Medium, Large), Transitional Living Facility, Homeless and Transient Shelter and Social Service Facility.
- **MT-11:** Create more stringent parameters and greater enforcement fines within the Midtown Core Area for Alcohol-Special Land Use Permits and Marijuana-Special Land Use Permits.
- **MT-15:** Strengthen crime prevention tools and activities within the Midtown area to help alleviate panhandling, loitering, vandalism, property crime, and illegal street parking.
- **MT-16:** Eliminate all illegal camping, including illegal street camping, within Midtown.

### North Star Area Early Action Items:

- **NS-1:** Leverage re-striping and quick-build infrastructure changes to make small improvements such as narrowed lanes, bump outs, planter boxes, and additional crosswalks to balance road usage and prevent vehicles from blocking existing pedestrian infrastructure.

- **NS-2:** Use temporary pilot solutions such as curbs and planters along roadways in areas identified as problems by community members to increase safety and collect community feedback for future permanent projects.
- **NS-4:** Encourage city and DOT to triage minimum usability ASAP for snow removal, such as prioritizing one side of the sidewalk over complete coverage.
- **NS-7:** Fund community efforts to install murals and placemaking signage such as the repainting of the Spenard and Hillcrest mural.
- **NS-10:** Work with the Muni on installation of additional bus shelters and benches, and additional infrastructure in Valley of the Moon park to incentivize year-round use.

### Spenard Area Early Action Items:

- **SP-6:** Put all parcels in the Spenard Corridor on the Municipal water system.
- **SP-14:** Update all intersections to allow for non-motorized crossing at all points.
- **SP-17:** Seek funding to complete an engineering and development plan to daylight Fish Creek
- **SP-16:** Redesignate functional classifications where classifications are inappropriate to how the roadways are currently functioning and being used.

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
<b>MT-1</b>	Identify which traffic corridors should remain the same to maintain ease of ingress and egress for individual properties and the MTDP area.	MOA CIP	1-3 years	MOA Mayor, APD, AFD, PM&E
<b>MT-2</b>	Identify which traffic corridors should be transformed to better facilitate Midtown residential housing.	MOA CIP	1-3 years	TRAFFIC, MOA Mayor, PM&E
<b>MT-3</b>	Establish limitations on road projects by requiring an economic impact analysis for each project and greater consensus with the community council.	MOA CIP	1 - year	MOA Assembly, TRAFFIC, PM&E
<b>MT-4</b>	Create a Cuddy Park master plan to encourage greater public use through festivals, markets, recreation, and general use.	MOA CIP	Ongoing	MOA PR
<b>MT-5</b>	Establish incentives to encourage a catalyst residential housing development at the “archive” site.		3-5 Years	MOA, HLB, Assembly
<b>MT-6</b>	Limit uses on the “archive” site by only allowing a small amount of commercial space and not permitting the following uses: correctional community residential center, habilitative care facility (Small/Medium/Large), transitional living facility, homeless and transient shelter, and social services facility.		1 Year	MOA, HLB, Assembly
<b>MT-7</b>	Exempt Title 21 provisions that prevent mixed-use development.		1 Year	MOA, Assembly, Planning
<b>MT-8</b>	Identify and change barriers to commercial-to-residential conversions within Titles 21 and 23.		3-5 Years	MOA, AMATS, Planning
<b>MT-9</b>	Advocate for infrastructure sufficient to support new residential construction within the Midtown area.		1 Year	MOA
<b>MT-10</b>	Create more stringent “use-specific standards” within the Midtown Core Area for the following uses: Correctional Community Residential Center, Habilitative Care Facility (Small, Medium, Large), Transitional Living Facility, Homeless and Transient Shelter and Social Service Facility.		1 Year	MOA Planning, Mayor, Assembly
<b>MT-11</b>	Create more stringent parameters and greater enforcement fines within the Midtown Core Area for Alcohol-Special Land Use Permits and Marijuana-Special Land Use Permits.		1 Year	MOA Planning, Mayor, Assembly
<b>MT-12</b>	Implement a 20-year property tax abatement for new housing within Midtown.		1-3 Years	MOA, Assembly

