

Submitted by: ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRAWLEY
Prepared by: Dept. of _____
For reading: _____
(always blank)

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AO No. 20XX-_____

1 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE TO
2 PERMANENTLY SUNSET THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION AND
3 REALLOCATE ITS DUTIES TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION.
4

5 **WHEREAS**, in 1968 the City of Anchorage established an Urban Beautification
6 Commission, a body that had several purposes, including advising private property
7 owners on how to enhance the aesthetics of their properties; and
8

9 **WHEREAS**, the Urban Beautification Commission was incorporated into the
10 Municipality of Anchorage in 1975, and in 1984 it was renamed Urban Design
11 Commission (UDC); and
12

13 **WHEREAS**, in 1985 the UDC's purpose and scope was expanded and rewritten in
14 code, with a variety of duties from reviewing cases delegated to it by other boards,
15 making decisions on street and highway landscaping plans, and "make
16 recommendations to the Mayor and Assembly regarding any state or municipal plan
17 or program affecting urban design or aesthetics in the Municipality"; and
18

19 **WHEREAS**, during the Title 21 Rewrite, a 2002 external evaluation and 2003
20 proposed reorganization of the zoning code identified UDC as needing more
21 clarification and well-defined purpose, citing examples of where its functions were
22 redundant to or not clearly distinct from other similar boards, with a recommendation
23 to significantly revise and clarify the entity's duties; and
24

25 **WHEREAS**, revisions to UDC's purpose and scope were adopted in the new Title
26 21, including review of many types of variances, and other responsibilities held in
27 parallel with similar functions of Planning and Zoning Commission, as summarized
28 in Table 21.02-1; and
29

30 **WHEREAS**, Sunset Audit Report 2025-S1 (AIM 177-2025) found that UDC met a
31 total of nine times between January 2024 and May 2025, a 17-month period, with a
32 significantly lighter workload than PZC which met 31 times; and
33

34 **WHEREAS**, the planning profession has shifted its standards of practice toward
35 more objective design and development standards, fewer points of discretionary
36 review of development projects, and re-evaluating the benefits of time-intensive
37 public process with trade-offs of costs and uncertainty it creates for new
38 development; now, therefore,
39

40 **THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:**
41

42 **Section 1.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 1.35.010 is hereby amended to
43 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
44

1 *out):*

2

3 **1.35.010 Principal executive personnel, boards and commissions, and**
4 **elected officials.**

5 *** *** ***

6

7 B. Principal executive personnel and members of boards and
8 commissions and elected officials who shall take the oath of office.
9 The following officials and municipal executives shall take and
10 subscribe to the oath of office:

11 *** *** ***

12

13 4. Members of regulatory and adjudicatory boards and
14 commissions as set forth in AMC 4.40, including, but not limited
15 to:

16 m. Zoning board of examiners and appeals.

17 [N. URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION.]

18 n.[O.] Board of adjustment.

19 o.[P.] On-site wastewater system technical review board.

20 p.[Q.] MOA Trust Fund board of trustees.

21 q.[R.] Anchorage Child Care and Early Education (ACCEE)
22 Fund Board.

23 *** *** ***

24 (AO No. 2000-131, § 1, 9-12-00; AO No. 2002-69, § 1, 5-14-02; AO No. 2018-
25 24, § 1, 4-10-18; AO No. 2021-114, § 1, 1-31-22; AO No. 2022-40(S), § 1, 3-
26 22-22; AO No. 2023-68, § 3, 6-20-23; AO No. 2023-73, § 2, 7-25-23; AO No.
27 2023-111(S), § 1, 11-7-23; AO No. 2024-61(S-1), § 3, 7-16-24; AO No. 2024-
28 110(S), §§ 1, 7, 11-26-24)

29

30 **Section 2.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 3.20.070 is hereby amended to
31 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
32 *out):*

33

34 **3.20.070 Executive branch organization.**

35 *** *** ***

36 B. Office of the municipal manager. Within the office of the municipal
37 manager and reporting to the municipal manager or designee are: the
38 office of emergency management; health and safety; transportation

inspection; and the following departments:

*** *** ***

10. Planning, development and public works. Within the planning, development and public works and reporting to the department, are the following departments:

*** *** ***

b. Planning department. This department is responsible for comprehensive land use planning and planning for public facilities, and environmental resources. The department manages the municipality's coastal and wetlands management programs; administers, and enforces the Title 21 Land Use Code; processes applications and prepares recommendations for zoning, conditional use, variance, subdivision, and site plan reviews; and provides staff support to the planning and zoning commission, platting board, zoning board of examiners and appeals, [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION,] and the municipal assembly. The department also provides technical, GIS mapping, geographic base layers, and website support to all of the departments headquartered in the planning and development center. The department also provides staff support to the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS).

*** *** ***

1 1, 5-23-23; AO No. 2023-111(S), § 2, 11-7-23; AO No. 2023-81, § 2, 1-9-24;
2 AO No. 2024-28, § 1, 3-27-24; AO No. 2024-110(S), §§ 4, 7, 8, 11-26-24; AO
3 No. 2025-57, § 1, 5-6-25)

4
5 **Section 3.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 4.05.060 is hereby amended to
6 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
7 *out*):

8
9 **4.05.060 Attendance requirements; vacancies.**

10 A. The office of a member of a board or commission member shall
11 become vacant if the member:

12 *** *** ***

13
14 7. During any 12-month period while in office:

15
16 a. Is absent from three regular meetings without excuse;

17
18 b. Is absent from:

19
20 i. Six regular meetings; or

21
22 ii. Eight regular meetings for members of the
23 planning and zoning commission, [URBAN
24 DESIGN COMMISSION,] platting board, or
25 zoning board of examiners and appeals; or

26
27 c. Fails to attend a two-thirds majority of the regular
28 meetings.

29 *** *** ***

30
31 (CAC 2.64.060; AO No. 89-122(S-1); AO No. 90-70; AO No. 92-95; AO No.
32 93-215, § 1, 1-4-94; AO No. 95-113, §§ 1, 2, 5-2-95; AO No. 2007-63(S), §
33 1, 5-1-07; AO No. 2013-55, § 1, 4-23-13; AO No. 2017-148, § 1, 11-21-17;
34 AO No. 2018-31, § 1, 4-24-18; AO No. 2020-42, § 1, 4-14-20; AO No. 2021-
35 85, § 1, 10-28-21; AO No. 2023-105, § 1, 11-7-23)

36
37 **Section 4.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 4.40.125 is hereby repealed as
38 follows:

39
40 **4.40.125 (Repealed) [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION.]**

41 [A. THERE IS ESTABLISHED AN URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION TO
42 EXERCISE THE POWERS AND DUTIES MORE PARTICULARLY
43 SET FORTH IN TITLE 21.

