

Chapter 4

4.4 Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goal 1. Provide balanced land use patterns that support the community’s future growth.

Objective	Actions
1.1 Ensure that future land use designations reflect demographic and market trends.	1.1.1 Update and maintain a Future Land Use Map that provides appropriate designations that allow rezonings necessary to accommodate anticipated growth that are compatible with surrounding areas.
1.2 Revise development review process to require early coordination with developers to ensure quality projects and minimize negative impacts to the community.	1.2.1 Work toward assuming platting powers from the Borough in order to balance developer and community goals while minimizing impacts on private property rights. 1.2.2 Continue to provide comments and recommendations on platting request processed by the Borough to ensure consistency with this Plan.

Goal 2. Encourage development opportunities that support the City’s role as a regional commercial center.

Objective	Actions
2.1 Encourage expansion of the City’s commercial major areas to accommodate regional demands.	2.1.1 Review and amend the Future Land Use Map and Title 16 to allow for map amendments and rezonings necessary to allow for appropriate commercial development.
2.2 Ensure adequate land area preserved for industrial and manufacturing-type uses.	2.2.1 Review and amend the Future Land Use Map as necessary to allow for appropriate industrial and manufacturing development.

Goal 3. Encourage a variety of residential housing opportunities.

Objective	Actions
3.1 Retain pockets of land zoned Rural Residential to allow historical homesteading, less intensive land uses, and protection of natural water systems (lakes, wetlands, etc.)	3.1.1 Work at the neighborhood plan level, under code 16.08.050 to help the City’s more rural neighborhoods to develop strategies to help retain their rural qualities.
3.2 Adopt policies that allow increased residential densities in appropriate areas necessary to accommodate future growth.	3.2.1 Provide opportunities for subdivision development that utilizes alternative designs to maximize use of property while preserving natural land features. 3.2.2 Amend Title 16 to allow cluster subdivision development with required common open space, stream, and trail corridors.

Goal 4. Promote positive neighborhood identities and build a strong civic base to enhance resident’s quality of life.

Objective	Actions
<p>4.1 Encourage a minimum housing safety standard to minimize decreased property values, neighborhood blight, and health and safety problems.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Consider adopting the International Building Code for residential and other development not currently covered by State law in order to increase the stock of sound and safe housing built consistent with widely accepted building standards. Explore approaches for ensuring compliance that are the most cost-effective and time efficient, both for the developer and the City.</p>
<p>4.2 Encourage residents to take an active role in improving the community, especially at the neighborhood level.</p>	<p>4.2.1 Continue to encourage neighborhoods to create neighborhood plans and provide appropriate staff assistance.</p> <p>4.2.2 Support annual neighborhood clean-up initiatives.</p>
<p>4.3 Enhance neighborhood connectivity, aesthetics, and recreational opportunities by securing greenbelts, trail easements, neighborhood use pocket parks, natural open spaces, and retaining wetlands, stream corridors, and lake frontage in a natural condition into the future.</p>	<p>4.3.1 Develop a future trail system concept that better links Wasilla’s neighborhoods to each other and to key destination centers.</p> <p>4.3.2 Consider adopting regulations that require developers to provide sidewalks, trails, greenbelts, or dedicated pocket parks and open space.</p>

Goal 5. Continue to expand the City’s borders as needed to allow economic development and growth in the future.

Objective	Actions
<p>5.1 Identify areas to be annexed into the City that will provide opportunities for economic growth.</p>	<p>5.1.1 Develop quantitative criteria for determining if, when, and where parcels outside the City limits are creating an issue of acute importance in terms of Wasilla’s future services, health, safety and economy. Re-evaluate opportunities for additional annexation every five years.</p> <p>5.1.2 In the immediate future, evaluate areas adjacent to the City’s boundaries that are appropriate for annexations.</p>

5.3 Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goal 1. Promote and encourage development and redevelopment within the Downtown area.