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
<b>MT-13</b>	Identify and exempt Title 21 land use policies that disincentivize new Midtown housing.		3-5 Years	MOA Planning
<b>MT-14</b>	Fund and Complete a MTDP Step 3.		3-5 Years	MOA Planning
<b>MT-15</b>	Strengthen crime prevention tools and activities within the Midtown area to help alleviate panhandling, loitering, vandalism, property crime, and illegal street parking.		1-3 Years	MOA, MTCC, APD
<b>MT-16</b>	Eliminate all illegal camping, including illegal street camping, within Midtown.	MOA CIP	1-3 Years	MOA
<b>MT-17</b>	Create an incentive program to bring new businesses into the Midtown District that may provide 24-7 operations.		1-3 Years	MOA, MTCC
<b>MT-18</b>	Continue to work to ensure current property rights are not reduced through zoning action, land use code, and any other land use plans or actions.		1 Year	MOA/MTCC
<b>MT-19</b>	Create provisions within the Midtown Core Area that encourage restaurants, entertainment spaces and shopping venues to use outdoor spaces.		1-3 Years	MOA, MTCC, DHHS



ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
<b>NS-1</b>	Leverage re-striping and quick-build infrastructure changes to make small improvements such as narrowed lanes, bump outs, planter boxes, and additional crosswalks to balance road usage and prevent vehicles from blocking existing pedestrian infrastructure.	MOA CIP	EA:1-3 Years	MOA PM&E, Traffic
<b>NS-2</b>	Use temporary pilot solutions such as curbs and planters along roadways in areas identified as problems by community members to increase safety and collect community feedback for future permanent projects.	MOA CIP	EA:1-3 Years	MOA PM&E, Traffic
<b>NS-3</b>	Provide the community council with the drafted map of snow clearing and landscaping priorities for sidewalks such as those near schools, care facilities, and bus stops.		Ongoing	MOA PM&E, Maintenance
<b>NS-4</b>	Encourage city and DOT to triage minimum usability ASAP, such as prioritizing one side of the sidewalk over complete coverage.		EA:1-3 Years	MOA PM&E DOT&PF, Traffic
<b>NS-5</b>	Establish expectations for regular trash removal near camps with the municipality.		1 year	MOA PR
<b>NS-6</b>	Engage the municipality and service providers to leverage community member “eyes on the street” to direct resources towards camps in the area and mitigate their impact.		Ongoing	Several MOA departments, APD, PR
<b>NS-7</b>	Fund community efforts to install murals and placemaking signage such as the repainting of the Spenard and Hillcrest mural.	Grants	EA:1-3 Years	NSCC, MOA PM&E, 1% FOR ART
<b>NS-8</b>	NSCC will work with the City, Visit Anchorage, The Chamber of Commerce, and other entities to complete a plan for developing the identity of North Star.	Grants		NSCC
<b>NS-9</b>	Install way-finding routes to connect Midtown, North Star, and Spenard business locations, and encourage the use of walking routes through core area.	Grants	1-3 years	NSCC/MTCC SPCC/MOA TRAFFIC
<b>NS-10</b>	Work with the Muni on installation of additional bus shelters and benches, and additional infrastructure in Valley of the Moon park to incentivize year-round use.	AMATS TIP	EA:1-3 Years	People Mover, PR
<b>NS-11</b>	Work with local organizations, the Muni, and business to fund/incentivize and install additional bike parking in parks such as Mulcahy Park and at local businesses, schools, and other destinations.	Grants	2-5 years	MOA Parks ASD, Bike Anchorage, Parks Foundation

