

**Proposed Scope of Work
for development of the
Fairview Neighborhood Plan**

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April 3, 2001**

Introduction

The Municipality of Anchorage has long recognized the importance of public participation in its government process. Participation in Community Councils provides focus and coordination at the neighborhood level. Residents in many neighborhoods are saying "no" to graffiti, crime, and trash by participating in neighborhood patrols. At the same time residents are saying "yes" to being involved in cleanups, beautification projects and code enforcement. The collaborative efforts of volunteers and City programs have decreased crime and graffiti, removed blight and decay, and improved the appearance of our City.

As the Municipality continues to emphasize community-based programs, the role of each community council is vital in assisting the Municipality and staff to understand the goals, needs, concerns, priorities and resources of each neighborhood. Effective implementation of the new Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Development Plan requires that a Neighborhood Plan approach begin this year starting with the neighborhood of Fairview. This plan will help the Administration, Municipal Assembly, Boards and Commissions, service providers, business owners, developers and residents in identifying neighborhood needs. The Fairview Neighborhood Plan is not a document to be filed on a shelf - it is a living, moving, practical guide enabling residents to shape the destiny of their neighborhood.

What is a Neighborhood Plan?

A Neighborhood Plan is a set of strategies and action recommendations about how to improve a given area of a city. Recommendations are based on analysis of a large amount of data collected about that area and generally represent the consensus of the stakeholders (residents, business owners, citizens, organizations and institutions, and city departments) who have participated in drafting the plan.

A Neighborhood Plan:

- Represents all of the groups that make a community;
- Identifies neighborhood strengths and assets;
- Identifies neighborhood needs and challenges;
- Establishes strategies for improving the neighborhood;
- Provides actions items and performance benchmarks;
- Guides future development;
- Helps to direct policy and financial decisions pertaining to the neighborhood;
- Helps to increase citizen involvement in neighborhood activities;
- Develops leadership among the stakeholders;
- Increases knowledge about and commitment to the neighborhood.

Advantages of Neighborhood Planning

1. Engages citizenry in civic life at the grass-roots.
2. Neighborhood residents and City are partners in its development.
3. Serves as a concrete statement of direction for the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Planning Process

Formation of Steering Committee

The Neighborhood Planning Process will use a team of volunteers from Fairview and interested organizations to address the elements of a neighborhood plan. The Fairview Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee will be composed of a cross section of stakeholders from the community. Stakeholders might include homeowners, business owners, residents, managers and employees from neighborhood businesses and institutions, representatives of interested non-profits, clergy and congregations of neighborhood churches, property owners and managers, as well as elected representatives and Municipal staff involved in delivery of services to the neighborhood.

Kick-off Event

The Fairview Community Council Planning Committee, Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services and Municipal staff will co-host a meeting with stakeholders and other residents within the planning area to formally introduce the planning program to the neighborhood. The kick-off meeting will have a dual purpose, first as publicity of the program and second as enticement for participation from the neighborhood. If possible, a known speaker should keynote the event and get participants excited about the project. The event could have a series of brainstorming groups to develop a mission statement, construct draft goals and objectives, identify key issues, challenges and opportunities.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROCESS

1. Identify Issues
2. Prepare Strategies, Action Items and Performance Benchmarks
3. Develop Plan Report
4. Obtain Approval of Plan
5. Schedule Improvements

Summer Work

The mission of the Fairview Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee is to review the existing conditions and needs of the neighborhood and work to develop a series of development scenarios (See Table 1).

The summer months are proposed to be a time when the context for the plan is fleshed out respecting demographics and development patterns. These months would be helpful for committee members to examine and provide information on environmental, heritage and other character features in the neighborhood. (Neighborhood maps should be distributed for this purpose). The summer months are difficult to organize and hold public meetings with many residents enjoying the beauty of summer in Alaska. It is important to be realistic about what could be accomplished in the summer with limited staff resources and inattention by many residents.

The Steering Committee develops an inventory of the community assets and needs through the administration of a four-pronged approach: A survey of neighborhood

residents, a survey of realtors and property appraisers, a survey of non-profits, and a survey of businesses.

**NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING:
KEYS TO SUCCESS**

1. Must Move Efficiently - Not Take Too Long
2. Residents & City must be committed to Process
3. Residents must develop plan - They need to know that the plan is theirs.
4. Everyone must maintain a positive attitude, and focus on the future.

