

# Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission Meeting

Thursday, August 22, 2024 at 1:30PM

Permit & Development Center, Conf. Room 170  
4700 Elmore Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99507

*Join via Microsoft Teams - Meeting ID: 263 322 183 869, Passcode: jHGL3p*

*Join by Telephone - 907-519-0237, Conference ID: 987366530#*

## A G E N D A

- I. **Call to Order and Statement of Procedure**
- II. **Roll Call, Introductions and Disclosures**
- III. **Approval of Agenda and Minutes**
  - a. August 22, 2024 Agenda
  - b. May 23, 2024 Minutes
- IV. **Director's Report**
- V. **Proposed Action Items and Public Hearings** *(No Public Hearing shall extend over 60 minutes without an extension by majority vote of the commission. If not extended, Public Hearing may be held open and continued to the next meeting if public testimony is not complete.)*
  - a. **Resolution 2024-05:** A Resolution of the Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission recommending approval of the withdrawal from HLB Inventory and transfer of management authority of HLB Parcel 6-075, legally described as Alyeska - Prince Addition Tract F, to the Girdwood Parks and Recreation Department.
  - b. **Resolution 2024-06:** A Resolution of the Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission recommending Assembly approval of the disposal by a relocatable public use easement to Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance, dba Bikewood, of portions within HLB parcels 6-251 and 6-296 in Girdwood, legally described as portions of SEC 3 & 10 T10N R2E S.M., for twenty (20) years at no cost, and to amend the 2024 HLB Annual Work Plan.
- VI. **Persons or Items Not on the Agenda** *(THREE minutes per individual, each person may only speak once, commissioners and staff will not answer questions, but may have questions for you after your testimony.)*
- VII. **Commissioner Comments**
- VIII. **Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting Date:** Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 1:30pm in the Permit & Development Center (4700 Elmore Road 99507) or via Microsoft Teams and telephone.
- IX. **Adjournment**

# Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission Meeting

Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 1:30PM

Permit & Development Center  
4700 Elmore Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99507

*or via Microsoft Teams and Telephone*

## MINUTES

### **I. Call to Order and Statement of Procedure**

Chair Marshall called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm.

### **II. Roll Call, Introductions and Disclosures**

Present: Chair Marshall, Commissioners Oswald, Chmielowski, and Charnon

Excused: Vice Chair Fynn and Commissioner Hansen

Staff Present: Director Tiffany Briggs, Land Management Officer Emma Giboney, and Contractor Nicole Jones-Vogel

### **III. Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

**a.** May 23, 2024 Agenda, Commissioner Oswald moved, seconded by Commissioner Chmielowski, there was no objection and the agenda passed as presented.

**b.** April 25, 2024 Minutes, Commissioner Charnon moved, seconded by Commissioner Chmielowski, there was no objection and the minutes passed as presented.

### **IV. Director's Report**

Director Briggs provided an update on many projects.

- Tract Plat for Holtan Hills was recorded and Phases 1 and 2 were transferred to the developer.
- The Holtan Hills Section Line Easement vacation is still underway as well as coordination with AWWU and the developer for infrastructure improvements.
- The Assembly approved the Potter Marsh Watershed Park project.
- Appraisals are being ordered for Maui Subdivision and the Girdwood Industrial Park.
- Request for Proposals (RFP) to be issued soon for a natural burial cemetery in South Anchorage.
- Four new Laurel Acres properties will likely be in the HLB inventory through the foreclosure process.
- New groundwater wells to be installed for the contaminated site known as "Peacock Cleaners" near Lake Otis and Tudor.
- Levee update, "Glacier Creek Embankment", information gathering the who/what/where/when/why. USACE maintains all levees on their website and this

- structure is not listed in their database. At this time the working understanding is that the Corps began doing repairs after the 1964 Earthquake and they did many improvements without any permits. Since it is not a listed “levee” there are no reporting requirements associated with the structure.
- The June HLBAC meeting will be canceled.

## V. Presentations

### a. Paul Ervasti, Municipal Administrative Hearing Officer: Boards and Commissions Ethics Training.

Paul Ervasti presented “The Municipal Code of Ethics - A summary of AMC Chapter 1.15”. Mr. Ervasti focused on conflicts of interests, the purpose of the code, gifts, Commissioners’ duty to disclose potential conflicts, how a conflict is decided, participating in political activity, use of nonpublic information, and Board of Ethics. In summary, “if in doubt, do a disclosure”.

### b. Dan Starr, President, Bikewood: Girdwood mountain bike trail project update.

Mr. Starr provided an overview of the former Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance, now known as Bikewood. The first trails were built in 2018; Small House, Earn Again, and 2 Cents. All trails are off of the Nordic 5K Loop - modeled after Kincaid. Trails are approximately half a mile each.

Mr. Starr provided an overview of the trail building process. 90% was done with a contractor and 10% done with volunteer effort. Mr. Starr showed a 2-minute video that was created during the rebranding from Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance to Bikewood. Mr. Starr talked about fundraising through grants and events.

Bikewood has been wanting to move forward with additional trails; however, they’ve been awaiting the approval of the Girdwood Trails Plan, which has recently been adopted by the Anchorage Assembly. The Trails Plan identifies three areas for mountain biking trails. Currently waiting for resolutions of support from the Land Use Committee in Girdwood. Hoping to begin construction later this summer.

Mr. Starr presented Phase 2 of the Girdwood Bike Park (red trails on the presentation) the trails would be considerably longer than the existing trails and would be located in the longest area of downhill grade. Proposed 4 - 6 foot tread with a 12-foot clearing distance. Bikewood has a master plan that lays out a handful of additional trails.

Mr. Starr discussed a few challenges including that if this land was under the Parks and Recreation purview it would result in the approval process being much less cumbersome.

Staff provided an overview of the history of Phase 1 through the HLBAC and Assembly and notes that an Easement has not yet been recorded, due to as-built surveys not having been submitted by Bikewood.

**VI. Persons or Items Not on the Agenda**

Amanda Tuttle, Girdwood Resident

Ms. Tuttle stated that she sent an email in April. She asserted that the HLB has not been conducting site land use studies, particularly for Girdwood. Ms. Tuttle requested a response from staff.

**VII. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Charnon commented on the path for approval of the new trails for Bikewood being simplified due to the approval of the Girdwood Trails Plan. Staff provided a response on trail updates in general and how the easement process follows a similar process.

**VIII. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting Date**

Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 1:30pm in the Permit & Development Center (4700 Elmore Road 99507) or via Microsoft Teams and telephone.

**IX. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 2:22 pm.



**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**  
**REAL ESTATE DEPARTMENT**  
**HERITAGE LAND BANK**

**PROJECTS UPDATE REPORT**

**August 16, 2024**

**Pending and Recently Completed Disposals**

- *3-027A – Dowling Substation (HLBAC Res 2022-03, As Amended)*  
A Purchase and Sale agreement will be drafted, and documents will be prepared for taking this disposal to the Anchorage Assembly for approval. This transaction is anticipated to be complete in 2024.
- *3-078A-D – Lake Otis and Tudor (HLBAC Res 2021-01; AO 2022-50)*  
The disposal of these 4 parcels, which includes an Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) contaminated site, has been under contract since December of 2021. The purchaser is working with DEC and the liable party to close the site, with the plan to redevelop to site into a car wash. This transaction has been extended several times and is now anticipated to close by the end of 2024.

