

Public Comments on Framework Alternatives - Received as of May 12, 2008

Note: Please also see attached letters containing additional comments.

General

Overall I support the idea of planned development instead of haphazard development as we've seen in the rest of Anchorage. I like the idea of setting standards for future land use, i.e. the controlled growth parcels which retain green belts and better development of roads, drainage, trails and access to the park. I do not support rezoning of the Furrow Creek and BLM areas as the people that live in these areas moved to the hillside for low density housing just like everyone else. Wed, 4/30/08 10:16 AM

I am writing to ask if you would please put me on your e-mailing list to receive updated information regarding this project. I'm happy to hear about the HDP to address the water/sewer and drainage concerns on the Hillside and believe it is badly needed. I live near the intersection of Huffman Rd and Birch Rd. This area has serious water drainage and septic problems because of the poor soils conditions and grade, etc. A new subdivision (61 single family dwellings on acres lots) is currently going in around three sides of my subdivision and are all being put on wells and septic. It is a good possibility that due to all the trees and ground cover they removed, that our subdivision is now experiencing more water volume these past few weeks then I've experienced in my 11 years here. I also believe that if we have a bad earthquake that serious sewer and water problems could occur and that Anchorage's future may have disastrous consequences in store as a result of not addressing these issues. I'm surprised that MOA and AWWU didn't do something about it years ago. Thank you for your time, and please proceed with this project. Tue, 4/29/08 1:22 PM

I would like to see Public Water & Sewer in my area. Mon, 4/28/08 12:47 AM

My wife and I attended the Workshop on Wednesday and found the presentations very informative. We are both in agreement that there is dire need for a plan and think that if most of the people who oppose the plan in principle need to listen and understand that the plan does not encourage development but requires responsible development. Fri, 4/25/08 3:25 PM

It is obvious the city has spent much time and thought in their options. There are none I oppose – but do think there are drainage/road issues that should be fixed first. The whole Hillside management is a mess. There should be better and more consistent. As a new Hillside resident, I am shocked at road conditions. I do not think these meetings represent the views of all of the Hillside. Very vocal group opposed to **all development** manages to show up at every meeting and push **their** agenda. 4/23-24/08

Look to the comments from HALO The vision of the community is very clear and stated in a forthright manner by HALO. After attending all of the HDP meetings and some CAC meetings this shines through the details. The Hillside community wishes to retain large lots, 1 acre, 1 home, on site services are performing well, no new commercial, limit commercial to Old Seward Hwy - nothing on

Rabbit Creek Rd., remove BLM from lower hillside area and add it to Central Hillside or better yet to SE hillside to maintain the integrity of the Rabbit Creek watershed, no "controlled growth" scenarios in BLM. Maintain R6 at R6 with accessory dwellings counted as density in terms of build out. NO PUD's that double density, NO 3 to 4 DUA subdivisions that quadruple density. Mon, 5/12/08 11:20 AM

I live 200 yards from a park access in Bear Valley off of Honey Bear Lane. The access went in about two years ago over the objections of the subdivision residents. My general observation is that the pro access people will say and promise anything to get the access but once it is in they have absolutely no concern for what the effects on the neighborhood are and are completely unwilling to police themselves. We have a parking area for five cars and have seen as many as 25 illegally parked cars at one time. They will block driveways, let their dogs run free, leave trash at the parking area and the entire route from Carls Road to the cul-de-sac on Honey Bear. The residents end up picking up bras, panties, used condoms, used fireworks and alcohol containers by the hundreds. I have couples parked directly in front of my house having sex in a vehicle. I have had car loads of teenagers parked directly in front of my house smoking dope. They get angry when I ask them to take it somewhere else at 3 in the morning. I spend a great deal of time and money both personally and as part of the homeowners association maintaining the roads in Grandview subdivision. Since the new access has gone in the association has spent \$7000 plus dollars repairing damage to the gravel road caused by increased traffic generated by the access. The residents plow all of the roads in the subdivision with our own equipment. I spent 50-60 hours plus gas and over \$1000 in repairs to a plow truck this year alone. We have not joined LRSA because we do a better job of keeping our roads open in the winter than the LRSA contractors do. Increasing the traffic onto these roads will destroy them and I'm sure the Muni won't pay to rebuild them. Sun, 5/11/08 8:25 PM

Proper planning is essential to a good outcome. With that in mind, the hillside either has to remain low density or the MOA has to commit significant funds to upgrade the infrastructure. This upgrade should be done before any increased density. Established homes should be grandfathered into their existing design, including water and sewer. Sun, 5/11/08 7:46 PM

"It is important to have multiple access points to the Park, so that traffic generated by Park visitors is spread over a number of subdivisions rather than concentrating Park user traffic within a very few neighborhoods... But access to the park can not be provided without taking into account the impact on adjacent neighborhoods in terms of traffic, road maintenance, on-street parking and blocked driveways. A balance needs to be reached between both residents and visitors to the park." -Margaret O'Brien, Senior Planner, in a Municipality of Anchorage Memorandum dated November 3, 2004, to the Platting Board. These very ideas have echoed from the mouths of Assembly members, Park Advisory Board members, Park rangers, etc. My neighborhood, Stolle/Grandview, in Bear Valley fairly recently ended up with a 5-car parking area and pedestrian access to the Park. The reality of the situation is that since that time our neighborhood has had to deal with the traffic, the dust, the vandalism, the illegal parking and blocked driveways, the garbage and dog poop, the loose dogs, and the party crowd at night, bonfires included, not to mention the continuing drainage problems created with the expansion of the cul-de-sac. Out of necessity, Honey Bear Lane is maintained by the homeowners, not a LRSA. Now, according to your Plan, since "the Convention and Visitors Bureau recently adopted a slogan "Big Wild Life," and is now in a position of having to deliver on that promise," I see that you have more priority trailheads planned for Bear Valley. The trailheads at Rabbit Creek Road and on Brewster's would help to spread out the Park user traffic. Another trailhead on Honey Bear Lane, less than 1500 feet from the existing access point, however, is

unconscionable, and would place an undue burden on the neighborhood and others in Bear Valley who will be burdened enough by other proposed priority trailheads. Sun, 5/11/08 6:01 PM

The need to recognize a planning effort Mon, 5/12/08 1:18 PM

Why [I prefer certain alternative] = need for world class quality of life in the Hillside District in the future. Applies to all our preferences.

District divided into 3 general areas: areas should be delineated by drainage (e.g. Rabbit Creek drainage wholly located within Southeast Hillside area.

Due diligence requires that future Hillside property values, possible under utilization of proposed infrastructure extensions by AWWU/& competition from Mat-Su needs for infrastructure funding from State, be examined in terms of a Knik Arm crossing being a reality.

We do not want to be saddled with a \$160,000 AWWU assessment, significant property value reductions, and no hope of relief from the State. These projections must be made along with probability estimates, and timeframes before a reasoned decision can be made on expensive aspects embedded in the Hillside District Plan. If these concerns have been studied, please forward the results. 5/12/08

I support planned development for the remaining growth on the Hillside. Mon, 5/12/08 9:56 PM

We have lived on Virgo Ave for 22 years and have been involved in community issues. Your Hillside plan does not address our concerns and adds problems created by others. Mon, 5/12/08 7:03 PM

The lack of a dedicated parks/open space chapter is a serious omission. Drainage and transportation can't handle what is needed for a true parks vision by hillside residents. Drainage does not include wildlife corridors and does not include wetlands in the need to provide habitat. The final plan must include a dedicated parks chapter and should include the projects that the public voted on during the Parks Plan Rewrite in April, 2005 as part of that chapter. Mon, 5/12/08 5:07 PM

The lists of CAC members has Wayne Westberg as Vice Chair. Should be Vic Mollozi.

Land Use

I live in the Furrow Creek area and do not support re-zoning for higher density. I moved into this area because of the low density and do not want it changed. Aside from that my concerns are two-fold. First, you can recommend to the assembly that the new zoning go hand in hand with the conservation subdivision model but that doesn't mean all the assembly will hear is that there is no objection to rezoning. Either way I do not support the re-zoning. Second, if the density increases then, due to water quality, we may be forced to go to AWWU or the neighborhood systems which would increase our costs substantially, when our current water and septic systems work just fine.
Wed, 4/30/08 10:25 AM

Ref #1 Old tanks are already polluting our Hillside. Tue, 4/29/08 1:25 PM

More parks and public areas Mon, 4/28/08 12:47 AM

No PUD's or changes to BLM south of Rabbit Cr. (the water body). They would create an infrastructure snowball in any portion of the area with regard to roads, drainage more than the benefit of the added housing in this small area. Costs for infrastructure are not economical and connectivity for services is limited by topographical constraints. (Rabbit Creek Canyon, wetlands associated with Elmore Creek) 4/23-24/08

Accessory dwellings already in code allow the area to be built to 2 DUA. This is more economical and provides for diverse housing types as asked for in Anchorage 2020 with minimal infrastructure impacts. Realistically this allows land owners to develop without intensive demands for upgraded infrastructure that a PUD would require. This is more economical. It allows people to stay in their homes longer with the option of a caretaker on site or allow for elderly family members to move into a dwelling close by. Cool expansion/continuity of existing neighborhood. 4/23-24/08

The BLM is a unique area. Good for horses and pedestrians without the costs of maintaining and upgrading roads and trails. Keep the area South of Rabbit Creek at R6, no PUD's. 4/23-24/08

In all cases get rid of the 5 acre PUD. It is a dinosaur and should become extinct on the entire hillside. There is not enough ground to accommodate large homes and drainage. The impact of one of these beasts to the fragile infrastructure on hillside is too costly for the gain. 4/23-24/08

Areas around the rim of the canyon are seismically susceptible to failure and are not the best place for a conservation sub or 2 DUA PUD, sewer installation etc. Something I would have considered had I known about it. 4/23-24/08

I support the 5 acres / 2 DUA density increase but not the 10 acres / 3-4 DUA density increase. Is it feasible to have an additional alternative to increase the targeted areas to only 10 acres / 3-4 DUA? 4/23-24/08

I fully support the "built / green infrastructure" approach. I guess I am appalled at how loose the MOA standards have been. 4/23-24/08

Do we have to have a high density senior housing development above Potter's Marsh? It seems impractical as it is distant from services for seniors. 4/23-24/08

Your “breakout sessions” were very unsatisfactory. There was too much noise from adjoining sessions and people just carrying on their own conversations. It is unfortunate that a better format was not used. 4/23-24/08

Change the 5 acre minimum to 10 acres for higher density proposal at Lake Otis, Elmore, O’Malley section. No PUD’s in Southeast section. Commercial sections: no store on Rabbit Creek Rd., Old Seward or SE section. Make sure each developer is responsible for all drainage on property and it’s effect on adjacent areas. Drainage plans should not vary from natural drainage. 4/23-24/08

I was impressed with the overall plan of controlled growth. I believe this plan allows for progressive future growth. I believe higher density is inevitable and necessary to pay for these improvements. More neighborhood commercial is needed. May be necessary to expand zoning to the east of Elmore. 4/23-24/08

I support sensible development on the Hillside that includes a small country store at the end of Rabbit Creek and Bear Valley. I also think the city-planned communities are a good idea. One house per acre would be my preference. 4/23-24/08

No commercial district up Rabbit Creek Rd. There exist commercial areas on the Old Seward Highway. This is a relatively flat area and commercial zoning exists. (To consider running commercial up that hill indicates that there is a disconnected between the designer and people who actually have to use the road.) 4/23-24/08

Require master plan of Potter Marsh area. All commercial business must relate to the natural history of the area. Page 42 there are no Potter Marsh recreational users to speak of. Limited skating in winter and DOT considers the road unsafe for pedestrians and won’t allow “Adopt a road” garbage pick up due to liability. It is a bird sanctuary. Keep it green. 4/23-24/08

No commercial on Rabbit Creek Rd. near the Bear Valley area. Consider commercial in section 36 under control of Parks and Recreation, such as coffee shop to raise funds for local parks and recreational projects only. This will help aid our flagging parks budgets. 4/23-24/08

Table for the next plan further consideration of commercial development in Bear Valley. There is no support and people are simply tired of hearing about it. Commercial growth on Lower Rabbit Creek Rd. - delete. RC Rd is no place to stop for anything other than turning on to your road. It is way too dangerous. Limit commercial to the already zoned area on the Old Seward Highway. Require establish natural history guideline for type of commercial. Develop in conjunction with Bird TLC. Master plan the area keeping Old Seward hwy a "country lane" with superior pedestrian and biking facilities to invite low impact recreation to the area. No quick Stops or gas stations to invite vehicles. Maintain low density in BLM area. 1 home, 1 acre. This area is almost built out. It can become a higher density area if homeowners take advantage of the Accessory dwelling code. For some unknown reason this is not factored when it should be. In R1a Accessory Dwellings were not allowed because they would increase density. It is the same rational. Accessory dwellings may over time increase density. BLM is a critical watershed and nesting area for Potter Marsh. There has been no consideration or delineation for greenbelt/wildlife corridors, no comments by Fish and Wildlife. Rabbit Creek is an anadromous creek and supports a large number of bears. Higher density will degrade the water quality and impact wildlife increasing the odds of human/bear confrontation. Not only that, Anchorage is notorious in its' lack of planning around creeks. Fish Creek undergoing millions of dollars of rehab., Ship Creek being rehabbed from an industrial dumping area, several million dollars, Campbell Creek has a ecal colliform count so high it needs warning signs so lets save

some money and keep Rabbit Creek BLM a strictly R6 area. Density targetted by "controlled growth" is completely out of line in BLM. If allowed will quadruple density in R6. It implies decelerated growth when in fact it is a density free for all in a rural area. Mon, 5/12/08 11:45 AM

Keep the hillside low density to preserve the rural character. NO to neighborhood commercial centers! Sun, 5/11/08 6:06 PM