Surveys are mailed to all residential and commercial water customers, and to property owners in the neighborhood. Surveys are then collected by neighborhood volunteers and tallied by Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services staff. In addition, a survey of real estate agents and appraisers will be undertaken to determine the ways to improve property valuations and market desirability. Local non-profits in the neighborhood will be surveyed. Business owners and interests will be contacted and asked for their thinking. Results of these surveys, coupled with results of the initial workshop identifying neighborhood Strengths, Weaknesses,

Opportunities, and Threats, will provide a good inventory of conditions and needs in the neighborhood.

Municipal Staff will develop a profile of the Fairview neighborhood to include:

Demographics

- Population trends
- Households
- Children/Seniors/Handicapped
- Income Levels
- Occupational Categories
- Homeless

Housing

- Density
- Conditions
- Sales prices and trends
- Housing costs
- Owners and renters
- Available development opportunities
- Age of structures

Employment and Economic Development

- Work force participation

- Incomes and education levels
- Occupations and industries where residents work
- Obstacles to employment
- Underemployment
- Planned development
- Trends in the Marketplace

Capital Improvement

- Condition of Parks
- Scheduled maintenance of parks, streets, sidewalks and alleys
- Condition of sewers, water lines
- Availability of high-band telecommunications
- Plans for winter and summer landscaping
- Snow removal and winter lighting
- Trail connections and pedestrian accessibility
- Scheduled transportation improvements

Land Use Maps

- Housing
- Social Support agencies and services
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Vacant land
- Under used property

Autumn Get-Together

The Steering Committee will use this information to develop a series of alternative development scenarios. These scenarios will be produced through an open, public process with meetings every two weeks. The result of this work will be presented to the community during a September visioning workshop. The autumn event should be professionally facilitated and strive to craft a synthesis that incorporates important issues.

The findings of these exercises are then compiled into a collection of long-term strategies for protecting the assets of the neighborhood and meeting any needs that exist in the neighborhood. Each strategy is further defined in the neighborhood plan by several objectives and each objective is specifically outlined by recommended Action Items with performance benchmarks. The objectives, Action Items and benchmarks associated with each strategy provide a framework for future decisions affecting the neighborhood.

As Action Items are defined, each one will be distributed to the City Department that will be affected by the item through an Internal Review Sheet. The purpose of the Internal Review Sheet is to allow Municipal Departments an opportunity to comment on the cost

and feasibility of each Action Item. The completed Internal Review Sheets will be returned to the Steering Committee so that priorities can be assigned with a clear understanding of the associated costs and obstacles.

The development of draft strategies and objectives, policies, options, actions and benchmarks would be produced along with the alternative development scenarios and reviewed at meetings of the Fairview Community Council. A larger, neighborhood open house/workshop to obtain neighborhood feedback on draft strategies, objectives, policies/actions and preferred development scenario is proposed for early October. Following this meeting the draft plan would be prepared.

Approval of Work

Once a draft of the Neighborhood Plan is completed, passed through initial neighborhood revision and been approved by the Fairview Community Council it will be passed to the Housing and Neighborhood Development Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission and AMATS for review and recommendation. The plan will then be reviewed and approved by the Municipal Assembly

The Steering Committee, without obligation or assistance from the Municipality of Anchorage may independently pursue the Action Items determined to be outside the scope of Municipal services.

The implementation of the Neighborhood Plan will be the responsibility of the Steering Committee, Fairview Community Council and the appropriate departments of the Municipality of Anchorage.

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Table 1
FAIRVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN SCHEDULE

Pre-meeting Activity

- Organize work schedule
- Obtain commitments for process
- Find stakeholder representatives
- Arrange for commitment of resources

Council Planning Committee reports at each Council Meeting

Workshop 1 May of 2001

- Kick-off Meeting with national speaker
- What is Neighborhood Planning?
- What is a Winter City Neighborhood?

Steering Committee meets every two weeks through the summer

- Issue Discussion
- Distribute Surveys
- Present Survey Results
- Categorize & Define Issues
- Discuss Recommendations

Workshop 2 Mid - September

- Present Draft Goals and Objectives,
- Discuss existing conditions and alternative development scenarios
- Request Neighborhood Feedback
- Follow-up Discussion on Recommendations (if necessary)

Workshop 3 Mid - October

- Present Draft Report to Residents
- Discuss Preferred Development Scenario

November/December Meeting of Fairview Community Council

- Approval of Final Report

January, February and March

- Approval by Municipality – Commissions, AMATS, Assembly