**Pending and Recently Completed Acquisitions**

- *5-041 – Laurel Acres (HLBAC Res 2023-01; AO 2023-113)*  
On November 7, 2023, the Assembly approved the acquisition of Lots 41 & 42 of Block 10 of the Laurel Acres Subdivision for future wetland mitigation. This transaction is anticipated to close in 2024, pending current owner action.
- *5-041 – Laurel Acres Tax Foreclosures (AO 2024-58)*  
Real Estate Services is seeking authorization from the Assembly to retain two tax foreclosed parcels in the Laurel Acres Subdivision for public purpose. It is anticipated that these two parcels would come into the HLB Inventory for future wetland mitigation credits. There will be a Public Hearing regarding this item at the September 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly meeting.

**Current & Continuing Projects**

- *2-127-136 – Potter Marsh Watershed Park (HLBAC Res 2024-03; AO 2024-47/8/9)*  
Assembly Ordinances 2024-47, 48 & 49 were approved by the Anchorage Assembly on May 21<sup>st</sup>. These ordinances authorized the transfer of ten HLB parcels to Parks and Recreation, the acquisition of the adjoining 200 acres using grant funding, and a Great Land Trust held conservation easement being placed on the entire 300-acre Potter Marsh Watershed Park area. HLB continues to collaborate with GLT and the Parks and Recreation Department to meet the

grant requirements and project goals. It is anticipated that this transfer and acquisition will occur at the beginning of 2025.

- *2-156 – Hillside Cemetery Project RFP*  
On June 17<sup>th</sup>, HLB released an RFP for the development of this 9.5-acre parcel for cemetery purposes. HLB received one submission, which will be reviewed in the coming weeks.
- *4-046 and 4-047 – Former Native Hospital Site*  
There has been renewed interest in activating the Former Native Hospital Site. ACDA has expressed interest in developing an RV park at the site and HLB issued them a permit to perform due diligence work. This proposal will likely be presented to the HLBAC in the coming months, with a resolution for recommendation at a subsequent meeting.
- *5-041 – Laurel Acres Parcel Acquisitions*  
HLB Staff sent letters to all property owners in Laurel Acres seeking donations in February of 2022. Several property owners are considering sale and/or donation to HLB. This is anticipated to be a continuing project with parcels coming before HLBAC as they are processed. Eight parcels have been acquired since starting the project.
- *6-011B portion – Glacier Creek Village*  
HLB, Alyeska Development Holdings LP, and Seth Andersen entered into a Letter of Intent in September of 2023. Alyeska and Andersen have begun preliminary land and site planning, surveying, and environmental investigation. Alyeska Development Holdings submitted an Area Master Plan Modification & Development Master Plan to the Planning and Zoning Commission, which was adopted with conditions on June 10, 2024 (Case 2024-0061). This Plan includes a portion of HLB 6-011B but does not commit HLBAC to any action. As this project progresses HLB Staff will keep HLBAC updated.
- *Holtan Hills Tracts 1 & 2 (formerly HLB 6-011/6/7)*  
HLB Staff continues to collaborate with the developer and implement the Development Agreement and AO 2023-137, As Amended. HLB Staff is coordinating with AWWU on the sewer extension and other site-related work to support the Holtan Hills project. HLB continues to work with the State Department of Natural Resource's to vacate the Section Line Easement.
- *6-057F – Girdwood Industrial Park*  
HLB Staff presented a preliminary feasibility study of different future options for the GWIP to HLBAC and GBOS in April. HLB has requested an appraisal for the several options, which is anticipated to be completed in the next few weeks. Staff will continue to update HLBAC and GBOS as the project proceeds.
- *6-076 – Girdwood South Townsite*  
HLB Staff is working with Girdwood Community Land Trust to explore the development requirements of HLB Parcel 6-076 for a potential long-term ground lease. At this time, GCLT has released a Request for Information (RFI) to the development community as part of their due diligence. We anticipate after reviewing the information GCLT will be before the HLBAC to present a project update.

## **Administrative and Land Management**

- *2025 Work Plan*

It is anticipated that HLB Staff will begin drafting the 2025 Work Plan in the coming weeks.

- *Contaminated Site Monitoring*

HLB continues to work with contractors and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to monitor the contamination at HLB Parcels 3-078A-E. New monitoring wells were installed this month to work towards delineating the potential contamination plume. Monitoring is scheduled to occur on 3-078A-D in the coming month.

- *Wetland Monitoring*

Routine wetland monitoring will occur in the coming weeks in the conservation easement areas that are used for wetland mitigation credits. These areas include in Laurel Acres in southwest Anchorage. The Arlberg CE is scheduled to move to long-term monitoring, pending USACE approval.

- *GIS Mapping*

HLB staff works with the MOA Geographic Data & Information Center (GDIC) to routinely update public and internal HLB maps with parcel, zoning and wetland information. HLB Staff is working with the ROW/Survey division to update the easement layer on many HLB parcels.

- *Site Visits & Inspections*

HLB Staff will continue to visit HLB owned parcels in 2024. Real Estate Department Staff is working with GDIC to make a georeferenced online form to make inspections more streamlined.

## Land Use Permits

HLB Permit	Issued To	Permitted Use	Expiration
2017-29	Chugach Powder Guides	Heli-skiing	2024-05-31
2022-02	Girdwood Equipment Rental	Storage	2024-05-31
2023-07	3 Barons Renaissance Fair, Inc.	Storage	2024-05-31
2016-21	Silverton Mountain Guides	Heli-skiing	2024-06-30
2018-13	Alaska Guide Collective	Mountain guiding	2024-06-30
2024-05	True North Sustainable Development Solutions, LLC	Archaeological surveying	2024-06-30
2016-09	Girdwood Forest Fair	Vendor camping	2024-07-10
2023-03	AWWU	Geotechnical investigation	2024-07-15
2024-04	USFS	Spruce Beetle research	2024-07-31
2018-10	Chugach Powder Guides	Access to Notch Hut	2024-08-31
2023-05	Alyeska Development Holdings, LP and Seth Andersen	Due diligence activities	2024-09-15
2024-02	QAP	Storage	2024-09-30
2024-03	USFS Forest Inventory and Analysis Program	Forest research	2024-09-30
2024-01	Anchorage Community Development Authority	Due diligence activities	2024-10-15
2007-08	Girdwood Parks & Recreation	Frisbee golf course	2024-12-31
2009-13	Girdwood Valley Service Area	Storage	2024-12-31
2011-15	Snow Free Snowplowing	Storage	2024-12-31
2017-10	Alaska Railroad Corporation	Avalanche mitigation	2024-12-31
2019-08	Girdwood Valley Service Area	Park & Ride	2024-12-31
2023-01	Ritual Bough	Ceremonies	2025-01-31
2021-07	Turnagain Tree Care	Contractor wood lot	2025-02-10
2022-04	Girdwood Community Land Trust	Storage	2025-02-10
2018-01	ADOT&PF/TSAIA	Access	2025-03-30
2023-02	Girdwood Community Land Trust	Due diligence activities	2025-04-30
2021-18	Ridgetop Builders	Wood mill	2025-08-01
2020-10	Straight to the Plate	Storage	<i>pending</i>

List of Permits that were issued or active in 2024. Permits are organized by term expiration.