44
45 B. THIS COMMISSION SHALL TERMINATE ON OCTOBER 14, 2025,
46 UNLESS AFFIRMATIVELY CONTINUED BY THE ASSEMBLY IN

1 ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 4.05.150.]
23 (CAC 2.64.520—2.64.540; AO No. 81-180; AO No. 82-167; AO No. 84-30;
4 AO No. 85-160, 1-8-86; AO No. 97-145, § 1, 12-9-97; AO No. 2000-114, § 1,
5 1-9-01; AO No. 2004-68, § 1, 4-13-04; AO No. 2004-96, § 1, 6-8-04; AO No.
6 2011-64(S-1), § 3, 6-28-11; AO No. 2013-69, § 1, 10-8-13; AO No. 2016-60,
7 § 1, 10-4-16; AO No. 2019-71, § 1, 10-8-19; AO No. 2022-65, § 1, 10-11-22)
8
910 **Section 5.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 4.60.105 is hereby amended to
11 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
12 *out*):
1314 **4.60.105 Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board.**
1516 *** *** ***
1718 D. The Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board shall serve to focus and
19 advise on Chugiak-Eagle River area land use concerns. The advisory
20 board shall be notified timely to provide review and make
21 recommendations to the municipality and its boards and commissions
22 in advance of final deliberation and decision on these matters:
2324 1. Changes to the Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive Plan and
25 changes to other comprehensive plans and studies which
26 impact the Chugiak-Eagle River area.
2728 2. Actions of the platting board, planning and zoning commission,
29 and zoning board of examiners and appeals[, AND THE
30 URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] that require public notice to
31 more than one community council in the Chugiak-Eagle River
32 area.
3334 *** *** ***
3536 (AO No. 2013-71, § 1, 6-4-13; AO No. 2013-121, § 1, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-
37 61, § 6, 10-13-15; AO No. 2016-60, § 4, 10-4-16; AO No. 2019-71, § 4, 10-
38 8-19; AO No. 2022-43(S), § 2, 4-12-22)
3940 **Section 6.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 7.40.100 is hereby amended to
41 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
42 *out*):
4344 **7.40.100 Jury procedures.**
4546 *** *** ***
4748 H. Within five working days after rendering a decision, a jury shall provide
49 written notice of its selection to the planning and zoning commission,
50 [THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION,] the Anchorage Arts Advisory

Commission, the public art committee, the community council in which the art is proposed to be placed, and the administration. Neither a commission nor the administration may reject a jury selection except as provided in subsection G. of this section.

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(AR No. 79-109; AO No. 80-79; AR No. 81-270; AO No. 84-30; AR No. 87-309, 1-1-88; AO No. 91-41; AO No. 2011-64(S-1), § 11, 6-28-11; AO No. 2019-127, § 1, 10-22-19; AO No. 2025-37, § 21, 5-16-25)

Section 7. Anchorage Municipal Code section 7.40.170 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

7.40.170 Annual report.

The public art committee shall prepare an annual informational report listing all acquisitions and art projects, whether completed or in progress, and submit it to the assembly, the mayor, the Anchorage School Board, and the planning and zoning commission [THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION.]

(AR No. 79-109; AO No. 80-79; AO No. 84-30; AO No. 91-41; AO No. 2019-127, § 1, 10-22-19)

Section 8. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.02.020 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.02.020 Table of decision and review authority.

A. Table 21.02-1 summarizes the major review and decision-making responsibilities of the assembly, the municipal staff, and the other entities that have roles in the procedures set forth in Chapter 21.03, Review and Approval Procedures. Such other entities are referred to as the "land use boards and commissions" and include: the planning and zoning commission, the platting board; the zoning board of examiners and appeals; the board of adjustment, [THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION;] and the geotechnical advisory commission. Any application, not including an appeal, to be heard and decided by these land use boards and commissions that is for development in the Chugiak-Eagle River area, as defined in Section 21.10.020C., shall be sent to the Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board and the matter heard not sooner than 30 days after transmittal. Any application, not including an appeal, to be heard and decided by these land use boards and commissions that is for development in the Girdwood area, as defined by Section 21.09.020C., shall be sent to the Girdwood Board of Supervisors and the matter heard not sooner than 30 days after transmittal.

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TABLE 21.02-1: SUMMARY OF MAJOR TITLE 21 DECISION-MAKING AND REVIEW RESPONSIBILITIES

NOTE: This table summarizes the major review and decision-making responsibilities for the procedures contained in Chapter 21.03. Exceptions to general rules apply; see Chapter 21.03 for details on each procedure.

A = APPEAL = Authority to Hear and Decide Appeals

D = DECISION = Responsible for Review and Final Decision

H = HEARING = Public Hearing Required

R = REVIEW = Responsible for Review and/or Recommendation Only

Section	ASBLY	PZC	[UDC]	PB	ZBEA	BOA	MS
Alcohol—Special Land Use Permit	21.03.040	D-H/A ¹					R/D ¹
Certificates of Zoning Compliance	21.03.060				A		D
Comprehensive Plan Amendments	21.03.070C.	D-H ²	R-H ²				R
Conditional Uses	21.03.080		D-H			A	R
Flood Hazard Permits	21.03.090				A		D
Land Use Permits	21.03.100			A ³	A ³		D
Marijuana—Special Land Use Permit and associated variances	21.03.105	D-H					R
Master Plan, Institutional	21.03.110A.	D-H	R-H				R
Reinvestment Focus Areas	21.03.116	D-H	R-H				R
Minor Modifications	21.03.120		D ⁴	[D ⁴]		A ⁵	D ⁴
Neighborhood or District Plans	21.03.130	D-H	R-H				R
Public Facility Site Selection	21.03.140	D-H/ A-H ⁶	R-H/ D-H ⁶				R
Rezonings (Map Amendments)	21.03.160	D-H	R-H				R
Sign Permits	21.03.170				A		D
Site Plan Review, Administrative	21.03.180C.		A	[A]			D
Site Plan Review, Major	21.03.180D.		D-H ⁷	[D-H ⁷]		A	R
Small Area Implementation Plan	21.03.115		D-H ^{[15]14}	[D-H]			R
Street Review	21.03.190B.		R ⁸ /D	[R ⁸ /D]		A	R
Trail Review	21.03.190C.		R/D	[R/D]			R
Preliminary Plat	21.03.200C.5.		D-H ⁹	[D-H ⁹]	D-H ⁹	A	R
Abbreviated Plat	21.03.200D.				A-H		D
Commercial Tract Plat	21.03.200E.		D-H ¹⁰	[D-H ¹⁰]	D-H ¹⁰		R
Title 21, Text Amendments	21.03.210	D-H	R-H		R-H ¹¹		R

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Section	ASBLY	PZC	[UDC]	PB	ZBEA	BOA	MS
Vacation of Public and Private Interest in Land	21.03.230				D or A ¹²		A ¹²
Variances from the provisions of 21.05.040K., <i>Telecommunication Facilities</i> ; 21.06, <i>Dimensional Standards and Measurements</i> (except subsection 21.06.030D.9., <i>Airport Height Regulations</i>); 21.07.020B., Watercourse, Water Body, and Wetland Protection 21.07.050, <i>Utility Distribution Facilities</i> ; 21.09.060, <i>Dimensional Standards</i> ; 21.09.070J., <i>Utilities and Utility Equipment Standards</i> ; 21.10.060, <i>Dimensional Standards</i> ; 21.13, <i>Nonconformities</i> .	21.03.240		D-H ¹⁵		D-H ¹⁶	R	
Variances from the provisions of 21.11.060, <i>Dimensional Standards for Sites and</i>	21.03.240	D-H ^{15,17}			D-H		R
Variances from the provisions of 21.07.020C., <i>Steep Slope Development</i> ; 21.07.060, <i>Transportation and Connectivity</i> ; 21.08, <i>Subdivision Standards</i> ; 21.09.070C., <i>Hazard Areas</i> ; 21.09.070E	21.03.240		D-H ^{13, 15, 16}	[D-H ^{13, 16}]	D-H	A	R

TABLE 21.02-1: SUMMARY OF MAJOR TITLE 21 DECISION-MAKING AND REVIEW RESPONSIBILITIES

NOTE: This table summarizes the major review and decision-making responsibilities for the procedures contained in Chapter 21.03. Exceptions to general rules apply; see Chapter 21.03 for details on each procedure.

