

**Turnagain Community Council**  
 c/o President Jonathan Tarrant  
 tccpresident@yahoo.com

April 8, 2016

sent via e-mail

Heritage Land Bank  
 Real Estate Department  
 Municipality of Anchorage  
 4700 Elmore Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
 Anchorage, Alaska 99507

**RE: Draft 2016 HLB Annual Work Program and 2017-2021 Five-Year Management Plan**

Dear HLB Director Oswald, HLB Staff, and HLB Advisory Commissioners,

As the Turnagain Community Council (TCC) does each year, we are submitting comments on the Draft 2016 Heritage Land Bank (HLB) Annual Work Program and the 2017-2021 Five-Year Management Plan (Draft 2016 Plan). The following was approved at our April 7, 2016, general meeting.

**CHAPTER 1: HERITAGE LAND BANK OVERVIEW**

**Page 4, 5<sup>th</sup> graph, last sentence:**

Last year's approved 2015 Plan (page 3) included reference to Appendix D (HLB Leases and Permits List-December 2015 spreadsheet) in this sentence, but the Draft 2016 Plan has deleted this reference. TCC sees no reason for this deletion, as it provides an immediate reader-friendly reference to additional information in the Appendices section of the Plan.

⇒ *TCC requests that reference to Appendix D be reinserted, so the sentence reads as follows:*

***“A spreadsheet of leases and permits currently held by the HLB is attached as Appendix D and is also available online.”***

**THE HERITAGE LAND BANK FUND**

**Page 7, 1<sup>st</sup> graph:**

Last year's approved 2015 Plan included reference to Appendix C (HLB Fund Activities by Year and Fund Balance Graph: 1995-2015)) in this graph, but the Draft 2016 Plan has deleted this reference. As above, TCC sees no reason for this deletion, as it provides an immediate reader-friendly reference to additional information in the Appendices section of the Plan.

⇒ *TCC requests that the following sentence (from the 2015 Plan, page 6) be reinserted as the second sentence in this graph, so that reference to Appendix C is retained:*

***“A graph in Appendix C of this document outlines the fund's activities since 1983, showing the annual fund balance at the end of each year, and a trend line of the moving average from year to year.”***

## LAND MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

### Page 7, Objective 4:

As written in the Draft 2016 Plan, management objective 4. states, [Our management objectives include:] “*Disposing of lands excess to municipal, need both immediate need and potential future need, from its inventory to the appropriate municipal agency with the capacity to manage and utilize improved facilities,*” It clearly has some grammatical problems, making it unclear as to its meaning. Wording used in the approved 2015 Plan for this management objective seems preferable.

⇒ *TCC requests that the following sentence (from the 2015 Plan, page 6) be reinserted as management objective 4.:*

**[Our management objectives include:] “Disposing of improved lands from its inventory to the appropriate municipal agency, with the capability to manage and utilize improved facilities.”**

## ANNUAL WORK PROGRAM

### Page 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> graph:

This graph describes how Municipal Code (AMC 25.40.020.B & AMC 25.40.030) applies to public notice and hearing requirements for HLB plans and proposed actions on specific work items. TCC views this information as an important component of the Plan and supports its inclusion.

However, one specific public notice item from AMC 25.40.030 is not included in the Draft 2016 Plan description. This item (AMC 25.40.030.D.3.) references HLB maintaining a standing list of persons who have requested to receive notices, and this list is to be mailed notices whenever HLB is proposing an action — regardless of where they live. *So that the public notice description in this section is complete and readers are aware of this notification opportunity...*

⇒ *TCC requests that the following sentence be added after the current sixth sentence (“Considerable effort is made to keep the public notified of proposed HLB activities through neighborhood mailings, publication of the agenda and via online information maintained on its website.”):*

**“In addition, HLB maintains a standing list of people who request to receive notification of proposed HLB actions, and will mail notices of all proposed actions to this list.”**

## **CHAPTER 3: 2016 WORK PROGRAM**

### 2016 POTENTIAL ACQUISITIONS

#### Page 20, 3<sup>rd</sup> graph (& Chapter 4, Proposed Acquisitions: 2017-2021, page27):

TCC is pleased to see that Mayor Berkowitz has submitted a list of State-owned parcels to be transferred to the Municipality and supports HLB’s involvement in this effort.

It has been a long-standing position of TCC that State lands currently located within Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (TSAIA) boundaries that are being used as parks/natural open spaces/recreational areas (including Parcels #21 & #68, which are included in the 1986 Municipal Land Entitlement agreement) should be transferred to the Municipality.

For example, the popular and nationally-recognized Tony Knowles Coastal Trail is routed through a number of State-owned parcels. Transfer of these parcels to the Municipality would conform to the West Anchorage District Plan (WADP) Park Objective #6, P-8: “Acquire all remaining portions of the Tony Knowles Coastal



Trail on airport land along with a vegetative greenbelt buffer, so that the full length of the trail corridor is consolidated under MOA ownership for permanent public recreational use.