**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**  
**REAL ESTATE DEPARTMENT**  
**HERITAGE LAND BANK**

**STAFF REPORT**

**HLBAC Resolution:** 2024-05

**Action:** Withdrawal from HLB Inventory and transfer of management authority to the Girdwood Parks and Recreation Department

**Hearing Date:** August 22, 2024

**Subject Property:** HLB Parcel 6-075, legally described as Alyeska - Prince Addition Tract F (Plat 87-131) (Appendix B)

**Prepared By:** Emma Giboney, Land Management Officer

**SUMMARY**

**Proposal Summary:** The Girdwood Parks & Recreation Department is requesting the transfer of management authority of HLB Parcel 6-075 for the purpose of park and recreation use.

**Applicable Regulations & Standards:** AMC § 25.40.015B provides authority for this withdrawal and transfer.

**2024 Work Plan Amendment Required:** No amendment is required. This parcel and action are specifically listed in the 2024 Annual Work Program & 2025-2029 Five-Year Management Plan (AR 2024-92, As Amended).

**Summary Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval of this resolution (Appendix A).

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**Parcel Locations:** HLB Parcel 6-075 is located in Girdwood along Arlberg Ave across from Moose Meadow Park. (Appendix B)

**Parcel Size:** This long narrow parcel is approximately 200 feet wide and 1600 feet long. It is approximately 7.5 acres in size.

**Zoning:** GOS – Girdwood Open Space

**Existing Condition and Land Use of the parcel and surrounding area:** The current Land Use of this parcel is purely recreational; a portion of the Winner Creek Extension Trail passes through the entire length of the parcel. This Parcel is has an average slope of 32% and not suited for development. To the north, across Arlberg Ave is Moose Meadows Park (zoned GIP-p – Girdwood

Institutions and Parks). To the East and South of the parcel is land owned by Alyeska Development Limited Partnership, and other subsidiaries related to the Alyeska Ski Resort (zoned GRST-2 – Resort). These parcels are mostly vacant with some resort infrastructure. To the west is privately held vacant land (zoned GRST-2 – Resort).

**Adopted Land Use Plan:** The Girdwood Area Plan (adopted February 28, 1995; AO 1994-238 S) designates this parcel as Open Space. The plan describes Open Space as “areas with environmental characteristics or functions that should be protected, areas which are physically unsuitable or unsafe for development, and areas which have high recreational and /or scenic/wildlife habitat values”.

The Girdwood Trails Plan (adopted February 27, 2024; AO 2024-21) shows this parcel having a portion of the Winner Creek Extension Trail.

The Draft Girdwood Comprehensive Plan, although not yet adopted, also shows this parcel as “Potential Future Dedicated Park Land”. Although this is not an adopted plan, it shows that there is continued community support for this parcel to be kept for recreation uses.

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

As per AMC § 25.40.030, public notice procedures were followed for the proposed action. A sign was posted on the property on Wednesday, August 7, 2024. Notices were mailed to over 50 owners of properties within at least 500 feet of the parcel on Thursday, August 8, 2024. The HLBAC meeting agenda with this action item and public hearing was posted on the Municipal Meetings website, Boards and Commissions website, the HLB website, and emailed out to the applicable community councils and regular HLB mailing list on Thursday, August 8, 2024.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed action is the withdrawal HLB Parcel 6-075 from HLB inventory and placement into the Real Estate Services general inventory and transfer management authority to the Girdwood Parks and Recreation Department. This action is supported by the current HLB Work Plan, as well as other planning documents applicable for the area.

## **AGENCY REVIEW**

An agency review was sent out on August 2, 2024, to MOA and applicable external agencies. Comments of support of the transfer were received from Girdwood Parks and Recreation. The Municipal Clerk, MOA Right-of-Way Section, and Port expressed no municipal need for the parcel, and no objection to the transfer to Girdwood Parks and Recreation (comments provided in Appendix C).

## **ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this withdrawal and transfer is consistent with the HLB mission and current Work Plan. The highest and best use of this parcel is for recreation purposes. No other entities have expressed any objection to the request, nor proposed an alternative.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of the withdrawal and transfer of this parcel.

Appendices:

A – Resolution 2024-05

B – Vicinity Map

C – Agency Comments

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE  
HERITAGE LAND BANK ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**HLBAC RESOLUTION 2024-05**

A RESOLUTION OF THE HERITAGE LAND BANK ADVISORY COMMISSION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF THE WITHDRAWAL FROM HLB INVENTORY AND TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY OF HLB PARCEL 6-075, LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS ALYESKA - PRINCE ADDITION TRACT F, TO THE GIRDWOOD PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT.

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**WHEREAS**, pursuant to AMC 25.40.010, the Heritage Land Bank (HLB) was established to manage uncommitted municipal land and the HLB Fund in a manner designed to benefit the present and future citizens of Anchorage, promote orderly development, and achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to AMC 25.40.025.A, the HLB Advisory Commission (HLBAC) shall hold a public hearing, with public notice as specified in this chapter, prior to making a recommendation to the Mayor and Assembly regarding the disposal of HLB land, transfer of HLB land or an interest in land; and

**WHEREAS**, HLB Parcel 6-075, located in Girdwood near Arlberg Avenue, is a 7.5 acre parcel that is used exclusively for recreation purposes and has a portion of the Winner Creek Extension Trail running through it; and

**WHEREAS**, HLB received a request from Girdwood Parks and Recreation Department to be assigned management authority of this parcel to better facilitate management of the trail and recreation uses; and

**WHEREAS**, This transfer is supported by the HLB 2024 Annual Work Program & 2025-2029 Five-Year Management Plan (AR 2024-92, As Amended), as well as the Girdwood Area Plan (AO 1994-238 S), and the Girdwood Trails Plan (AO 2024-21); and

**WHEREAS**, HLB posted the property, conducted public notice, and an agency review by all potentially interested municipal agencies and Community Councils to establish no objections to the withdrawal and transfer; and

**WHEREAS**, the HLBAC finds the withdrawal of HLB Parcel 6-075 from HLB inventory and placement into Real Estate Services general inventory with management authority transferred to the Girdwood Parks and Recreation Department to be in the best interest of the Municipality and consistent with the HLB purpose and mission; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE HLBAC RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF THE WITHDRAWAL FROM HLB INVENTORY AND TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY OF HLB PARCEL 6-075, LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS ALYESKA - PRINCE ADDITION TRACT F, TO THE GIRDWOOD PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT.