A = APPEAL = Authority to Hear and Decide Appeals

D = DECISION = Responsible for Review and Final Decision

H = HEARING = Public Hearing Required

R = REVIEW = Responsible for Review and/or Recommendation Only

Section	ASBLY	PZC	[UDC]	PB	ZBEA	BOA	MS
Variances from the district-specific standards of 21.04, <i>Zoning Districts</i> ; 21.09.040, <i>Zoning Districts</i> ; 21.10.040, <i>Zoning Districts</i> . the use-specific standards of 21.05, <i>Use Regulations</i> (except subsection 21.05.040K., <i>Telecommunication Facilities, and section 21.05.055 Marijuana Establishments</i>); 21.09.050, <i>Use Regulations</i> ; 21.10.050, <i>Use Regulations</i> . 21.11.050, <i>Use Regulations</i> 21.07, <i>Development and Design Standards</i> (except 21.07.020B., <i>Watercourse, Water Body, and Wetland Protection</i> , 21.07.020C., <i>Steep Slope Development</i> , 21.07.050, <i>Utility Distribution Facilities</i> , and 21.07.060, <i>Transportation and Connectivity</i>); Those subsections of section 21.09.070, <i>Site Development and Design Standards</i> , not reserved to the platting authority or the zoning board of examiners and appeals; 21.09.080, <i>Building Design Standards</i> ; 21.10.070, <i>Development and Design Standards</i> (except 21.10.070B., <i>Transportation and Connectivity</i>); 21.12, <i>Signs</i>	21.03.240		D-H ¹⁷	[D-H ¹⁵]		A	R
Variances from the provisions of 21.11.070 <i>Development and Design Standards</i>	21.03.240		<u>D-H^{15,17}</u>	[D-H ^{15, 17}]		A	R
Administrative Variances	21.03.240J.				A		D

TABLE 21.02-1: SUMMARY OF MAJOR TITLE 21 DECISION-MAKING AND REVIEW RESPONSIBILITIES

NOTE: This table summarizes the major review and decision-making responsibilities for the procedures contained in Chapter 21.03. Exceptions to general rules apply; see Chapter 21.03 for details on each procedure.

A = APPEAL = Authority to Hear and Decide Appeals

D = DECISION = Responsible for Review and Final Decision

H = HEARING = Public Hearing Required

R = REVIEW = Responsible for Review and/or Recommendation Only

Section	ASBLY	PZC	[UDC]	PB	ZBEA	BOA	MS
Verification of Nonconforming Status	21.03.250				A		D
NOTES:							
¹ See section 21.03.040, <i>Alcohol-Special Land Use Permit</i> , to determine whether the Assembly or the director is the decision-making body.							
² Only substantive comprehensive plan amendments require a public hearing. See section 21.03.070, <i>Comprehensive Plan Amendments</i> .							
³ The appeal body for subsection 21.03.100E., <i>Improvements Associated with Land Use Permits</i> , is the platting board. Appeals related to provisions in title 23 are made to the building board of examiners and appeals.							
⁴ An applicant may request application of the minor modification process only once during the review process.							
⁵ See section 21.03.120C.5. for appropriate appeal body.							
⁶ Site selection for municipal facilities is approved by the assembly. See section 21.03.140.							
⁷ See section 21.03.180D. for the division of major site plan review decision-making authority.							
⁸ See section 21.03.190, <i>Street and Trail Review</i> .							
⁹ The planning and zoning commission may act as the platting authority for conditional uses that create a subdivision. The planning and zoning commission [OR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] may act as the platting authority for major site plan reviews that create a subdivision. The planning and zoning commission may act as the platting authority when a preliminary plat is being considered concurrently with a rezone.							
¹⁰ The planning and zoning commission [OR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION (WHICHEVER IS THE DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY—SEE SECTION 21.03.180)] shall act as the platting authority for a commercial tract whose site plan includes a large retail establishment. The platting board shall be the platting authority for all other commercial tracts.							
¹¹ Code amendments relating to chapter 21.08, <i>Subdivision Standards</i> , require a hearing by the platting board. All code amendments require a hearing by the planning and zoning commission.							
¹² See section 21.03.230, <i>Vacation of Public and Private Interest in Lands</i> .							
¹³ When the planning and zoning commission [OR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] acts as the platting authority, they shall have variance authority over these sections as well.							
¹⁴ The planning and zoning commission is the decision-making authority for a small area implementation plan that is being considered concurrently with a zoning map amendment and/or when B-1A use types not permitted by the underlying zoning are included per 21.03.115.							
¹⁵ The planning and zoning commission shall have variance authority over these sections when such variances are requested [REQUIRED] as part of a small area implementation plan that is being considered concurrently with a zoning map amendment per 21.03.115.							
¹⁶ The planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN] shall have variance authority over these sections when such variances are requested as part of a small area implementation plan per 21.03.115.							
¹⁷ The planning and zoning commission shall only decide variances when accompanied by a conditional use or a major site plan review per 21.03.240, except those to be decided by the zoning board of examiners and appeals.							
KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS:							
ASBLY = Anchorage Assembly							
PZC = Planning and Zoning Commission							
PB = Platting Board							
ZBEA = Zoning Board of Examiners and Appeals							
BOA = Board of Adjustment							
[UDC = URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION]							
MS = Municipal Staff							

1

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-36, § 1, 5-14-15; AO No. 2016-3(S), § 1, 2-23-16; AO No. 2017-55, § 2, 4-11-17; AO No. 2018-67(S-1), § 1, 10-9-18; AO No. 2020-38, § 2, 5-28-20; AO No. 2021-46(S), § 3, 6-8-21; AO No. 2022-38, § 1, 4-12-22; AO 2022-43(S), § 3, 4-12-22; AO No. 2022-62(S), § 2, 10-11-22; AO No. 2023-120, § 1, 12-5-23)

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1 **Section 9.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.02.030 is hereby amended to
2 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
3 *out*):

4

5 **21.02.030 Planning and zoning commission.**

6 *** *** ***

7

8 B. Decision-making authority. The planning and zoning commission has
9 decision-making authority over the following:

10

11 1. Conditional uses (21.03.080);

12

13 2. Preliminary plats, when a conditional use creates a subdivision
14 or requires the vacation of a dedicated public area, and the
15 commission directs in the conditional use approval that it shall
16 act as the platting authority (21.03.080F.);

