

Frequently Asked Questions: “The Basics”

1. What is the Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map?

The Anchorage Bowl Land Use Plan Map (Plan Map) is the community’s vision for future land use described in the city’s comprehensive plan. The update to the Plan Map incorporates recent District and Neighborhood plans, economic and population forecasts, and the results of recent housing, industrial, and commercial lands studies in order to accommodate growth through the year 2040.

2. What is Anchorage’s Comprehensive Plan?

Our comprehensive plan, *Anchorage 2020: Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan*, also called “*Anchorage 2020*,” is the plan the community adopted in 2001 to manage future growth in the Anchorage Bowl. It guides development according to the community’s goals, concentrating growth through infill, redevelopment, and mixed use in certain areas of town while enhancing neighborhoods, providing access to trails, and preserving parks and open space.

3. What is the Preferred Scenario for growth?

In *Anchorage 2020*, the community, through broad consensus, selected a Preferred Scenario for future growth. The community’s Preferred Scenario blends the most popular features of four original scenarios. Its features include urban growth, neighborhood diversity and enhancement, parks, recreation and open space, while maintaining Anchorage’s natural setting. The plan guides housing and jobs to designated places:

- **Major employment centers:** The plan designates three major employment centers to become the most intensely developed areas of the Municipality. They will have the highest concentrations of office employment, supporting retail and commercial uses, and institutions.
- **Redevelopment/mixed use areas** have been identified near all major employment centers. Residential redevelopment in these areas will be at medium and high densities to enable more people to live close to work.
- **Town centers** will function as the focus of community activity for smaller subareas of Anchorage. They are intended to include retail shopping and services, public facilities and medium density residential uses.
- **Neighborhood commercial centers** are less intense neighborhood-oriented commercial nodes that are designed to fill in the gaps between the larger town centers.
- **Industrial reserves** are intended to ensure that strategically located industrial land is available for industrial uses that help drive the economy.
- **Transit-supportive development corridors** tie major elements of the Preferred Scenario together. Most of the town centers are linked to one or more major employment centers by transit supportive development corridors. As Anchorage offers more transit service, builds more walkable streets, and develops more concentrated residential and commercial activity in selected areas, growth in traffic is expected to slow with reduced need for large parking lots.

4. How do we achieve the goals of *Anchorage 2020*?

Together we reach the goals of *Anchorage 2020* through capital improvement projects, land use decisions, ordinance changes, rezonings, private sector investments, community initiatives, and other municipal programs and services.

5. Why do we need to update the Plan Map?

The official Plan Map for the Anchorage Bowl is 34 years old. A new city land use plan map is needed to find room to grow, achieve *Anchorage 2020* and respond to current issues and needs. Neighborhoods have developed new plans of their own, and the land use ordinance (Title 21) has changed. We must also adapt to the challenges of affordable housing, the economy, employment, and transportation. The plan map helps address these issues by showing where to provide room for homes, businesses, recreation and employment for the growing population.

6. How is the Land Use Plan Map different from the Zoning Map?

The Land Use Plan Map is a part of the comprehensive plan. It provides long range, high-level policy guidance for a broad range of city decisions about public investment, programs, development incentives, land use code, as well as other municipal plans. It also provides policy direction regarding changes to the zoning map, i.e. "rezonings." The zoning map regulates the use and development of property. Its zoning districts are described in the city's zoning ordinance, Title 21. Each zoning district has specific requirements to help reach the community's land use goals.

7. What does "mixed use" mean?

Mixed Use development combines two or more of the primary types of land uses (residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, and industrial) within the same building, site, or district. In a mixed use development the various functions are physically and functionally integrated and provide clear pedestrian connections between uses. Mixed use is a more efficient use of land in urban centers.

8. What do "infill" and "redevelopment" mean?

Infill is new development on vacant parcels in an already developed area. Redevelopment converts existing building sites or underutilized parcels to a more intensive use. More of Anchorage's future growth is expected to be through infill and redevelopment.

9. How long will it take to update the Plan Map?

The Public Review Draft of the Land Use Plan Map will be released in late December for a two month public comment period. The Public Hearing Draft will go to the Planning and Zoning Commission in early spring 2016. The Assembly will receive the Plan Map for consideration in summer 2016.

10. How can we participate and comment on the Land Use Plan Map?

We plan a variety of venues for learning about the map and commenting. For now, comment at Community Council meetings or email us: at landuseplanmap@muni.org or call 907-343-7940. You can also write to: Municipality of Anchorage Long Range Planning Section, Community Development Department – LUPM, P.O. Box 196650, Anchorage, AK 99519-6650.

11. How will the public feedback on the Draft Plan Map be used?

The Plan Map Update team will review all the feedback that we receive. The Planning and Zoning Commission will also review the feedback when making its recommendations. It will help us decide what changes to the Draft Plan Map should be incorporated into the final draft Plan Map that the Anchorage Assembly will review and vote on. Not everyone may see his or her comment or suggestion expressed in the final Plan Map. However, we do consider it all. Hearing the full range of community perspectives will result in a better plan.