PASSED and APPROVED on this, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of August 2024.

Approved:

Attest:

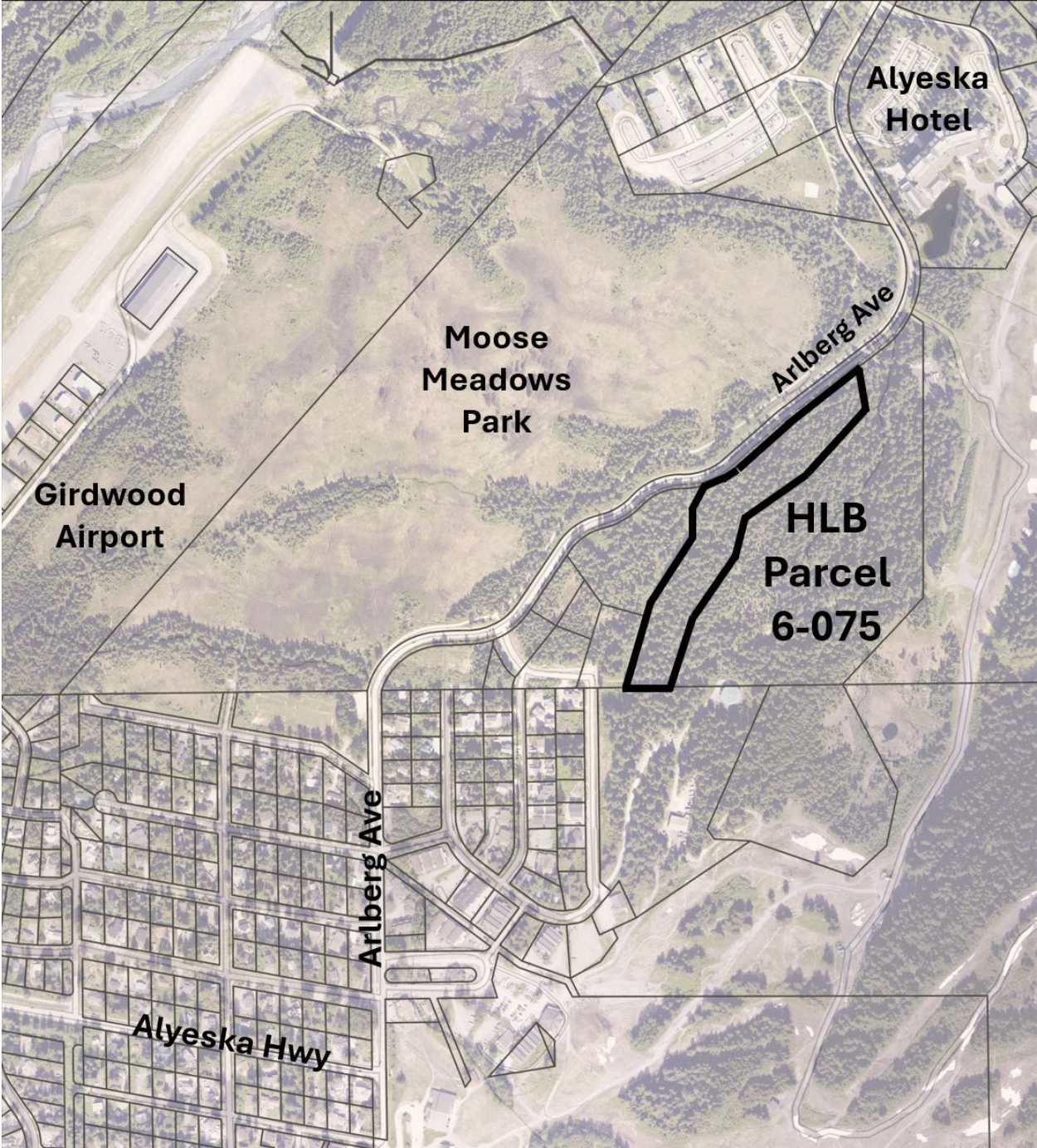
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L. Dean Marshall, MPA, Chair  
Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission

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Tiffany Briggs, Director  
Real Estate Department

Appendix B – Vicinity Map



The following agency has reviewed the proposed action and finds the following:

Public Purpose Need (Check One): YES  NO

Date: 8-5-24 From: Kyle Kelley

Department/Organization: MOA, Girdwood Parks and Rec

Describe Public Purpose Need:

We're supportive of this land transfer from HLB inventory to Girdwood Parks and Recreation inventory and land management. This parcel contains a section of the Winner Creek extension trail between Arlberg road and Veriber way. Girdwood P&R takes responsibility for many trails in Girdwood Valley and adding this to inventory makes the best sense for future management responsibilities.

**From:** Walters, Michael S.  
**Sent:** Friday, August 16, 2024 7:01 AM  
**To:** Giboney, Emma  
**Subject:** RE: AGENCY REVIEW: HLB Parcel 6-075 Girdwood

Emma,

Right of Way has no objections and strongly supports the proposed action.

Michael S Walters  
Senior Plan Reviewer  
Right of Way Section  
[michael.walters@anchorageak.gov](mailto:michael.walters@anchorageak.gov)  
Office: 907-343-8226  
Cell: 907-727-7637  
Fax: 907-249-7910





**From:** Ribuffo, Stephen  
**Sent:** Friday, August 2, 2024 5:05 PM  
**To:** Giboney, Emma  
**Subject:** Re: AGENCY REVIEW: HLB Parcel 6-075 Girdwood

Emma...The Port has no interest in this...Steve

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**From:** Heinz, Jamie L.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 12:39 PM  
**To:** Giboney, Emma  
**Subject:** RE: AGENCY REVIEW: HLB Parcel 6-075 Girdwood

The Municipal Clerk's Office has no public need for this property.

Thanks,  
Jamie Heinz, MMC  
Municipal Clerk  
907-343-4312

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**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**  
**REAL ESTATE DEPARTMENT**  
**HERITAGE LAND BANK**

**STAFF REPORT**

**HLBAC Resolution:** 2024-06

**Action:** Disposal by a 20-year relocatable trail easement to the Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance, dba Bikewood, and to amend the 2024 HLB Work Plan

**Hearing Date:** August 22, 2024

**Subject Property:** HLB Parcels 6-251 and 6-296 in Girdwood, Legally described as portions of Section 3 and 10 T10N R2E, S.M. (Appendix B)

**Prepared By:** Nicole Jones-Vogel, AICP, HLB Contractor

**SUMMARY**

**Proposal Summary:** The Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance dba Bikewood propose to expand the mountain biking trails in Girdwood on HLB parcels 6-251 and 6-296.

**Applicable Regulations & Standards:** AMC § 25.40.025A and 25.40.025B provide authority for this disposal by 20-year relocatable trail easement.

**2024 Work Program Amendment Required:** Yes. Although there is mention of implementing portions of the Girdwood Trails Plan upon adoption, this specific project was not identified in the 2024 Work Program (AMC § 25.40.020.B).

