

## Campbell Park – May 17, 2017 - Draft

(References: CRC Campbell Airstrip Road and Trail Report, April 2016 and Campbell Tract Administrative Building Replacement Archeological Assessment -September 2016, Anchorage Centennial Page, Municipal Assembly documents, ADN.com, *A Cultural and Historical Geography of Campbell Creek*, Anchorage, AK, by Cherie Northon, Ph.D., personal interviews and recollections Debra Corbett, Shem Pete's Alaska, *Anchorage Place Names* by Rae Arno)

### Boundaries and Gateways:

Campbell Park is bounded by Tudor Road to the north, Campbell Airstrip Road to the east, East Dowling Road on the South and New Seward Highway on the west. Gateways include Elmore Road, Lake Otis Parkway, Dow Street, Shelikof Street, Campbell Place and Waldron Drive, Wright, Piper and Grumman Streets.

### History:

#### *Prehistory*

The Dena'ina Athabascan place name for Campbell Creek is *Qin Cheghitnu*, Crying Ridge Creek, draining from *Qin Cheghi*, Crying Ridge, running along the north side of the north fork of Campbell Creek. The north fork heads in *Qin Cheghi Bena*, Crying Ridge Lake. The name implies an area associated with mourning (Shem Pete's Alaska).

The place name Campbell in Anchorage appears to derive from Joseph Whidbey, on Captain George Vancouver's 1794 expedition to Cook Inlet. Whidbey named both Point Campbell and Point MacKenzie in Upper Cook Inlet. Orth assumed the name referred to Sir Joseph, in reality the reference is to Archibald Campbell, a governor of Jamaica. An alternative explanation is that Whidbey named Point MacKenzie after James Stuart MacKenzie an astronomer and politician. Point Campbell was then named for his wife, Lady Elizabeth Campbell, daughter of the 2nd Duke of Argyll, John Campbell.

Anchorage Place Names credits the name to Captain Joseph B. Campbell, Army Chief Executive of the Department of Alaska between 1874 to 1876. "Campbell Lake and Campbell Creek are probably named after Campbell Point." Campbell Park and Campbell Airstrip Road are named after the creek (Cherie Northon, Ph.D., *A Cultural and Historical Geography of Campbell Creek*).

#### *WWII*

Tudor Road was named for Burl Alvin Tudor. A veteran of WWII, Tudor won a lottery drawing for a homestead near Boniface Road and Tudor Road in 1949. The earliest non-Dena'ina occupation of the area began in the early 1940's with the expansion of WWII related defensive features to the outskirts of Anchorage described below. Campbell Airstrip road, built in 1942 to reach the auxiliary airstrip of the same name, branched off Lake Otis road which in 1942, may have reached the vicinity of the future Tudor Road intersection.



Three concentrations of steep walled pits and leveled ground, with AHRS numbers ANC-00536, 00538,02361) west of Campbell Airstrip Road and south of Tudor are believed to be related to military use of the area (USGS 1:250,000; USGS 1:63,360; AHRS; *CRC Campbell Airstrip Road and Trail Report, April 2016, Anchorage Place Names* by Rae Arno).

The land use of this area changed in 1940s with the advent of World War II (WWII). After constructing Fort Richardson, one of Alaska's first WWII military installations established north of Anchorage in 1940-1941, the U.S. Army also built four satellite airfields as part of a strategy to disperse aircraft and their crews in case of a Japanese attack. In 1942, 7,000 acres of federally owned, public land south and east of the city of Anchorage was withdrawn by the War Department for military use. One of the satellite airfields, the 5,000-foot gravel Campbell Landing Strip, was constructed by the Corps of Engineers in the withdrawn land. This was south of the South Fork of Campbell Creek in the undeveloped birch and spruce forest. The Army also constructed a jeep trail that ran from Fort Richardson to the Campbell Landing Strip (ANC-00767; see below) and its supporting Army Air Corps garrison (ANC-01385). There were two camps associated with the Campbell Landing Strip: the Campbell Garrison at the northeast end of the runway, and a second, smaller camp near the southwest end of the runway.