In response to the Hillside District Plan for the "Priority Trailhead" on the Heritage Land Bank property with access via Honey Bear Circle: This is a very bad idea for many reasons I will list some of those here. - Traffic greatly increased on Snow Bear with the establishment of the current trail access point with cars speeding, spinning their wheels at all time of the day and night, parties in the parking lot, and increased trash on the roads. We are challenged now dealing with the negative aspects of the access trail and parking lot that we currently have. Our neighborhood could not maintain the quality of life with an additional trailhead especially one designated "Priority Trailhead". The existing homes were not developed with this high volume of traffic in mind. It would be best to place the "Priority Trailhead in a less populated area so the homes built along the roads could be built with this in consideration. - Currently there is not a legal access to the property where the trailhead is slated for. With the current covenants, conditions and restrictions in our subdivision it would not be possible to proceed with this type of development. This relates to my statement above, homes were established within the covenants and those do not support this increase in traffic. - Honey Bear Lane and Honey Bear Circle are not adequate roads to have the designation of a primary road. The concern now is access off the mountain for residence if there would be a fire. The fire department has already stated getting the residence off clarks road would be a challenge. If you proceed with this plan you make it more hazardous. It would be better to access from a different direction for the safety of all who currently live in Bear Valley. Sat, 5/10/08 4:33 PM

Page 23 – Home based business. There should also be restrictions against parking of more than 3 motorized vehicles connected with the business unless they are garaged or otherwise hidden from view. I'm not familiar with the details of the large animal ordinance, but neighborhoods need protection from over-use of land by too many horses. Page 23 – Nonresidential Uses I would discourage any additional land for nonresidential use, and set high standards for current or future development – lots of screening, good blending with surrounding residential, no neighborhood impacts. Page 40 – Bear Valley Rural Country Store. No, no, no! I am adamantly opposed to this proposal, or anything similar on the Hillside. Specifics against the Rabbit Creek proposal: 1. Danger! I have lived on Sierra Way, right on the curve at Bear Valley school, for over 30 years. This is a dangerous curve! Traffic in this area often far exceeds the 45 mph speed limit. There is limited visibility pulling out onto Rabbit Creek Road from Sierra Way. A "for instance" to the danger of this curve: our son was hit by a car while getting off the school bus right at this intersection! 2. The concept of locating the "country store" by Bear Valley School for convenience is flawed. Bear Valley is a totally bussed school, because Rabbit Creek Road is not a safe place for elementary school children to be walking. A store this close to the school would be an unsafe draw of the kids after school. 3. The before and after school traffic associated with Bear Valley School is extremely heavy. The idea of a country store/café that might encourage more parents to drive their kids to school then stop for coffee would just exacerbate the problem. 4. It's nice for teens to have a place to hang out. But with that comes the potential for added problems and more frequent police calls. Keep the coffee shops, cafes and stores in the commercial areas on Huffman and Old Seward! 5. "Quick-stop" type stores seem to attract robbers/burglars. Keep them down in the commercial areas and away from our homes! 6. The concept of saving gas and road miles with a "country store" is flawed. People will be DRIVING to it anyway – they may save a few miles, but not enough to justify the existence of this commercial development in a residential area. Page 42 – Rabbit Creek Mercantile District I

oppose any development of a "mercantile district" while Old Seward is in its current state. There are no shoulders - no safe place to walk; bike riding is hazardous. If the road is upgraded to a safer country road status, AND connections are made to Potter Marsh viewing or the Bird Treatment Center is built with visitor facilities, I would support only a small nonprofit gift shop and café that could support these endeavors. I would NOT support anything greater, including an "office center serving local home-based businesses or grocery store." KEEP THE COMMERCIAL TO THE HUFFMAN AREA!! Mon, 5/12/08 4:11 PM

While attending the Hillside Planning Meeting on Wed night I posed the question as to who is promoting the commercial development including a "country store" and shopping center when 95% of the respondents to the survey were against the idea.

In response I heard stories about forgetting lemons at Carrs on Huffman and being able to pick them up closer to home. I heard other stories about commercial property already existing on the Hillside which had been grandfathered in.

These stories are hardly justification for zoning and building commercially on the Hillside.

My question was never answered "Who is promoting the commercial development of the Hillside?"

It was quite surprising to see commercial develop slipped into the plan as if there was no resounding opposition from the homeowners. At the onset of the meeting the CAC was defined as "We are you." Somehow I don't feel the "We" are representing the "you."

The plan has a feeling of a Development Advisory Committee rather than a Citizen's Advisory Committee.

I would appreciate an answer to my question and would like to know that our (the 95% who are opposed to commercial development) concerns will be heard and addressed by the assembly. 4/27/08

- Favor improvements in development standards and process as part of an overlay specifically for the Hillside District (pg 33).
- Favor "Built/Green" infrastructure in SE with pg 22 D#2 - larger lots and more open space.
- NO neighborhood commercial - rezone is unnecessary; additions/controls for grandfather (p36) 5/12/08

The "Build/Green" Infrastructure plan for the Southeast Hillside would provide important corridors for wildlife, drainage, and continuity among all developments in the area. This is preferable to a hap hazard, each developer for himself, approach that would otherwise occur. New commercial development as identified in the draft is not necessary. Continued support and improvements to the Huffman Town Center and Abbott Town Centers, including traffic management and access improvements on Huffman Road, are adequate. The fear that once commercial development has their "foot in the door" especially in the Bear Valley area would lead to ugly, uncontrolled strip development is based on the history of development in Anchorage. Mon, 5/12/08 10:18 PM

We cannot absorb additional high density without adequate fire protection and evacuation routes. Mon, 5/12/08 7:20 PM

The use of Green Infrastructure appears to fit with hillside residents vision for development of remaining lands. Conservation subdivisions also seems to fit. Both should only be used to the current zoning density and dedicated perimeter buffering and public open space, trails, etc must be spelled out and noted on the plat if not deeded directly to the Homeowners Associations. PUDs do not fit with hillside development and should not be allowed. Neither are they necessary to reach the

residential quota required in the 2020 Plan for SE Anchorage and therefore they should not be allowed. Acknowledge in the HDP that the required residential quota per the 2020 Plan can already be reached with current zoning. Remove the BLM area from the plan for higher density in the lower hillside and amend the District Regions map on p 17 to reflect this area's removal from the Lower Hillside (higher density) region. Ensure that each point in the HDP meets the goals of the 2020 Plan for SE Anchorage and the vision of the residents as reflected in the household survey. Commercial Development--no new commercial on the Hillside! That which is already zoned off Old Seward Hwy east of Potter Marsh should be limited to what is already zoned commercial. Produce an overlay for use of that area with strict standards that fit with the country lane environment and the theme for the marsh. Ensure that DOT's design for upgrading of the Old Seward Hwy also fits with the desired country lane approach (not fast nor multi-lane) and recommend that DOT prioritize its upgrade faster than what is on their agenda to do so. Gas stations, auto repair and liquor stores should not be allowed. Mon, 5/12/08 5:16 PM

For all areas included in this plan, I would recommend strengthened code enforcement. Enforcement officials should be dedicated to this area of the Municipality.

For the Lower Hillside I support the "Controlled Growth" alternative. And the concept of the "conservation subdivision." I think that the feasibility of this alternative is very much dependent upon "willing sellers." I believe that there would be many "hold-outs" if landowners knew that they could sell at a higher price if they held out.

- Open space should be created in a manner that does not fragment remaining natural areas into small pieces that are non-functional as wildlife habitat.
- Open spaces should be created in a manner that preserves sensitive environmental features, e.g. streams, wetlands, and old growth.
- Open spaces should be protected from encroachment by utilities that historically have used them for power, cable sewer and water lines. These areas also need protection from adjacent landowners who might cut trees or use these areas for storage.
- "Controlled Growth" should be limited to areas north of the Rabbit Creek gorge.

For the Southeast Hillside I support the "Built/Green" alternative.

- Zoning density should be reduced, as is proposed for the R1-A-SL area in Potter Valley, in areas that are either environmentally sensitive or present significant challenges to development, i.e. steep slopes, wetlands, critical wildlife habitat or are part of wildlife movement corridors.
- Particular emphasis should be placed on retention of native vegetation especially on steep slopes or areas upslope of existing homes.
- All surface waters including ephemeral streams should be protected from development and have meaningful setbacks.
- Open space should be created in a manner that does not fragment remaining natural areas into small pieces that are non-functional as wildlife habitat.
- Open spaces should be created in a manner that preserves sensitive environmental features, e.g. streams, wetlands, and old growth.
- Open spaces should be protected from encroachment by utilities that historically have used them for power, cable sewer and water lines. These areas also need protection from adjacent landowners who might cut trees or use these areas for storage.

- I oppose the proposed commercial development in the vicinity of the Bear Valley Fire Station.
- I would support limited commercial development in the vicinity of the Old Rabbit Hutch if it were compatible with the adjacent Potter Marsh and with the proposed bird treatment center, e.g. gift shop and coffee shop that are part of the visitors facilities of the nature center. Under no circumstances would I support additional commercialization of this area for a variety of reasons especially because of additional traffic impacts.
- New developments adjacent to Chugach State Park should include small parking areas for the public that are near traditional access points into the park.

Drainage

I think creating a service area or district utility is a good idea. Wed, 4/30/08 10:26

See #1 Soil conditions (clay and sand) and sloped grade allow for very poor drainage conditions in my subdivision at the NW area of Birch and Huffman. Eleven (11) years ago when I moved in, S&S Engineering and Tweed Excavation installed a new septic. They did a very poor job of evaluating the ground conditions as well as a very shoddy job of installing my septic. It was all broken up that very spring they would not take responsibility for the numerous problems that resulted. There should be strong consideration of the integrity, honesty and competency when decisions are made with regards to inspectors! I am aware of other drainage/septic issues and concerns besides mine within my immediate subdivision. Tue, 4/29/08 1:34 PM

better storm drains Mon, 4/28/08 12:47 AM

I feel that the drainage plan is very important. The Bear Valley area has many areas that the drainage is terrible. There are several spots on the roads that are falling apart because there is no way for the water to escape the subgrade and in some area the runoff is leaving channels down the middle of the road. Our road is damaged this spring because a neighbor relocated his driveway and changed the drainage pattern and there is little regard given to how an upstream development will affect downstream neighbors. I feel that everything that we saw on Wed regarding drainage is worthwhile and I would be willing to cough up my fair share Fri, 4/25/08 3:38 PM

Angle/grating of road at 5900 Bristol Drive causing house flooding as rite-of-way on south side road is collecting entire water drainage flow hence accumulating onto owner's property and flooding home. North side of road rite-of-way is also recessed to such a degree that if the level of the road were such, both north and south sides could collect run-off without impeding onto either owner's property henceforth solving house-flooding issues (house on north side is far enough away and on top of a hill as to not be affected and 30 feet of rite-of-way is basically a huge ditch at the bottom of a hill that could serve as partial "holding tank" as the present south side of road is serving while waiting for water to permeate). Getting the run-around as keep being told this is a "drainage issue" versus a "road issue" from the road board. Fri, 4/25/08 1:51 PM

Re: Parcel ID 015-062-14-00, Nettleton Acres #2 Lot 10, Address: 6700 Paula Place My property is the lowest property in my neighborhood. All of the ditches on Homestead Trail and on Paula Place direct the drainage into my yard. The water is almost coming into my house. My shed is flooded, and I am concerned that my leach field may become saturated. It appears that the drainage was designed to run through a ditch easement on the south side of my property, but there was never any plan (that I can find) for directing the water beyond my yard. Thanks for your help. Sat, 4/5/08 12:24 PM

I support the new Watershed-based approach. Possible using this as a guideline but evaluating on a case by case basis. It is not fair for the new developments to pay for the "sins of the past." 4/23-24/08

Dealing with drainage by watershed is a great idea. 4/23-24/08

The idea of a District-wide Board is excellent. I would pay monthly to see it happen. My only suggestion is to do *more* drainage ditches to help with areas already developed. *Fix the problems* that currently exist. 4/23-24/08

Drainage is a function of the carrying capacity of the land. Bio swales and top to bottom drainage plans need to be developed. Design must keep drainage from neighboring properties and natural

areas that carry drainage must be maintained, not filled. Large areas of vegetation must remain undisturbed to absorb runoff. A percentage of vegetation should be required of all lots. Impervious surfaces need to be controlled especially with non residential uses in residential areas to limit and contain run off. Calculations of run of should include not only rain events and previous water flow but contain additional amounts for the removal of vegetation. A mature spruce can absorb upwards of 150 gallons of water a day so when we remove natural vegetation we are removing the sponge. Mon, 5/12/08 11:53 AM

Hold developers responsible for drainage problems they create, not only on site but downstream as well. Our neighborhood has been dealing with drainage issues for four years since the expansion of a cul-de-sac and the extension of a road. There is no resolution in sight, and the developer does nothing but continues to sell high-priced lots. Sun, 5/11/08 6:06 PM

- Favor district-wide service areas for management of both drainage and roads (p47)
- Favor the four components in summary of alternatives (p45) 5/12/08

The drainage section makes a good argument for the need for a funding mechanism and vehicle to control drainage. New development must not pour its drainage onto adjacent properties. Require at least 50 ft waterbody setbacks per side and more on steeper slopes. Retain native vegetation for help in controlling run off with new development. Mon, 5/12/08 5:18 PM

Drainage management is vital to addressing the existing roadway problems in the Southeast Hillside area of the study. Drainage will also be of vital importance as new developments, even just the building of one home, occurs above existing homes. The watershed based drainage plan seems like a no brainer for a modern city to require as it's remaining wild lands are developed. Mon, 5/12/08 10:34 PM

The water flow in Little Survivor Creek has been diverted East of Golden View Drive and must be channeled back to it's natural path, not down 164th St. Having used 164th for over twenty years I can say the drainage ditch dug last summer is so hazardously deep that I am concerned for the safety of everyone who uses 164th in the winter months. Mon, 5/12/08 7:21 PM

I support the "New Watershed-Based Approach."

- Emphasis should be placed upon retention of native vegetation and protection of historic patterns of runoff. Removal of vegetation required by the development should be mitigated by equivalent plantings of native vegetation.
- New developments upslope of existing homes should be required to conform to the highest standards of engineering that minimizes adverse impacts of development to adjacent neighborhoods and to ground and surface waters.
- New developments should pay for all necessary infrastructure.
- Fixes for existing and new drainage problems should be carried out at their source and paid for by the developer.
- In developments that will include non-native landscaping, especially lawns, runoff containing fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides should be intercepted and bio-engineered to remove those contaminants.

- Snow storage areas should be dispersed throughout new developments so that melt water can percolate into the ground in a manner that simulates natural conditions.