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
<b>NS-12</b>	Update code to incentivize conversion to, and new builds of mixed-use properties relevant to area such as daycare facilities, bakeries, etc.		2-5 years	MOA Planning, DHHS
<b>NS-13</b>	Evaluation of new stairs or pathways on easements or acquired property to better connect upper and lower NSCC.	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E
<b>NS-14</b>	Design for lower speeds to create inviting, and accessible streets that encourage pedestrians and drivers to linger, congregate, and patronize local businesses.	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E, TRAFFIC
<b>NS-15</b>	Add additional infrastructure and signage to schools' crossings following "Safe Routes to Schools" model	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E, ASD
<b>NS-16</b>	Addition of protected bike lanes and pedestrian facilities designed to NACTO Complete Streets manuals adopted by the Muni to ensure connectivity for both vehicles and pedestrians.	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E, TRAFFIC, Bike Anchorage
<b>NS-17</b>	Continued support for facilities serving vulnerable residents such as the MACK House and CSS Complex Care, and for programs that increase the safety and livability of the community such as trail grooming, needle exchanges, diaper exchanges, mobile crisis teams, Anchorage Safety Patrol, litter clearance, and public restrooms.		Ongoing	Mayor, PR, DHHS, APD
<b>NS-18</b>	Require adequate width in non-motorized facilities to allow year-round use by both pedestrians and cyclists and ease of maintenance. (e.g. consider the use of full-width shared use pathways used in other winter cities that allow for plow truck access, reducing the need for specialized and lower speed equipment).	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E, Bike Anchorage, TRAFFIC
<b>NS-19</b>	Where possible, use physical buffers between traffic and non-motorized users to increase the comfort level of pedestrians such as trees and/or other landscaping that may also serve as winter snow storage.	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E
<b>NS-20</b>	Prioritize actively designed streets that carefully consider the use of each section of road resulting in a profile that may allow for higher volume access to areas such as schools or turns onto arterials but may taper down elsewhere so that larger traffic volumes are not needed (e.g. Bayshore Dr.).	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
<b>NS-21</b>	Add raised crosswalks to crosswalks within CC area and surrounding roads where possible (e.g. Latouche street in Rogers Park). Such as but not limited to 19th and Arctic, 23rd and Barrow, 19th and Spenard, Stellar and North Star Connection.	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E
<b>NS-22</b>	Phase in widened sidewalks and additional crossings on Seward Highway.	AMATS	Ongoing	DOT&PF
<b>NS-23</b>	Add pedestrian access to the trail underpass connected to sidewalks along Seward Highway, and C Street.	AMATS	Ongoing	DOT&PF
<b>NS-24</b>	Study implementation of red-light cameras, sound meters, and other automated traffic enforcement methods to reduce the rates of red-light violations and excessive speeding.	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E
<b>NS-25</b>	Evaluate the impacts of a right-on-red ban in the NSCC area.	AMATS	Ongoing	MOA PM&E
<b>NS-26</b>	Implement policy changes that add additional housing in the NSCC through up-zoning, infill development, and other changes to improve economics of denser housing developments.	MOA	Ongoing	Mayor, MOA Planning, ASSEMBLY
<b>NS-27</b>	Support residents of mobile home communities through community and policy efforts that consider the impact of new developments on these uniquely dense and affordable housing options, through both careful consideration of potential re-development development and policies that minimize impacts of potential re-development.	MOA, State, AKLEGIS, PRIV	Ongoing	Mayor, MOA Planning