Objective	Actions
<p>1.1 Adopt land use policies that encourage a mix of land uses in the Downtown area that create and establish a more vibrant town center, create a gathering place for residents and visitors, and a focus for business and cultural activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1.1 Create a Downtown overlay zoning district that incorporates Wasilla’s historic center (see Downtown overlay concept map). Develop land use regulations and development standards that encourage new development/redevelopment, appropriate land use patterns, and a cohesive town center. 1.1.2 Consider developing an incentive based policy or other solutions to help reduce lot fragmentation of potentially valuable commercial sites. 1.1.3 Support developer’s efforts to reconsolidate Downtown lots for high-quality development that will enhance the historic Downtown district. 1.1.4 Adopt land use policies that allow development of multi-story buildings with street-level commercial and office uses with upper-story residential units in the Downtown area.
<p>1.2 Identify opportunities to develop civic investments that revitalize the Downtown area and reinforce its identity as an attractive civic center.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.2.1 Support partnership approaches that leverage funding and community support to help build a new library, expanded Valley Performing Arts Theater, town square, streetscape, sidewalks, and lighting in the Downtown core. 1.2.2 Design and improve Downtown streets to encourage walking, on-street parking, covered walkways, and additional curbs and gutters. 1.2.3 Work closely with ADOT&PF on major road projects, including the Yenlo Street Extension/Main Street Couplet and the Parks Highway Alternative Route development, to ensure that roadway’s are upgraded to re-shape core area circulation for walkability, on-street parking, and to include streetscape design opportunities.
<p>1.3 Improve pedestrian access in the Downtown area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.3.1 Work with roadway facility designers and community members to define basic functional and aesthetic parameters for streetscape improvements in the Downtown area. 1.3.2 Dedicate city, state, and federal resources as available to developing Downtown’s streetscape infrastructure, including wide sidewalks and pedestrian amenities. 1.3.3 Partner with Downtown business and property owners on improvement and management issues related to improving the Downtown pedestrian environment (parking needs, sidewalk upgrades, and regular snow clearing and maintenance).

Goal 2. Build the partnerships and develop the community capacity required to transform Downtown.

Objective	Actions
2.1 Bring key stakeholders together to help mobilize implementation of a Downtown overlay zoning district.	2.1.1 Engage key stakeholders and involve them in creating and assisting with the implementation of the Downtown overlay zoning district, potentially through a Downtown Development committee.
2.2 Create public-private partnerships that can leverage resources to implement the Downtown overlay zoning district.	2.2.1 Encourage the creation of a business improvement district among core area businesses to supplement city services and invest in the Downtown’s maintenance, marketing, and the common improvements that help attract residents and visitors.



Wasilla’s business district in 1974 (aerial, above) was focused in a “node” at the major crossroads. Today, much of the main business activity has become linear in nature, and spread along the highway corridor, making it harder to identify Wasilla’s “Downtown.”

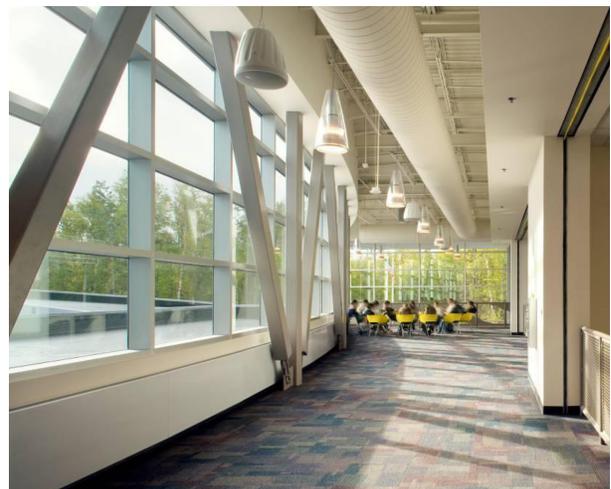
6.3 Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goal 1. Provide essential services and facilities necessary to encourage new commercial, industrial, and manufacturing development.

Objective	Actions
1.1 Enhance capacity and connectivity of services needed for new commercial, industrial, and manufacturing investment.	<p>1.1.1 Maintain and expand City infrastructure investments to adequately provide sewer services as the community grows.</p> <p>1.1.2 Coordinate at the regional level to plan for and develop the regional sewer systems necessary to accommodate future growth.</p> <p>1.1.3 Consider policies that require developers to anticipate future infrastructure connections in mind (conduit for utilities, pipe for water and sewer).</p>
1.2 Anticipate and plan for new state and federal regulations regarding development, land use, and infrastructure requirements.	<p>1.2.1 Update and maintain water, stormwater, and sewer master plans.</p>

Goal 2. Enhance educational opportunities.

Objective	Actions
2.1 Support quality education and lifelong learning opportunities needed to develop a skilled workforce that will attract new employers.	<p>2.1.1 Work with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the State of Alaska, and other partners to support development of a new library facility that can more adequately serve the region’s population.</p> <p>2.1.2 Partner with the Matanuska-Susitna School District, Charter College, and other educational institutions to help them enhance their program delivery, and to work on mutual community goals (recreation, health, safe routes to school, crime prevention, etc.).</p>



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Goal 3. Enhance recreational opportunities.