**Summary Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval of this resolution with conditions (Appendix A).

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**Parcel Locations:** HLB Parcels 6-251 and 6-296 are located at the end of Arlberg Avenue in the Girdwood Valley. (Appendix B)

**Parcel and Easement Area Size:** The area that is being requested is 25 feet on centerline of approximately 2 miles of proposed single-track mountain biking trail (approximately 264,000 Sq Ft) (Appendix C).

**Existing Condition and Land Use of the parcel and surrounding area:** The proposed trail location would be in close proximity to the existing Nordic ski trails and Phase I of the single-track mountain biking trails.

**Zoning:** The proposed trail locations span two zoning districts including Girdwood Open Space (GOS) and Girdwood Recreational Reserve (GRR).

**Adopted Land Use Plan:** The *Girdwood Area Plan (1995)* designates the area as Recreational Reserve and Open Space the proposed Girdwood Comprehensive Plan identifies this area as Open Space.

**Adopted Trails Plan:** The Girdwood Trails Plan was adopted in March 2024 and has identified this area as Mountain Bike Trail Development Area (MB2; See Appendix D).

## PUBLIC NOTICE

As per AMC § 25.40.030, public notice procedures were followed for the proposed action. A sign was posted on the property on Wednesday, August 7, 2024. Notices were mailed to over 50 owners of properties within at least 500 feet of the parcel on Thursday, August 8, 2024. The HLBAC meeting agenda with this action item and public hearing was posted on the Municipal Meetings website, Boards and Commissions website, the HLB website, and emailed out to the applicable community councils and regular HLB mailing list on Thursday, August 8, 2024.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### *Background*

The Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance, dba Bikewood has an existing approval for three trails in the vicinity of the Phase II proposal. Phase I was a first-time single-track trail development for the Heritage Land Bank, originally approved in 2018. The first phase had several conditions of approval due to the complexity of mountain biking standards, working with a newly formed non-profit entity, and located in an area with existing uses, and the potential for wildlife interactions on a bike moving at a quick speed. Due to the success of Phase I, many of the same conditions are being proposed for this request.

Since Phase I was approved and constructed, the Girdwood community developed, and the MOA adopted, the Girdwood Trails Plan (2024). This Trails Plan followed a robust community review process and identifies a Mountain Bike Trail Development Area, which Phase II is proposed completely within (See Appendix D).

Bikewood largely completed Phase I by spring of 2019; however, they have not met all conditions of the original approval. The final condition that HLB is waiting on is the final survey of the trail location that would allow the creation of the easement document itself. Bikewood is currently scheduling that survey work and staff recommends a condition of any further approval be subject to all conditions being met of Phase I.

### *Phase II Request*

Bikewood presented at the May 2024 HLBAC Regular meeting describing the trails that have previously been constructed and generally the desire to expand the trails in the area. Since that meeting, Bikewood has submitted an application to HLB staff requesting the approval of two additional trails each approximately one mile in length.

Both proposed trails will be one-way trails with Blue Square and Black Diamond ratings, not open during the winter months. The International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) describes standards to trail rating; Blue Square trails are defined as “More Difficult” having a grade of 15% or more and contains obstacles. Black Diamond trails are “Very Difficult”, have widely variable tread surface, more natural obstacles, and/or technical trail features.

HLB Staff have reviewed the proposal, conducted agency review, and collaborated with Parks & Recreation staff. Due to the complexity and limited MOA experience with more difficult trail evaluation, HLB recommends that a third-party review of the Black Diamond trail be conducted prior to opening the trail for public use. Mountain biking on single-track trails has inherent risks and providing a third-party review to evaluate the project against IMBA best practices is in the best interest of the public.

While there are many aspects of the project that requires technical review, the proposal implements the Girdwood Trails Plan, is compatible with existing and adjacent land uses, and is consistent with the HLB Mission.

## **ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this 20-year relocatable trail easement would be to expand the single-track recreational opportunities in the Girdwood Valley.

This relocatable easement is consistent with the Girdwood Trails Plan and the HLB Mission.

## **AGENCY REVIEW**

An agency review was sent out on Friday, August 5, 2024 to MOA and applicable external agencies. Comments of support were received from Girdwood Parks and Recreation, specifically mentioning that this action aligns with the Girdwood Trails Plan. Girdwood Fire Rescue had no objection to the action, but emphasized the need for proper wayfinding signage to enable any potential 911 callers to know their location. The Clerk’s Office and Right-of-Way Section had no objections.

In addition to the agency review, a resolution of support was received from the Girdwood Board of Supervisors, and a letter of support from the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club, who’s trail easement intersects with the Phase 1 and 2 Bikewood trails.

At the time of the release of this staff report, there were no objections received regarding this proposal.

For full comment texts see Appendix E.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval, with the below conditions, of this 20-year relocatable trail easement to the Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance dba Bikewood.

HLB staff recommends the following conditions of approval:

1. Prior to an issuance of any early entry authorization, Bikewood shall submit professional land surveyor documents defining the location of the Phase I trails permitted under HLBAC Resolution 2017-05.
2. Prior to any trail construction the following shall be provided to HLB:
  - a. Bikewood shall show proof of funding at 105% of proposed budget, unless HLB agrees in writing to phased construction with retaining a set amount of funding to ensure liability insurance for an agreed upon timeframe.
  - b. A written construction plan shall be provided and approved by HLB.
  - c. A signage plan shall be provided and approved by HLB.
3. All initial trail design shall be designed by a professional trail designer with professional liability insurance.
4. All initial trail construction shall be constructed by a contractor with liability insurance.
5. Volunteers may participate in initial trail development under the direct supervision of contractor utilizing hand tools only.
6. Prior to opening the Black Diamond trail for public use, Bikewood shall hire a third-party reviewer, in coordination with HLB, to evaluate the trail according to IMBA standards and address any and all recommendations by the third-party reviewer.
7. Upon trail acceptance by the MOA, GMBA shall hire a professional land surveyor to survey the trail centerline which will be used as the basis for the easement document.

Advisory Conditions:

1. It is the responsibility of GMBA to coordinate with the MOA Planning Department and Building Safety for any required approvals or permits.
2. It is recommended that GMBA coordinate with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) for their review and concurrence of the proposed trails and mitigation efforts to reduce bicyclist and wildlife conflicts and ensure property safety signage is in place.

Appendices:

A – Resolution 2024-06

B – Vicinity Map

C – Proposed Phase II Expansion Map

D – Girdwood Trails Plan Map

E – Agency Review Comments, Resolution and Letters of Support

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE  
HERITAGE LAND BANK ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**RESOLUTION 2024-06**

A RESOLUTION OF THE HERITAGE LAND BANK ADVISORY COMMISSION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF THE DISPOSAL BY A RELOCATABLE PUBLIC USE EASEMENT TO GIRDWOOD MOUNTAIN BIKE ALLIANCE OF PORTIONS WITHIN HLB PARCEL 6-251 AND 6-296, LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS PORTIONS WITHIN SEC 3 AND 10 T10N R2E, IN GIRDWOOD, FOR TWENTY (20) YEARS AT NO COST AND TO AMEND THE 2024 HLB WORK PLAN.