17

18 3. Public facility site selections, except for municipal facilities
19 (21.03.140);

20

21 4. Appeals from the director's decision regarding consistency with
22 an institutional master plan (21.03.110F.);

23

24 5. Major site plan reviews [FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL
25 DEVELOPMENT WITH A GROSS FLOOR AREA OF 100,000
26 SQUARE FEET OR MORE, AND FOR RESIDENTIAL
27 DEVELOPMENT OF 140 UNITS OR MORE] (21.03.180D.);

28

29 6. Preliminary plats, when a major site plan under the authority of
30 the planning and zoning commission creates a subdivision or
31 requires the vacation of a dedicated public area, and the
32 commission directs in the major site plan approval that it shall
33 act as the platting authority (21.03.180F.);

34

35 7. Draft design study report for new construction and
36 reconstruction of streets of collector class or greater in the
37 Official Streets and Highways Plan (21.03.190);

38

39 8. Plans in hand design drawings review for new construction and
40 reconstruction of streets of collector classification or greater on
41 the Official Streets and Highways Plan (21.03.190);

42

43 9.[8.] Commercial tract plats, where the site plan includes a large
44 commercial establishment under the authority of the planning
45 and zoning commission (21.03.200E.);

46

47 10.[9.] Small area implementation plans [WHEN A ZONING MAP
48 AMENDMENT IS SUBMITTED CONCURRENTLY AND/OR
49 WHEN B-1A USE TYPES NOT PERMITTED BY

UNDERLYING ZONING ARE INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSED SMALL AREA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN].

11.[10.]Preliminary plats, when accompanied by a rezone, unless the applicant chooses another platting authority allowed by 21.02.020; and

12.[11.]Variances, when accompanied by a conditional use or a major site plan review, except variances authorized to be decided by the zoning board of examiners and appeals.

13. Appeals of administrative site plan reviews (21.03.180C).

14. Appeals of the director's decision regarding subsection 21.13.060B, bringing characteristics into compliance (21.03.050).

15. Variances from:

a. The district-specific standards of Chapter 21.04, Zoning Districts, Section 21.09.040, Zoning Districts, and Section 21.10.040, Zoning Districts;

b. The use-specific standards of Chapter 21.05, Use Regulations (except subsection 21.05.040K., telecommunication facilities, and Section 21.05.055, Marijuana Establishments), Section 21.09.050, Use Regulations, and Section 21.10.050, Use Regulations;

c. Chapter 21.07, Development and Design Standards (except subsections 21.07.020B., watercourse, water body, and wetland protection, 21.07.020C., steep slope development, Sections 21.07.050, Utility Distribution Facilities, and 21.07.060, Transportation and Connectivity);

d. Those provisions of Section 21.09.070, Site Development and Design Standards, for which variance authority is not given to the platting authority or the zoning board of examiners and appeals:

e. Section 21.09.080, Building Design Standards;

f. Section 21.10.070, Development and Design Standards (except subsection 21.10.070B., Transportation and Connectivity):

g. Section 21.11.070, Development and Design Standards; and

h. Chapter 21.12, Signs.

C. Other powers and duties. The planning and zoning commission shall:

1. Develop, review, and make recommendations to the assembly regarding policies, plans, and ordinances to implement the municipal function of planning for the economic, social, and land use needs of the community.
2. Review and make recommendations to the assembly and school board regarding the annual capital improvement program of the municipality and school district.
3. Review and make recommendations to the mayor regarding the annual work program of the department.

[4]. Designate historic signs pursuant to subsection 21.13.070F.

- 5[4]. Promulgate regulations to implement or make specific the provisions of this title, except provisions of Chapter 21.08, Subdivision Standards, which are reserved to the platting board.
- 6[5]. Exercise such other powers, and perform such other duties, as are provided by law.

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2020-35, § 1, 4-14-20; AO No. 2020-38, § 2, 5-28-20; AO No. 2022-38, § 1, 4-12-22; AO No. 2023-120(S), § 2, 12-5-23)

Section 10. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.02.040 is hereby repealed as follows:

21.02.040 (Repealed) [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION.]

[A.] *DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY. THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION HAS DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY OVER THE FOLLOWING:*

1. APPEALS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SITE PLAN REVIEWS (21.03.180C.);
2. MAJOR SITE PLAN REVIEWS FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WITH A GROSS FLOOR AREA OF LESS THAN 100,000 SQUARE FEET, AND FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF FEWER THAN 140 UNITS (21.03.180D.);

- 1 3. PRELIMINARY PLATS, WHEN A MAJOR SITE PLAN
2 REVIEW UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE URBAN DESIGN
3 COMMISSION CREATES A SUBDIVISION OR REQUIRES
4 THE VACATION OF A DEDICATED PUBLIC AREA, AND THE
5 COMMISSION DIRECTS IN THE MAJOR SITE PLAN
6 APPROVAL THAT IT SHALL ACT AS THE PLATTING
7 AUTHORITY (21.03.180F.);
8
9 4. PLANS IN HAND DESIGN DRAWINGS REVIEW FOR NEW
10 CONSTRUCTION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF STREETS
11 OF COLLECTOR CLASSIFICATION OR GREATER ON THE
12 OFFICIAL STREETS AND HIGHWAYS PLAN (21.03.190);
13
14 5. COMMERCIAL TRACT PLATS, WHERE THE SITE PLAN
15 INCLUDES A LARGE COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENT
16 UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE URBAN DESIGN
17 COMMISSION (21.03.200E.);
18
19 6. VARIANCES FROM:
 - 20 A. THE DISTRICT-SPECIFIC STANDARDS OF
21 CHAPTER 21.04, ZONING DISTRICTS, SECTION
22 21.09.040, ZONING DISTRICTS, AND SECTION
23 21.10.040, ZONING DISTRICTS;
 - 24 B. THE USE-SPECIFIC STANDARDS OF CHAPTER
25 21.05, USE REGULATIONS (EXCEPT SUBSECTION
26 21.05.040K., TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES,
27 AND SECTION 21.05.055, MARIJUANA
28 ESTABLISHMENTS), SECTION 21.09.050, USE
29 REGULATIONS, AND SECTION 21.10.050, USE
30 REGULATIONS;
 - 31 C. CHAPTER 21.07, DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN
32 STANDARDS (EXCEPT SUBSECTIONS 21.07.020B.,
33 WATERCOURSE, WATER BODY, AND WETLAND
34 PROTECTION, 21.07.020C., STEEP SLOPE
35 DEVELOPMENT, SECTIONS 21.07.050, UTILITY
36 DISTRIBUTION FACILITIES, AND 21.07.060,
37 TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY);
38
39 D. THOSE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 21.09.070, SITE
40 DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN STANDARDS, FOR
41 WHICH VARIANCE AUTHORITY IS NOT GIVEN TO
42 THE PLATTING AUTHORITY OR THE ZONING
43 BOARD OF EXAMINERS AND APPEALS;
44
45 E. SECTION 21.09.080, BUILDING DESIGN
46 STANDARDS;

- F. SECTION 21.10.070, DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN STANDARDS (EXCEPT SUBSECTION 21.10.070B., TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY);
- G. SECTION 21.11.070, DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN STANDARDS; AND
- H. CHAPTER 21.12, SIGNS.