Water & Wastewater: Public and Onsite Systems

No extension of sewers to BLM. There has been no consideration of the Sewage Treatment plant that runs on an EPA waiver. At least septic systems provide primary treatment before it is pumped in to the inlet. City water improvements can be on a need based provision. Sewers should only be a public health decision based on the needs of an area. No schools, churches, or large scale non residential uses should be allowed in areas without prior installation of water and sewage. Mon, 5/12/08 11:59 AM

Don't need public water and sewer. Sun, 5/11/08 4:50 PM

Do not want public water and sewer! Sat, 5/10/08 4:34 PM

An option should be included to expand public water and sewer east to Elmore without a change in density. This would improve water quality in the areas adjacent to existing water and sewage infrastructure. Do not leave the area between Huffman and DeArmoun east of Furrow Creek Rd. out of the potential sewer expansion. I strongly support the extension of public water and sewer to build out areas of lower Hillside. I strongly support a program of individual well water quality testing to establish a baseline and monitor trends. There is a possibility we will have more water quality issues than homeowners are willing to admit. 4/23-24/08

I don't believe our neighborhood is organized enough to create and manage an onsite system. Wed, 4/30/08 10:27 AM

The original Onsite Systems in my subdivision were all installed around 1972. They are old and there are many old abandoned tanks polluting the ground and we have very poor drainage. Again, S&S Engineering and Tweed Excavation did an extremely shoddy job of installing my Septic 11 years ago. I would pay particular attention to S&S and who you select to do your evaluations and your inspections. Drainage/septics are a big concern. Tue, 4/29/08 1:37

If the school district needs city water and sewer at Huffman Elementary School then the city should request funding in the city wide election to pay for it, just as my taxes fund new roofs, etc on schools in other parts of town. I also think the costs quoted for AWWU extension are incredibly high, if the zoning is changed to allow more housing because Anchorage is running out of developable land or because AWWU won't extend to Huffman Elementary School without more density in the area then we should at least get the lower "not by invitation" rate. Wed, 4/30/08 10:39 AM

See previous #1-4 for my comments. Tue, 4/29/08 1:38 PM

I would like Public Water & Sewer. Mon, 4/28/08 12:48 AM

I think more people should have the opportunity to hook up to public utilities. 4/23-24/08

On site systems work well when installed and maintained properly. It is interesting that the consultants on this plan are advising to update systems that are completely opposite of any local engineer who installs septic systems on the hill. This area needs more consideration and "expert" local input before we make a really bad mess. Mon, 5/12/08 11:55 AM

The first thing the hikers do when they get out of the car is take a leak before they start their hike. Then they let the dogs do the same. I'm on a well. I don't need thousands more doing the same and as stated earlier once the access is in there is no willingness or money to make the improvements that would stop this. Sun, 5/11/08 8:27 PM

Onsite systems work fine. Sun, 5/11/08 4:50 PM

I am in favor of maintaining the current sewer and well systems for homes in this area. They work very well. Sat, 5/10/08 4:33 PM

We do not need Public water and sewer. Mon, 5/12/08 7:21 PM

- No to AWWU's South Anchorage Water Improvements (p67). Leads to more mega-development
- A Do away with AWWU Maximum Perimeters (p72) Loosen restrictions on neighborhood systems (p74)
- Advanced systems on site (p72) favor #3 (p86) No advanced systems would be better
- Wastewater service extension only by vote, homeowners affected (p88)
- Alternative 1 – no change in boundary (p91) 5/12/08

We have not had any problems with our onsite systems in our subdivision. Mon, 5/12/08 7:21 PM

The onsite utilities chapter is written in such a way as to make the Assembly think the hillside is drinking its own urine. Rewrite the section in a positive tone to reflect the purifying effect of a septic system. Write the whole chapter with the mind to answer the points of the 2020 Plan's policy 80 in regards to which wastewater treatment system fits the conditions for that policy. Include traditional onsite systems as well as the high tech systems and public utilities. Acknowledge that building at current low density zoning with minimum 1.25 acres is sufficient to continue the use of onsite systems without any health concerns. Acknowledge the EPA quote that was in one of your prior supplementary reports that stated onsite systems are a viable system for the LONG TERM for dealing with the Hillside's wastewater. Acknowledge that there is no nitrate problem on the hillside and state the real reasons why some systems appear to have a higher nitrate problem (no grouting of the wells) and the reasons why some systems need replacing–placed on too small of a lot, improper care, and routine life of system–which does NOT indicate a failure of the system rather an infrequent maintenance that is needed each 15-20 yrs and which is taken care of by use of the reserve drainfield system for which it was designed. Mon, 5/12/08 5:30 PM

Do not define an urban/rural boundary nor a new HWMP boundary because it is useless to do so. There is no clear cut area that has a lower level of service. South of DeArmoun Rd is a lower density land use pattern and the water and sewer boundary are not appropriate for this area. Draw lines on what currently is served by public utilities and do not allow the expansion of public utilities further. With continued growth at the current zoning--low density 1.25 DUA--there is no need to consider expansion of public utilities. Acknowledge that the Tischler Report considers each new house that comes on the tax rolls with public utilities to be a draw on city coffers, therefore to even consider the expansion of public utilities would be a violation of 2020's Policy 80. Mon, 5/12/08 5:31 PM

I support any alternative that minimizes construction of new public water and wastewater systems. These systems should be built on an "as-needed" basis and not used as a justification for high-density development.

- Areas that have been identified as having problems with onsite systems ("Challenged areas") should be assessed by empirical studies rather than anecdotal reports.
- Areas documented as challenged by poor soils should first be considered as candidates for advanced onsite systems rather than for public or neighborhood wastewater systems.

- If upslope areas are either preserved in their natural state or if new developments are created in an environmentally sensitive manner, groundwater quality will remain high and wells will continue to be an excellent source of potable water.
- Sources of groundwater contamination, i.e. nitrates and nitrites, should be identified and mapped. Owners of identified sources, such as stables should be required to control or eliminate these inputs.
- The costs for water and wastewater systems required by new developments should be borne entirely by the developer.

Transportation

DeArmoun Rd. to Rabbit Creek Rd. connection. The intersection at Elmore and Rabbit Creek is extremely dangerous as is the down hill to the west. The cost to fix this portion would require an enormous use (taking) of private property and dwarfs fixing the curve on DeArmoun in terms of cost. Higher density is inappropriate for this area. The Lower portion of Rabbit Creek Rd. is a 12% or 14% grade. The accidents have been spectacular on the hill and at Elmore. Note the signage for Not a good area for PUD's or increased traffic or commercial. 4/23-24/08

Greatly opposed to any consideration of road / neighborhood access trails designated as 10 on the large aerial map. This would funnel traffic from South high school into our "Ridgewood Road" neighborhood. We don't want that. We cherish our buffer from high school activity and their negative impacts. 4/23-24/08

I am appalled at the #10 additional roadway improvements recommended in the Hillside District Plan. When my lot on Bainbridge was purchased in the early 90's, the city assured me Bainbridge would never go thru, one of the primary reasons I bought that lot. MOA said it was a Chugach Electric easement and would never be used. My neighbors and I have negative thoughts on continuing your "country land" into DeArmoun. It is already has a very dangerous curve and has a large number of accidents. Please don't make Bainbridge a thru-street! 4/23-24/08

Traffic should not be increased any more on Rabbit Creek Rd. or Old Seward behind Potter Marsh. 4/23-24/08

I support road and trail improvements. I'm not sure how to pay for this but it is necessary. 4/23-24/08

I agree that we need a comprehensive plan on developing future roads. For trails I think the Anchorage Bowl Service Area plan would be the best since many trail users do not live on the hillside. Wed, 4/30/08 10:42 AM

The transportation plan in general looks good. The trails portion is a tough one for me, I don't think that the burden for developing and/or maintaining or improving trails should fall on Hillside residents as they are used by residents of the entire City. I would vote to leave trails as is but maybe add an access point off Brewster. There is a priority trail access shown on Honey Bear Circle. This is a small neighborhood with one trail access point already which is not managed and is somewhat of a nuisance for neighbors. Adding another access point which doesn't lead to anywhere will promote even more trespass as well as environmental impacts to the neighbors including dust, noise and dog shit. I don't believe that the HOA covenants would allow a parking lot if the lot depicted were to be purchased for this use. It's important that these neighborhood access points are developed with the intent to preserve the neighborhoods that they are placed in and do not drive out the people that live there. Access is important but the access points should be spread out and not concentrated in on esmall neighborhood. The "Bear Roads" are depicted as primary roads and it was described to me that, despite the ADT being 10 on some of them, they are defined as primary because of the park access point at the end. It was also described that the primary roads would be eligible for State grants because the road is used by residents of the state and not only by residents of Bear Valley, this seems reasonable to me. Fri, 4/25/08 4:09 PM

I support the city's Option 1 drainage/roads. You cannot separate them. It should be combined. **Fix** the **roads** - they are terrible - before building new ones. 4/23-24/08

Old Seward Highway, fix and maintain as a country lane, low speed, 35mph, high pedestrian use ability to attract recreational users to Potter Marsh. Bear Valley to Golden View collector, Mt Air Drive should be built. Rabbit Creek Rd may consider turn lanes but no 3rd lane in center. It would just increase speed. The Legacy Point Rd or connecting road to Potter Creek needs to be platted and designed to pull traffic away from GoldenView and Rabbit Creek Rd. With the quadruple density plan for BLM, (aka controlled growth) the infrastructure would fail. The roads are not built to standards to withstand that kind of use. The LRSA's are not capable of maintaining and repairing paving which would be needed. Mon, 5/12/08 1:11 PM

Why on earth would you place another public access in a neighbor hood with 21 lots and 11 houses 1500 feet from one you already have? Get your access where you're not ruining a neighborhood. Sun, 5/11/08 8:30 PM

Not sure why Honey Bear is designated a primary road. Very few houses are up there and neighbors take care of their own streets and needs. People who live there - in a high wind area - do so for a reason; they love the rural, low traffic, end of the road environment. Don't change the nature of Honey Bear - for no apparent reason - from the rural setting that actual land owners bought and settled there to achieve. Sun, 5/11/08 4:50 PM

I have been informed by my neighbor that there is a proposal to build a parking lot on the top of Honey Bear Dr in Bear Valley and make this area a Priority Trailhead. As a new home owner on Snow Bear Drive, I implore you to not move forward with this project. Our roads are in very poor condition with just the local traffic and with the joy riding teens that barrel up the roads to get to the Grandview overlook. Besides heavy dirt and dust, the litter from these vehicles seems to get worse every day. I pick up trash on my daily walks, beer cans, broken bottles, not to mention prophylactics and undergarments. Several times I have been walking my dogs and have had too many close calls with the foreign traffic in our neighborhood. To put an actual parking lot will just invite more trouble to our neighborhoods. I feel it is extremely unfair and inappropriate to make a public parking lot accessible ONLY through our neighborhood. The additional traffic and noise from potentially thousands of strangers would have a negative impact and increase the crime rate in Bear Valley.

It is my understanding that the area near the proposed site is zoned as residential. The recorded Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for the subdivision does not allow this type of development, and the trailhead has never been identified as an existing or historical access point on the Chugach Park Access Inventory, the Anchorage Trails Plan or any such planning document.

Honey Bear Lane and Honey Bear Circle specifically must be removed from the Hillside District Plan for Primary Road designations.

Please help us keep our neighborhood safe!! 5/5/08

The Transp Plan includes some illogical choices for road connections: 1. Remove the Hillside Dr connection from the map because it crosses wetlands and is illogical to even consider as a way to relieve congestion given that the Mt Air collector was selected for the road connection in the Hillside SubArea Transportation Study. 2. Remove Elmore at RC Rd as an intersection that will accommodate connecting traffic from DeArmoun. This is a hugely unsafe area with a steep hill and blind curve. Nothing that any engineer could do will make this a safe intersection. Find another way--like Buffalo. 3. The collector status for the "Legacy" collector Goldenview Dr to Potter Rd should not be the lowest collector status but the highest in order to truly accommodate the need for ER egress and relief of congestion from Goldenview traffic. This road needs to be redesigned with the residents

in mind, NOT that of the potential developer of the land. This collector is to serve the whole region and cannot be allowed to be designed with the landowner in mind even if that landowner MIGHT pay for the road or part of it. That would be totally disregarding the purpose of the collector and the needs of the residents. 4. Acknowledge that the current standard to design roads to MOA standards AND max 8% grade do NOT fit with the hillside terrain nor the ability to develop effectively the remaining and sometimes challenged lands here. Fire trucks manage very well to travel RC Rd and DeArmoun Rd and Windsong and Sandpiper and others that are greater than even 10-12%, therefore to require all roads to be 8% max grade is not only not necessary from a public safety standpoint but also a poor way to develop the remaining steep land here. Grades of 10% in sections should be allowed. Acknowledge that school buses go up RC RD and DeArmoun both of which are above 10% grade in places. 5. The Romania to Finland connection is the only logical connection from Goldenview to Potter Valley area. Acknowledge that and acknowledge that the connection should not occur before the "Legacy" collector is open in order to truly relieve congestion on Goldenview. 6. RC Rd may need turning lanes but should NOT be upgraded to 3-full lanes because it would only increase driving speeds and is not needed otherwise. 7. Trails in subdivisions and such connections must always be public and policy 55 of 2020 should remain in effect to ensure such connections are always platted with each new plat or replat. 8. Connection between Bear and Potter valleys is a high priority per the public process that occurred with the Parks Plan rewrite in 2005 and that should be acknowledged and prioritized. 9. The old Seward Hwy from RC RD to Potter Rd must be a higher priority on DOT's list. It is a severe safety issue and has NO shoulders or trails yet is heavily used by recreators. Its upgrade is also in the state's security interest because it is the only access to the Kenai should there be an accident or natural disaster on the New Seward Hwy in that area. Its upgrade should only be made however in a 'country lane' design so as to fit with the neighborhood and potential low key development there. Even three lanes is not needed nor desired except as turning lanes. Mon, 5/12/08 5:53 PM

Roads:

- favor connectivity and calming; maximum public influence over location and alignments (p54)
- rebuild existing roads with substantial variances to existing standards, such as roads built over 12% grade
- district-wide service area for management of drainage and roads (p57)

Trails:

- Hillside-based service area: favor Hillside-wide network of trails. 5/12/08

The HDP Trails plan is a good concept but has some major flaws that must be addressed. The trails plan in the HDP is currently showing a "Priority Trailhead" on the HLB property adjacent to CSP that lies directly behind two subdivision lots platted in the early 1980's to the north of Honey Bear Circle. Note that the "Priority Trailhead" is the same designation as the very large units at Glen Alps, Prospect Heights, etc that park from 50 to 200 cars and due to the topography of the HLB property the trailhead would have to be build directly adjacent to an existing home, and visible from all homes in the subdivision. The intention appears to be to have all of the traffic for this trailhead go up Honey Bear Drive through Honey Bear Circle which would then be extended into HLP property to the trailhead. To accommodate the increase in traffic they have designated both roads as "Primary Roads", the same as the main Clark's Road that leads into Bear Valley. When the study consultant's representative was asked how they would extend the road through private property they pointed out what they believe to be a 20' easement between the two end lots as their starting point and the fact

that one of the lots is currently vacant and could potentially be purchased. Note the following: -There is currently no legal access to the HLP property where the trailhead is identified. -The trailhead could only become a reality if they purchased an existing lot or secured an easement to construct a road through a lot which is currently zoned as R-10 residential only. -The recorded Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CCR's) for the subdivision, and the lot in question, do not allow this type of development and you can be guaranteed that legal action would be taken if the CCR's are not honored. -The trailhead has never been identified as an existing, or historical, access point on the Chugach Park Access Inventory, the Anchorage Trails Plan, or any such planning documents. -This neighborhood bears their fair share of the park access burden from the existing trail access point only a few thousand feet from this one, and it is inappropriate to develop a new major trail head in and through, an existing neighborhood. -Honey Bear Lane and Honey Bear Circle specifically must be removed from the HDP for "Primary Road" designations. Honey Bear Circle is a platted subdivision road with a current daily traffic of approximately 5 cars. The designation to a primary road in the HDP was designed specifically to facilitate it's use for hundreds of cars a day to access the trailhead and is inappropriate. -The "Priority Trailhead" proposal at this location is ill conceived and must be removed from the plan. Mon, 5/12/08 11:11 PM

Roads are inadequate to handle the flow of traffic especially if an emergency evacuation occurs. Adding more subdivisions and/or schools would only increase the problem. Now developers propose to add road access to follow the steep, icy existing roads. You would only have to travel these roads on a regular basis to know how crazy and dangerous that would be. Mon, 5/12/08 7:22 PM

- Paved trails that are plowed during the winter should be considered for both Rabbit Creek Road and Goldenview Drive.
- There should be a moratorium on any new, large developments that would increase the traffic load on Goldenview Drive until significant improvements are made for this road that will diminish the congestion at the intersection of Goldenview Drive and Rabbit Creek Road.
- Road upgrades necessary to accommodate the traffic emanating from new developments should be funded, at least in part, by impact fees levied on these developments. `

In response to the Hillside District Plan for the "Priority Trailhead" on the Heritage Land Bank property with access via Honey Bear Circle: This is a very bad idea for many reasons I will list some of those here. - Traffic greatly increased on Snow Bear with the establishment of the current trail access point with cars speeding, spinning their wheels at all time of the day and night, parties in the parking lot, and increased trash on the roads. We are challenged now dealing with the negative aspects of the access trail and parking lot that we currently have. Our neighborhood could not maintain the quality of life with an additional trailhead especially one designated "Priority Trailhead". The existing homes were not developed with this high volume of traffic in mind. It would be best to place the "Priority Trailhead in a less populated area so the homes built along the roads could be built with this in consideration. - Currently there is not a legal access to the property where the trailhead is slated for. With the current covenants, conditions and restrictions in our subdivision it would not be possible to proceed with this type of development. This relates to my statement above, homes were established within the covenants and those do not support this increase in traffic. - Honey Bear Lane and Honey Bear Circle are not adequate roads to have the designation of a primary road. The concern now is access off the mountain for residence if there would be a fire. The fire department has already stated getting the residence off clarks road would be a challenge. If you proceed with this plan you make it more hazardous. It would be better to access from a different

direction for the safety of all who currently live in Bear Valley. Thank you for your consideration Sat,
5/10/08 4:33 PM

Management and Funding Options

I support the Hillside Option 1 – Hillside wide service area. I have had positive experiences living in that community service district / community improvement districts. 4/23-24/08

Option 1 makes the most sense since the roads, drainage and trails are all inter-related and should be seen as a whole...which is precisely what this framework plan demonstrates. However, it is undoubtedly not politically feasible. Therefore Option 2 is probably what could succeed in becoming established. However, could it not be passed with some sort of “sunset” clause so that after 5 or 8 years, this new mechanism could be evaluated to see if it has improved the situation. Also there needs to be some kind of mechanism to evaluate, at the same time, whether the LRSA’s and RRSA’s have and can continue to manage efficiently and effectively the local roads. Extending the MOA parks jurisdiction to cover the Hillside is the only thing that makes sense since parks and recreation needs involve the whole of the Anchorage bowl area and can involve all of Anchorage’s residents. There is no reason why some mechanisms can’t be established for a Hillside advisory group to work closely with the MOA parks employees, planners, etc. I like the idea of MOA parks taking some responsibility for a mile within Chugach State Park borders. That should certainly help with access issues. Susan Olsen 4/23-24/08

Did not see this option. 4/23-24/08

I favor Option 1: p110 HRDTSA 5/12/08



Area-G
Home
And
Landowners
Organization, Inc.

P.O. Box 110096
Anchorage, AK 99511-0096

Area G Home and Landowners Organization, Inc.

May 12, 2008

Agnew:Beck
Heather Stewart
441 West 5th Avenue, Suite 202
Anchorage, AK 99501

RE: Comments on Hillside District Plan Framework

HALO was formed prior to the creation of the Municipality of Anchorage with a mission “ to promote within the Anchorage Hillside the rural way of life in a community of low density settlement, in which the forest and water resources may be adequate to the people’s needs, and the character of the community experience remain ... To promote public policies that favor the home and land owners, rather than the speculator; that will postpone or eliminate the need for expensive services and utilities by prevention of haphazard, inappropriate, and untimely development; and that will tend to place squarely on the shoulders of the developer the entire cost to the community of his development.”

Our comments below are made in support of these ideals and were adopted on at the May 1, 2008 HALO meeting.

Sincerely,

Dianne Holmes

Dianne Holmes, Sec.

Introduction -- Hillside Plan – Overall Goal

“The large majority of the Hillside District has low-density lots of 1.25 to 2.5 acres and larger, with ample vegetation, access to trails, the presence of wildlife, privacy, views, access to open space and other amenities associated with low-density residential development (HDP Framework p.16).” “The overall goal of the HDP is to take active steps to retain these qualities . . . most enjoyed by the residents and . . . visitors . . . while accommodating the Hillside District’s share of Anchorage’s growth as determined by the Anchorage 2020 *Comprehensive Plan* (HDP Framework p. 10).”

Address the misinterpretation of the HDP survey as depicted in the Executive Summary (mixed use density vs housing styles.

1. **Compliance with 2020**—coordinate and justify each HDP recommendation with policies and goals of Anchorage's 2020 *Comprehensive Plan* as defined for SE Anchorage.
2. **Transportation**—need to comment and be able to display funding options so they can be understood. Likelihood that the public will accept enhanced LRSA construction authority but will want to continue with local control.
3. **Commercial Development**—no *new* commercial development. Recognize results of HDP survey. Businesses that are “grandfathered” shall meet Title 21, Chapter 12 requirements for non-conforming uses with any changes leading towards conditions of Overlay standards, below, as applicable; changes will not diminish their non-conforming status.

Create an Overlay district for parcels currently zoned commercial along the Old Seward Hwy, off lower Rabbit Cr Rd. Conditions for the Overlay will include: a natural history theme for businesses; boundaries of the Overlay set to currently commercially zoned parcels; residential standards or stricter for lot coverage and with large vegetative buffers including access road not less than 50 ft wide; max 3,500 sq ft for buildings; use shall not require extension of public utilities; access to Old Seward Hwy only (not Rabbit Cr Rd); participation in LRSA and drainage service area if applicable; low lighting; restricted operating hours; lower parking space requirements; minimize impervious surfaces; business to be a local traffic generator only except as pertains to natural history theme of Potter Marsh; may allow residential use; major site plan review required. No auto-related business such as gas stations.

4. **Utilities, public and on-site**—given the success and safety of traditional onsite systems and newer “high tech” systems in lower density areas and the flexibility of neighborhood OWS systems, along with the high cost of extending public utilities to SE Anchorage, there is no need to extend the boundary for public systems. This statement complies with 2020 goal to maintain on-site utilities (p. 66). Consultants’ reports also support confirmation that on-site utilities comply with 2020 Policy 80—which is a significant marker for fulfilling 2020’s vision for lower density development—as well as reducing costs of urban sprawl (p.88).

The AWWU service boundary for both water and wastewater should be drawn to include only those areas currently served by AWWU. Residents who would like to connect to the AWWU system should begin by petitioning to move the boundary.

Consultants report good water quality on the Hillside, but also recommend some unnecessary and costly suggestions for changes in the requirements for on-site wastewater systems. Any changes to water and wastewater regulations should be accompanied by a review by local on-site engineers. See attached detailed analysis of consultants’ recommendations by Ted Moore.

Make public utilities section separate from on-site in HDP

- 5 **Land Use**— Conservation subdivisions (CS) and Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) do not fit into the community’s vision for itself. The Hillside wants to preserve and enhance the identity as a rural community characterized by single-family, detached homes on large treed lots. By contrast, conservation subdivisions and PUDs offer areas of concentrated development surrounded by trees.

Any CS and PUD must only be allowed where it offers benefits that outweigh these community values. They must offer real useable open space, real protection of waterways, real protection and creation of trails and protection and creation of wildlife corridors. The CS and PUDs must minimize the impact on the Hillside’s character as a large, minimum 1 ¼ acre, lot community.

Anchorage 2020’s goal for the area, is one of low density. The Framework states that current zoning allows Hillside development to accommodate the residential quota as prescribed by the 2020 Plan. Given this ability to comply with growth and the challenges of the remaining undeveloped land, coupled with infrastructure that has limited ability to be upgraded, it is neither necessary, recommended nor economically prudent to develop with higher density rezones or PUDs.

The Lower Hillside District (map p. 17 as amended north to DeArmoun Rd in HALO’s comments) is the only region in which a slightly higher density might match their community vision and would not create costly urban sprawl.

Should higher densities be permitted through PUDs/Conservation subdivisions, standards must be set that produce real benefits to the public because developers automatically receive benefits by not having to build as much infrastructure or clear as much land. Currently PUDs do not have standards that meet the community vision for development on the Hillside. Perimeter buffers should be undisturbed and not less than 50 ft wide. Linear installation of utilities in buffers should be prohibited. PUDs and Conservation subdivisions must include usable public open space/trails with limits on % of open space assigned to 30% or greater slopes, waterbody protection, and wildlife corridors. A PUD or Conservation subdivision must have a minimum of 15 acres in R6-R10 zones or 10 acre minimum, subject to public hearing (not administrative review). Firewise recommendations for defensible space should be factored into the open space 5 to be retained, otherwise buffers and retention of vegetation, to help control drainage, could end up being cleared. A plat note should secure open space and buffers’ permanence.

The green infrastructure approach to using marginal lands is described in the Framework. It would allow building to the current zoning, but with smaller, clustered lots. The standards should produce usable public open space, greenbelts, trails, wildlife corridors and generous waterbody setbacks. Community on-site utilities would serve the developments. A plat note should secure open space and buffers’ permanence.

Agreed that Potter Valley density should be reduced as recommended in Framework and Land Use Plan Map process.

Modify boundaries of District Regions (map p. 17) by shrinking Lower Hillside region’s southern border to DeArmoun Rd. and to Lake Otis Pkwy on the east. Move SE Hillside region’s northern boundary to DeArmoun Rd. This allows all of Rabbit Creek watershed to fall within one region. The configuration is more efficient for management of a future drainage service area and reflects a more unified representation of land use patterns.

6. **Drainage**—approve of recommendation to address drainage issues by watersheds. Recommend that Hillside District Regions (map p. 17) be amended to include complete watersheds in districts—move SE District border north to DeAmoun Rd. Recommend establishment of drainage service area either in conjunction with roads/trails or not. Approve of using Little Rabbit Cr and Little Survival Cr for pilot studies for service area. Agree that minimum stream setbacks should be 50’ per side. Shortcoming of this section is the limited focus of wetlands’ purpose. Specific standards are needed to define buffering

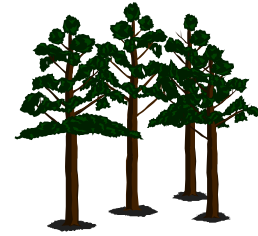
requirements and % of vegetation to be retained. Expand to include wetlands value as wildlife corridors and habitat because the Framework does not address this, open space, nor greenbelts. Address attached comments by Dr Vivian Mendenhall.

7. **Parks/Open Space**—Recommend expansion of the service area to include Bear Valley and Potter Valley be put to a vote. Missing from the HDP Framework is a chapter on Parks, Greenbelts, Open Space and Wildlife Corridors. The drainage section addresses wetlands in regard to runoff absorption only; their value for wildlife and waterfowl is ignored, as are greenbelts—the need to protect them and to complete missing segments. The land use sections do not address wildlife corridors, nor greenbelts either. The HDP will not be complete without this chapter because it goes to the heart of what SE Anchorage is about.

Rabbit Creek Community Council

P.O. Box 112354, Anchorage, AK 99511-2354

May 12, 2008



Agnew::Beck
441 West 5th Avenue, Suite 202
Anchorage, AK 99501

RE: Comments on HDP Framework from RCCC

Dear Mr Beck:

Attached are the council's compiled comments that were voted on by our Board and attending members on May 8th. The view of our community is aptly summed up in your Framework introduction:

Hillside Plan – Overall Goal

“The large majority of the Hillside District has low-density lots of 1.25 to 2.5 acres and larger, with ample vegetation, access to trails, the presence of wildlife, privacy, views, access to open space and other amenities associated with low-density residential development (HDP Framework p.16).”

“The overall goal of the HDP is to take active steps to retain these qualities . . . most enjoyed by the residents and . . . visitors . . . while accommodating the Hillside District's share of Anchorage's growth as determined by the Anchorage *2020 Comprehensive Plan* (HDP Framework p. 10).”

