



# GOALS

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## BACKGROUND

This section outlines broad goals for the future of the Hillside. The purpose of these goals is to articulate common values that can be used as a reference point for future decisions. The primary intent of this material is to identify desired ends. Accompanying the list of goals are preliminary, general strategies to reach these goals, to be worked out in more detail as the planning process proceeds. These goals also establish criteria for evaluating land use alternatives to be developed through the Plan.

These goals came from several sources. One is the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan; other sources include input from the public during the initial round of interviews and workshops, and the recently completed Hillside Survey.

## OVERALL GOAL FOR THE HILLSIDE DISTRICT PLAN

Take active steps to retain the qualities of the Hillside most enjoyed by Hillside residents and Hillside users – including quality residential neighborhoods, a sense of “elbow room”, natural vegetation, views, trails and access to open space – while accommodating the Hillside District’s share of Anchorage’s growth, as allocated by the 2020 Comprehensive Plan.

## GOALS BY CATEGORY

### LAND USE, COMMUNITY CHARACTER & NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Recognize and maintain the quality and diversity of the Hillside District as a place to live, ranging from low density rural areas, to single family suburban neighborhoods, to areas with duplexes and townhouses. Throughout the Hillside, maintain assets such as quietude, trees and other natural vegetation, wildlife habitat, good views, access to open space, access to clean water, and dark night skies.
2. Guide the character of future development in the Hillside District. The Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan growth allocation for the Hillside is 4000-6000 new dwelling units for the years between 2001 and 2020. (*see the land use section of this report for more background on this topic*)
3. Provide a range of housing types and values within the Hillside District, compatible with the characteristics of individual neighborhoods, and consistent with the Anchorage 2020 plan.
4. Plan land use, transportation and other infrastructure to be efficient in terms of public expense, energy use and other resources.
5. Protect a system of “green infrastructure” that serves community needs such as providing corridors for drainage; protecting natural systems such as aquifer recharge areas, stream and wildlife corridors, and providing open space for views and recreation.

6. Retain land for public purposes such as schools, drainage-related facilities, and fire stations. Provide gathering places for neighborhoods such as parks and recreation facilities, taking advantage of existing public facilities such as schools.
7. Maintain and improve a system of parks, trails, open spaces and other active and passive recreation areas.
8. Protect views, both looking out from the Hillside, and views of the upper Hillside as seen from the rest of the Anchorage Bowl, for example by maintaining vegetation, limiting cuts and fill, and guiding the location and character of new residential development.

#### Possible strategies to reach these goals

- Improve the quality of new development by improving development standards and development review and approval processes to accommodate growth while retaining neighborhood character. (Significant steps in this direction are taking place as part of the revisions to Title 21, the Design Criteria Manual, and other Municipal policies and procedures.)
- Develop strategies to help define and maintain the quality of neighborhoods with different character, including more rural and more urban areas. For example consider adding to current policies to establish stronger buffers and transitional zones between areas of different uses and densities of development.
- Prepare development standards to maintain the quality and character of residential areas as areas already zoned for commercial use on the Hillside are developed.
- At this time, there is substantial opposition among residents to any new neighborhood-serving commercial development on the Hillside. As the population increases, however, resident demand for this type of development may increase due to factors such as higher fuel costs, changes in demographics and road congestion. To ensure any future neighborhood-serving commercial development maintains the character of existing neighborhoods and is well-located in relation to the transportation network and other public facilities, the Hillside District Plan should outline the criteria by which future neighborhood-serving commercial development would be reviewed. These criteria may include, for example, limits on the size and location of any commercial development; proximity to transportation corridors and trail systems; design standards to specify character of development and landscaping; and, buffers between any commercial sites and neighboring residential areas.
- Ensure appropriate residential densities through zoning regulations, not as a side effect of public water and sewer provision.

## **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE – OVERALL GOALS FOR TRANSPORTATION, DRAINAGE, WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE**

1. Provide public services and facilities for the Hillside in a manner that minimizes construction and operating costs, meets resident needs, and maintains environmental quality.
2. Correct problems associated with deficiencies in existing infrastructure, as well as plan and develop adequate infrastructure for new development.

Possible strategies to reach these goals

- Plan and develop a system of infrastructure for the Hillside as a whole, to create a district-wide framework to guide development of infrastructure within individual subdivisions and individual neighborhoods.
- Synchronize the timing of new development with needed expansion of infrastructure such as roads and utilities.

## **TRANSPORTATION GOALS**

### **Road System**

1. Improve the system of Hillside roads, to respond to current use and expected growth.
2. Improve road safety, through, for example, physical changes in roads and intersections, changing speed limits, improving sight distance, minimizing cresting over roads, and improving strategies for providing road access in steep areas.
3. Improve road connectivity while maintaining neighborhood character, particularly in areas where new development is likely to occur. Define and improve collector and arterial roads to avoid excessive traffic in residential neighborhoods.
4. Provide improved emergency access and egress (see also Emergency Services section below).