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**WHEREAS**, pursuant to AMC § 25.40.010, the Heritage Land Bank (HLB) was established to manage uncommitted municipal land and the HLB Fund in a manner designed to benefit the present and future citizens of Anchorage, promote orderly development, and achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to AMC § 25.40.025A, the HLB Advisory Commission (HLBAC) shall hold a public hearing, with public notice as specified in this chapter, prior to making a recommendation to the Mayor and Assembly regarding the disposal of HLB land or an interest in land. Land disposals under this chapter include land sales, land exchanges, leases and easements; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed action is not in the 2024 HLB Annual Work Program (AR 2023-235), and pursuant to AMC § 25.40.020B, to proceed with the action the 2024 HLB Annual Work Program must be amended; and

**WHEREAS**, HLB posted the property, conducted public notice and an agency review by all potentially interested municipal agencies, Assembly, Federation of Community Councils and the Girdwood Board of Supervisors to establish no objections to the disposal by easement; and

**WHEREAS**, if substantial effort is not made towards implementing this project, all approvals will be considered rescinded 5 years after Assembly approval; and

**WHEREAS**, Bikewood shall resolve the following conditions:

1. Prior to an issuance of any early entry authorization, Bikewood shall submit professional land surveyor documents defining the location of the Phase I trails permitted under HLBAC Resolution 2017-05.
2. Prior to any trail construction the follow shall be provided to HLB:

- a. Bikewood shall show proof of funding at 105% of proposed budget, unless HLB agrees in writing to phased construction with retaining a set amount of funding to ensure liability insurance for an agreed upon timeframe.
  - b. A written construction plan shall be provided and approved by HLB.
  - c. A signage plan shall be provided and approved by HLB.
3. All initial trail design shall be designed by a professional trail designer with professional liability insurance.
  4. All initial trail construction shall be constructed by a contractor with liability insurance.
  5. Volunteers may participate in initial trail development under the direct supervision of contractor utilizing hand tools only.
  6. Prior to opening the Black Diamond trail for public use, Bikewood shall hire a third-party reviewer, in coordination with HLB, to evaluate the trail according to IMBA standards and address any and all recommendations by the third-party reviewer.
  7. Upon trail acceptance by the MOA, GMBA shall hire a professional land surveyor to survey the trail centerline which will be used as the basis for the easement document.

Advisory Conditions:

8. It is the responsibility of GMBA to coordinate with the MOA Planning Department and Building Safety for any required approvals or permits.
9. It is recommended that GMBA coordinate with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) for their review and concurrence of the proposed trails and mitigation efforts to reduce bicyclist and wildlife conflicts and ensure property safety signage is in place.

**WHEREAS**, the HLBAC finds the 20-year relocatable trail easement in the best interest of the Municipality and consistent with the HLB purpose and mission, subject to the above conditions; now therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE HLBAC RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF THE DISPOSAL BY A RELOCATABLE PUBLIC USE EASEMENT TO GIRDWOOD MOUNTAIN BIKE ALLIANCE OF PORTIONS WITHIN HLB PARCEL 6-251 AND 6-296, LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS PORTIONS WITHIN SEC 3 AND 10 T10N R2E, IN GIRDWOOD, FOR TWENTY (20) YEARS AT NO COST AND TO AMEND THE 2024 HLB WORK PLAN.

PASSED and APPROVED on this, the 22th day of August, 2024.

Approved:

Attest:

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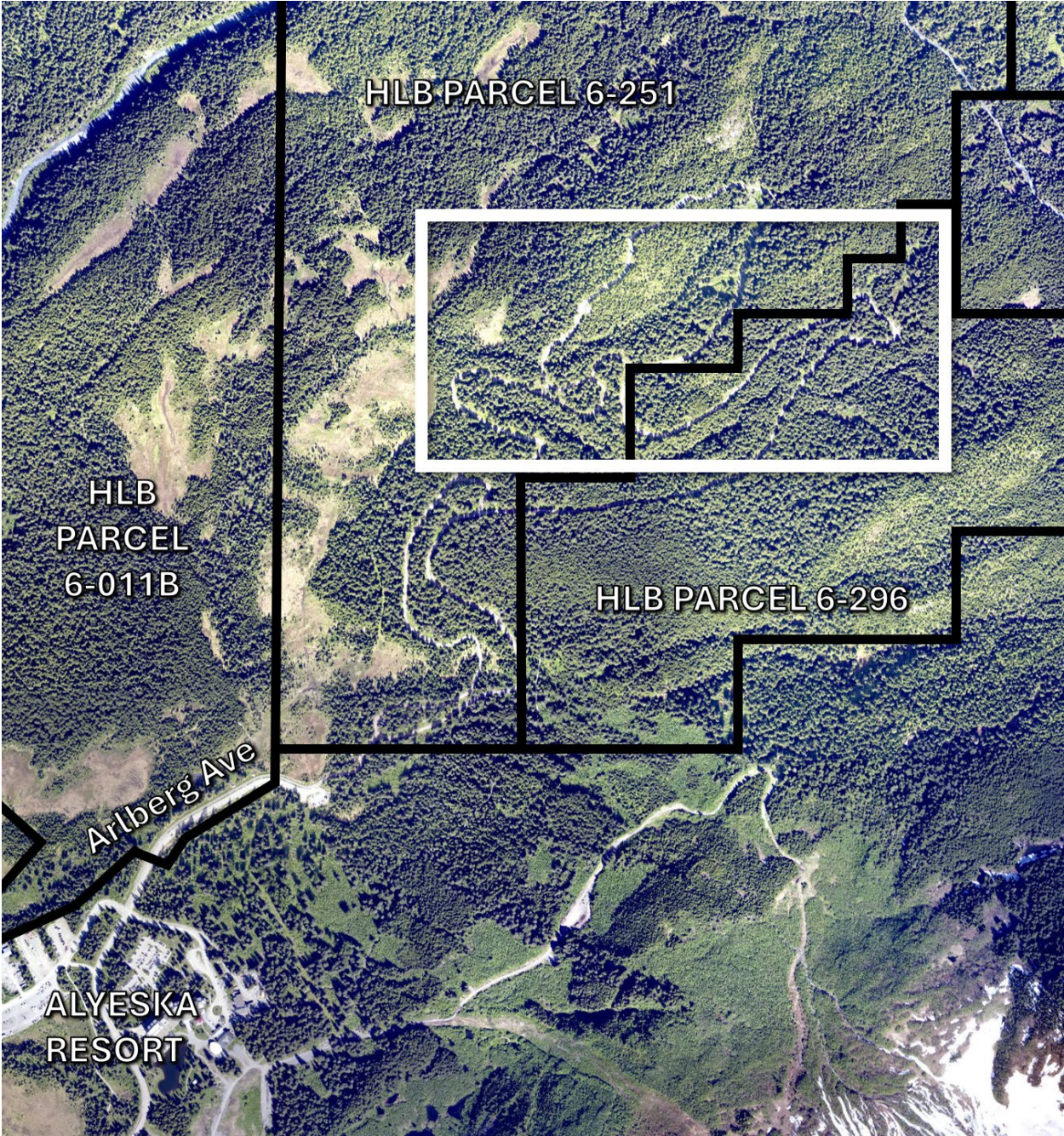
L. Dean Marshall, MPA, Chair  
Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission

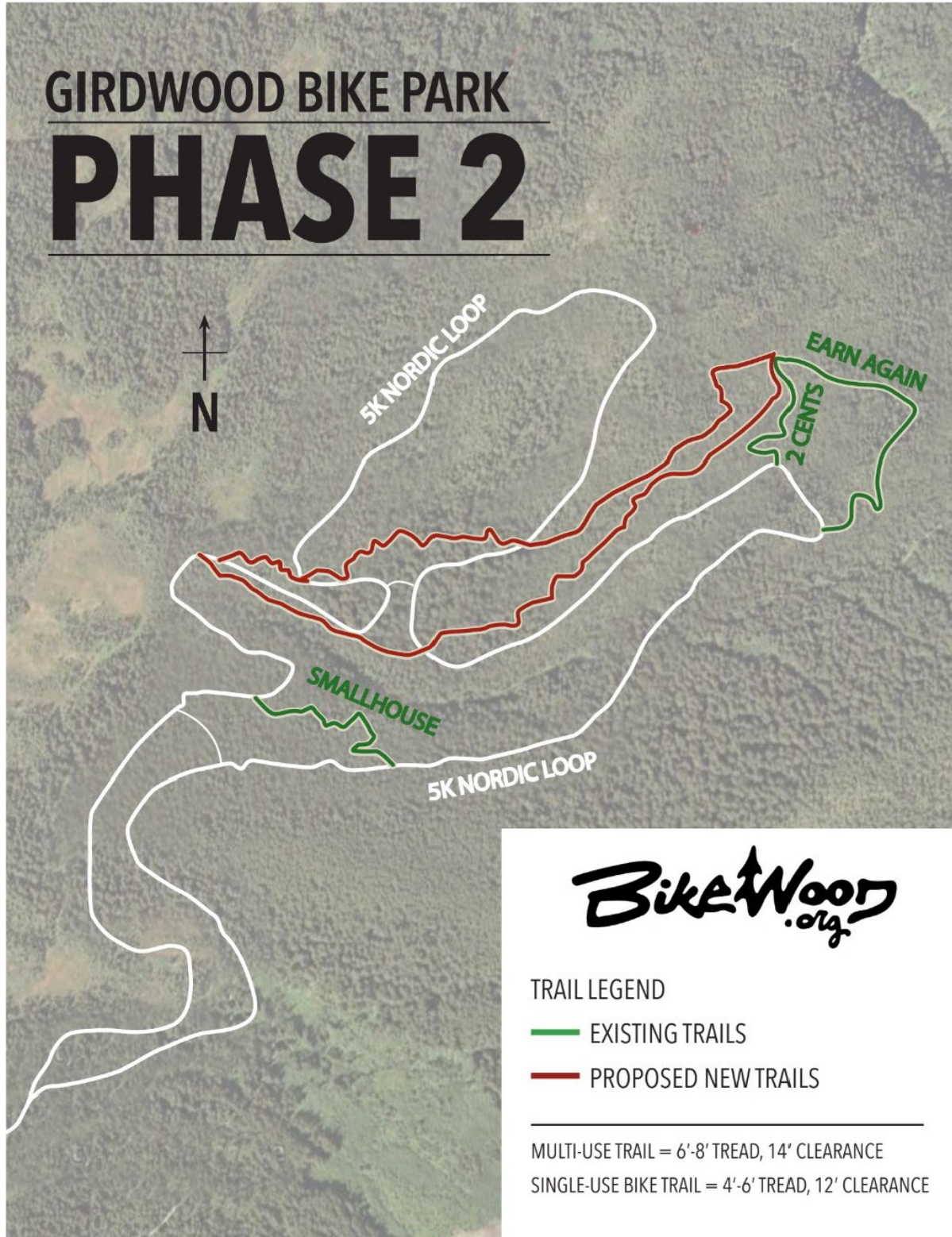
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Tiffany Briggs, Director  
Real Estate Department