A 1944 Army Corps of Engineers as-built plan of the Campbell Garrison shows several Quonset huts that replaced earlier sod huts that had been constructed in the winter of 1942. The Quonsets housed barracks, officer's quarters, a recreation hall, a mess hall, and an aid station. Several smaller huts were used for storage. Immediately following construction of the airstrip and the Campbell Garrison, the next priority was to dig fortifications. "Anti-aircraft gun emplacements, machine-gun nests and foxholes ringed the airstrip. More foxholes protected troops near offices and quarters" (Bureau of Land Management 2007c). There are still foxholes on prominences surrounding the airfield and along the Birch Knob Trail, which now runs near where the Campbell Garrison was located.

#### *Post WWII*

Legal homesteading of lands withdrawn from Chugach National Forest, and informal squatting, probably began in the late 1940's, after the war. In 1950 the Kuznicki House (AHRS ANC-03789) was built at the intersection of the brand new Seward Highway which extended from Anchorage to Potter/Dowling Road, where the highway ended. The 1951 and 1952 USGS maps show Lake Otis extending from just south of DeBarr Road to Dowling Road. Tudor ran east of Lake Otis to Patterson Road. The Seward Highway was completed between Seward and Anchorage (USGS 1:250,000; USGS 1:63,360; AHRS; *CRC Campbell Airstrip Road and Trail Report, April 2016*).

In the post-war years, the Campbell Tract continued to be owned by the military and was used in training maneuvers, eventually becoming known as the Campbell Creek Range and Maneuver Site. George Ondola, Eklutna elder and member of the 196th Infantry from 1952 to 1954, remembered that his company used the area around Campbell Airstrip as a training area (George Ondola, personal communication 2009). Following WWII, the former military road to Campbell Airstrip became known as Campbell Airstrip Road (Bureau of Land Management 2007a, 2007b). A 1952 USGS topographic map of the area ([Figure 4](#)) shows the gravel jeep trail beginning north of Tudor Road at Lake Otis Road and running southeast and northeast, generally following the Chester Creek valley to Boniface Road. From there, it headed southeast across Baxter Road, then south past Tudor Road to the auxiliary Campbell Landing Strip. The Campbell Tract area has been surveyed for archeological significance at several different times as trails development and other projects are implemented on Municipal, BLM and State owned lands within this community council area. The Historic Campbell District found eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places contains the airstrip, administrative site and a portion of the land adjacent to Campbell Airstrip Road beginning at Tudor Road.



### *Homesteading*

Development within the neighborhood focused on four areas. South of Tudor Road and west of Boniface a cluster of buildings housing generators for the Distant Early Warning (DEW Line) system was constructed (AHRs ANC-01986). West of the intersection at Elmore Road and Tudor Road was a small commercial and residential enclave, mainly clustered between Folker and Grumman (Easy) Streets. A log house at 4706 Grumman Street was built in 1952-3 on a 3 acre small parcel homestead. The cabin was built with logs from the parcel. This enclave extended south on Lake Otis Parkway with houses along the east side of the road to 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

West of Lake Otis, Fyfe Street had been built off Lake Otis, but the main foci for settlement were in the southwestern end between Rowan Street and the Seward Highway, and in the northwest end where homesteads in the Shelikof-Becharof area had been subdivided. Homesteaders included Roger and Marcie Waldron and Oscar Fast along Tudor and Lake Otis. Rag-tied pegs in the swampy ground were all that marked Tudor's alignment at that time. "Old Man Waldron" and his oldest son died in a plane crash in 1962. Marcie Waldron married John Trent after Trent's wife passed. Marcie, more prominently known for her untimely death with son Larry by a grizzly bear in 1995, was a marathon runner, and did great things for St. Mary's Episcopal Church including donated land on the southwest corner of Lake Otis Parkway and Tudor Road. The church building was completed in 1958 (USGS 1:250,000; USGS 1:63,360; AHRs; St. Marys Church web page; Personal information). In her will, Marcie helped preserve Waldron Lake through a donation to the Boy Scouts. The lake area was later acquired by the Municipality in 2012, with some state funding (TPS Report 56148v1) and added to the Municipal Parks and Recreation park inventory.

