

ANCHORAGE BOWL 2040 LAND USE PLAN & MAP

Turnagain Community Council Land Use Committee Findings
Submitted Friday, January 26, 2017

TCC Responses to Staff Recommendations in January 9, 2017 Comment and Issue Response Table 3-b & Accompanying Map:

- **Page 27 — 1: TCC Supports Elimination of Overlay on Heritage Land Bank Land West of Airport**
 - Support change removing these lands from the proposed “Potential Airport Growth Alternative” overlay designation, and designate all but Clitheroe Center-leased land as “Park or Natural Area.”
 - The final version of the map should be shown as is, without the black boundary, and without the overlay indicating it as part of the Airport Growth Alternative area.

- **Page 28 — 2: TCC Supports Overlay Name Change to “Potential Airport Growth Alternative”**
 - However, TCC still opposes this overlay on Point Woronzof Park dedicated parkland and recommends having no overlay on this parcel indicating it could be part of airport expansion.
 - To help mitigate the placement of this overlay, if retained in the final document, TCC would like recognition on the LUP Map that Point Woronzof Park is dedicated parkland and recommends adding an additional subsection or asterisk with text in the Map Legend that indicates the overlay “Includes Municipal Dedicated Parkland.” This would indicate that some lands with this overlay have a higher of protection than other open space parcels.

- **Page 28 — 3: TCC Supports Overlay Name Change to “Potential Open Space Alternative”**
 - Support changing overlay on Airport lands from “Greenway Supported Development” to “Potential Open Space Alternative.” These are two distinctly different land use designations, and the intent on Airport property is not necessarily greenway development, but preserving natural open space and recreational areas in the designated areas.

- **Page 28 — 4: TCC Supports Adding New Overlay under the Airport, Railroad, or Port Facility Land Use Designation**
- **Page 28 — 5: TCC Supports Removing the Tartan Hatch Overlay Pattern from, and Changing the Boundaries of, the Municipal Street Maintenance Facility East of Connors Bog**

- **Page 29-32 — 3-b Supplement: TCC Recommends the Following Changes to the Potential Airport Growth Alternative Section TEXT:**
 - **PAGE 29 — Strike last sentence in fourth paragraph:** ~~“Based on the significance of the Airport to municipal and state commerce and the national airport system, this Plan acknowledges this potentiality, in keeping with Anchorage 2020 and WADP.”~~
 - *This language does not seem necessary and seems to editorialize* (countering editorializing in this section could be made that thousands of people use the nationally-recognized Tony Knowles Coastal Trail through Point Woronzof Park each year, the park includes important wildlife habitat and serves as a key wildlife corridor in the bowl area, a significant Native archeological site is located within the park, etc.).
 - **PAGE 29 — Strike first sentence in fifth paragraph:** ~~“Forecasts have predicted that air transportation market factors and TSAIA’s physical configuration will eventually lead to demand for a second N-S runway.”~~
 - A number of factors, including international air transportation market fluctuations and larger capacity aircraft, indicate that operation numbers and potential congestion and delays at the Airport will not reach levels that necessitates another N-S runway in many years, if ever. And recent cargo and passenger traffic data have shown that the Airport is not meeting unconstrained forecast operations growth projections to-date. If the entire sentence is not deleted, at least change wording to: “Unconstrained forecasts are used to predict that air

~~transportation market factors and~~ **target operation, congestion and delay demands, which may** and TSAIA's physical configuration will eventually **trigger the need** lead to demand for a second N-S runway.