The council sincerely hopes the HDP draft that will be produced will incorporate these and others' comments and will support the above goal. One concern, however, are the supplemental and alternative reports that appear on the website. They contain much detail and if they are to be part of the adopted plan, their contents have not been discussed at open houses.

Sincerely,

Dick Tremaine, President

Rabbit Cr. Community Council--Hillside District Plan Framework Comments
Approved May 8, 2008

The HDP contains many issues important to residents regarding the character of their neighborhoods, their investment, proposed changes in infrastructure and future development (density, roads, trails, drainage, utilities, open space, wildlife).

The RCCC has been involved in the lengthy HDP process and has encouraged residents likewise. At the council's May 8, '08 meeting, the following comments were discussed and recommended for inclusion in, and editing of, the HDP.

Parks/Open Space/Wildlife Issues:

The RCCC finds the lack of a Parks/Open Space/Wildlife chapter unacceptable. The HDP's Household survey confirms residents preference for a more rural environment accompanied by open space, wildlife, trails and parks accessibility. The Drainage and Transportation chapters do not sufficiently address these issues. Also lacking is a plan to address the missing gaps in greenbelts, such as along Potter Creek among others. Include a Parks/Open Space/Wildlife chapter in the final HDP. Address Dr Vivian Mendenhall's comments on these deficiencies (attached).

Land Use—Density (P. 6-34)

- Anchorage Comprehensive Plan Compliance—coordinate and justify each HDP recommendation with policies and goals of Anchorage's 2020 *Comprehensive Plan* as defined for SE Anchorage.
- Acknowledge that the 2020 Plan's goal for SE Anchorage is one of continued low density with a recommended residential growth quota of 4-6K units from about 2000 to 2020.
- Acknowledge that current zoning can accommodate the recommended residential growth quota of 4-6K units per several statements in the HDP Framework; subtract the number of units already built since the 2020 Plan was drafted (1998) and state the number needed to fulfill the quota.
- For this reason (above) and others, it is unnecessary and uneconomical to include the "BLM area" south of DeArmoun Rd for proposed increased density. Remove BLM area from higher density recommendation (p. 25, 26, 90-92). Other justifications include the inaccurate information in the Framework that stated this area is 'challenged' for on-site utilities.
- Accompany the removal of the BLM area from a higher density designation with a corollary change in the Hillside District Regions map (p. 17). Shrink the Lower Hillside District's southern border to DeArmoun Rd. Move the SE Region's northern boundary to DeArmoun Rd. This modification allows for the whole Rabbit Cr watershed to be included in one district which in turn will make drainage management more efficient; the land use patterns and infrastructure south of DeArmoun Rd are more uniform and should be represented that way on the modified map. A modified SE District would also include all Potter Marsh drainages
- Agree with proposed reduction in density in Potter Valley. The terrain and lack of adequate road egress—even with the proposed improvements—makes this area better suited for lower density.
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and conditions for retention of natural vegetation and open space are both necessary to maintain the community and 2020's vision in lower density neighborhoods, especially if smaller lots are allowed such as in the Green Infrastructure and Conservation Subdivision approach to development. FAR is a way to deal with the bulk of a building compared to the open space surrounding it. Without such conditions, a 4:1 FAR could result in a 2,500 ft house-print on a 10,000 sq ft lot with

paving to the lot perimeters. Other open space conditions recommended below are to protect adjacent subdivisions and fulfill separate public benefits when either development method is used. Some of the open space requirements allow ½ of requirement to be private yards, thus the need for additional conditions below.

- Agree that ‘Green infrastructure’ development approach is to retain more natural terrain and natural vegetation and is a mechanism to deal with drainage and ‘natural systems.’ Conditions for Green Infrastructure should include: building to not exceed current zoning density in clustered lots with usable; public open space and trails; greenbelts; wildlife corridors; 50 ft or more waterbody setbacks per side; 50 ft minimum *undisturbed* perimeter vegetative buffers (deeded, included as a plat note, and held common open space by Homeowner’s Assoc.); served with community on-site utilities; and 30% minimum retention of natural vegetation beyond open space requirement in conjunction with FAR conditions (to keep a potentially massive building footprint and vegetation on a small lot in harmony; suggest FAR of 4 or 5:1).
- Agree Conservation Subdivision approach is a preferred way to build on marginal lands that appears to fit with the community vision for the Hillside. Conditions for this method include those for “green infrastructure” above (build to current zoning only--by clustering lots; usable, public open space and trails; greenbelts if applicable; wildlife corridors; 50 ft or more waterbody setbacks per side; 50 ft minimum undisturbed perimeter vegetative buffers deeded, with a plat note and held as common open space by Homeowner’s Assoc; served with community on-site utilities; and 30% minimum retention of natural vegetation beyond open space requirement in conjunction with FAR conditions [suggest FAR of 4 or 5:1]). This development approach is its own incentive because developers do not have to build as much infrastructure, therefore no more incentives need be included.
- Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) do not fit the community vision goals for SE Anchorage nor 2020’s. PUDs are not needed to meet 2020’s residential quota for the district nor as a method for development of marginal lands because the Conservation Subdivision approach is a more appropriate technique. Do not permit PUDs in the Hillside area. PUD development standards are not stringent enough to protect community vision. If PUDs are allowed, however, the following conditions, at a minimum, must be met: develop on minimum of 20 acres in Lower Hillside District as modified in this document (map p. 17); 50 ft minimum undisturbed perimeter vegetative buffers (deeded, with a plat note and held as common open space by Homeowner’s Assoc); greater perimeter buffers required on slopes and where PUD density is twice that of adjacent areas; 50 ft or more waterbody setbacks per side; usable public open space and trails; and 30% minimum retention of natural vegetation beyond open space requirement in conjunction with FAR conditions to keep the building footprint and vegetation on small lot in relationship (suggest FAR of 4 or 5:1).
- The term “controlled growth” implies decelerated growth, but its use here has been misapplied. Change the term to honestly represent that is being recommended—quadruple density (or eight times density, if the potential for accessory units is realized.)

Land Use—Commercial Zones: (P. 35-43)

- Acknowledge results of HDP Household survey and input at public meetings for NO NEW development in SE Anchorage. Delete suggestion for Bear Valley commercial area.
- Create an Overlay District for those parcels currently zoned commercial along Old Seward Hwy (east of Potter Marsh) and set the following development standards: at a minimum—set boundary limits for the Overlay to those parcels currently zoned commercial; no commercial property shall use Rabbit Cr Rd as a main access; natural history theme shall be applied to commercial Overlay to compliment Potter Marsh; limit building size to that of a residential area including conditions for minimum 50 ft natural vegetative buffers, low lighting standards, impervious surface standards, and less parking space requirements. Delete term “mercantile district” because it connotes activities that may not be appropriate

for a natural history-theme Overlay. Businesses shall exclude auto related and gas stations, and liquor stores.

- Overlay's success must include cooperation of DOT for an expedited reconstruction of the Old Seward Hwy (RC Rd to Potter Rd) as a country lane design (only) with pedestrian /bike paths.

Land Use, Drainage: (P. 44-51)

- Agree that SE Anchorage has areas of severe drainage and glaciation problems.
- Agree that a management tool such as a Drainage Service Area or Utility is needed.
- Agree that better development standards are needed to control runoff in conjunction with above.
- Agree that drainage should be managed by watersheds.
- In conjunction with above, move SE Hillside District border north to DeArmoun Rd (p. 17 map).
- Agree waterbody setbacks shall be 50ft per side—at a minimum.
- Recommend that vegetative buffers in subdivisions be the property of the homeowner's assoc to secure their permanence.
- Recommend editing (p. 47) *Runoff Controls*, to reflect reality (“Retention of native vegetation based on lot size”). Set FAR standards for conditions that would limit footprint of house and impervious surfaces, in relation to lot size, as factors to control runoff. See FAR recommendations in Land Use comments above.
- Remedy Drainage section's omission for dealing with wetlands as valuable for wildlife corridors.
- Remedy Drainage section's omission on completing missing pieces of greenbelts on Hillside.

Land Use, Transportation and Trails: (P.52-63)

- Acknowledge that the LRTP list of priorities and projects (in the Transportation Alternatives Report) do not reflect consensus of the council nor did they receive a full public process when the LRTP was compiled. Examples: Elmore at RC Rd intersection and connection to DeArmoun Rd should be deleted as an incredibly unsafe location and another connection sought; Old Seward Hwy (RC Rd to Potter) should be given a higher priority for reconstruction by acknowledging the several justifications presented by the RCCC over the years, including safety issues.
- Agree with p. 53 statement that MOA road standards cannot be applied to all Hillside roads because of inability to rebuild them to MOA standards due to terrain and/or desire of residents to maintain rural environment.
- HDP must include projected traffic volumes for new and proposed road improvements. Residents deserve to understand what the impacts of the changes will be. Projected development should be translated into road system details. Transportation infrastructure plans should be tied to land use changes and explained.
- Acknowledge that flexibility in % of slope must be allowed in road construction. Keeping to 8% grade is not possible in many areas without using up excessive land and could preclude a road's usefulness in dispersing traffic across the area or as use for egress in emergencies. Acknowledge that current fire equipment is able to travel hillside roads where slopes are well over 10% grades and that Rabbit Cr Rd and DeArmoun Rd have sections at 12% or more.
- The funding options are complex and difficult to understand. It is likely the public will accept granting more authority to LRSAs but they may wish to keep local control for some items.
- Acknowledge that many transportation improvements should be made before further development occurs such as Goldenview Dr at Rabbit Cr Rd intersection. or prove that other road improvements will deflect traffic off of the intersection.

- P. 55 : remove suggested road connection improvements for Hillside Dr (east of Bear Valley School north to RC Rd [p. 28, map ID 3? in Transportation .Alternative Report]) and south to Potter Dr. This route would bisect wetlands, a school and park while not acknowledging that the recent Hillside Sub Area Transportation Study and the COE did not approve that route. Rather, a connection somewhere along Mt Air was the preferred choice. Recognize that the logic behind promoting Hillside Dr as a way to divert traffic from RC Rd is seriously flawed and represents a lack of understanding of Hillside driving patterns and intent. Remove this connection from the map and acknowledge the Hillside Sub-Area Study.
- Acknowledge the need for an independent design study for the Goldenview to Potter collector (referred to as the Legacy collector) in order to provide a truer ability to disperse traffic and to provide better ER egress.
- Change the “Legacy” collector status (Goldenview Dr to Potter Rd) to a higher level to reflect its importance in Hillside traffic congestion mitigation and ER egress.
- Acknowledge the severe safety issues at Elmore and Rabbit Cr Rd. Delete this area as a connection to DeArmoun and search for other safer connections.
- State that there is a need for a connection from Romania to Finland, but that it should not be completed before the “Legacy” collector (Goldenview to Potter) has been independently designed and built because it would pour more traffic onto Goldenview Dr and ‘program’ drivers to use that road instead of having the option to use the Legacy collector and relieve congestion.
- Acknowledge that any upgrade to Rabbit Cr Rd should include intermittent third lanes only for turning and should not be constructed to a full three lanes because it would increase speeds. Agree that separated pedestrian and bike trails are needed.
- Trails, P 62 agree: expand service area to include Bear Valley and Potter Valley.
- Trails: P. 58 “Trails are an important form of community infrastructure . . .” it is good that this section appears to have been rewritten to reflect that trails are actually part of a comprehensive transportation plan and are also included as such in 2020 and its sub-plan, the LRTP.
- Trails: the Transportation section has done a nice job of listing trail connections that are needed, but it does not make up for the lack of a separate HDP chapter on parks/open space/wildlife corridors.
- Trails: the HDP Framework does not contain goals nor plans for dealing with missing greenbelt segment, yet many Hillside creeks are fairly intact corridors.
- Trails: Agree that trail and pedestrian connections are a necessary and highly desirable component to living in SE Anchorage. More connections to parks whether state or local are needed.
- Trails: P. 63—the statement that there should be more discussion to determine the appropriate course of action for trail issues, should not lead to setting aside Policy 55 in 2020 (requirement for ped/trail connection in each plat). Advise continued adherence to that policy requirement.
- Trails Figure II.3B Trail classifications: All trails should be public and connected. If private subdivision trails are allowed to be exclusive, the intent of policy 55 of the 2020 Plan will not be met (requirement for plats to include ped/trail connections). This will relegate walkers outside of a subdivision to using the road and sidewalks, if any exist.
- Trails, ... Network P. 61: state that developers cannot depend on section lines for fulfilling trail

requirements. It is not appropriate to consider a steep section line trail simply because section lines provide legal access. Some of the proposed section line trails, such as the one marked “5” (in-line with Hillside Dr) cannot be built to sustainable standards and as such the HDP text should not indicate that these areas can be considered as trail alternatives.

- Trails, P. 63 Include factual balance in the statement from developers that they feel they are unfairly required to provide trails for plat approval. In reality, subdivision trails do not detract from the value but increase it by up to 20%. Connectivity is the key to creating that value as experience outside Alaska indicates.
- Re-evaluate all secondary access roads for their grade; it is believed many are excessive and therefore should be reconsidered before being designated ‘secondary.’

Land Use, Water and Wastewater: (P. 64-92)

- Traditional on-site systems have a long and good safety record in SE Anchorage. Acknowledge their continued use, as well as use of the newer high tech systems—those on the market and those that may be invented—plus use of the community on-site systems to handle the development needs of the Hillside at the current zoning (lower) densities.
- Acknowledge *2020 Plan’s* goal for continued use of on-site systems (p. 66).
- Acknowledge that the HDP should compare all utility systems against *2020’s* policy 80 and chart the results. Policy 80 compliments the community vision for development on the Hillside—lower density, rural, reduced costs, lower visual impacts.
- Acknowledge that development has made it impossible and irrelevant to now attempt to define an Urban/Rural boundary for public utilities or any other LOS. Therefore, draw lines around those areas served by public utilities now and determine that all areas outside those boundaries will be served by traditional, high tech, or community on-site systems.
- Acknowledge that the whole Wastewater section is written in a negative tone that portends unsafe conditions if on-site systems continue, yet this tone is not borne out by evidence and is countered by statements elsewhere in the document and supplemental reports that on-site systems are a viable long term method for wastewater treatment. Rewrite this section in a positive and fact-supported tone.
- Acknowledge Ted Moore’s comments (attached) on the consultant’s recommendations including the ability for a low cost Groundwater Protection Program based first on use of available data.
- Nitrate issue (p. 65 second bullet): the impression given is that our drinking water is at risk, but data do not back that up. Such statements should include supporting data and should include whether the wells in question have been grouted properly because all nitrate problems can be eliminated with proper grouting.
- Challenged Areas (P. 79): this section is misleading and inaccurate. Rewrite and state real reasons why there have been septic ‘malfunctions’ – small lot sizes without reserve areas for drainfields, lack of regular pumping, natural life span of septic system. Acknowledge that a malfunctioning septic does not translate to a whole troubled subdivision.
- P. 81 Figure II.4H Provide a cost analysis for a variety of subdivisions from smaller to large across the Hillside. Are these subdivisions suppose to represent the ‘challenged’ areas? Why include only two options? Note costs for individual high tech and traditional onsite systems rather than just a cluster system because the statement on p. 79 says not all lots are affected in all ‘challenged’ areas.