Possible strategies to reach these goals

- Develop improved north-south access to mitigate increased traffic impacts on neighborhoods, particularly when the Bragaw extension is complete.
- Improve circulation in the southern end of the district by providing a new route from the southern portion of Golden View into the Potter Marsh area.
- Improve circulation southeast of Rabbit Creek Road by extending Mt. Air Drive south to connect proposed new residential development.
- Develop road design standards that retain neighborhood character by maintaining slower design speeds and narrower road widths.

- Improve standards for road construction to lessen impacts on drainage, visual quality and road congestion. Avoid large cuts and fills and excessive vegetation clearing when developing new roads. Minimize road steepness and the number of switchbacks by planning roads to serve multiple subdivisions.
- Develop new standards for house setbacks, driveways and utility easements in steeply sloping areas to minimize grading and clearing.
- Clarify and possibly modify responsibilities for road improvements and road maintenance, particularly on roads where ownership is not clear.

## Trails

1. Develop a system of Hillside trails that links neighborhoods and connects to schools, parks, shopping areas, to access points to the Chugach State Park, and to the city-wide trail system.
2. Design the trail system to benefit visitors to the area as well as Hillside residents.
3. Develop trails that serve a variety of uses and users, including trails that serve transportation as well as recreation purposes.

### Possible strategies to reach these goals

- Identify the trail system as an important part of the Hillside “green infrastructure” system; guide development of adjoining properties so trail corridors are continuous.
- Develop an effective process for reserving, constructing and maintaining new trails where traditional trails cross private lands. Explore public-private partnerships and modifications in development standards so that as new development occurs, key trails and open spaces are reserved and added to the Hillside park-trail system.
- Develop improved options, including increased funding, for managing and maintaining trails.
- Develop improved approaches to locating and managing Chugach State Park trailheads, working cooperatively with the State of Alaska, the Municipality, local residents and landowners, and Local Road Service Districts. (*see Chugach Access inventory, and revised Title 21 policy*)
- Adhere to the new AMC Title 21 Subdivision standards that require dedication of a public pedestrian easement for a trail or access point identified in the most current Chugach State Park Access Inventory.

## **DRAINAGE GOALS**

1. Develop a functional drainage system for the Hillside District that protects existing landowners when new development occurs and that mitigates hazards and impacts caused by inadequate water management.

Possible strategies to reach these goals

- Develop an effective, integrated and systematic approach to drainage on the Hillside, which includes on-site runoff retention and regional treatment and conveyance systems.
- Manage drainage on the Hillside by watershed rather than through Limited Road Service Areas or other political boundaries.
- Improve drainage along roads to solve and mitigate safety and road maintenance problems caused by inadequate drainage.
- Protect the functions of natural drainage systems, including streams and wetlands, to convey runoff and mitigate drainage problems.
- Develop and enforce regulations that avoid creating drainage problems when new development occurs; establish standards to provide the right mix of on- and off-site drainage solutions to manage predicted drainage flows and maintain receiving water quality.
- Incorporate improved guidelines for onsite drainage retention into the Municipal development plan review process.
- Provide more continuity to stream and waterbody setbacks, so setbacks reflect stream classifications.

## **WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT GOALS**

1. Provide a combination of on-site, neighborhood and public water and wastewater services in a manner that protects public health, ensures environmental quality, provides for cost-effective installation and operation, and meets resident and landowner needs.
2. Preserve the viability of on-site water and wastewater systems.

Possible strategies to reach these goals

### **On-site Water and Wastewater:**

- Develop new approaches to educating residents regarding best practices for managing and maintaining their on-site systems.
- Develop and enforce standards for improved monitoring of individual septic systems and the cumulative impact of multiple systems; improve enforcement to ensure on-site systems are operated in a manner that meets standards and maintains environmental quality.

- Determine the viability of neighborhood-serving on-site water and wastewater treatment systems, particularly for those specific subdivisions where individual on-site systems are not working well.
- Explore new technologies for on-site water supply and wastewater disposal. (see Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan, Planning Principles for Public Facilities and Services p. 66)
- Review, and adopt where applicable, regulation standards from other successful communities that enhance the environment and reflect the needs of Hillside residents and the Anchorage community.

### **Public Water and Sewer:**

- Establish an updated set of boundaries for public water and wastewater provision, in response to land use and other policies developed through the Hillside planning process; ensure that extension of public water and sewer service responds to development rather than drives development.
- Educate residents regarding the costs of connection to public water and sewer, mechanisms by which connection can occur, and the typical impact of such connections on property values.
- Ensure residential densities through zoning regulations, not as an effect of public water and sewer provision.
- Provide options for water and sewer service in areas where on-site systems are not functional.

### **EMERGENCY SERVICES GOALS**

1. Plan for public safety and fire prevention
2. Plan for emergency evacuation by ensuring that all residents have adequate egress from their neighborhood.
3. Minimize risks of wildfire, for example, through incorporating fire management guidelines into site planning and development standards.