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
SP-1	Design transit stops and hubs to facilitate efficient and comfortable bus use to include umbrella-style shelter, seating, trash can, and secure bicycle racks.	AMATS	Ongoing	AMATS/PM&E, PeopleMover
SP-2	Improve transit service along the Spenard Corridor by increasing the frequency of bus service throughout the Corridor to a minimum of 30 minutes.	AMATS	Ongoing	People Mover
SP-3	Cope Street & Wilson Street Park Improvements.	Parks	3-5 Years	Parks
SP-4	Promote development of gateways and enhancement of key intersections.	Grants	1-3 Years	SPCC
SP-5	Design and upgrade Chugach Way from Spenard Rd to Arctic Blvd as a facility for multimodal transit.	AMATS	1-3 Years	AMATS/PM&E
SP-6	Put all parcels in the Spenard Corridor on the Municipal water system.	AWWU	EA:1-3 Years	AWWU
SP-7	Place and maintain public trash cans no further than at each intersection in the Spenard Corridor.	SWS	Now	SWS
SP-8	Design facilities classified as Minor Arterials and smaller as Complete Streets.	AMATS	Ongoing	PM&E
SP-9	Participate in the completion of the Fireweed Lane Corridor Study funded by AMATS in 2025 – <i>Amended from SPCP.</i>	AMATS	Ongoing	SPCC
SP-10	Remove Minnesota Drive from the National Highway System.	DOT&PF	Ongoing	SPCC, AMATS
SP-11	Participate in the completion of the Tudor Road Corridor Study funded by AMATS in 2025 – <i>Amended from SPCP.</i>	AMATS	Ongoing	SPCC
SP-12	Participate in the completion of the Northern Lights and Benson Boulevard Corridor Study funded by AMATS in 2025 – <i>Amended from the SPCP.</i>	AMATS	Ongoing	SPCC
SP-13	Update all intersections to allow for non-motorized crossing at all points.	AMATS	3-10 Years	PM&E
SP-14	Create marked and signaled crosswalks across lanes designed for motorized transit at a distance no further than 0.2 miles.	AMATS	EA:1-3 Years	AMATS, TRAFFIC
SP-15	Create diagonal crossing opportunities at intersections that involve facilities classified as Minor Arterials or larger.	AMATS	3-10 Years	PM&E

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
SP-16	Redesignate functional classifications where classifications are inappropriate to how the roadways are currently functioning and being used.	AMATS	EA:1-3 Years	PM&E
SP-17	Seek funding to complete an engineering and development plan for Fish Creek – Amended from the SPCP.	Parks/CIP	EA:1-3 Years	SPCC
SP-18	Design and upgrade Spenard Road from Benson Blvd to Minnesota Dr for multimodal transit, including buffers no smaller than 2 feet between non-motorized and motorized transit lanes.	AMATS	3-10 Years	PM&E
SP-19	Rehabilitate 36th Avenue to include lower design speed. Redesignate the functional classification if necessary from Arctic to Minnesota Drive.	AMATS	3-10 Years	PM&E
SP-20	Incentivize shared parking lots in the Spenard Corridor through a tax abatement program.		Ongoing	SPCC
SP-21	Manage ROW for community priorities.	AMATS	Ongoing	SPCC
SP-22	Transportation routes scheduled for upgrade shall include an enhancement or buffer zone of no less than 4 feet between the lanes for motorized and non-motorized transit to allow for a safe distance between transit modes and snow storage.	AMATS	3-10 Years	PM&E
SP-23	Mixed-use buildings and other non-residential development along the corridors shall be sited and designed to sensitively transition to adjacent single-family properties. Corridor development must strategically arrange site features, integrate architectural elements and include site design elements that reduce impacts on abutting single-family properties.	PRIV	Ongoing	SPCC
SP-24	Reduce operational impacts of noise and odor, minimize the presence of looming walls that impact privacy and ensure adequate solar access to sensitive properties are all key factors to consider.		Ongoing	SPCC



ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
<b>Planning Team Recommended Action Items</b>				
HSG-1	<p>Increase all types of housing whenever possible by applying the following to new and rehabilitation housing projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use up all the infill lots.</li> <li>▪ Use larger tracts of land in single ownership.</li> <li>▪ Renovate and add existing residential and commercial buildings.</li> <li>▪ Target strategies to add housing for all income levels.</li> <li>▪ Adopt new property tax incentives.</li> <li>▪ Provide publicly-funded infrastructure.</li> <li>▪ State and local governments or agencies will provide land for free or at reduced cost for low- and median-income housing.</li> <li>▪ Create development agreements with developers to streamline and expedite housing development.</li> <li>▪ Seek EPA Brownfield clean-up grant funding through the MOA Planning Department to assist in clean-ups on properties prime for housing.</li> <li>▪ Seek Federal grant funding grants or low-interest loans including Housing &amp; Urban Development (HUD), Department of Defense (DOD), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to fund new housing.</li> <li>▪ Seek Federal historic preservation tax credits through the State of Alaska from the National Park Service to assist in historic building renovation and reuse to provide new options for funding new housing.</li> <li>▪ Consider Planned Unit Developments on lots 1 acre or more to allow for small-lot developments and smaller entry-level homes.</li> <li>▪ Seek CPACER and other clean energy and economic development funding to 100% upfront reduce costs for new housing (See Alaska C-PACE – Alaska's Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Administrative Platform).</li> <li>▪ Waive all MOA fees including dump fees, entitlement fees, and utility fees within certain parameters, on public properties and private properties when a substantial amount of housing will be built.</li> <li>▪ Utility providers should be approached early to determine fee waivers, construction timing, and utility capacity, necessary upgrades, location to ensure no unknown financial impacts occur.</li> </ul>		ASAP and ongoing	Mayor and Assembly, Utility providers, SOA, TLO, HFC, AIDEA, Development Services, MOA Planning, MOA Brownfield Coalition.