WILDLIFE ON THE HILLSIDE:
NOT ADDRESSED in HDP Framework except for stream corridors
Summarized from Vivian Mendenhall, (907) 345-7124
April, '08

The continued presence of wildlife on the Hillside is not identified as an issue or goal.

NO WETLANDS are proposed for protection as habitat (other than streams)-- i.e., almost no bogs, ponds, or marshes. A few wetlands would be protected under the watershed drainage plans-- but only if they would absorb drainage runoff, not because they are valuable open space and wildlife habitat.

The public has stated that it values wildlife in our neighborhoods. Wildlife brings the wilderness of Alaska close to our homes. But if we want to keep wildlife, the overwhelming requirement is for habitat protection. Numerous studies have shown that development causes wildlife to retreat or disappear, unless habitat is maintained. Wildlife needs not only corridors, but also the patches of habitat that the corridors link together.

Wetlands are a vital habitat for many species, yet many have already disappeared on the Hillside. One example are the yellowlegs that nest near Goldenview Middle School and then travel down Little Rabbit Cr to Potter Marsh. That wetland is not suggested for preservation in the HDP Framework.

Another consideration: If habitat diminishes, dangerous conflicts with wildlife are likely to increase in the short term, according to ADF&G biologists.

ANCHORAGE 2020 CLEARLY MANDATES PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE AND HABITATS : "Fish, wildlife, and habitat protection methods shall be addressed in land use planning, design, and development processes" (Policy 66, page 85), and "Critical fish and wildlife habitats, high-value wetlands, and riparian corridors shall be protected as natural open spaces, wherever possible" (Policy 67, page 85).

The "Land Use" chapter of the Hillside District Plan (Framework) does mention open space and wildlife corridors. It then refers the reader to the chapter on "Drainage" for more details (page 31, last paragraph). That chapter protects stream corridors, but it gives short shrift to wetlands.

At one of the Framework work sessions, several reasons were given why the HDP did not consider protection of wetlands or other habitats: (1) No one wanted to work on habitats (other than stream corridors); (2) The Parks and Recreation Department did not participate in contracting for the plan; (3) The Alaska Department of Fish and Game didn't offer specific advice; and (4) The pilot watershed drainage planner said he "could not justify preserving any wetlands that didn't have the purpose of managing drainage."

THESE ARE VERY DISAPPOINTING ATTITUDES. If expertise is lacking among the advisory committees or contractors, I implore you to LOOK FOR IT IN THE COMMUNITY (from among the professional wildlife biologists). No long process will be needed to identify habitats-- most Hillside wetlands have already been identified in the Anchorage Wetlands Plan.

A drainage planner said that we will have to rely on the Army Corps of Engineers to preserve most Hillside wetlands. That is an inadequate response. That agency makes its decisions based on the needs of landowner-developers. They do not give equal weight to the needs of neighborhoods (nor can they, according to their mandate in federal regulations). We residents thought that the Hillside District Plan would finally give us a voice in land use, after being bulldozed by development-oriented agencies all these years. The plan does give us a new voice on many issues-- but not, in this draft, on open space and wildlife.

A special case is Potter Marsh. Hillside drainage affects this important marsh (which is part of our planning area). The marsh receives all its water from the south Hillside-- especially from Little Survival Creek. But that watershed will soon undergo rapid development. PROTECTION OF POTTER MARSH'S WATER SOURCE should be an explicit issue for watershed and drainage planners.

Restore the balance of the Hillside District Plan and maintain the Alaskan character of our neighborhoods-- by including wetland protection in the plan. Then we can continue to enjoy wildlife in our yards, and the public can enjoy Potter Marsh.

HDP Framework: Comments on revisions to on-site wastewater disposal standards
Summarized from Ted Moore, April, 2008

These comments relate to recommendations made by the wastewater consultant on wastewater disposal standards in the HDP Supplemental Report. They reflect the combined recommendations of four local, independent, on-site professional engineers - Ted Moore, Jeff Garness, Cindy Ellis and Lars Spurkland. The consensus is that in a couple of cases, there may be some potential benefit associated with the recommendations, but we strongly question whether the benefit justifies the significant additional cost.

While the recommendations are well-intentioned, taken cumulatively, they would make it significantly more difficult and expensive to design and install simple, effective on-site wastewater disposal systems on the Hillside. If so, this would only accelerate the push to expand the AWWU service area and/or create small neighborhood wastewater treatment systems, which have their own different set of potential problems.

In 2000, there was a comprehensive investigation of on-site wastewater system performance that looked at the results of over 800 adequacy tests and evaluated the performance of different system types. A copy of that report was provided to the consultant last year.

1. Consultant recommendation - Phase out the use of deep trench drainfields.

Response: Deep trenches are in fact the best disposal option available whenever soil conditions permit. Approximately 2/3 of all conventional septic installations in the Municipality utilize deep trenches.

- Deep trenches significantly outlast beds and shallow drainfields because the soil absorption is laterally through the sidewalls instead of downwards through the more easily clogged base.
- Deep trenches are the most economical system type to install and require the least disturbance of natural vegetation on the lot.
- There is no evidence of environmental concern associated with the use of deep trenches. The wastewater treatment in trenches is primarily anaerobic, as is the treatment in beds and shallow drainfields in Alaska. This is due to low soil temperature and limited oxygen associated with necessary frost protection.

2. Consultant recommendation – Increase the required setback from well to drainfield from 100 feet to 200 feet in areas of special concern

Response: The present 100-foot separation distance requirement is already as stringent as any in the country and there is no evidence that doubling the requirement would improve public health.

- The only effect of such a change would be to make it virtually impossible to site a simple conventional septic system on any lot so designated, even if suitable soil conditions exist.
- The proposal to only allow an advanced treatment wastewater system at 100 feet on such lots would approximately double the homeowner's cost to provide on-site wastewater disposal.

3. Consultant recommendation – Allow holding tanks to be used to develop lots with difficult site conditions

Response: Holding tanks should remain a solution of last resort only where existing soil absorption systems are found to be improperly installed or operated and no suitable replacement site is available.

- While developers would love to see this change because it would allow any lot to be developed irrespective of size or soil conditions, the Municipality has wisely rejected it in the current regulations because of the huge management headache and potential for pollution from un-pumped tanks. Large numbers of homes served by holding tanks would increase pressure for bringing in public sewers.

4. Consultant recommendation – Require that all drainfields be dosed by pumps or siphons
Response: Dosing is not beneficial or economical in all situations.
 - While pressure dosing is generally agreed to be beneficial to the performance of beds and shallow drainfields, **it provides no benefit to the performance of deep trenches.**
 - A pump adds approximately \$5000 to the cost of a conventional gravity system and necessitates additional maintenance.
 - Other less costly design features are also available to enhance the performance of beds and drainfields where soil conditions do not allow trench installation.

5. Consultant recommendation – Require every on-site wastewater system to be monitored and maintained by a municipally certified technician.
Response: Conventional on-site wastewater systems operate quite effectively with a very basic level of maintenance.
 - The advantage of a well designed and constructed conventional septic system is that is simple and virtually maintenance free, requiring only periodic septic tank pumping. No municipal training is needed to successfully operate a system, although existing educational and homeowner awareness programs are beneficial and should be continued.
 - Because advanced treatment systems include complex mechanical equipment, they do need close monitoring and frequent maintenance (as already required by the municipality).

6. Consultant recommendation – Change the percolation rate of native soil triggering the requirement for a 24-inch sand filter from 1 MPI to 5 MPI.
Response: The consultant’s rationale that a percolation rate of less than 5 minutes per inch through native soil will not provide adequate treatment is incorrect.
 - Concerns about lack of adequate soil treatment due to rapid percolation rate only apply to coarse gravel that allows wastewater to flow rapidly down to groundwater. Such gravel will percolate much, much faster than 1 minute per inch.
 - Filter sand also has a percolation rate of less than 1 minute per inch, but the smaller grain size provides good adsorption and particle filtration necessary for wastewater treatment.
 - Extensive testing of intermittent sand filters demonstrates that 24 inches of highly permeable sand provides excellent treatment of wastewater.

7. Consultant recommendation – Reduce the required separation distance between septic tanks and wells to 50 feet from the present 100 feet
Response: Steel septic tanks eventually rust out and inlet and outlet pipes become disconnected due to earth settlement.
 - Either condition can result in the discharge of untreated septage into the ground, so the required tank separation distance should remain the same as for soil absorption systems.
 - Point is moot because governed by State regulations which are unlikely to change.
 - A good argument could be made for reducing the horizontal separation requirements for all components of an advanced treatment system, if a concrete or other improved tank used.

8. Consultant recommendation - Reduce minimum drainfield burial depth to 12-18 inches.
Response: The consultant’s assertion that Anchorage and Minneapolis have comparably severe climates is not valid.
 - While winter **temperature extremes may be comparable**, the much more prolonged cold temperatures drive **frost penetrations much deeper in Anchorage.**
 - Anchorage has approximately double the number of Freezing Degree Days (FDD) as Minneapolis.
 - During years having early snow cover, frost penetration under un-plowed areas in Anchorage is minimal; the opposite is true in other years.

- Septic systems need to function every winter, not just some.

Note: The following 3 comments address proposals that are less black and white. Valid arguments can be made on either side of the issue, and the question is whether the expected benefits justify the known extra cost.

9. Consultant recommendation – Require 24” diameter risers above each septic tank compartment.

Response: The consultant’s premise that manholes are necessary to determine tank integrity is incorrect.

- There would be some benefit in terms of allowing more thorough inspection and cleaning.
- Requiring manhole risers above each compartment would add significant cost.
- Pre-existing manholes would allow later conversion to STEP or ATS systems, if necessary.

10. Consultant recommendation – Require a 30-inch maximum burial depth for septic tanks

Response: This requirement would not be feasible on relatively flat lots with daylight or full basements.

- Waste lines typically run under footings at a minimum depth of 42 inches.
- Additional frost protection would be necessary.
- Unreliable grinder pumps inside the house would often be necessary.
- Improvement to pumping efficiency would be marginal, if any.

11. Consultant recommendation – Allow reduction in drainfield area for use of gravelless chambers.

Response: This idea is quite controversial within the engineering community.

- This proposal is heavily pushed by the manufacturers for marketing reasons.
- Long-term independent monitoring in Alaska needs to support manufacturer’s claim.
- Gravelless chambers do not have part of the bottom absorption area masked by gravel stones, but that is the area most prone to rapid biomat formation.
- Gravelless chambers allow significantly less sidewall absorption, which is where much of the long-term absorption takes place in Alaskan soils.
- Proposal is moot because infiltration area sizing is governed by State regulations.



Protecting the public's right to Park access.....

May 12, 2008

Tom Nelson, Director
Municipality of Anchorage
Planning Department

Subject: Hillside District Plan - Chugach State Park Access

Dear Mr. Nelson:

We are writing to express our concern about the Hillside District Plan's treatment of Chugach State Park (CSP) access issues.

1. HDP should clearly state that it will be subordinate to the new CSP Access and Trail Plans

The Department of Natural Resources recently started a master planning process for CSP that will culminate in three new CSP plans: a Master Plan, a Trail Plan, and an Access Plan. That process may take two to four years.

We understand that there have been several coordination meetings between CSP, the Municipality of Anchorage, and the HDP consultants on the issue of CSP access. We also understand that there have been quite a few meetings of the HDP Citizens Advisory Group at which the issue of CSP access has been discussed.

Nevertheless, we fear that regional CSP access issues relative to the Hillside area of CSP may not have been adequately addressed and that broad (regional) public input—such as will be generated during the CSP master planning process—has not been obtained.

We believe that the HDP should **not** address CSP access issues and trailhead locations until the CSP master planning process is complete. Otherwise, there may be conflicts between the finished HDP and CSP plans, with resulting confusion about which plan has precedence. That said, we recognize that CSP access is a small part of the HDP scope and that publication of the HDP can't be delayed until the CSP master planning process is complete.

Therefore, we believe that the HDP should clearly state that its CSP access conclusions, trailhead locations, etc. are “preliminary” and will be subordinate to and replaced by the CSP Access and Trail Plans.



Protecting the public's right to Park access.....

2. HDP should state that developers have a responsibility to provide public park access

In recent correspondence with Land Design North (LDN), we mentioned our concern that the draft HDP “Hillside Alternative Recommendations Summary” (Alternatives) seemed to suggest that developers should be compensated for any public trails and park access amenities they are required to provide.

We stated that we believe – and recent Platting Board decisions have supported – the concept that a subdivider has a duty to provide public trail easements (and in some cases, parking areas) to Chugach State Park without compensation. This has been a successful approach to providing Park access consistent with the 2002 CSP Access Inventory. In the same vein, we also feel that compensation might be reasonably expected if a Prospect Heights or Glen Alps-size parking lot is constructed on private land.

We continue to be concerned about your consultant’s take on this issue. The April 2008 HDP “Alternatives – A Framework for Public Discussions,” (Framework) says that “Developers and landowners believe that they often are unfairly required to provide land for trails as a condition of subdivision approval, without compensation, and to the detriment of their developments” (p. 63). It goes on to talk about the need for new approaches to address landowner concerns but does not mention the fact that, although it may seem unfair, it is, in fact, reasonable public policy.

A basic tenet of land development is that it should not be done in such a way as to prevent access to adjoining undeveloped land. The Municipality regularly and rightly requires developers to plat and construct very expensive roads to adjoining undeveloped private parcels to allow for future use. Public parkland should not be treated differently; in some situations a public pedestrian easement with limited on-street parking is an appropriate alternative, with significant savings accruing to the developer.