Housing from the 1950s still remains throughout the community council area interspersed with the subdivided tracts including: Alpine Meadows, Homestead Acres, Wickersham Park (also includes Wickersham Park named for the subdivision), and Little Tree #1, and #2. Details on the developers of the subdivisions was not found. The Waldron homestead house remains by Tudor Road next to Waldron Lake.

### *1964 Earthquake*

The earthquake highlighted the shortage of buildable land in the downtown area. The federal Bureau of Land Management owned several government parcels, including prime parcels considered ready for development. The City expressed its desire for these parcels to the BLM. This resulted in the BLM's agreement to move its headquarters outside of the downtown. During this same timeframe, the Department of Defense determined that the Campbell Creek Range and Maneuver Site was surplus to their needs, ultimately dividing it into portions that were conveyed to the BLM, State, and City of Anchorage:

*Five thousand ten acres were relinquished by Presidential Land Order to the Department of the Interior on January 20, 1971; and accountability and responsibility was accepted November 4, 1971, amended November 23, 1971, by the Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior. By this action, the military released all remaining land which they held (except 45 acres) of the central Anchorage lands west of the dividing line between Ranges 2 and 3 of the Seward Meridian (Roderick 1974).*

The BLM spent over \$2 million on new facilities including administrative, fire control, and warehouse operations at the new Campbell Tract site in the mid-70s. The military also granted the BLM the use of the air strip during this time. During this same time the community was planning for the large swath of property that remained undeveloped and much in federal hands. Federal legislation would be required to convey, manage, and develop what became Far North Bicentennial Park, Municipal PLI properties along Tudor Road, State PLI properties along Tudor Road, and the neighborhoods.



### *Urban Renewal*

Campbell Park was not impacted like Rogers Park with Urban Renewal. There was not much to rebuild in the area. However, during this time period is when the area was subdivided into the developments noted above.

### *Oil Boom*

The area to the east of the intersection at Lake Otis and Tudor was a focus for growth in the 1960's. Tudor had been extended west to join the Seward Highway. A powerline brought electricity from Cooper Creek to Anchorage along Tudor Road. By 1972 a land use map shows the area as a mix of commercial development and medium density housing. West of Lake Otis Parkway a few pockets of high density housing show up. Tudor Elementary was built by 1979, according to the USGS map (USGS 1:250,000; USGS 1:63,360; Northon)

The YMCA relocated to Lake Otis Parkway with the current facility operational in 1978. The Flood family donated land, the Jay Flood Memorial Park, to the YMCA in 1974. The Campbell Creek Greenbelt was established by 1975 as a flood control measure. Waldron Lake, an artificial lake appeared on maps at this time. In 1979, Dowling Road extended east of Lake Otis only 1 block or so. The neighborhood south between 48th and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenues, off of Campbell Creek east of Lake Otis was an established neighborhood. The Manoog's Isle trailer park is in existence and the Anchorage Police Department building, and Lake Otis Post Office were opened (1:250,000; 1:63,360).

### *Far North Bicentennial Park*

The Campbell Park area contains a large portion of the Far North Bicentennial Park and the Campbell Creek Greenbelt. The first master plan for Far North Bicentennial Park as adopted in 1974. The park area was conveyed for Recreation and Public Purposes with distinct restrictions on roadway access points. Planning for the park was based on the natural systems inventory include slope, slope orientation, vegetation, soils, water table, and water resources. Provisions for greenbelts, trails, watersheds and recreation areas were made part of the conveyance documents giving the Municipality title in the Cook Inlet Land Exchange legislation (Public Law 94-204, 1/2/1976).

According to the Far North Bicentennial Park Plan of 1985, Ideas for an east-side bypass were quashed in 1974, as the public realized that the integrity of the park would be greatly impacted by such a facility. A decision was made to improve Tudor Road instead to alleviate the demand for the east-side bypass.