7. APPEALS OF THE DIRECTOR'S DECISION REGARDING SUBSECTION 21.13.060B., BRINGING CHARACTERISTICS INTO COMPLIANCE (21.03.050).

8. SMALL AREA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (21.03.115).

OTHER POWERS AND DUTIES. THE URBAN DESIGN MISSION SHALL:

- 1. ADVISE THE MAYOR, ASSEMBLY, AND PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION REGARDING URBAN DESIGN, NORTHERN CLIMATE DESIGN, AND WINTER CITY DESIGN MATTERS, INCLUDING DESIGN-RELATED AMENDMENTS TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND TITLE 21.
- 2. REVIEW AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING ANY ENTITLEMENT REQUESTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH AUTHORITY DELEGATED BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION OR PLATTING BOARD UNDER THIS TITLE.
- 3. PERFORM THOSE DUTIES STATED IN TITLE 7, RELATING TO THE ART FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES.
- 4. DESIGNATE HISTORIC SIGNS PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION 21.13.070F.
- 5. EXERCISE SUCH OTHER POWERS, AND PERFORM SUCH OTHER DUTIES, AS ARE PROVIDED BY LAW.

C. REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP AND QUORUMS

1. A MAJORITY OF THE FULL MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION SHALL CONSTITUTE A QUORUM FOR THE TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS.
2. ACTION BY THE COMMISSION SHALL REQUIRE THE FAVORABLE VOTE OF A MAJORITY OF THE FULL MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION.

1 3. FULL MEMBERSHIP MEANS NINE COMMISSIONERS,
2 LESS THE NUMBER OF COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED FOR
3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.]
4

5 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-36, § 2, 5-
6 14-15; AO No. 2017-55, § 3, 4-11-17; AO No. 2018-67(S-1), § 2, 10-9-18;
7 AO No. 2020-35, § 2, 4-14-20; AO No. 2020-38, § 2, 5-28-20; AO No. 2021-
8 46(S), § 4, 6-8-21)
9

10 **Section 11.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.02.090 is hereby amended to
11 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
12 *out*):
13

14 **21.02.090 Assembly.**
15

16 A. Decision-making authority. The assembly has the following decision-
17 making authority under this title:
18

19 *** *** ***
20

21 11. Any other action not delegated to the planning and zoning
22 commission, platting board, zoning board of examiners and
23 appeals, board of adjustment, [URBAN DESIGN
24 COMMISSION,] or municipal staff, as the assembly may deem
25 desirable and necessary to implement the provisions of this title.
26

27 *** *** ***
28

29 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO No. 2016-3(S), § 2, 2-23-16; AO No. 2017-
30 55, § 4, 4-11-17; AO No. 2022-62(S), § 3, 10-11-22)
31

32 **Section 12.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.03.115 is hereby amended to
33 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
34 *out*):
35

36 **21.03.115 Small area implementation plan.**
37

38 *** *** ***
39

40 C. *Submittal requirements.* Submittal requirements are listed below and
41 shall be in narrative and illustrative form. It is understood that changes
42 can occur to these original submittal details during the planning and
43 review approval process. The director may waive submittal
44 requirements not relevant to the proposed development or planning
45 area. The [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION, THE] planning and
46 zoning commission [WHEN APPLICABLE,] and/or the director may
47 require the submission of other information as necessary for the
48 informed exercise of judgment under the criteria for the review of the
49 plan, as set out in subsection F. below.
50

1 *** *** ***
2
3 D. *Procedures for small area implementation plan approval.*4 *** *** ***
5
6 6. *Departmental review.* The director shall review the proposed
7 small area implementation plan in light of the approval criteria
8 of subsection F. below and shall distribute the application to
9 other reviewers as necessary. Based on the results of the
10 reviews, the director shall provide a report and
11 recommendation for changes or additions to [THE URBAN
12 DESIGN COMMISSION, OR IF APPLICABLE,] the planning
13 and zoning commission.14
15 7. *Public notice.* Notice shall be provided in accordance with
16 section 21.03.020H.17
18 8. *Review and action by planning and zoning [URBAN DESIGN]
19 commission.* Except as provided in subsections D.9. and D.10.
20 below, the planning and zoning [URBAN DESIGN] commission
21 shall hold a public hearing on the proposed small area
22 implementation plan and, at the close of the hearing, taking into
23 account the recommendations of the director and any public
24 comment, and based on the approval criteria of subsection F.
25 below, shall, within 90 days, approve the small area
26 implementation plan as submitted, approve the plan subject to
27 conditions or modifications, remand the plan to the applicant for
28 modifications, or deny the plan.29
30 *** *** ***
31
32 H. *Modification of approved small area implementation plan.* The director
33 shall determine whether a proposed modification to an approved small
34 area implementation plan may be approved administratively or is
35 significant enough to require a new small area implementation plan.
36 Any modifications recommended by the director shall be transmitted
37 to [THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION, OR IF APPLICABLE,] the
38 planning and zoning commission.39
40 I. *Termination of small area implementation plan.* A small area
41 implementation plan approval shall expire if:42
43 1. Implementation of the small area implementation plan schedule
44 is delayed for more than seven years without a request for a
45 modification as outlined in subsection 21.03.115H.; or
46
47 2. All property owner(s) or their designee(s) of the subject
48 property or area provide written notice to the director of the
49 extinguishment of the small area implementation plan. The

director shall notify [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION, OR IF APPLICABLE,] the planning and zoning commission.

(AO No. 2021-46(S), § 1, 6-8-21; AO No. 2024-24, § 1, 4-23-24; AO No. 2025-40(S), § 3, 4-22-25)

Section 13. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.03.120 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.03.120 Minor modifications.

A. *Purpose and scope.* This section sets out the required review and approval procedures for "minor modifications," which are minor deviations from otherwise applicable standards that may be approved by the director or [.] the planning and zoning commission[, OR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION]. Minor modifications are to be used when the small size of the modification requested, and the unlikelihood of any adverse effects on nearby properties or the neighborhood, make it unnecessary to complete a formal variance process.

B. *Applicability.*

1. *Minor modifications to general development and zoning district standards.* As part of the review and approval of any procedure set forth in this chapter, the director or [,] the planning and zoning commission[, OR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] may approve minor modifications of up to a maximum of five percent from the following general development and zoning district standards provided that the approval criteria of subsection D. below are met.

*** *** ***

*** *** ***

3. *Minor modifications approved by planning and zoning commission[, OR URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION].* The planning and zoning commission[, OR URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] may approve a minor modification allowed under this section at any time before taking action on a development application.

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2020-38, § 3, 5-28-20; AO No. 2022-36, § 1, 4-26-22; AO No. 2025-40(S), § 4, 4-22-25)

1
2 **Section 14.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.03.180 is hereby amended to
3 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
4 *out*):

5 **21.03.180 Site plan review.**

6 *** *** ***

7
8 C. *Administrative site plan review.*

9
10 *** *** ***

11
12 2. *Procedure.*

13
14 *** *** ***

15
16 d. *Appeals.* Decisions on administrative site plans may be
17 appealed to the planning and zoning commission
18 [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION], in which case it shall
19 be treated as a major site plan review application under
20 subsection D. below.