We request that the body of the HDP explicitly recognize the developer’s duties related to provide park access, trail easements, and other small public amenities without compensation.

3. HDP should be consistent with the 2002 CSP Access Inventory

The current HDP Framework and HDP Alternatives documents are not consistent with the 2002 CSP Access Inventory (Inventory) with respect to CSP trailhead recommendations – they should be.

The Inventory recommends small, closely-spaced “Neighborhood Access” points: “...subdivisions adjoining the Park (should) have dedicated Neighborhood Access easements...running from public roads to the Park at intervals of approximately **1,000 feet** in order to provide connectivity to Chugach



Protecting the public's right to Park access.....

State Park, reduce traffic and parking concerns, and disperse use.” The Inventory makes it clear that these points are intended for public, as well as neighborhood, use.¹

On the other hand, the current HDP documents have **no** provisions for public access at frequently-spaced trailheads. The HDP focus is solely on priority trailheads (which we agree are necessary) which are to be spaced “approximately **one mile** along the Chugach State Park border.”

While we recognize that the terrain along the HDP/CSP boundary may make a certain small trailhead here and there impractical, until there is broad public input on this issue, we feel it premature for the HDP to eliminate the Inventory’s concept of closely-spaced, low-impact public access points.

Please revise the HDP to be consistent with the Inventory’s vision of CSP access.

We hope you will take these comments into consideration as you and your consultants finalize the HDP for public hearing. We would be happy to meet with you to discuss these and other related ideas pertaining to improving public access to Chugach State Park.

Sincerely,

Cory Hinds
President

CC by email:

Mark Begich, Mayor
James King, Alaska State Parks
Tom Harrison, Chugach State Park
Julian Mason, Chugach State Park Advisory Board
Monica Alvarez, Alaska State Parks
Dwayne Adams, Land Design North

¹ To avoid confusion over intended users, we suggest that in the HDP and future CSP plans, these smaller access points be described as “Low-Impact Access trailheads.” We also support provisions for limited parking (5 to 10 cars) at these “Low-Impact Access” points. To avoid over-crowding at these smaller parking areas, we suggest using an Internet-based reservation system.

May 12, 2008

To: Heather Stewart, planner

From: Nancy Pease, Commissioner
Planning & Zoning Commission

Re: Comments on April 2008 draft Hillside District Plan Alternatives: a Framework for Public Discussion

Thank you for the chance to submit comments on the Hillside District Plan Alternatives: Framework for Public Discussion. I am sending most of my comments today and I have a few more that I am still writing up.

I. GENERAL COMMENTS ON HDP ALTERNATIVES

1-A. PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND GREENBELTS

Missing from this draft: analysis, planning, and implementation approach for Parks, Greenbelts, and Open Space. This draft fails to analyze and plan for open space, greenbelt corridors, and pedestrian-accessible parks. This is a major gap that needs to be filled in the next draft. The only proposed regional park with internal trails is at Section 36; and the pattern of public parkland and greenbelts is scattered and often isolated from population concentrations by terrain or high-traffic roads.

Especially troubling is the missing opportunities for greenbelt acquisition Some Hillside creeks have intact corridors (little to no development for a half mile or more). The creeks in this area have very few segments retained as public greenbelt corridors. The 2020 Comp Plan and the 2006 Parks Plan have goals for greenbelt acquisition; and this HDP draft talks about “green infrastructure” yet the locations of creek greenbelts that could have high *multiple* public benefits are not singled out in this HDP. Although the creeks cross mostly private land, private ownership of land has not deterred this draft plan from identification of a “compromise” trail network. Draft a proposed creek greenbelt system in this HDP, with at least some proposed public access or ownership. Creeks are more than a drainage system. This can deliver high public benefits not only for watershed management, but also implement many natural resources policies of the Comp 2020 and Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource and Recreation Facility Plan (hereafter called the 2006 Park Plan) with regard to wildlife, open space, recreation, scenic value, etc.

The public has a strong interest in participating in identification of parks and open space locations and creek greenbelt opportunities, and strategies to achieve them, in this planning effort, for the following reasons:

- The Parks Department is notoriously short on funding and has not taken initiatives to plan ahead on the Hillside. Is there any record of park dedication or acquisition in this quadrant of Anchorage in the past 10 or 15 years, other than donated land? There have been only a few minor park facility installations.
- The 1- to 2-mile radius that parks are supposed to serve in a rural area (according to 2006 Parks Plan) may not provide decent public access in areas that will have higher density or cluster development, or in areas where terrain features and lack of pedestrian facilities make walking access improbable. (Maps 2 & 3 of 2006 Parks Plan)
- There are fleeting opportunities to preserve irreplaceable creek greenbelts through large undeveloped tracts on the Hillside. Another planning effort may be long in coming.
- Many of the values and land use goals, such as “green infrastructure” identified in this draft HDP portray the public value of retaining pieces of the natural setting, and creek greenbelts are a key component..
- Parks and greenbelts usually include public access, and those access patterns should be part of the roads and trails planning in this HDP.
- Important strategic actions of the 2006 Parks Plan were not applied in this draft HDP, including this:
The area will require 3 to 5 new Neighborhood Use parks between five and ten acres in size over the next 20 years. Two new Community Parks are called for. NU parks are deficient in the following areas:
 - Huffman OMalley
 - Rabbit Creek
 - Mid-Hillside
 - Potter Valley (p 88)

B. CONCERNS ABOUT PROPOSED COMMERCIAL AREAS

Provide real trip destination/trip instigation analysis for any proposed intensification of land uses. This draft does not provide any trip analysis to document the suggestion that the proposed commercial areas will reduce vehicle trips or vehicle miles traveled. Any commercial area may increase vehicle miles traveled if it draws significant out-of-the-way trips or generates new trips single purpose trips. As an overarching rule in the era of climate change and \$4.00/per gallon gas, the MOA should evaluate the real (not guesswork) travel impacts of all land use decisions that create centers of activity.

Inadequate standards or restrictions to ensure neighborhood-orientation and scale of proposed commercial areas at Old Seward Highway. The proposed floating rezone to allow a commercial center somewhere near that intersection is a gamble that may create a spread-out commercial area and a traffic snarl on an already-overloaded road. This is a location where micro-location is critical to traffic management: so if a site is chosen, planners should choose it. There is already a node of commercial land, and if the opportunity is golden, it would have happened there (or still could). There is also the BLT site, where commercial activity would be a logical adjunct to a nature center.

There are insufficient guidelines in the HDP (and in Title 21) to limit the character or type of business going into proposed Old Seward Highway /Rabbit Creek commercial area. It's specious to portray this as a commercial recreation node while this HDP does not analyze or plan the park and open space uses and connectivity from Rabbit Creek to Little Rabbit Creek and on to HLB lands and possible Potter Marsh access points along the Old Seward Highway. If commercial recreation and Potter Marsh is really the orientation of this proposed sub-district (and it should be!), the market potential needs to be shown and further limits need to be applied for a compatible commercial outlet: particularly, limits on parking capacity and design; and building height and bulk limits. .

Regarding the Bear Creek "mercantile" : Before creating a commercial zone, demonstrate the market realities for that sort of business at this sort of location. This city has only one charming neighborhood hub/grocery store/gathering place, which is New Sagaya downtown. If the retail market hasn't allowed this model to be replicated in any other neighborhood, how can one predict that it can be transplanted onto the upper Hillside. The charming description in the draft HDP seems like a marketing campaign, but *market research is what is needed before zoning creates an expectation of the "right to develop"*. The location appears to increase traffic on Rabbit Creek Road at an area of curves, school and fire station congestion, etc.

Neither area should be zoned for commercial uses until the road upgrades and pedestrian connectivity are designed, funded, and under construction.

1C LOWER HILLSIDE NEEDS TO BE REDRAWN INTO DIFFERENT SUBDISTRICTS.

There is no commonality between the northern and southern part of the currently-drawn Lower Hillside district. They have different densities, character, and natural setting. South of DeArmoun Road, the BLM lots are larger, more woody, with country lanes and topography not suited to through traffic. Also the south end of Elmore Road is not a natural delineation as neighborhoods are similar on both sides of it.. The Comp Plan calls for planning in harmony with the natural setting. There is both a neighborhood and natural setting that is consistent west of Buffalo and south of DeArmoun, extending across the southern hillside west of the natural gasoline corridor to the Turnagain Arm

Trailhead. This is an area of existing large-lot development with high retention of natural contours and vegetation, with many small wetlands, creeks, and drainage ways. It is not proximate to existing commercial and institution uses like the northern part of the current “Lower Hillside District”.

Traffic loads / rural character / community recreation along east side of Potter Marsh is overlooked. I am aware of long-standing support in the Rabbit Creek area for recreation and “country lane” emphasis along the east side of Potter Marsh, consistent with the wildlife refuge. Has the idea of a “scenic byway” or “country lane” on the east side of Potter Marsh been considered? Community values and preferences should be clearly portrayed (through adopted guidelines) in this HDP so that AMATS or DOTPF does not have carte blanche on the timing and design of reconstruction of the Old Seward Highway. The HDP should be clear and explicit during the public review of the HDP about what traffic it plans to direct down the Old Seward Highway, and what road upgrades are planned. The community has not been given detailed traffic information to see whether this is currently slated to become a high-traffic corridor parallel to the Seward Highway. There are narrow ROW and wetlands issues that came forth in the Coastal Trail studies, and these should be part of the discussion of the role of the Old Seward Highway as a traffic corridor.

1D PUBLIC NEEDS MORE DETAILS TO ANALYZE THE TRANSPORTATION PROPOSAL

In general, there is a need for clearer presentation to the public about the traffic volumes, speeds, and sizes of intersections proposed in this transportation network. Some of these proposed roads are through virgin territory or along current one-lane de facto private driveways. At this planning stage, the public should be shown more details on the major roads and new roads: average daily traffic volumes; design speed; number of lanes, controlled intersections, probable ROW widths, so that the public can judge what those roads will be like. Otherwise, people feel blindsided when a busy road is proposed near their homes.

HDP also needs to present more details to show that the road system can carry the proposed densities and that the impacts are accepted by the community. Maybe the traffic system cannot be built to carry such high densities in places. Land Use density and traffic infrastructure need to be calibrated.

I request that technical information be presented at Open House and council meetings, and in the draft documents, and to the P&Z Commission. These are a few specific details which the public should be told: Which roads will be 3- and 4-lanes? Will any roads have traffic calming features, like the South High roundabout? How many vehicles will arterials and collectors carry at peak hours? Which intersections will be four and five lane? For Potter Valley Road

and other switchback and steep roads, what is the projected traffic volume at peak hours, and can it carry this volume?.

1E – PRIORITIZING AND PHASING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

In general, the role of public spending on new infrastructure needs to be discussed and prioritized in the HDP. Public spending should be contingent on a logical phasing and pattern of growth on the Hillside. The competition on spending for the whole Bowl must be considered. The 2020 Comp Plan strongly supports re-development and intensification in Downtown, Midtown, and around town centers. Should public funding be spent to accelerate or induce development on private tracts on the upper Hillside? This will compete for public funding with the rest of the Bowl and detract from redevelopment and infill in intended centers of development.

There should be phasing of roads to meet existing overloads and prevent new overloads before serving new areas on the Hillside. Specifically, before there are new collectors and upper-valley roads, there should be upgrades to resolve the existing and projected traffic overloads and hazards at locations such as Rabbit Creek Road and major intersections, and Potter Valley Road and Old Seward Highway.

1F – WATER SUPPLY FOR RESIDENTIAL USE

The discussion of residential density has not adequately addressed the limits of total ground water supply. The section on water and wastewater poses the possibility of community water and wastewater systems to support denser development, but does not recognize that this will draw down water supplies and undercut those already served by wells or those landowners who want to keep their lower density of development. Denser development must be linked to availability of AWWU water, even if it is not linked to AWWU sewer.

1G – LOT COVERAGE

As build-out occurs, especially in sub-acre lot areas, the issue of lot coverage must be addressed not only to reduce drainage problems but also many of the other values this plan lists as important to Hillside residents. This requires some concrete proposals in the next draft (to allow public discussion) of these development standards: percent of impervious surface, percent of natural vegetation retention, and floor area ratio. These issues are especially important if conservation subdivisions or PUD result in much smaller lot sizes than 1 acre. An FAR of 4:1 would protect against the McMansion syndrome.

II - SPECIFIC CONCERNS

P 7 Fourth bullet asks what special standards should be developed for vegetation retention, home sites, and other built infrastructure, but *no standards seem to be proposed*. Provide some proposed standards for public discussion in later chapters of the HDP.

P 7 Seventh bullet asks “is it possible and desirable” to reserve trail routes. I think this document elsewhere makes it clear that Hillside residents want trails, and anything is possible.. Re-state this as “*how can trail easements be reserved or acquired* to meet unmet needs and strong public desires for trails...”

P 7 last bullet: what is meant by: “...so the process *improves* for developers, landowners, and residents.” Define “improves”. Less public review or more? Less flexible design guidelines, or more flexible? Less enforcement or more?

P 9 Hillside landscape is inadequately addressed with only mention of soils. This is the “landscape” overview section. Mention: slopes, veg, views, wind, solar access, neighborhood character, waterbodies, wildlife, roads, night darkness.

P 14 Caption about a 20-minute drive to downtown not accurate. Better to state drive distances (which are probably 7 to 15 miles.)

P 15 Figure 1.5B this table needs to reflect the additional capacity allowed by accessory dwelling units under existing zoning. MOA should also provide an estimate of the prevalence of accessory dwelling units: seems quite likely in the larger homes and as selected in classified ads.

P 16 Big Picture, first paragraph. Delete statement that there is access to trails. There is very scattered access to legal trails. Families who need a safe non-road paved trail drive to the Coastal Trail 10 miles away.

P 16 Lower Hillside District. Re-draw this district to separate the area north of DeArmoun road and allow more tailored policies for the BLM/Potter Marsh area in the final plan (see general comments). The statement about commercial centers and urban services only applies to the northern part, not south of DeArmoun.

P 16 Central Hillside The statement about extension of public water and sewer is also “very costly” to landowners in the Lower Hillside.

P 17 Southeast Hillside Few commonalities extend across this district. Redraw this district to differentiate the denser Golden View/lower Potter area and the much steeper, windier upper Bear Valley and Potter areas.

