FROM: MAYOR

SUBJECT: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 2.40, COMMUNITY COUNCILS, TO MERGE THE BOUNDARIES OF THE MID-HILLSIDE AND THE HILLSIDE EAST COMMUNITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS AS ONE TO ESTABLISH THE HILLSIDE COMMUNITY COUNCIL DISTRICT.

On April 11, 2016, the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) held a public hearing on a proposed boundary amendment to merge the Mid-Hillside and Hillside East Community Councils into a new entity known as the Hillside Community Council. Based on their review and findings, the Commission approved the amendment.

Background

The Anchorage Municipal Charter, at the founding of the Municipality in 1975, established community councils—granting official recognition and representation to neighborhood associations in government and local affairs. Community councils are intended to represent actual neighborhoods in the Municipality so that people can identify the part of the city they belong and relate to and organize as a community.

The Planning Department is responsible for recommending adjustments to community council district boundaries and the number of districts every ten years. Since the establishment of community councils 41 years ago, several additional community councils have been added and some minor boundary changes have been made.

2015-2016 Boundary Review Request

In December 2015, Planning staff received a resolution from the presidents of the Mid-Hillside and Hillside East Community Councils dated January 28, 2015, requesting that the Assembly approve a merger of both community councils. The resolution explained that neither community council has been active in quite some time, that the bylaws are not in conformance with Assembly Ordinance AO 2014-3(S) approved on February 11, 2014, and a merger of the two community councils would provide better representation for the members of those councils.
In consultation with the Municipal Ombudsman’s and the Clerk’s Offices on December 21, 2015, Planning staff contacted delegates of the Federation of Community Councils to review and generate community discussion and comments about the proposed merger. The results of these discussions resulted in a recommendation to move the merger forward for approval by the Municipality.

During the public review period prior to the public hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission, no agency comments were received in opposition to the proposed boundary amendment. Six municipal and state agencies provided a response of “no comment” and the Airport Heights Community Council sent an email conveying its unanimous support. The Planning Department found no compelling reason to oppose the merger of the two community councils into a new entity known as the Hillside Community Council.

On April 11, 2016, the Planning and Zoning Commission held the advertised public hearing and took action. No members of the public testified against the proposed merger. Based on its review and findings, the Commission approved the proposed boundary amendment to merge the Mid-Hillside and Hillside East Community Councils. (See Exhibit A, Planning and Zoning Commission Resolution No. 2016-018.) The staff packet is also attached for your information. (See Exhibit B, PZC Case No. 2016-0039.)

**Recommendation**

The Administration concurs with the findings and action of the Planning and Zoning Commission and recommends adoption of the proposed Mid-Hillside and Hillside East Community Councils Boundary Amendment.

**THE ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDS APPROVAL.**

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Attachments: Exhibit A, Planning and Zoning Commission Resolution 2016-018
Exhibit B, Planning Staff Packet for PZC Case 2016-0039