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Redevelop existing mobile home parks transitioning them into residential ownership models.</li> <li>▪ Inform potential willing sellers of their relocation rights and benefits in redevelopment projects using either public or private funding (See Alaska Right of Way Manual).</li> <li>▪ Preapprove in-state modular constructed small house options that build to IBC and HUD standards.</li> </ul>			
<b>LUPM-1</b>	Amend the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan Map to include the proposed land use plan and narrative from the MTDP.		Within 90 days of MTDP adoption	MOA Planning
<b>LUPM-2</b>	Fund and Complete the MTDP Step 3 working group process.		1 Year	MOA Planning
<b>LUPM-3</b>	Fund an outreach process to engage property owners, business owners, developers, and residents regarding the benefits of a revised code for Midtown.		1-2 Years	MOA Planning
<b>LUPM-4</b>	Streamline the 10-year deteriorated property tax abatement approval process.		ASAP	MOA CFO/MOA Legal
<b>AHZIP-1</b>	Conduct fire-wise home assessments. This may include outreach to AFD for information and support.		Ongoing	MOA EOC assisting residents
<b>AHZIP-2</b>	Develop an emergency response plan for your business with employee training. Ensure employees know where gas and water turnoffs are located. Include an off-site gathering area for counting heads once the building has been evacuated.	OEM PRIV	Ongoing	MOA EOC assisting businesses
<b>AHZIP-3</b>	Develop a household emergency response plan. Establish a meeting place for all family members. Compile adequate water and food to last five days for each family member.	OEM PRIV	Ongoing	MOA EOC outreach to community members
<b>AHPZ-4</b>	<p>Work with MOA Emergency Response Team to create a plan to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify additional emergency shelter options within the Midtown District.</li> <li>2. An Emergency Exit Plan.</li> <li>3. Emergency Signage and Warning System.</li> </ol>	OEM PRIV	1-2 Years	MOA EOC, Planning, Community Councils in MTDP District
<b>Road-1</b>	Roadway redesign and improvements should incorporate NACTO Street Design Guidelines and Principals; Great Streets are Great for Business, Streets Can Be Changed, Design for Safety, Sustainable Design, and Act Now.	AMATS	Ongoing	PM&E, TRAFFIC, AMATS

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING	TIMELINE	IMPLEMENTERS
<b>Road-2</b>	All DOT&PF and AMATS planning projects will brief community councils before, during, and after the projects are complete. Community Councils are advisory to the Anchorage Assembly and as such our voices in the planning process must be heard and considered in the final recommendations for design and construction of any project.	AMATS	Now, Ongoing	PM&E, TRAFFIC
<b>Road-3</b>	Recommendations for future roadway improvements in the MTCC Area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 30<sup>th</sup> Ave between Spenard and C Street</li> <li>▪ 31<sup>st</sup> Ave between Spenard and C Street</li> <li>▪ 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave between Spenard and C Street</li> <li>▪ 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave between Denali and New Seward</li> <li>▪ 34<sup>th</sup> Ave between Denali and New Seward</li> <li>▪ Bering Street between Benson and 36<sup>th</sup></li> <li>▪ Cheechako Street between Benson and 36<sup>th</sup></li> <li>▪ Eureka Street between Benson and 36<sup>th</sup></li> </ul>	AMATS MOA CIP	ASAP	PM&E, TRAFFIC



**Building Our City's Future**

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