21
22 *** *** ***

23
24 D. *Major site plan review.*

25
26 *** *** ***

27
28 2. *Decision-making authority.* [FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL
29 DEVELOPMENT WITH A GROSS FLOOR AREA OF 100,000
30 SQUARE FEET OR GREATER, AND FOR RESIDENTIAL
31 DEVELOPMENT OF 140 UNITS OR MORE, THE DECISION-
32 MAKING BODY SHALL BE THE PLANNING AND ZONING
33 COMMISSION.] For all [OTHER] major site plan reviews, the
34 decision-making body shall be the planning and zoning
35 commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION].

36
37 *** *** ***

38
39 E. *Expiration.*

40
41 *** *** ***

42
43 2. *Extension.*

44
45 a. *First extension.* Upon written application submitted by
46 the applicant at least 30 days prior to the expiration of
47 the permit period and upon a showing of good cause,
48 the director may grant one extension not to exceed 12

months. The approval shall be deemed extended until the director has acted upon the request for extension. Failure to submit an application for an extension within the time limits established by this section shall render the site plan approval void.

b. *Further extensions.* Upon written application submitted at least 30 days prior to the expiration of the previous extensions and upon a showing of good cause, the planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION], without a public hearing, may grant additional extensions, each one not to exceed 12 months. The approval shall be deemed extended until the commission has acted upon the request for extension.

*** *** ***

I. *Amendments to approved site plans.*

*** *** ***

2. *Administrative approval of minor amendments.* The director may approve administratively minor amendments to any approved site plan upon written application and documentation by the applicant, and upon the director's determination that the amendment is a minor amendment.

a. *Procedure.*

- i. Upon receiving a written request from the applicant for a site plan amendment, the director shall determine if the proposed amendment will be processed as a minor amendment or major amendment. The applicant may appeal the director's decision, in writing to the zoning board of examiners and appeals within 10 days of the decision.

- ii. Immediately following the director's determination that a proposed amendment is minor, the director shall:

(A) Issue a minor amendment affidavit, which shall be transmitted to the planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] for their information; and

(B) Attach a form stating the nature of the modification, date of approval, and bearing

the signature of the director to the site plan on file in the department.

iii. If the original approval had been recorded, the amended plan shall be recorded by the municipality at the applicant's expense.

*** *** ***

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-142(S-1), § 2, 6-21-16; AO No. 2020-38, § 3, 5-28-20; AO No. 2021-89(S), § 21, 2-15-22; AO No. 2022-36, § 1, 4-26-22)

Section 15. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.03.190 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.03.190 Street and trail review.

A. **Purpose.** Streets are a significant investment in the municipality's infrastructure and establish long-term land use impacts on nearby properties and the community at large. Streets and trails are not only utilitarian, but also add lasting value to the community and convey the image of the municipality to all users. These important parts of the municipality's fabric benefit by oversight and concurrence in the design decisions by [CITIZEN BODIES THAT ARE REPRESENTED BY] the planning and zoning commission [AND THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION]. All transportation projects are required to identify functional and design issues early in the process and include public input at various stages of the project. In addition, projects meeting certain thresholds are required to include the planning and zoning commission [AND URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] in the review and approval process.

B. Street review.

1. *Applicability and overview.* All MOA transportation projects are required to follow A Strategy for Developing Context Sensitive Transportation Projects. New construction and reconstruction of street and intersection projects involving streets of collector classification or greater in the Official Streets and Highways Plan are required to follow a review process by the planning and zoning commission, as indicated below and in Table 21.03-4. The stages are:

- a. The concept report or equivalent, distributed to the planning and zoning commission as an information item;
- b. The draft design study report, reviewed by the planning and zoning commission; and

1
2
3
4
5

c. The plans in hand design drawings, reviewed by the planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION].

TABLE 21.03-4: STREET AND INTERSECTION PROJECT REVIEW		
REVIEW	REVIEW BODY	PRIMARY DECISION
Concept Report	Project Management Team	Issue identification, "go, no-go" decision
Draft Design Study Report	Planning and Zoning Commission	Alternatives development, evaluation and screening criteria, alternative decision
Plans in Hand Design Drawings	<u>Planning and Zoning Commission</u> [Urban Design Commission]	Approval of plans at 65 percent stage, including landscaping "theme"

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2. *Procedure for design study report and plans in hand review.*

*** *** ***

e. *Department review.* The department shall review each proposed application and distribute the application to other reviewers as deemed necessary. Reviewers shall address those aspects of the design that are germane to the commissions' deliberations; detailed lists of technical comments shall be separately coordinated with the design team leader. Based on the results of those reviews, the department shall provide a report to the planning and zoning commission [OR URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION, AS APPLICABLE].

*** *** ***

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5. *Plans in hand design drawings review.*

a. The planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] shall review and approve all landscaping and streetscape and pedestrian facilities for streets of collector classification or greater in the Official Streets and Highways Plan.

b. The planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] shall approve, approve with conditions, or reject the landscaping, streetscape, and pedestrian design plans at a stage no greater than 65 percent designed, for all applicable street projects. A public

hearing is not required but may be held at the commission's discretion.

*** *** ***

C. *Trail review.*

1. *Purpose.* Trails are a basic part of the infrastructure of the municipality. They are used for transportation, for recreation and leisure, and also provide aesthetic and psychological benefits. Significant additions or revisions to the municipality's trail network benefit by oversight and concurrence in design decisions by the planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION].

*** *** ***

3. *Review and action.*

- a. *Pre-application conference.* The project management team shall request a pre-application conference with the direction, in accordance with subsection 21.03.020 B.
- b. *Application submittal.* Applications for trail review shall contain the information specified on the application form for a Context Sensitive Solutions Transportation Project Site Plan Review.
- c. *Public notice.* Notice shall be provided in accordance with subsection 21.03.020 H.
- d. *Department review.* The department shall review each proposed application and distribute the application to other reviewers as deemed necessary. Based on the results of those reviews, the department shall provide a report to the planning and zoning commission.
- e. *Planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] action.* The planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] shall hold a public hearing on the proposed application and act to approve, approve with conditions, or reject the application.

*** *** ***

Section 16. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.03.200 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

1 **21.03.200 Subdivisions.**

2 *** *** ***

3

4 **E. Commercial tract plats.**

5

6 1. *Applicability.* A commercial tract may be created and divided
7 into fragment lots in order to facilitate construction of
8 commercial developments requiring multiple phases of
9 construction. Designation of commercial tracts shall be allowed
10 only in the B-3, RO, DT, I-1, I-2, PCD, MC, MI, GC-1 through
11 GC-10, GI-1, GI-2, GRST-1, and GRST-2 zoning districts.

12

13 2. *Platting authority.* The planning and zoning commission [OR
14 THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] shall be the platting
15 authority for a commercial tract whose site plan includes a large
16 commercial establishment[(SEE SUBSECTION 21.03.180C.
17 FOR APPLICABLE COMMISSION). THE PLANNING AND
18 ZONING COMMISSION SHALL BE THE PLATTING
19 AUTHORITY FOR A COMMERCIAL TRACT WHOSE SITE
20 PLAN INCLUDES A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT.] The
21 platting board shall be the platting authority for all other
22 commercial tracts.