- **PAGE 29 & 30 — Provide a consistent estimate for runway planning lead-time:** page 29 refers to 12-15 years, and page 30 refers to 10-20 years of advance planning.
 - This inconsistency in the Land Use Plan narrative is indicative of how fluid the time frame is in trying to predict when there will be a “need” to acquire land for a second N-S runway (which may never be necessary). Unless a more definitive, reliable timeframe estimate can be provided, not sure it should be included.
- **PAGE 29 — Correct grammatical errors in fifth paragraph, line 3:** Suggested change: “... for state and federal agencies to plan, fund, design, and construct a runway.”
- **PAGE 29 — Change last sentence in last paragraph to specifically address undedication of Point Woronzof Park:** “Also, any a change of use in ownership of Point Woronzof Park, a Municipal-owned dedicated park, would **first** require a **majority** vote of Anchorage residents **to undedicate this parkland.**”
- **PAGE 30 — Support deletion (as shown in Table) of second and third paragraph language that makes reference to a potential land exchange and specific parcels that could be included in a land trade.**
 - Deletion of this language is appropriate; no specific parcels in a potential land exchange should be included in this plan. Full market value appraisals, park undedication ballot measure, need justification, and so much more would need to take place, in order to determine details of any proposed acquisitions/land trades/eminent domain/taking scenarios.
- ⊖ **PAGE 30 — Strike end of last sentence in fifth paragraph:** “...Coastal Trail realignments, and replacement of Pt. Woronzof Park acreage.”
 - TCC objects to language that implies the viability of actually being able to realign the Coastal Trail, and replace Point Woronzof Park acreage, with anything remotely comparable to the incredible amenities that the community now benefits from in their current condition and location — that the net loss would be significant is an understatement. TCC has long expressed concern about the implications proposed by the Airport that they would be able to recreate the user experience, wildlife habitat, natural open space, etc. with Coastal Trail realignment (especially if it is located under two runways — example illustrated in the current Airport Master Plan, Appendix F, page 11). TCC objects to the tone of the language that suggests it is feasible to retain the Coastal Trail and the value of Pt. Woronzof parklands — this plan should not imply that this is an acceptable alternative.
- **PAGE 30 — Retain the last full sentence in the last paragraph:** “These areas include important wildlife habitat, natural areas, buffers, greenbelt and trail connections, scenic values, or other recreational uses.”
 - All of the designated “Potential Open Space Alternative” parcels within the Airport boundaries provide high value to the community, and this is aptly described in the above language; it is appropriate to retain this very accurate and descriptive language in the Land Use Plan.
 - The Anchorage Bowl 2020 Comprehensive Plan Conceptual Natural Open Space Map (page 63), identifies most of the land with the Potential Open Space Alternative land use overlay — not only by the public, but by local wildlife experts and scientific reports — as having community preference for natural open space and/or important wildlife habitats.
- **PAGE 31 — Amend the second paragraph to:** “This pattern overlay on **public** facility lands reflects natural open space **and/or recreational use currently enjoyed by the public.** The intent of the overlay would be for these benefits to be preserved under any change in ownership.” ~~possibly recreation as an alternative use, should some of these areas be preserved or placed in public ownership.~~
 - These lands are currently under ‘public’ ownership, so it doesn’t make sense to state that these lands should be “preserved or placed in public ownership.”

- PAGE 31 — **Amend sixth paragraph, second sentence to:** “In many areas these formal mechanisms **may** have expired, although recreational access **use and municipal management** continues to be allowed.”
 - TCC’s understanding is that the Airport and the Municipality maintain a month-to-month agreement for use of these lands, and that the Parks and Recreation Department has taken on management and oversight of these lands.
- PAGE 31 — **Amend seventh paragraph, third sentence to:** “Conflicts **may** exist between that sentiment and the jurisdictional requirements of the managing agency.”
 - TCC’s understanding is that the Airport and the Municipality maintain a month-to-month agreement for use of many of these parcels, and that the Parks and Recreation Department has taken on management and oversight of these public amenities (Coastal Trail, Spenard Beach Park, etc.).
 - Under FAA’s Grant Assurances, Airport land may be used for public/recreational purposes, if/until there is a need for aeronautical use.
- PAGE 31 — **Strike last paragraph in its entirety:** “Specific tracts of the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport are opportunity parcels where some mechanism could be employed to resolve land use needs or changes and ownership conflicts. *These conflicts are further outlined in the Anchorage 2020 and the West Anchorage District Plan. Some of the long term conflict resolution possibilities require public participation and ballot measures.*”
 - TCC sees no reason to elaborate/repeat this language — this is already expressed in numerous places within the “Potential Airport Growth Alternative” and “Potential Open Space Alternative” sections.