P 18 Third bullet: how does this draft HDP demonstrate protection and integration of significant environmental features, such as Potter Marsh or the creek corridors? At the very least, there should be a policy to determine the recharge needs of Potter Marsh and the anadromous creeks that could guide the drainage and water/wastewater decisions. There is nothing on viewshed analysis that I could find.

P 19 HDP Goals

Under goal 1, where are the townhouses? If this is an insignificant component, say so.

Goal 2, “guide the character of future development”, is meaningless without any characteristics. Since this goal lists the number of expected units, say instead “guide the pattern of density and the site design of future development to achieve the assets of goal 1 (above).” Insert a statement that “the Comp Plan growth allocation can be accommodated within existing zoning.” In order to avoid confusion that there is a need for greater densities than current zoning.

Goal 4: good emphasis on efficiency. Add language here in the goal and in the later chapters that “the efficiency goal will be implemented through phasing or prioritizing the proposed projects in the HDP so that public funds will resolve existing deficiencies before accelerating growth in new areas, and so that HDP infrastructure funding will be consistent with growth patterns desired in the rest of the Anchorage Bowl”.

Goal 6: “retain land” might not be interpreted as “acquire appropriate sites” for public purposes” (Trades or purchase or land donations might be involved). Add to the list of sites to be acquired: “creek greenbelts, parks or open spaces.” If this HDP purports to achieve green infrastructure, strategic acquisitions may be needed.

Goal 8: Add language: “...guiding the location, *density*, and character....” This goal doesn’t appear to have produced any viewshed analysis or guidelines in the HDP. The next draft should do so.

Public infrastructure goals:

Add new goal: Locations for antenna farms and wind energy turbines are likely to be proposed in the upper Hillside. The HDP should at least acknowledge this possibility and produce some guidelines about scenic compatibility at park entrances or other sensitive sites.

Amend goal 2: Add: When public funding is proposed for infrastructure, there shall be phased improvements to ensure that currently over-burdened or substandard infrastructure is relieved and upgraded before extending infrastructure to areas that will create additional burdens off-site.

Add a goal: *“A green infrastructure” approach will be used to contain and treat wastewater and drainage on site whenever practical rather than discharging it into Hillside waterbodies or the municipal sewers. Treat this concept seriously. It still isn’t entirely clear to me.*

Transportation Goals

In this era of costly fuel and greenhouse gas concerns, shouldn’t every transportation plan include goals to reduce vehicle miles traveled? Transit is NOT out of the question. Why isn’t existing transit shown? There should be discussion of transit loops at least to schools and perhaps to Chugach State Park in the summer so that car-less visitors and residents can get to these community attractions. Could there be a commuter train stop at Potter in the next 20 years? The plan should clearly show that direct safe routes are available to bike commuters. Currently, *there are no safe bike routes down any of the east/west collectors and arterials.*

New Goal 1:

Existing Goal 1: the wording “improve the system” is too vague. Delete this goal unless there is more specific intent: the next three goals have adequate specificity.

Add to Goal 3: *“...to avoid excessive or high-speed traffic in residential neighborhoods.”* Speed has the highest impact because of noise and safety.

Add to Goal 4: *“ingress and egress without creating continuous cut-through traffic in neighborhoods”.* Emergency gates should continue to be a tool.

Add a new Goal 5: *“Design roads appropriate to the natural setting and the rural character. Develop standards to minimize cut-and-fill on steep slopes, preserve views, control traffic speeds through design features, and allow flexibility on lighting. Develop standards for “country lanes” where roads will continue to have low volumes or low speeds owing to low densities or terrain features. “*

Transportation Goals: Trails

New goal and analysis needed: Provide direct safe commute routes to major destinations for bike commuters. The Hillside is not slated to have employment centers, so the commute flow needs options other than roads. Currently, *there are no safe bike routes down any of the east/west collectors and arterials. In*

some places, bike lanes are safer than separated paths. The Seward Highway frontage road for north/south travel has inadequate shoulders for bikes, and speeds are too high. . This section needs some standards for trails on steep roads because the terrain is too often used as an excuse not to build trails, or to undersize them. When trails are constructed on only one side of the road on the Hillside, they must be designed for safe two-way traffic

Add to goal 3: "...including *greenbelt and off-the-road* trails that serve as transportation and recreation *and green infrastructure*." This is more specific about the setting, and off-the-road trails are a preference repeatedly shown on MOA-sponsored trail user polls for the entire city.

Add goal: Incorporate direct trail links within and between subdivisions and public destinations to create convenient pedestrian connectivity even when roads may be circuitous.

Add goal: Develop standards for various levels of trail development that are suited to the terrain and natural setting.

Drainage Goals

Goal1: "mitigate hazards" is too vague a standard.

Add: "minimizes erosion, sediment transport, or flooding; maintains near-natural drainage rates, and maximizes on-site containment and treatment of run-off".

Water and Wastewater Management Goals

There is no goal to ensure adequate water supply.

Add goal: *Ensure that proposed development densities and groundsurface alterations do not overtax the recharge capabilities of the groundwater system relied upon by many Hillside residences and vital to the health of the local creeks and Potter Marsh.* (Note: this needs to lead to policies in the water and wastewater section, which is currently entirely ignoring water supply quantity. E.g: Require groundwater capacity studies before allowing onsite well water systems for subdivisions higher than existing zoning.)

Add to Goal 1: further specify environmental quality. *"maintain or improve water quality and quantity of natural waterbodies and groundwater"*

Ace and Cathy Worley
P.O. Box 112234
Anchorage, Alaska 99511

Comments on the “Hillside District Plan Alternatives – April, 2008”

We reside at 16301 Sandpiper Drive in the Ptarmigan Roost Subdivision located in the Southeast Hillside area as described in the Hillside District Plan (HDP).

After reading the HPD and the Transportation Alternatives Report we wish to make the following comments.

First, we wish to thank the Municipality for recognizing the need to develop a plan for guiding development in the Hillside area and special thanks to the members of the Hillside District Plan Citizens Advisory Committee.

In the Introduction on page 6 appears the paragraph – “Many residents, particularly those who live in the large portion of the district where housing densities are low, have expressed a strong preference for maintaining these low densities, protecting natural vegetation and the ‘rural’ character of their surroundings.” This paragraph summarizes the desires of our family. We purchased our 1.3 acre lot in 1973 and very much wish to preserve that very “rural” character that has always been an important part of our enjoyment of our Alaskan dream. The comments that follow focus on what we feel are the most critical issues that may adversely affect development in our area.

In the Introduction, Item 5. Expectations for Growth – the sidebar on page 15 says “Limited revisions to existing zoning will be allowed - - - to satisfy demand for small-lot home sites.” We are concerned that the MOA is willing to set the precedent of rezoning based on market demand rather than preserving the character of areas already partially developed. We do not want to see this policy extended to other areas of the Hillside.

On page 20, the “Summary of this section” – does not appear to address the Central Hillside area. Is this an oversight?

On page 22, Figure II. 1A Subdivision Styles raises the interesting possibilities of Conservation Subdivisions but prompts the question of who owns and therefore pays property taxes on the undeveloped areas. The term “conservation easement” used in the description might infer that a property owner in the subdivision is responsible for taxes on land they cannot do anything with. If ownership of the undeveloped areas will not rest with the lot owners, does the MOA propose to purchase these areas from the developer? Also, doesn't the smaller lot sizes actually decrease the value of land portion of each lot?

Page 25 outlines a scenario for “Lower Hillside Controlled Growth”. It would appear that any density greater than one dwelling unit per acre will require extension of municipal water and sewer to those lots which will be intermingled with older 2.5 acre BLM parcels. We would not support a policy that requires families that have already built on a 2.5 acre parcel be required to connect to Municipal services even if they are maintaining a successful onsite water and sewer system.

On page 30, a proposal to rezone some R-1-A SL land to R-6 appears to correct an earlier oversight that established small lots in an area of the Hillside that is predominately large lots. We support this rezoning to R-6 and withdrawing this area from the Maximum Perimeter of Public Sewerage.

Page 33 and 34 address “New Development Standards and Processes”. In general, the proposed revisions appear to be helpful to prevent and correct some of the oversights found in previously approved subdivisions.

Page 35 begins a discussion on Commercial Development. Our family does not support either the Rabbit Creek Mercantile District or the Bear Valley Rural Country Store concepts. The Southeast Hillside area should continue to allow the grand fathered commercial activities such as Chucks Backhoe Services and the Tire Shop on Rabbit Creek Road. We also support continuation of the current rules for home-based businesses such as bed and breakfasts.

On page 45, the first bullet under “Planning Issues Summary” states – “Development is increasing runoff and has caused an associated increase in drainage related problems.” This masterful understatement recognizes the lack of adequate drainage consideration during plat reviews compounded with a dismal lack of enforcement by those responsible for supervising the actual development.

We hope the revisions to Title 21 will catch drainage deficiencies at the plat stage when corrections are much cheaper than when construction is underway.

We support all items listed under the Summary of Alternatives on page 45. Watershed based drainage planning is essential to identify problem areas and to set out uniform policies to be followed by developers.

A goal of retaining all new runoff onsite that results from the impervious surfaces caused by development should be the standard.

Page 48 under Setbacks and Drainage Easements recommends dimensional standards. These should not be imposed on existing subdivisions. Also the terms “Setback” and “Easement” infer that a property owner has to pay property taxes on land he cannot use. Consider requiring the developer to donate those areas to the MOA.

Page 50 under “Base Case – Existing Approach” – notes, “Most road service areas and all of the ad hoc areas will continue to lack the ability to fund and construct drainage improvements.” Those areas should consider forming a Rural Road Service Area to provide an enhanced level of funding and services.

Regarding transportation issues – we live on Sandpiper Drive, a nice gravel road and want our road to remain unchanged. When we go for a walk, we walk on the road, as do our neighbors. We do not need separated trails to enjoy our neighborhood. Mindlessly imposing trails on every new development is unnecessary, costly to the developer and an additional maintenance expense for some responsible party.

We support a well thought out area wide trail network with moderate grades (10% or less), generally within sight of a road or homes to prevent the trail from becoming a hangout for sexual predators.

Also regarding trails – the issues of trails through subdivisions is a separate issue from identifying and developing new trailheads/parking areas for residents that want to access Chugach State Park. We would recommend a joint MOA/Alaska State Parks committee to include members of trail using groups and the public to discuss and recommend locations for access points and how these areas should be managed and maintained.

Volunteer groups such as Boy Scouts and work groups organized by REI and user groups could likely construct access trails within the park.

Page 64 begins the discussion of Water and Wastewater. We strongly prefer to continue to utilize our onsite well and septic system. We would be willing to participate in training and to agree to submit proper samples of our well water for periodic testing for any contaminants. We are sure there are hundreds of residents with onsite water and septic systems that would be willing to do the same to document the status of groundwater on the Hillside. Over time, this could give the MOA a substantial quantity of data to evaluate any changes to water quality.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Hillside District Plan Alternatives.

Sincerely,

Ace and Cathy Worley

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May 12, 2008

Municipality of Anchorage
Planning and Zoning Commission
Anchorage, Alaska 995101

Re: Comments on Hillside District Plan

Dear Sir/Ms:

This letter presents the comments of my wife and I on the proposed Hillside District Plan.

My wife and I are 25-year residents of Woodridge Subdivision located to the west and down slope of Goldenview Drive (south) on Virgo Avenue. The principal access to our subdivision is via 164th Avenue.

We strongly object to some of the proposed solutions to address hillside drainage, transportation and water and wastewater issues. Most of the alternative proposals will adversely affect our subdivision and our retirement income. That is not to say problems do not exist. It is that the blame, solutions and future costs are inappropriately placed on residents of long standing small subdivision such as Woodridge.

No. 1 Drainage

The plan recognizes the problem of drainage along 164th Avenue but not the real cause or the correct solutions. The problem has been caused by the creation of the high density Goldenview Park subdivision and the failure of the developer to comply with the zoning and platting-mandated vegetative buffer along 164th Avenue which essentially does not exist. Further, the developer did not allow for drainage when laying out the lots of that subdivision. If you look at air photos prior to the building in Goldenview Park, you will see that the problem is one created by that subdivision's non-compliant developers not the adjacent pre-existing low density subdivisions such as Woodridge. There was never a problem with drainage along 164th Avenue until that subdivision was developed. Unfortunately, the solution is to adversely impact the neighbors in Woodridge

subdivision by tearing up a section of Virgo Avenue across from our house and diverting one flooding problem by creating another in our subdivision.

Fixing the drainage problems should be borne by the high density subdivisions in our neighborhood that created the problems specifically Goldenview Park and Prominence Pointe and soon to be a problem Legacy Pointe.

No. 2 Transportation

We strongly oppose creation of a secondary access route through Woodridge Subdivision. The access and transportation problems of the hillside south of Rabbit Creek Road have been created by the ad hoc zoning and approval of high density subdivisions such as Goldenview Park and especially Prominence Point. The solution to traffic congestion and safety is to divert traffic through subdivisions such as Virgo Avenue which in the plan is designated as a new secondary route. We note that the Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission stated that their approval of Legacy Pointe did not include a route from that subdivision to Belarde and thus direct access to our subdivision.

We did not build our home 25 years ago to see heavy traffic through our subdivision, if we did, we would have purchased land on Rabbit Creek Road or Goldenview Drive.

3. Water and Wastewater

The plan identifies Woodridge Subdivision as an "Onsite Wastewater Challenge Area" which appears to implicitly recommend extensive and expensive civil works at the expense of Woodridge Subdivision residents. To the contrary most lots in this subdivision have good drainage and excellent percolation tests resulting in the need for relatively small septic fields. Commenting as a former geologist, many of the lots in this subdivision reside along a glacial kame ridge of gravel. For example, our lot has 50 feet of coarse gravel over bedrock. Whoever made this designation failed to look the perk tests and well logs for this subdivision. The one drainage problem along Virgo Avenue pictured in the report was simply the result of a failed culvert thaw wire not a natural glaciation.

The Municipality needs to go back and reconsider all alternatives to better understand the causes of drainage, transportation and wastewater problems in south hillside. The problem has been create by ad hoc zoning and platting decisions and lack of enforcement of those actions on subdivision developers. Instead the plan appears to put the blame and cost on long time residents who built in a low density setting.

Sincerely,

Peter T. Hanley