Objective	Actions
<p>3.1 Continue to provide and improve opportunities for community recreation.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Develop and protect important recreational trail corridors (e.g. Iditarod, Wasilla-Big Lake trails) and promote multiple-use trails year-round.</p> <p>3.1.2 Maintain existing parks to a high standard and review options for new parks as deemed necessary or desirable by residents.</p> <p>3.1.3 Adopt formal plans for Wasilla’s Parks, Trails, and the Multi-Use Sports Center to identify priority goals, projects, standards and implementation tools.</p> <p>3.1.4 Assess the capacity and use of the recreational and park facilities to ensure sufficient capacity, maximum/multiple use, and additional facilities and parks where desired by the community.</p> <p>3.1.5 Enhance City parks and recreation facilities; where possible, partner with volunteer, private, and not-for-profit organizations for improvements.</p>
<p>3.2 Identify missing trail links and address deficiencies and safety issues associated with the existing trail network.</p>	<p>3.2.1 Update the 1999 City of Wasilla Trails Plan using a public process that integrates Trail Management methods which can both address multi-use safety conflicts, and ensure that each user group has a usable network.</p> <p>3.2.2 Identify, reserve, and purchase rights-of-way for trail routes that link Wasilla to regional networks and destinations (Big Lake Wasilla Trail) and that connect local residents to parks, educational centers, and commercial centers.</p> <p>3.2.3 Determine access points for trails and trailheads that respect private property.</p> <p>3.2.4 Develop or adopt a trail education, etiquette, and sign program to help trail users respect other users and trail neighbors.</p>



Goal 4. Preserve and enhance the City’s unique community assets.

Objective	Actions
<p>4.1 Recognize, preserve, and showcase the City’s historic past.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Maintain, strengthen, and preserve the City’s historic town site and structures.</p> <p>4.1.2 Seek to acquire, restore, and protect important historical resources with an emphasis on pre-statehood articles, buildings, and historic sites. Once acquired, provide interpretive and visitor facilities that support that attraction.</p> <p>4.1.3 Provide support for the Dorothy Page Museum, and Museum of Alaska Transportation and Industry as important visitor and resident attractions.</p>
<p>4.2 Enhance the City’s visual appearance and identity.</p>	<p>4.2.1 Identify landmarks and features of visual interest to residents and visitors, and explore opportunities for enhancing access to them and/or framing views for the public (e.g. scenic overlooks, pullouts, site development that maintains and/or incorporates views.)</p> <p>4.2.2 Work to tap community pride and owners’ self interest in enhancing properties along the Parks Highway by partnering with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations on community beautification and cleanup efforts.</p> <p>4.2.3 Collaborate with ADOT&PF to identify ways to preserve landscaping along state roadways and minimize dust pollution from winter maintenance.</p>
<p>4.3 Protect the City’s natural resources, including Wasilla Lake and Lake Lucille.</p>	<p>4.3.1 Seek mitigation opportunities and design solutions to balance recreational use of lands and preservation goals, particularly with ORV crossings of wetlands and anadromous streams.</p> <p>4.3.2 Consider ways to better protect waterways from neighborhood septic tanks, use of damaging chemicals and fertilizers, and clearing of natural vegetation along the shoreline which both filters chemicals and provides important habitat for young Salmon and other fish.</p> <p>4.3.3 Establish programs to improve and maintain the water quality in both Lucille Lake and Wasilla Lake.</p> <p>4.3.4 Require curbs, gutter, and stormwater runoff control measures that help collect, filter, and enhance the quality of water quality returning to natural waterways.</p>
<p>4.4 Enhance access to natural areas.</p>	<p>4.4.1 As possible expand the public land base to include greenbelts, stream corridors, and open spaces that support groundwater, flood control, habitat, and community enjoyment values.</p> <p>4.4.2 Work with landowners and other partners to enhance resident’s access to Cottonwood Creek, Lucille Lake and Wasilla Lake, and to create a connected trail system that features overlooks and interpretive materials pertaining to these important community resources.</p>

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7.3 Goals, Objectives and Actions

Goal 1. Continue to promote and enhance the City’s future as the region’s major center for commerce, services, visitor hospitality, culture and arts, transportation and industry.

