



FISH CREEK PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS

ANCHORAGE PARKS AND RECREATION & ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

SUMMER 2016 PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENT - PUBLIC PROCESS AND DESIGN OVERVIEW
PARK PLANNER, TAYLOR KEEGAN. KEEGANTH@MUNI.ORG 343-4355



COMMUNITY AND PROJECT OUTREACH

The Fish Creek Playground Improvements includes forming one group that not only joins Spenard and Turnagain neighbors, but highlights the Fish Creek Greenbelt as a uniting factor instead of a dividing one (i.e. the community council boundary). Community outreach included working with neighbors involved in the 2015 Barbara Street Challenge Grant in helping facilitate the rest of the grant goals, which are inclusive turf surfacing and updates playground equipment geared towards 2-5 year olds. Expanding on the group that worked on fundraising and park improvements this summer, the Fish Creek Community Advisory Group was formed to facilitate complimentary designs at the two parks and think holistically about the public space that runs along the wonderful community asset that is Fish Creek and Fish Creek Trail.

Outreach for this project included three group meetings that were focused on the analysis and design of both playgrounds, as well as an additional design charrette with the Girl Scouts of Alaska, whose office is one property away from the Kiwanis Fish Creek Park boundary. Additionally, with two other projects happening in close proximity to these playground improvements in 2017, it is important that dialogue be maintained between these entities working in the neighborhoods, and the voices of the community are heard.

For more information about these processes, please reach out to the Park Planner on these projects, Taylor Keegan at KeeganTH@muni.org or 343-4355.

PARK REPORT CARDS, FLYERS, & DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION

Anchorage Park Foundation 2011
Anchorage Park Foundation

Kiwanis Fish Creek Park
3907 Turnagain Blvd. E

Park History
This park was the 2011 Neighborhood Project Award winner for its inclusive design and inclusive play equipment. The park is a great example of a park that is designed to be inclusive and accessible to all children and adults.

Neighborhood Statistics*
Population: 10,000
Percent of population age 18-24: 15%

Neighborhood Assets*
Playground
Turf
Bench
Bike rack
Water fountain
Lighting
Art

Community Members & Roles
Project Lead: Taylor Keegan
Project Manager: Taylor Keegan
Project Committee: Taylor Keegan, Taylor Keegan, Taylor Keegan

Park Features & Equipment
Playground
Turf
Bench
Bike rack
Water fountain
Lighting
Art

Park Profile

2016 FISH CREEK PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE

- THEMED PLAY
- NATURE INSPIRED PLAY
- GROUP PLAY

BE A PART OF THE IMPROVEMENTS!

- VOLUNTEER AT THE 2016 FIX IT EVENTS FOR BARBARA STREET PARK OR KIWANIS FISH CREEK PARK
- JOIN THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP AND GIVE YOUR INPUT
- GIVE INPUT THROUGH SURVEYS, AND/OR CONTACT THE PARK PLANNER WITH YOUR IDEAS
- MEET YOUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND PARTICIPATE IN THE PUBLIC PROCESS

PARKS AND RECREATION CONTACT
PARK PLANNER TAYLOR KEEGAN
CONTACT: 343-4355 OR TKEEGAN@MUNI.ORG

Anchorage Park Foundation 2011
Anchorage Park Foundation

Barbara Street Park
2100 Barbara Street

Park History
This park was the 2011 Neighborhood Project Award winner for its inclusive design and inclusive play equipment. The park is a great example of a park that is designed to be inclusive and accessible to all children and adults.

Neighborhood Statistics*
Population: 10,000
Percent of population age 18-24: 15%

Neighborhood Assets*
Playground
Turf
Bench
Bike rack
Water fountain
Lighting
Art

Community Members & Roles
Project Lead: Taylor Keegan
Project Manager: Taylor Keegan
Project Committee: Taylor Keegan, Taylor Keegan, Taylor Keegan

Park Features & Equipment
Playground
Turf
Bench
Bike rack
Water fountain
Lighting
Art

Park Profile

FISH CREEK GREENBELT IMPROVEMENTS
BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

TURNAGIN STREET UPGRADE
This project will improve the safety and accessibility of Turnagain Street from the intersection of Fish Creek Trail to the intersection of Turnagain Street and Turnagain Street.