TCC Responses to Map Designations Not Specifically Addressed in Table 3.b., but Shown in Issue Response Item 3-MAP :

- **TCC Supports Designation of Airport Parcel Containing Coastal Trail/Greenbelt, Located South of Point Woronzof Park and North of HLB Land, as “Potential Open Space Alternative”**
 - This land provides an important link between two Municipally owned “Park or Natural Area” parcels where a scenic section of the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail and important greenbelt buffering are located. Based on the current Airport Master Plan (December 2014), no Airport-related development is proposed for this parcel.
- **TCC Supports Designation of Airport Parcel Containing Coastal Trail, Located South of HLB Land and North of Kincaid Park, as “Potential Open Space Alternative”**
 - This land provides an important link between two Municipally owned “Park or Natural Area” parcels where a scenic section of the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail and important greenbelt buffering as well as a portion of the Sisson Loop Trail system are located. Based on the current Airport Master Plan (December 2014), no Airport-related development is proposed for this parcel.
- **TCC Supports Designation of Spenard Beach Park as “Potential Open Space Alternative”**
 - This popular West Anchorage park located within Airport boundaries has been under management agreements with the Anchorage Park and Recreation Department for many years. The Final Draft of the Lake Hood Seaplane Base Master Plan acknowledges this long-term land use, and no Airport-related development is proposed for this parcel.
- **TCC Supports the “Potential Open Space Alternative” Overlay Designation on Turnagain Bog Wetlands — However, TCC Opposes the Arbitrary Delineation of the Overlay Area**
 - TCC’s position is that the overlay area (300 feet from the western Turnagain neighborhood boundary) is completely arbitrary, is not based on any real evaluation of the effectiveness of this wetland buffer width to potential adjacent high-impact development and operations starting at the 301-foot width, and does not reflect the high values of the remaining Turnagain Bog wetlands and associated uplands they provide the TCC neighborhood. These high-value functions include: providing a soft crash landing area for GA planes, which may avoid planes crashing into homes; hydrology/flood control; wildlife habitat; water quality filtration; aesthetics; air pollution absorption; and ground noise absorption and buffering.

- The Anchorage Wetlands Management Plan currently ranks Turnagain Bog as the highest value wetlands in the Anchorage Bowl, with the majority of the remaining wetlands ranked Class A.
- The remaining Turnagain Bog areas provide an essential buffer between homes and adjacent Lake Hood development and operations. If this buffer were removed and replaced with additional high impact aviation development and operations closer to our residential area, the negative effects to the West Turnagain neighborhood would be substantial.
- The Airport acknowledged the potential impacts to our neighborhood if development in Turnagain Bog occurs east of the gravel runway strip in a recent wetland permit application:
 - US Army Corps of Engineers wetland fill permit application reference number POA-2016-500 (application by the Airport to fill Turnagain Bog wetlands west of Echo GA parking lot) states the following on page 2 of the application with regard to rejection of an alternative for developing a new [GA] parking lot east of Lake Hood Strip:
 - “The third alternative analyzed was the creation of a new parking area east of the Lake Hood Strip. The proposed area would have lesser wetland impacts; however, noise associated with the lot would create issues with the adjacent residential community. The additional noise pollution would be a violation of Anchorage noise ordinances, as the parking area may cause a noise disturbance across the residential real property boundary.”
- **In order to appropriately acknowledge and potentially protect these high-value remaining Turnagain Bog wetlands and associated uplands from Airport development and operations, the Potential Open Space Alternative overlay in the 2040 Land Use Plan Map should include, at minimum, the area identified in AO 2001-151(S-2), Illustration 2 – “Lands Not Permitted.” This reflects the ordinance’s recognition of the importance of these wetlands. As the ordinance states, “WHEREAS, It is in the public interest that the portions of Turnagain Bog identified as “Lands not Permitted” in green on illustration 2 (including “Scenic Easement”) remain as a natural buffer between ANC and surrounding neighborhoods.”**