23

24 *** *** ***

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26

27 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2017-75, § 2, 5-
28 9-17; AO No. 2020-38, § 3, 5-28-20; AO No. 2021-89(S), § 21, 2-15-22; AO
29 No. 2024-74, § 1, 8-13-24)

30

31 **Section 17.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.03.240 is hereby amended to
32 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
33 *out*):

34

35 **21.03.240 Variances.**

36 *** *** ***

37

38 **B. Decision-making bodies for variance requests.**

39

40



1 *** *** ***

3

4 3. The [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION,] planning and zoning
5 commission [WHEN THE VARIANCE IS ACCOMPANIED BY
6 A CONDITIONAL USE OR MAJOR SITE PLAN REVIEW,] shall be authorized to review and decide all requests for
7 variances to standards of the following sections:

8

9

10 a. District-specific standards of Chapter 21.04, Zoning
11 Districts, Section 21.09.040, Zoning Districts
12 (Girdwood), and Section 21.10.040, Zoning Districts
13 (Chugiak-Eagle River);

14

15 b. Use-specific standards of Chapter 21.05, Use
16 Regulations (except subsection 21.05.040K.,
17 telecommunication facilities, and Section 21.05.055,
18 Marijuana Establishments), Section 21.09.050, Use
19 Regulations, and Section 21.10.050, Use Regulations;

20

21 c. Chapter 21.07, Development and Design Standards
22 (except subsections 21.07.020B., watercourse, water
23 body, and wetland protection, 21.07.020C., steep slope
24 development, 21.07.050, utility distribution facilities, and
25 21.07.060, Transportation and Connectivity);

26

27 d. Those subsections of Section 21.09.070 that are not
28 reserved to the platting authority or the zoning board of
29 examiners and appeals;

30

31 e. Section 21.09.080, Building Design Standards;

32

33 f. Section 21.10.070, Development and Design Standards
34 (Chugiak-Eagle River) (except subsection 21.10.070B.,
35 Transportation and Connectivity);

36

37 g. Section 21.11.070, Development and Design Standards
38 (Downtown); and

39

40 h. Chapter 21.12, Signs, including the maximum sign area,
41 the maximum sign height, the location of the sign, and
42 the number of signs on the parcel.

43 *** *** ***

44

45

46 G. *Approval criteria.* The application must state with particularity the relief
47 sought and must specify the facts or circumstances that are alleged to
48 show that the application substantially meets the following standards:

49

50 1. Approval criteria for variances decided by [URBAN DESIGN

COMMISSION] the planning and zoning commission.

*** *** ***

h. In evaluating the request for a variance to the maximum sign height, the planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] may consider whether there are special topographic circumstances that would result in a material impairment of visibility of the sign from the adjacent roadway which significantly diminishes the owner's or user's ability to continue to communicate adequately and effectively with the public through the use of the sign.

*** *** ***

I. *Appeals.*

1. An appeal from a decision of the platting authority [OR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] shall be brought to the board of adjustment in accordance with subsection 21.03.050A.
2. An appeal from a decision of the zoning board of examiners and appeals shall be brought in accordance with subsection 21.03.050D.

J. *Administrative variances.*

1. *Process*

*** *** ***

d. *Appeals.* If the request for an administrative variance is denied, the applicant may apply for a public hearing variance before the planning and zoning commission[URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION] under this Section 21.03.240. Additionally, denial of requests for reasonable accommodation may be appealed by any person with standing to request reasonable accommodation under the Fair Housing Act, 42 U.S.C. § 3604(f).

*** *** ***

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-36, § 10, 5-14-15; AO No. 2015-133(S), § 2, 2-23-16; AO No. 2017-55, § 7, 4-11-17; AO No. 2018-67(S-1), § 4, 10-9-18; AO No. 2018-118, § 2, 1-1-19; AO No. 2020-38, § 3, 5-28-20; AO No. 2021-89(S), § 21, 2-15-22; AO No. 2022-36, § 1, 4-26-22; AO No. 2022-38, § 3, 4-12-22; AO No. 2023-50, § 1, 7-11-23, eff. 1-1-24; AO No. 2023-120, § 4, 12-5-23; AO No. 2024-24, § 1, 4-23-24;

AO No. 2025-64, § 1, 6-10-25)

Section 18. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.07.020 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.07.020 Natural resource protection.

*** *** ***

D. *Wildlife management corridors.*

*** *** ***

4. *Discretionary approvals.*

a. For discretionary approvals before the planning and zoning commission, [THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION,] the platting board, or the zoning board of examiners and appeals that include the area identified in subsection D.2. above, the following shall be considered during deliberations:

*** *** ***

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2016-34(S), § 1, 4-12-16; AO No. 2018-67(S-1), § 5, 10-9-18; AO No. 2023-77, § 11, 7-25-23)

Section 19. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.07.110 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.07.110 Residential design standards.

*** *** ***

B. *Alternatives and flexibility.*

1. *Alternative equivalent compliance.* The alternative equivalent compliance procedure set forth in subsection 21.07.010D. may be used to propose alternative means of complying with the intent of this section. Structures over eight units may apply directly to the planning and zoning [URBAN DESIGN] commission for alternative compliance with plans at least 15 percent complete, that include exterior elevations and dimensions, floor plans, landscaping, and parking plans.

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-36, §§ 8, 9, 5-14-15; AO No. 2015-100, § 8(Exh. C), 10-13-15; AO No. 2016-34(S), § 2,

1 4-12-16; AO No. 2016-136am, § 5, 1-1-17; AO No. 2017-160, § 5, 12-19-17;
2 AO No. 2017-176, § 9, 1-9-18; AO No. 2018-59, § 2, 7-31-18; AO No. 2019-
3 132, § 3, 12-3-19; AO No. 2020-38, § 8, 5-28-20; AO No. 2021-89(S), §§ 14,
4 21, 2-15-22; AO No. 2022-80(S), § 2, 11-22-22; AO No. 2023-30, § 1, 3-22-
5 23; AO No. 2023-77, § 14, 7-25-23; AO No. 2023-42, § 5, 8-22-23; AO No.
6 2023-50, § 3, 7-11-23, eff. 1-1-24; AO No. 2023-103(S), § 6, 1-1-24; AO No.
7 2024-24, § 5, 4-23-24; AO No. 2024-83(S), § 1, 10-8-24; AO No. 2024-102,
8 § 4, 1-7-25; AO No. 2024-104(S), § 1, 2-11-25; AO No. 2025-48, § 3, 4-22-
9 25; AO No. 2025-64, § 9, 6-10-25)

10
11 **Section 20.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.10.030 is hereby amended to
12 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
13 *out*):

14
15 **21.10.030 Administration and review procedures.**

16 *** *** ***

17
18 B. *Chugiak-Eagle River Advisory Board.*

19
20 3. The advisory board shall provide review and make
21 recommendations to the municipality and its boards and
22 commissions on matters including the following:

23
24 a. Changes to the Chugiak-Eagle River Comprehensive
25 Plan and changes to the other comprehensive plans and
26 studies which impact the Chugiak-Eagle River area.