BARBARA STREET
This project will improve the safety and accessibility of Barbara Street from the intersection of Fish Creek Trail to the intersection of Turnagain Street and Turnagain Street.

TRAIL REHABILITATION
This project will improve the safety and accessibility of the Fish Creek Trail from the intersection of Fish Creek Trail and Turnagain Street to the intersection of Fish Creek Trail and Turnagain Street.

KIWANIS FISH CREEK
This project will improve the safety and accessibility of the Kiwanis Fish Creek Park from the intersection of Fish Creek Trail and Turnagain Street to the intersection of Fish Creek Trail and Turnagain Street.

NORTHERN LIGHTS

LEGEND

BE A PART OF THE IMPROVEMENTS!

PARKS AND RECREATION CONTACT
PARK PLANNER TAYLOR KEEGAN
CONTACT: 343-4355 OR TKEEGAN@MUNI.ORG

BARBARA STREET CHALLENGE GRANT



FISH CREEK COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP



GIRL SCOUT DESIGN CHARRETTE



KIWANIS FISH CREEK PLAYGROUND



2016 FUNDING:

- 27K DONOR MATCH
- 65K RASUMSON CLEAN + GREEN
- 120K RASUMSON ACCESSIBILITY FUNDS
- 20K REITMAN CHARTABLE FUND
- 6.2K STATE GRANT FUNDS

\$238K

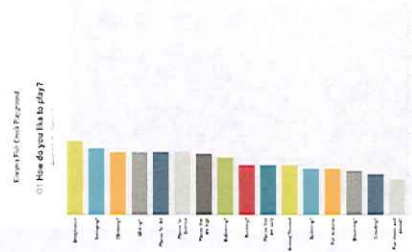
STRENGTHS:

- PURPLE DINOSAUR
- CONNECTS TO CREEK
- GREENBELT IS REALLY NICE THROUGH THE FORESTED AREA, SPECIFICALLY BIKING THROUGH THE NATURAL AREAS
- AMPLE PARKING
- DIVERSE USERS
- PRESERVE THE ART ALONG THE BENCHES-LIKE THE WALL, BUT IT COULD BE IMPROVED ON
- GIRLS SCOUTS AS STAKEHOLDERS

WEAKNESSES:

- ROAD EDGE, PLEASE WORK WITH ROAD FOLK
- POOR ALONG ROAD EDGE- NEEDS MORE TREES
- OPEN GRASSY AREA RARELY GETS USED
- PLAY EQUIPMENT AND SURFACING, GRASS GROWING IN PLAY AREA
- CONNECTION FROM MCRAY IN PARK IS "SPOOKY"
- INVASIVE PLANT MATERIAL- PRUNUS SP.
- THE AREA WITH WALL AND ART IS NOT A PLAZA THAT DRAWS FOLKS IN, (COULD WE GET AN ARTIST TO COME IN AND ENHANCE AREA?)

SURVEY RESPONSES:



- Responses:**
- 1. Please keep the purple dinosaur the north end to west end and central with trees. As there is a way to accessible to creek there is a better opportunity creating a green trail. If you can't imagine through on the trail that the north end. And if there are trees that are in the trees, please include some areas that are in the trees.
 - 2. The area the creek is very nice and the trees that are in the trees are very nice and the trees are very nice.
 - 3. There is a lot of parking for a lot of people. The parking area is not the best. There are some trees that are in the trees and the trees are very nice.
 - 4. Please keep the purple dinosaur the north end to west end and central with trees. As there is a way to accessible to creek there is a better opportunity creating a green trail. If you can't imagine through on the trail that the north end.
 - 5. The creek is very nice.
 - 6. The area the creek is very nice and the trees that are in the trees are very nice and the trees are very nice.
 - 7. There is a lot of parking for a lot of people. The parking area is not the best. There are some trees that are in the trees and the trees are very nice.
 - 8. Please keep the purple dinosaur the north end to west end and central with trees. As there is a way to accessible to creek there is a better opportunity creating a green trail. If you can't imagine through on the trail that the north end.
 - 9. There is a lot of parking for a lot of people. The parking area is not the best. There are some trees that are in the trees and the trees are very nice.
 - 10. Please keep the purple dinosaur the north end to west end and central with trees. As there is a way to accessible to creek there is a better opportunity creating a green trail. If you can't imagine through on the trail that the north end.