⇒ *TCC requests to be provided a list of the Mayor’s requested State-owned parcels to be transferred to the Municipality, to ensure State-owned land that has served as important, long-term wildlife habitat, natural open space, and recreational and parkland uses are included in this list.*

**Page 20, 3<sup>rd</sup> graph, 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence:**

Typo needs correcting:

**“The list of requested properties...some of these parcels will be disposed of by...”**

## **CHAPTER 4: FIVE YEAR WORK PLAN: 2017-2021**

### **PROPOSED DISPOSALS: 2017-2021**

#### **Page 26, Region 4 — Northwest Anchorage Bowl, 4. HLB Parcels 4-033 and 4-034:**

Consistent with previous TCC requests, this section of the HLB Plan should include a specific proposal to transfer HLB Parcels 4-033 and 4-034 to the Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department, for the permanent protection of important municipal lands currently being used by the public for park, recreation and natural open space purposes.

While TCC understands that a transfer request of HLB should come from the Municipal Dept. (in this case, the Dept. of Parks and Recreation), **Appendix B — Heritage Land Bank Policies, page 4, IX. HLB Policies, A. Land Management Policies** states,

*“The HLB shall consult regularly with other municipal agencies and the Assembly to determine whether HLB land is needed to fulfill various municipal purposes.”*

So it is not out of HLB’s purview to participate in a discussion with the Dept. of Parks and Recreation and communicate TCC and other interested community member’s longstanding desire for the Coastal Trail and portions of the Sission Loop Trails system located in HLB Parcels 4—033 & 4-034 to be transferred to the Parks Dept. — *and this should effort should be include in HLB’s Five-Year Plan.*

**RATIONALE FOR TRANSFER:** The portions of HLB Parcels 4-033 and 4-034 not being leased or otherwise encumbered by easements and right-of-ways should become permanently dedicated parkland due to the location of the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail as well as a portion of the Sisson Loop Trail within the parcel boundaries. The naturally wooded areas remaining in these two parcels are serving as de facto parkland and the natural open space provides essential buffering from high impacts generated by TSAIA operations to the east. This buffering will only increase in value to the community if the airport’s West Airpark is fully developed with high-impact cargo operations adjacent to this municipal land. This land also contains marginal soils; if there is ever a need to relocate the Coastal Trail inland due to erosion, the Parks and Recreation Department will already have the permanently protected land under its management authority to build a new trail.

Transfer of this municipal land to the Parks and Recreation Department would provide permanent protection of a Coastal Trail greenbelt/buffer, and protect some of the most important attributes about Anchorage, as stated in the goals and expressed by the community in the 2020 Anchorage Comprehensive Plan, and explicitly stated as an objective in the WADP on page 223.

On December 4, 1997, TCC passed a resolution in support of transfer of title and management authority of Parcels 4-032, 4-033 and 4-044 from HLB to the Parks and Recreation Dept. We reiterated our position by passing another resolution making the same request on December 2, 1999.



Each year, our TCC-approved comment letter on the HLB 1-Year and Five-Year Plans underscored our continuing position. TCC sees no justifiable reason to delay this action any longer and it should take place early in the 2017-2021 timeframe, to ensure permanent protection of high value land used by a multitude of park and trail users along our scenic coast.

TCC would like to collaborate with the current administration's appropriate departments (including HLB), and hopes that a request from the Municipal Parks Dept. for transfer of these HLB parcels to their department can be made in the near future. We feel it is important to reiterate our request for this action to be included in the HLB Five-Year Management Program.

⇒ *As previously submitted, TCC requests that the following language for HLB Parcels #4-033 and 4-034 be amended in this section as follows:*

**“In the future, HLB will manage this land in a manner consistent with the 2012 [NEWLY ADOPTED] West Anchorage District Plan, which provides for potential title and land management authority of these parcels to be transferred to the MOA Parks and Recreation Department, with the intent that it become permanently dedicated parkland. Detailed ordinance language should be written with community and agency input to ensure all easements, plat notes and restrictions are appropriately included in the land transfer. This would conform to WADP Park Objective #6: “...permanently preserve the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail as a well-maintained, continuous, public recreational corridor with vegetative buffer from Kincaid Park to Westchester Lagoon [PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCE, AND POTENTIALLY MAJOR TRANSPORTATION FACILITY USES FOR THESE PARCELS.”**

**PROPOSED ACQUISITIONS: 2017-2021**

**Page 27, 2<sup>nd</sup> graph, only sentence in this section:**

Typo needs correcting:

**“The list of requested properties...some of these parcels will be disposed of by [TO THE] during the 5-year...”**

⇒ *However, TCC recommends replacing this sentence with the language used on page 20 of the Draft 2016 Plan (with the typo corrected and amended for 5-year plan chapter), which provided more specific information on the transfer proposal:*

**“The list of requested properties to be transferred to the MOA ownership has been well received and it is anticipated that some of these parcels will be disposed of by the State of Alaska to the MOA during the 5-year work plan horizon.”**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the 2016 Heritage Land Bank Work Program and 2017-2021 Management Plan. In the past, HLB has worked with TCC to incorporate our requests into these important municipal planning documents and we look forward to that continued effort. Appropriate planning and management of our public land is vital to the long-term future of our city, and citizen/community council involvement is an important element of this endeavor.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Tarrant  
Turnagain Community Council President

CC: Mayor Ethan Berkowitz, Anchorage Assembly, Parks and Recreation Department Director John Rodda