27
28 b. Actions involving the platting board, planning and zoning
29 commission, and zoning board of examiners and
30 appeals[AND THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION]
31 that require public notice to multiple community councils
32 in the Chugiak-Eagle River area.

33
34 *** *** ***

35
36 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO No. 2022-43(S), § 4, 4-12-22)

37
38 **Section 21.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.12.040 is hereby amended to
39 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
40 *out*):

41
42 **21.12.040 Computations and rules of measurement.**

43
44 The following regulations shall control the computation and
45 measurement of sign area, sign height, building frontage, and public street
46 frontage:

47
48 A. *Determining sign area or dimensions of signs.*

1 *** *** ***
2
3
4

5. In determining the area of freestanding and projecting signs,
6 the following shall be exempted from being considered as part
7 of the maximum permitted area:
8
9 a. One-half square foot of sign area shall be exempted for
10 each digit of the street number, up to a maximum of
11 three square feet.
12
13 b. The portion of a solid sign base up to a maximum height
14 of four feet that is at least 50 percent screened by
15 landscaping.
16
17 c. The air space under a freestanding sign between
18 supporting posts and air space between a projecting
19 sign and the wall to which it is attached.

20 All other exemptions to the area of a sign may only be approved
21 by the planning and zoning [URBAN DESIGN] commission.

22 *** *** ***
23
24
25

26 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO No. 2015-138, §§ 1, 2, 1-12-16; AO No. 2020-
27 38, § 11, 5-28-20)

28 **Section 22.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.13.060 is hereby amended to
29 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
30 *out*):

31 **21.13.060 Characteristics of use.**
32
33 *** *** ***
34
35

36 C. *Bringing characteristics into compliance.*
37
38 *** *** ***
39
40 2. *Standard.*
41
42 *** *** ***
43
44

- 45 e. The applicant may appeal the director's decision to the
46 planning and zoning commission [URBAN DESIGN]
47 commission, which shall hold a non-public hearing on
48 the appeal.

49 *** *** ***
50

1 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-82, § 6, 7-
2 28-15; AO No. 2017-55, § 13, 4-11-17; AO No. 2018-67(S-1), § 8, 10-9-18;
3 AO No. 2019-11, § 6, 2-12-19; AO No. 2020-38, §§ 11, 13, 5-28-20; AO No.
4 2024-15, § 1, 2-27-24; AO No. 2024-24, § 9, 4-23-24)

5
6 **Section 23.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.13.070 is hereby amended to
7 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
8 *out*):

9
10 **21.13.070 Nonconforming signs.**

11 *** *** ***

12
13 F. *Historic signs.* The planning and zoning [URBAN DESIGN]
14 commission may grant exceptions to these standards whenever a sign
15 or property has been designated an historic sign pursuant to the
16 guidelines and criteria established and adopted by the planning and
17 zoning [URBAN DESIGN] commission.

18
19 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2020-38, § 11, 5-
20 28-20)

21
22 **Section 24.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.15.030 is hereby amended to
23 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*
24 *out*):

25
26 **21.15.030 Common acronyms and abbreviations.**

AAC	Alaska administrative code
AC	Asphalt concrete
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADT	Average daily trips
ADU	Accessory dwelling unit
AIM	Assembly informational memorandum
AMC	Anchorage municipal code
AMCR	Anchorage municipal code of regulations
AO	Assembly ordinance
AR	Assembly resolution
AS	Alaska statute
ATV	All terrain vehicle
BLM	Bureau of land management
BOA	Board of adjustment
CATV	Community access television (cable TV)
CCRC	Community correctional residential center
CFR	Code of federal regulations
CMU	Concrete masonry unit
CRI	Color rendering index
dBA	Decibel adjusted

DBH	Diameter at breast height
DT	Downtown zoning districts including the B-2A, B-2B, and B-2C districts
du	Dwelling unit
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAR (in 21.04.080C.)	Federal aviation regulations
FAR	Floor area ratio
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Administration
GAAB	Greater Anchorage area borough
gfa	Gross floor area
HLB	Heritage Land Bank
HUD	US department of housing and urban development
HVAC	Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
LED	Light emitting diode
MHC	Manufactured home community
MS4	Municipal separate storm sewer system
NESC	National Electrical Safety Code
NFPA	National Fire Protection Act
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
OS&HP	Official Streets and Highways Plan
OV	Overlay district
PB	Platting board
PCC	Portland cement concrete
PUD	Planned unit development
PZC	Planning and zoning commission
RAP	Recycled asphaltic pavement
RFP	Request for proposals
ROW	Right-of-way
RV	Recreational vehicle
sf	Square feet
SL	Special limitation
TDU	Thermal desorption unit
TIA	Traffic impact analysis
[UDC	URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION]
USC	United States code
WECS	Wind energy conversion system
ZBEA	Zoning board of examiners and appeals

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2020-38, §§ 11, 14, 5-28-20)

Section 25. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.15.040 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.15.040 Definitions.

*** *** ***

Sign, historic

Any sign that has been designated as historic by the planning and zoning [URBAN DESIGN] commission.

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-82, § 7, 7-28-15; AO No. 2015-100, § 9, 10-13-15; AO No. 2015-133(S), § 6, 2-23-16; AO No. 2015-138, § 5, 1-12-16; AO No. 2015-142(S-1), § 10, 6-21-16; AO No. 2016-3(S), § 18, 2-23-16; AO No. 2016-144(S), § 2, 1-1-17; AO No. 2017-55, § 14, 4-11-17; AO No. 2018-12, § 2, 2-27-18; AO No. 2018-67(S-1), § 9, 10-9-18; AO No. 2018-92, § 1, 10-23-18; AO No. 2017-75, § 4, 5-9-17; AO No. 2019-132, § 4, 12-3-19; AO No. 2020-38, §§ 11, 14, 5-28-20; AO No. 2021-89(S), §§ 8, 21, 2-15-22; AO No. 2022-36, § 5, 4-26-22; AO No. 2022-80(S), § 4, 11-22-22; AO No. 2023-50, § 4, 7-11-23, eff. 1-1-24; AO No. 2023-120, § 10, 12-5-23; AO No. 2025-38(S), § 2, 4-22-25)

Section 26. Anchorage Municipal Code section 24.15.030 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

24.15.030 Landscaping standards.

B. Existing streets and highways. Not later than January 31 of each year, the planning and zoning [URBAN DESIGN] commission shall submit to the mayor a list of existing streets and highways proposed for landscaping in accordance with the official street and highway landscape plan. The recommendations of the commission shall be presented to the planning and zoning commission and the assembly for review and approval as part of the capital improvement plan and capital improvement budget for the succeeding fiscal year.

Section 27. Anchorage Municipal Code of Regulations chapter 21.13 is hereby repealed in its entirety (*current chapter 21.13 is attached*):

Regulation 21.13 [URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION RULES OF PROCEDURE] (Repealed).

Section 29. This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and approval by the Assembly.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this _____ day of
_____, 2026.

1
2
3
4 ATTEST:
5
6
7
8

Chair of the Assembly

Municipal Clerk