CONCEPT ONE

CONCEPT TWO

CONCEPT THREE

DINOSAUR THEMED/SCIENCE AND IMAGINATION

CANYON THEME/CLIMBING AND IMAGINATION

ZIP LINE IN CONJUNCTION WITH ?

KIWANIS FISH CREEK PLAYGROUND CONCEPTS

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



PARK IMPROVEMENTS:

• FOR KIWANIS FISH CREEK PARK, THERE WAS OVERWHELMING COMMENT ON THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE SITE SURROUNDING THE PLAYGROUND; IMPROVEMENTS ALONG BOTH THE TRAIL AND THE ROAD WERE REQUESTED. AS THE CONTEXT OF THIS PROJECT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSES THE PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS, THE FOCUS WAS TO RECONNECT THE PLAYGROUND, THEMATICALLY, TO THE FISH CREEK. THIS WILL BE DONE THROUGH CAPITALIZING ON THE GIRL SCOUTS AS STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PARK AND FACILITATING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN FEMALES AND SCIENCE REGARDING ECOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY. FOR THIS REASON, NATIVE PLANTINGS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED ON SITE WITH SIGNAGE CALLING OUT THE IMPORTANCE OF VEGETATION FOR WATER QUALITY AND RIPARIAN HEALTH. ADDITIONALLY, FOR AN IMAGINATIVE ELEMENT, SURFACING WILL BE UTILIZED TO CELEBRATE THE RIVER AND THE EQUIPMENT WILL SPEAK TO FOREST ECOLOGY AND VEGETATION.

SPECIFIC GOALS INCLUDE:

- PROVIDE ALL-INCLUSIVE TURF SURFACING FOR PLAY SURFACING
- PROVIDE ADA ACCESSIBLE PATH FORM PARKING LOT TO PAVILLION
- HIGHLIGHT CONNECTIONS TO FISH CREEK THROUGH THEMATIC DESIGN ELEMENTS OF WATER AND ECOLOGY
- NATIVE TREE PLANTINGS AND EDUCATION ON RIPARIAN HEALTH AND BUFFERS
- FIX-IT DAY CLEARING INVASIVE PRUNUS SP. THAT PROMOTES SIGHT LINES AND ECOSYSTEM RECOVERY

KIWANIS FISH CREEK PLAYGROUND

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



PARK IMPROVEMENTS:

• WHEN THE WIDER COMMUNITY WAS ASKED WHAT THEY WANTED, IT WAS IMPORTANT TO MANY OF THE NEIGHBORS THAT BARBARA STREET APPEAL TO A LARGER AGE GROUP AS WELL AS MAINTAIN THE "QUIET HAPPENSTANCE VIBE" THAT THE PARK CURRENTLY POSSESSES. WITH THIS, A SLIDE USING THE NATURAL TOPOGRAPHY OF THE PARK WAS SUGGESTED, AS THIS WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THE WINTER SLEDDING USE OF THE PARK, AND WOULD PROVIDE A MORE DYNAMIC EXPERIENCE FOR ALL AGES. ADDITIONALLY, AFTER DELIBERATION, TWO OF THE THREE TINY HOUSES WOULD LIKE TO BE KEPT ON-SITE, WITH SLIGHT UPDATES.