Objective	Actions
1.1 Adopt policies and programs that will ensure that the City remains the preferred place in the Valley for shopping, services, employment, arts, entertainment, sports, and culture.	1.1.1 Develop a strategic economic plan that considers how to secure Wasilla’s future as the leading commercial center given its location and proximity to growing population nodes, particularly Knik/Fairview.
1.2 Develop a plan to creating a more diverse economic base that will attract a wider range of employment opportunities.	1.2.1 Identify ways to ensure that the City continues to support appropriate development. 1.2.2 Continue to offer efficient and affordable permitting to foster improvements to and investments in the area’s housing stock and business properties. 1.2.3 Coordinate with non-City utility providers to expand services that will support new commercial, industrial, and manufacturing investment. 1.2.4 Identify key commercial and industrial areas of the City for development; promote the advantages for businesses to build or expand in these locations such as availability of City services, access to utilities, and the value of being adjacent to other businesses. 1.2.5 Encourage developers and investors to work with the comprehensive planning process to help formulate plans for community and economic development.
1.3 Encourage the development of new anchor developments, facilities, and attractions that generate economic activity.	1.3.1 Support community initiatives to strengthen the City as a regional center of art, culture, and education (e.g. Valley Performing Arts expansion, new Wasilla Library, new Sports Dome). 1.3.2 Promote opportunities for creating a destination hotel, restaurant, timeshare and convention center in areas such the multi-modal transit center and the Museum of Alaska Transportation and Industry and Wasilla Heights. 1.3.3 Promote and support new activities, festivals, and recreational opportunities that encourage visitors and tourists to visit the City (e.g., fishing derbies, new mining history display, winter festival, etc.).
1.4 Promote the City as a base for Valley recreation and a “Gateway to Adventure.”	1.4.1 Partner with the Mat-Su Convention and Visitors Bureau and Wasilla Chamber of Commerce and other recreation-oriented interests to promote the City’s visitor hospitality services and location as the gateway to recreational opportunities. 1.4.2 Identify opportunities for tourist attractions within the City.

Goal 2. Diversify the economic base and attract new employment generators.

Objective	Actions
2.1 Continue to expand the City airport and encourage development of adjacent economic generators on City-owned land.	2.1.1 Identify ways to attract new product manufacturing and assembly plants, including focused on producing specialty items using local resources. 2.1.2 Seeks funds to be used for capital improvements that serve as an incentive to attract new employers to the City.
2.2 Encourage employment opportunities within the City to reduce commuting to Anchorage for jobs.	2.2.1 Reach out to commercial, financial, and government entities headquartered in Anchorage and Palmer and promote local branch Wasilla offices, both to provide better services directly in MSB’s population growth center, and to allow commuting employees the option of working in their community.



The Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center has gained regional interest as a place to hold large public events, seminars, and small conventions.

Economic Vitality Element Supplementary Documents

This comprehensive plan chapter presents a broad vision, intended for incremental implementation over the next ten or more years. Please consult other documents, including those listed below, for more specific and up to date information, priorities and projects:

City of Wasilla

- Airport Master Plan
- Wasilla Area Plans
- Retail, Office, and Lodging Market Analysis for the Wasilla Area

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Areawide Plans

- Economic Development Strategic Plan



8.3 Goals, Objectives, and Actions

Goal 1. Foster and encourage intergovernmental coordination between the City and the cities of Palmer and Houston, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and regional, state, federal and Native entities.

Objective	Actions
1.1 Coordinate on land use proposals and planning.	1.1.1 Establish processes to review and provide comment on development proposals in the Borough near the City’s boundary.
1.2 Coordinate on new school proposals and planning.	1.2.1 Establish procedures to provide copies of rezoning and conditional use applications and other development applications that are pertinent to the School District staff for their information.
1.3 Encourage cooperation and coordination at many levels on mutually beneficial endeavors.	1.3.1 Consider mechanisms for fostering enhanced cooperation and coordination between the City, the Borough, interested citizens groups and advisory boards, and private organizations, regarding mutually beneficial endeavors.

Goal 2. Continue to promote the awareness and involvement of the residents in the planning processes for the City.

Objective	Actions
2.1 Continue to advocate public participation in the planning processes for the City.	<p>2.1.1 Continue to utilize an information exchange program, including the maintenance of an email mailing list and posting on the City’s web site as a means of communication between the City and all interested parties.</p> <p>2.1.2 Maintain procedures to provide for the disseminating of proposals and alternatives for public inspection; opportunities for written comments; public hearings; open discussions; communication programs and information services; and the notification of real property owners for the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Reports, and other planning implementation efforts.</p> <p>2.1.3 Continue to encourage public awareness of the Comprehensive Plan and the implementing regulations by providing for public education programs designed to promote a widespread understanding of the Plan’s purpose, intent and how citizens can be involved in the planning process and in all aspects of City government.</p> <p>2.1.4 Seek involvement of local school and college students and staff in planning processes.</p>

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