With the Oil Boom, the Department of the Interior conveyed the remainder of the Campbell Tract to the Municipality of Anchorage in the 1980s, with the exception of the BLM inholding that encompassed BLM headquarters and the Campbell Airstrip. Neighborhood and commercial development between New Seward Highway and encircling Far North Bicentennial Park continued to progress.

## **Character Summary and Character Defining Features**

The residential areas are built out with Alaska's typical single level and split level, vernacular structures constructed from the 1950s through 1980s. Gable roofs with dormers are present in the Homestead Acres area. Medium to large custom homes are located along a low bluff area on Tudor Top.

Campbell Creek Greenbelt, Waldron Lake, Wickersham Park, Campbell Creek and Campbell Creek Trail, large mature trees including treed buffers along Tudor Road and portions of Lake Otis, the grid and meandering roadways, ready access points to Far North Bicentennial Park, and the eastward views to the Chugach Range are the most prominent character defining features.



### Streetscape – Lighting and Utilities

One major arterial and two minor arterials access Campbell Park. Tudor Road's first expansion into a 150' right-of-way was proposed in the 1974 Far North Bicentennial Park Plan. Tudor Road from the Muldoon curve to Elmore Road provides a large utility corridor and contributes to watershed protection. Lake Otis Parkway is a minor arterial with many curb cuts and traffic lights that access business and the adjoining neighborhoods. Elmore Road is a minor arterial connecting the UMED District to Dowling Road. Neighborhood streets are narrow, with some built on the grid pattern and others built with a winding circular alignment. There are few sidewalks within neighborhoods to access trails and major roadways. Standard lighting throughout. Some utilities are underground, other are above ground in the older developed areas.

### Buildings

- \* Saint Mary's Episcopal Church
- \* 1950s single-story vernacular ranches built on former homestead sites
- \* Homestead Acres – 1 and 2 story vernacular ranches and split levels
- \* Log cabins
- \* Kuzniki House
- \* 4510 Grumman Street
- \* 4706 Grumman Street

### Opportunities for Preservation

- \* Homestead Acres/Wickersham Park - Waldron Subdivisions – possible Anchorage Local Historic Districts
- \* Campbell Creek Trail and Greenbelt Corridor
- \* Archeological sites within Far North Bicentennial Park
- \* Log cabins?
- \* Dog Sled Trails
- \* Vital Moose, Bear, and Salmon Habitat