SPECIFIC GOALS INCLUDE:

- PROVIDE ALL INCLUSIVE TURF SURFACING
- PROVIDE ACTIVITIES FOR WIDER AGE GROUP THAN THE CURRENT TARGET AGE OF 2-5 YR OLDS
- REMOVE ONE TINY HOUSE THAT HAS BEEN REPORTED TO ATTRACT NEGATIVE ACTIVITIES
- THIS INCLUDES A PROPOSED EMBANKMENT SLIDE AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL PLAY EQUIPMENT

BARBARA STREET PARK



REPORT CARD ON PARKS: Kiwanis Fish Creek Park 2011

Report Card Background

The Anchorage Parks Report Card utilized community volunteers to create a comprehensive picture of the condition of our parks, reflecting the Anchorage community's opinions, preferences and ideas. Anchorage citizens along with Anchorage Parks and Recreation staff evaluated 38 parks based on 6 different settings. Parks were surveyed based on cleanliness, safety, structure, appearance, and function. Anchorage Parks and Recreation staff will use this information to strategically employ its funding and volunteer resources to better meet the needs of the Anchorage community.

OVERALL GRADE

F

Active Recreation Areas

63

Green Spaces

80

Park Entry

62

Passive Recreation Areas

62

Pathways

45

Playgrounds

64

Scores were calculated on a 100 point scale

Kiwanis Fish Creek Park Findings

Community members would like to see a barrier between the park and the road. They reported, "(cars and trucks are driving all over the park!. One even used the hill by the parking lot to load up his snowmachine)" Tennis court, basketball court, and playground badly need upgrades. They suggested making a neighborhood ice rink in the winter on the tennis courts.

Fix It List

- Barrier between park and road
- New swing set
- New dog station with doggie bags and sign
- Interpretive signs/upgraded current signage for a possible path above the creek
- Tennis court upgrades (it's very dilapidated)

Wish list: *Ice rink for winter!



Basketball court not fully functional



Tennis courts are old and in need of upgrade

For a complete directory of Report Card results for neighborhood parks, go to www.AnchorageParkFoundation.org/projects/reportcard.htm

The Anchorage Park Foundation developed the Anchorage Parks Report Card in partnership with the Epley Institute for Parks and Public Lands at Indiana University, and community volunteers, thanks to a generous grant from the Rasmuson Foundation. The APF has raised over \$18 million dollars since 2004 to improve public parks, trail and recreation areas. To make a contribution or volunteer, please visit us at:

Anchorage Park Foundation 2011

AnchorageParkFoundation.org



Barbara Street Park

3109 Barbara Street

Park History

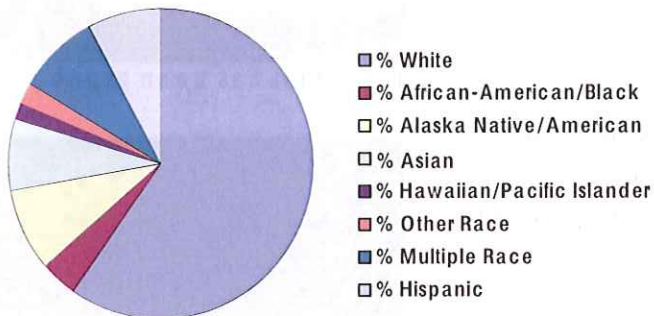
The park was deeded to the city in 1971 and developed in 1972. The original development included play equipment, a play area, and a trail and bridge over Fish Creek. The bridge has since been replaced. In 2003 the play equipment was replaced with accessible toddler equipment.