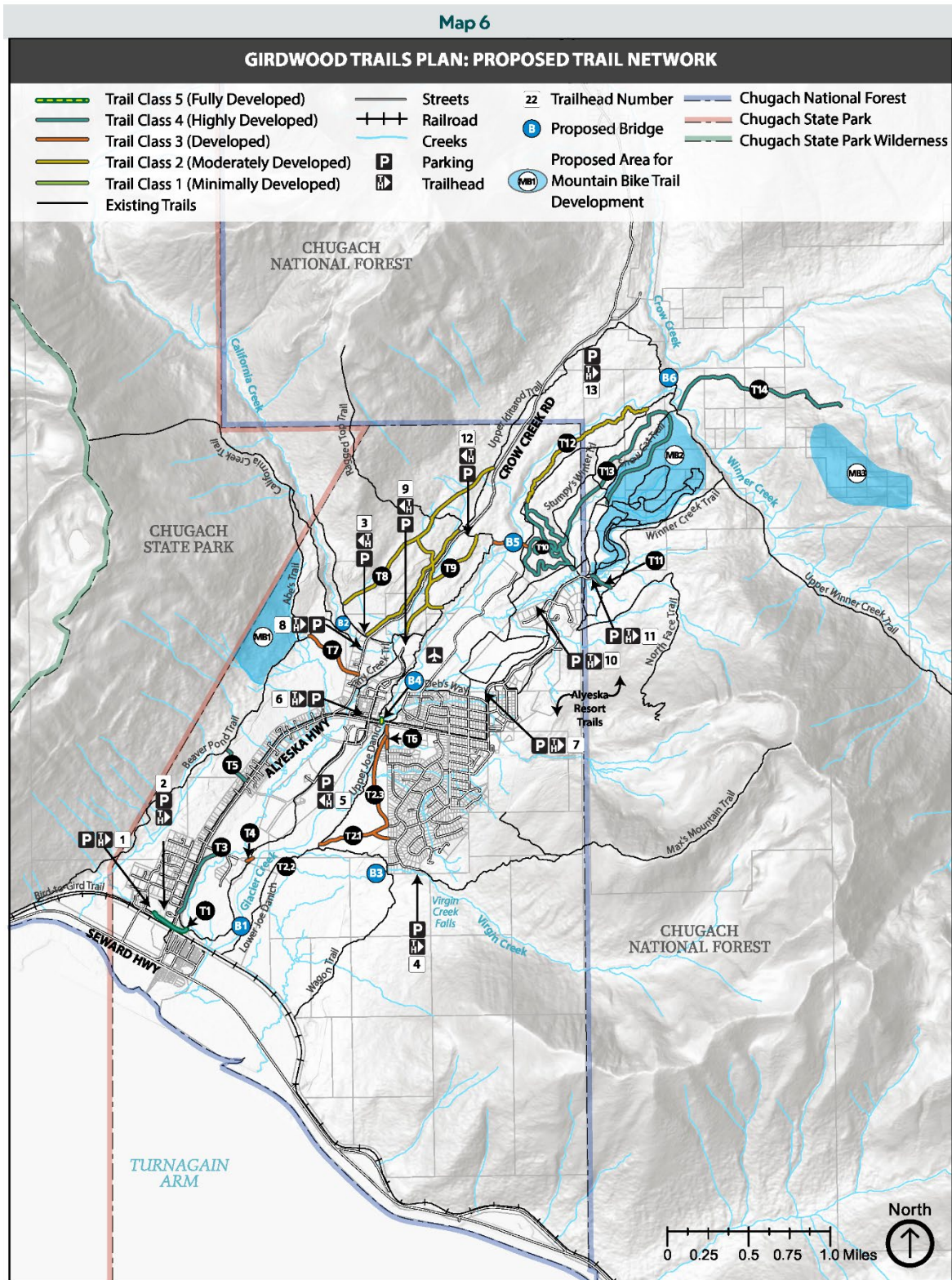


Appendix B – Vicinity Map (Areas with potential new trail development outlined in white)





Appendix D – Girdwood Trails Plan Map



Appendix E – Agency Review Comments, Resolution and Letters of Support

The following agency has reviewed the proposed action and finds the following:

Public Purpose Need (Check One): YES  NO

Date: 8-6-24 From: Kyle Kelley

Department/Organization: MOA, Girdwood Valley Service Area, Parks and Rec

Describe Public Purpose Need:

We support this potential Mountain Bike easement on the proposed parcels in Girdwood. This area is recognized in the Girdwood trails as a preferred area for current and future mountain bike trail development.

**From:** Schrage, Douglas R  
**Sent:** Friday, August 9, 2024 2:44 PM  
**To:** Giboney, Emma  
**Subject:** FW: Agency Review HLB Girdwood Mountain Bike Trails

Emma, please see the comment from Michelle Weston, Chief of Girdwood Fire & Rescue. Thanks!



**Douglas R. Schrage, MS, EFO, CFO**  
Fire Chief, Anchorage Fire Department  
100 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501  
(907) 267-4945  
**PulsePoint**

*Serving our community before, during, and after an emergency*

**AFD's core values are Respect, Teamwork, Integrity, Customer Service, and Professionalism**

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**From:** Weston, Michelle R <michelle.weston@anchorageak.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 5:08 PM  
**To:** Schrage, Douglas R <Douglas.Schrage@anchorageak.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Agency Review HLB Girdwood Mountain Bike Trails

Our comments would be:

Girdwood Fire Rescue has no objection.

Please follow Girdwood trails wayfinding standard for trail users calling 911 to know their trail location.

Michelle Weston

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**From:** Heinz, Jamie L.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 12:38 PM  
**To:** Giboney, Emma  
**Subject:** RE: Agency Review HLB Girdwood Mountain Bike Trails

The Municipal Clerk's Office has not public need for the property.

Thanks,  
Jamie Heinz, MMC  
Municipal Clerk

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**From:** Walters, Michael S.  
**Sent:** Friday, August 16, 2024 7:04 AM  
**To:** Giboney, Emma  
**Subject:** RE: Agency Review HLB Girdwood Mountain Bike Trails

Emma,

Right of Way has no comments or objections to the proposed action.

Regards,

Michael S Walters  
Senior Plan Reviewer  
Right of Way Section  
[michael.walters@anchorageak.gov](mailto:michael.walters@anchorageak.gov)



# Municipality of Anchorage

P.O. Box 390  
Girdwood, Alaska 99587  
<http://www.muni.org/gbos>  
**David Bronson, Mayor**



**GIRDWOOD VALLEY SERVICE AREA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
*Briana Sullivan & Mike Edgington, Co-Chairs*  
*Jennifer Wingard, Brian Burnett, Guy Wade*

## Resolution 2024-06 Of the Girdwood Board of Supervisors **Resolution of Support for construction of BIKEWOOD Phase 2 Trails**

Whereas, BIKEWOOD (formerly Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance) is a grassroots group created for the purpose of building and maintaining mountain biking trails in the Girdwood Valley, promoting responsible trail use, and advocating for cycling in the Girdwood community; and

Whereas, BIKEWOOD Phase 2 plan aligns with the Girdwood Trails Plan adopted by Anchorage Assembly in March 2024 in supporting non-motorized recreational development in the Girdwood Valley; and

Whereas, BIKEWOOD has met with the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club (GNSC) and has that group's approval to use the 5K Nordic Loop for uphill biking access and trail equipment access, during the summer months; and

Whereas, trails built by BIKEWOOD are to be built within accepted design standards as a class 3 mountain biking trail, approximately 4 – 6 feet in constructed tread width, clearing width of 10-12 feet; and

Whereas, BIKEWOOD has met with the Girdwood Trails Committee and has received the support of that advisory committee at their regular meeting on May 7, 2024 with a unanimous vote; and

Whereas, BIKEWOOD has met with the Girdwood Land Use Committee and has received the support of that advisory committee at their regular meeting on June 10, 2024 with a vote of 14 in favor, 0 opposed, and 4 abstaining;

Therefore, the Girdwood Board of Supervisors resolves to support BIKEWOOD in acquiring the easement for, construction and maintenance of trails on Heritage Land Bank land in the Lower Winner Creek zone, as presented at the GBOS Regular meeting of June 17, 2024 by a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

*Brian Burnett*

*Margaret Tyler*

Brian Burnett  
GBOS Parks and Recreation Supervisor

Attest



# Girdwood Nordic Ski Club

August, 15, 2024

HLB Advisory Commission  
4700 Elmore Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission,

I wholeheartedly support Bikewood (formally GMBA), and their proposed Phase 2 Project to continue building connected mountain bike trails in the Girdwood Valley. I also agree with their methodology of creating advocacy first, stewardship second, and a sustainable trail design third. Bikewood has continually utilized templates of successful trail design and effective fundraising to complete all projects to date. Girdwood has seen an amazing increase in bike traffic this past decade, and Bikewood is answering the demand for fun opportunities to bike within Girdwood's rolling terrain.

The location of these new trails is fully supported by the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club. All over Alaska, single-track trails and flow-trails have been created within Nordic ski trails for good reason. The established trail system provides a low-impact access to the project site, and multiple connectivity routes to the newly designed trails, and the Winner Creek Trail. Trail connectivity in Girdwood is long overdue, and Bikewood is leading the way with public education, and community outreach.

Bikewood has created a grassroots movement of volunteers and members that want to improve trails within the Anchorage and Girdwood community. They have already partnered with the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club, Girdwood Inc, and Girdwood Trails Committee. Their Phase 2 Project will be built by local contractors and local volunteers...which we all know lends to successful trail stewardship. Ride on!!

Sincerely,



Deb Essex  
President, Girdwood Nordic Ski Club  
deb@skigirdwood.org