### Landmarks to Save

- \* Waldron Homestead
- \* Alaska Sled Dog and Racing Association Headquarters



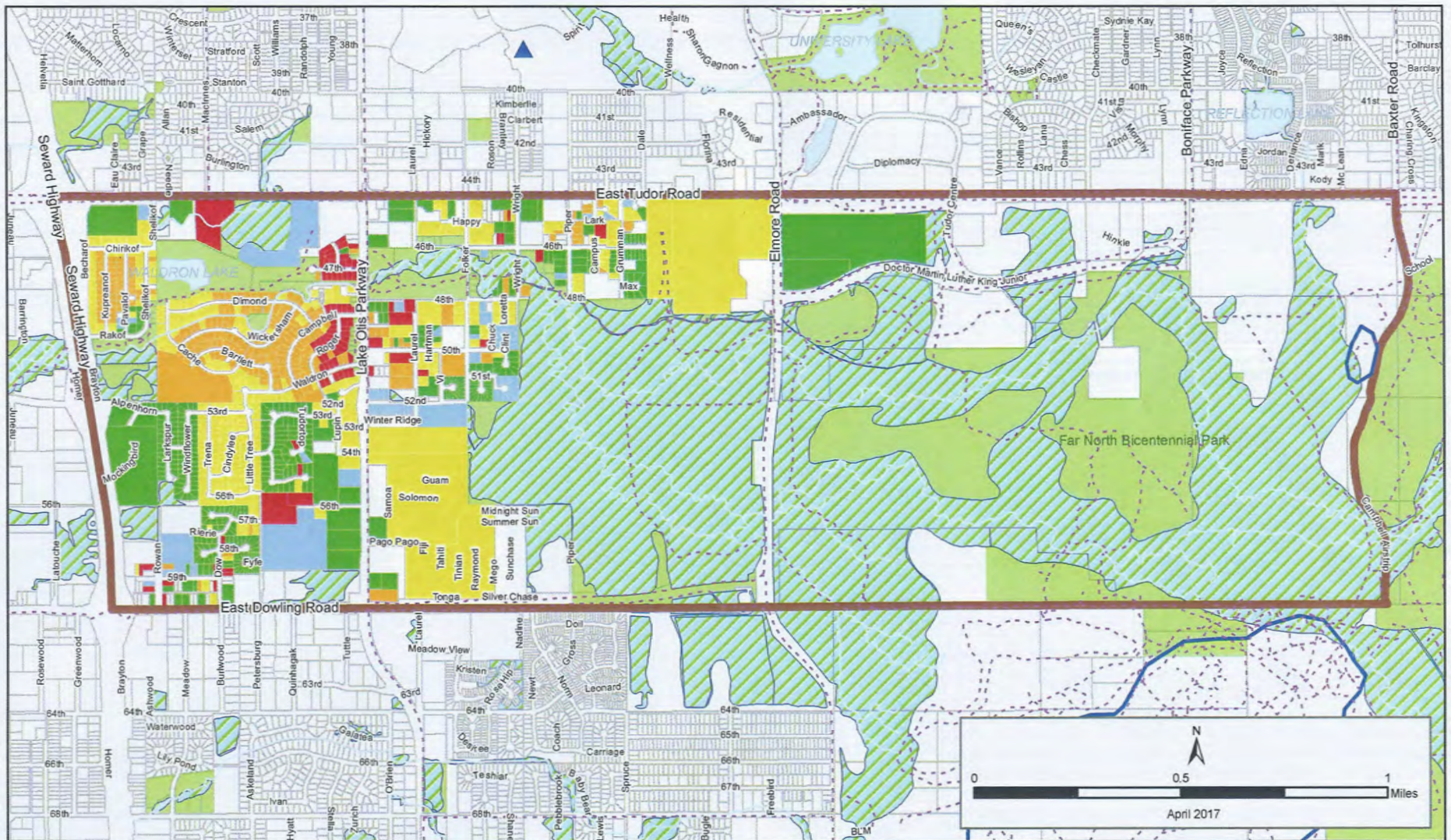
## Challenges

- \* Neighborhoods directly adjacent to the UMED District provide housing for traveling medical personnel and university students with little investment and outreach from the UMED organizations. It would be beneficial to this community if there was more interaction with UMED organizational leadership.
- \* Homeless camps along Chester Creek Greenbelt and Trail
- \* Educating the community on benefits of historic preservation
- \* Environmental impacts to Chester Creek through dumping, trash, buildings too close to the water
- \* Street and sidewalk improvements
- \* Chester Creek Trail connectivity including maintenance of trail to prevent bridge damage, graffiti, etc.

## Draft Specific Policies/ Implementation Items

1. Ensure new development is compatible with surrounding neighborhood through design, landscaping, trail and sidewalk connectivity.
2. Fund and maintain Chester Creek Greenbelt and Trail corridor including removal of unauthorized camping and trail use.
3. Repurpose or renovate existing housing to provide affordable housing options.
4. Share area history and culture through public outreach and engagement
5. Fund and complete a community council area historic property survey
6. Fund and complete oral histories for publishing to the community
7. Hold community council area events that celebrate history and culture.
8. Implement the Chester Creek Watershed Plan.









# Campbell Park Community Council

## Context Statement Map

-  Community Council Boundary
-  Parks
-  Trails
-  Wetlands

-  National Register of Historic Places
-  Site eligible for National Register of Historic Places
-  Site eligible for National Register of Historic Places
-  Site eligible for National Register of Historic Places
-  Districts recommended for further study

### Age of Primary Structure

-  >100 yrs old
-  >60 yrs old
-  50 to 60 yrs old
-  40 to 50 yrs old
-  20 to 40 yrs old
-  <20 yrs old
-  Vacant or no data