Neighborhood Statistics*

Population: 2,960
Percent of Population under age 18: 19.9%

Ethnic Composition:



*2010 Census Data

Park Facilities & Equipment

- Accessible play equipment for 2-5 year olds
- Small play area midway through the park
- Benches
- Trail is lit for year round use
- Access to Fish Creek Trail



COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:

Mayor Dan Sullivan
mayor@muni.org

Turnagain Community Council
Cathy Gleason, President
tccpresident@yahoo.com

Assembly District 3
Ernie Hall - halle@muni.org
Harriet Drummond - harrietdrummond@alaska.com

Alaska State Legislative District 26M
Representative Lindsey Holmes
Representative_Lindsey_Holmes@legis.state.ak.us

Senator Hollis French
Senator_Hollis_French@legis.state.ak.us

Park Profile



REPORT CARD ON PARKS: Barbara Street Park 2011

Report Card Background

The Anchorage Parks Report Card utilized community volunteers to create a comprehensive picture of the condition of our parks, reflecting the Anchorage community's opinions, preferences and ideas. Anchorage citizens along with Anchorage Parks and Recreation staff evaluated 38 parks based on 6 different settings. Parks were surveyed based on cleanliness, safety, structure, appearance, and function. Anchorage Parks and Recreation staff will use this information to strategically employ its funding and volunteer resources to better meet the needs of the Anchorage community.

OVERALL GRADE

C

Active Recreation Areas

N/A

Green Spaces

90

Park Entry

66

Passive Recreation Areas

61

Pathways

44

Playgrounds

87

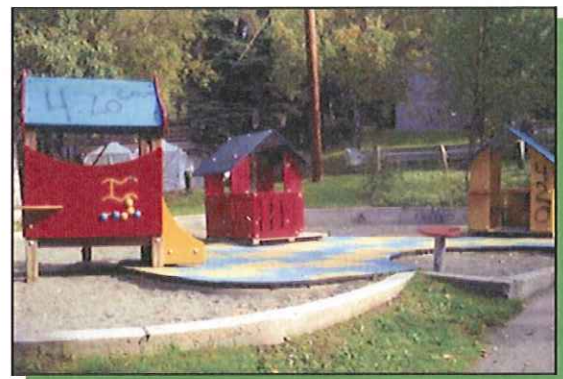
Scores were calculated on a 100 point scale

Barbara Street Park Findings

Community members reported a lot of graffiti in this park. They would like to see wooden benches and bollards re-painted and flowers planted.

Fix It List

- Remove gang graffiti on fence bordering the park, on the Fish Creek Bridge, on tot playground, and light poles
- Some of the wooden stairsteps leading to park have rotted away
- Re-paint wooden benches and bollards
- Fix trail with large roots coming out of it
- Plant flower beds



The tot lot has been tagged with graffiti



The play equipment was taken out and the grass never grew back

For a complete directory of Report Card results for neighborhood parks, go to www.AnchorageParkFoundation.org/projects/reportcard.htm

The Anchorage Park Foundation developed the Anchorage Parks Report Card in partnership with the Epley Institute for Parks and Public Lands at Indiana University, and community volunteers, thanks to a generous grant from the Rasmuson Foundation. The APF has raised over \$18 million dollars since 2004 to improve public parks, trail and recreation areas. To make a contribution or volunteer, please visit us at:



Anchorage Waterways Council

P.O. Box 241774

Anchorage, AK 99524

www.anchoragereeks.org

Anchorage Waterways Council's Creek Report Card

"No creek left behind."

Dear Turnagain, Campbell Park, Midtown and Spenard Community Councils:

The Municipality of Anchorage is about 2,000 mi² and has approximately 2,250 miles of creeks and rivers. These creeks and rivers are often listed as some of Anchorage's premier amenities. During the summer of 2012, 70-hardy citizen volunteers surveyed nearly 175 miles of these creeks for issues, problems, access, suggestions for projects and repairs and general comments. These volunteers "graded" the creeks on a variety of criteria, including human impacts, recreational opportunities, natural processes, and aesthetics. Specific findings will be provided to the appropriate agency or organization.

This survey was modeled after the Anchorage Park Foundation's Park Report Card as well as another 50+ citizen creek surveys around the U.S. and a number in other parts of the world. These citizen creek report cards have been encouraged by a number of organizations including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and American Rivers. The Anchorage program was sponsored by the Bullitt Foundation and the USFWS.

Additionally, the Anchorage Waterways Council has volunteer water-quality monitors along our creeks, and is the only organization that routinely monitors the water quality of our creeks.

With this note, the Anchorage Waterways Council (AWC) would like to provide information to you about the "state of the creeks" in your Community Council area. They are one of our urban assets, and **we ALL need to be involved in protecting and enhancing our creeks.**

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas J. Eley, Ph.D.

Creek Report Card Coordinator

Anchorage Waterways Council is a non-profit, membership organization

www.anchoragereeks.org

Community Council(s): **Turnagain, Midtown and Spenard**

Creek(s): **Fish Creek**

Water Quality Monitoring: **Consistently since 2004 at the end of LaHonda**

Issues:

- Fish Creek was completely surveyed where it emerges from its headwater at E 42nd and Lake Otis to the mouth of the creek. Also the tributaries and former tributaries were surveyed.
- In 1916, salmon still ran up Fish Creek, and it was a fully functioning watershed. Currently, it has a small population of trout, but the existence of salmon in Fish Creek is questionable.
- Since 1916, 73 percent of Fish Creek has disappeared. Fish Creek was one of the first Anchorage Creeks to suffer from development, road and railroad building, filling, and channelization. By 1964, the channelization and filling of Fish Creek was well underway.
- Fish Creek once ran through what is now the Sears Mall, and, if you ever visit BP's Energy Center and walk across the bridge that crosses what is now a ditch, you are crossing an old section of Fish Creek.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Building is built on a former lake on Fish Creek, and you could pick out the creek's course through the ACS complex until it was clear cut and built upon in summer 2012.
- From 42nd and Lake Otis to Shelikof, the creek is above ground and is important wildlife habitat. It then goes underground and emerges again in Spenard except for a brief daylighting at Cuddy Park.
- The water was generally turbid and sediment filled due to the rainy summer. Water levels ranged from average to filled to the top of its banks, particularly after the September 2012 wind and rain storm.
- The State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation considers Fish Creek to be "impaired water" due to high fecal coliform counts, which is a product of urban runoff (<http://www.dec.alaska.gov/water/wqsar/Docs/2010impairedwaters.pdf>). Considerable pet waste was seen along the lower sections of the creek, and pet waste has been shown to be a significant source of fecal coliform bacteria. In addition, the open section of the creek in Cuddy Park is the haunt of several hundred ducks, ravens and eagles as well as by geese and gulls in the summer months. People feed the ducks there causing them to concentrate in the winter and this concentration could be an additional source of fecal bacteria.
- Fish Creek has times exceed the State dissolved oxygen requirement and has had a dissolved oxygen level as low as 4.8 mg/l. The State's minimum requirement is 7 mg/l in waters for wildlife and the growth and propagation of fish and other aquatic life. Numerous scientific studies suggest that 4-5 mg/l of DO is the minimum amount that will support a large, diverse fish population. The DO level in good fishing waters generally averages about 9.0 mg/l.
- Dissolved oxygen naturally decreases in the summer due to the physiological activity of fish and other organisms. However, the decomposition of yard wastes dumped into the creek also results in the depletion of oxygen, and **yard wastes should not be dumped** into Fish Creek.
- Fish Creek has recorded pH as low as pH 6.0, which exceeded the State standards of a minimum of 6.5 and a maximum of 8.5 for wildlife and the growth and propagation of fish and other aquatic life.
- Considerable trash was found in and along the exposed sections of the creek, including bicycles, tires, construction materials, pallets, household debris and plastic bags.
- Some flooding was noted along much of the creek due to downed trees from the September 2012 wind storm.

- The biggest threat to Fish Creek is most likely from storm water runoff from roads, commercial properties and yards. Storm water runoff, and whatever it carries with it in the way of pollutants, ultimately ends up in our creeks and rivers and **is not routed** through the sewage treatment plant.
- Citizens living along the creek should work with the Municipality of Anchorage and State of Alaska to get Fish Creek off the Impaired Waters List.
- Lastly, a number of people have voiced their desire to see more of Fish Creek opened back up from its underground home and restored to a more natural condition. Perhaps this would be a good topic of discussion for the Community Councils.