



Planning Commission Meeting Agenda  
Regular Scheduled Meeting Thursday, May 10, 2018– 6:30PM  
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS 300 CHIEF EDDIE HOFFMAN HIGHWAY

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**MEMBERS**

Kathy Hanson  
*Chair*  
Term Expires 12/2018

Lorin Bradbury  
*Vice-Chair*  
Term Expires 12/2020

John Guinn  
*Commission Member*  
Term Expires 12/2019

Alex Wasierski  
*Commission Member*  
Term Expires 12/18

Shadi Rabi  
*Commission Member*  
Term Expires 12/19

Scott Campbell  
*Alternate Member*  
Term Expires 1/2020

Thor Williams  
*Council Representative*  
Term Expires 10/19

Betsy Jumper  
*Ex-Officio Member*

Pauline Boratko  
*Recorder*

**AGENDA**

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD – (5 Minute Limit)
- IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:
- V. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:
  - A. Regular Meeting- April 12, 2018
- VI. NEW BUSINESS:
  - A. "Per BMC 2.52.070, Commissions Acceptance of Elizabeth Williams' Resignation, And Declaring The Seat Vacant"
  - B. Chapter 4 Review of the Bethel Comprehensive Plan
- VII. PLANNER'S REPORT
- VIII. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS:
- IX. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS
- X. ADJOURNMENT

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# City of Bethel, Alaska

## Planning Commission

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March 8, 2018

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

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### I. CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held on March 08, 2018 at the City of Bethel, Council Chambers in Bethel, Alaska. Chair Kathy Hanson called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

### II. ROLL CALL:

Compromising a quorum of the Commission, the following members were present for roll call: Kathy Hanson, Lorin Bradbury, Alex Wasierski, and Shadi Rabi.

Excused Absence: Scott Campbell

Unexcused Absence: Thor Williams, John Guinn, and Elizabeth Williams

Also present: City Planner, Betsy Jumper, Recorder, Pauline Boratko, ONC Representative, Calvin Cockroft, Rodney P. Kinney Associates Representative, Clark Kinney, and Solstice Alaska Consulting Representative, Robin Reich.

**III. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD:** No one wished to be heard

### IV. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS:

### V. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

<b>MOVED:</b>	Lorin Bradbury	Motion to approve the agenda.
<b>SECONDED:</b>	Alex Wasierski	
<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Unanimous	

### VI. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

<b>MOVED:</b>	Lorin Bradbury	Motion to approve the February 8, 2018 meeting minutes
<b>SECONDED:</b>	Alex Wasierski	
<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Unanimous	

### VII. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **PUBLIC HEARING:** Request for Special Use Permit- The City of Bethel Planning Office received a request for a public hearing for the placement and construction for a tall tower for the Bethel Wind Project. This area is underdeveloped land that is west of Old BIA Road, about 0.3 miles southwest of the BIA Administrative Site and approximately 1.2 miles west of the Bethel Airport. Land Owner: Bethel Native Corporation, P.O. Box 719, Bethel, Alaska. 99559. Contact: Ana Hoffman, 543-2124. Applicant: Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, 4831 Eagle Street, Anchorage, Alaska. 99503 Contact: Forrest Button 561-1818

<b>MOVED:</b>	Shadi Rabi	Motion to open public hearing
<b>SECONDED:</b>	Lorin Bradbury	

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Unanimous	
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City planner gave an overview, Commissioners asked Robin Reich and City Planner questions. With No further questions or comments Chair Hanson closes public hearing.

<b>MOVED:</b>	Lorin Bradbury	Motion to approve Special Use Permit for the placement and construction for a tall tower for the Bethel Wind Project
<b>SECONDED:</b>	Alex Wasierski	

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Unanimous	
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A. PUBLIC HEARING: City of Bethel Planning Office received the filing of a preliminary plat from Rodney P. Kinney Association that creates Ciullkulek Subdivision, creating Block 1, Lots 1-9; Block 2, Lots 1-6; Block 3, Lots 1-17; Block 4, Lots 1-6; and Tract A, in the Bethel Recording District. Land Owner: Orutsararmiut Native Council, 117 P.O. Box 927, Bethel, AK. 99559 phone 907-543-2608 Contact: Clark E. Kinney, Rodney P. Kinney Associates, 16515 Centerfield Drive, Eagle River, Alaska 99577, (907) 694-2332

<b>MOVED:</b>	Shadi Rabi	Motion to open public hearing
<b>SECONDED:</b>	Lorin Bradbury	

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Unanimous	
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City Planner gave her presentation, Commissioners asked Calvin Cockroft and City Planner questions. With no further questions or comments, Chair Hanson closes public hearing.

<b>MOVED:</b>	Lorin Bradbury	Motion to approve preliminary plat with the conditions of the City Planner's, including a subdivision agreement
<b>SECONDED:</b>	Alex Wasierski	

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Unanimous	
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**VII. PLANNER'S REPORT:** Betsy Jumper gave her monthly report.

**VIII. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:**

- L. Bradbury- no comment.
- A. Wasierski- no comment.
- S. Rabi- no comment.
- K. Hanson- I got us back in the commission training.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT:**

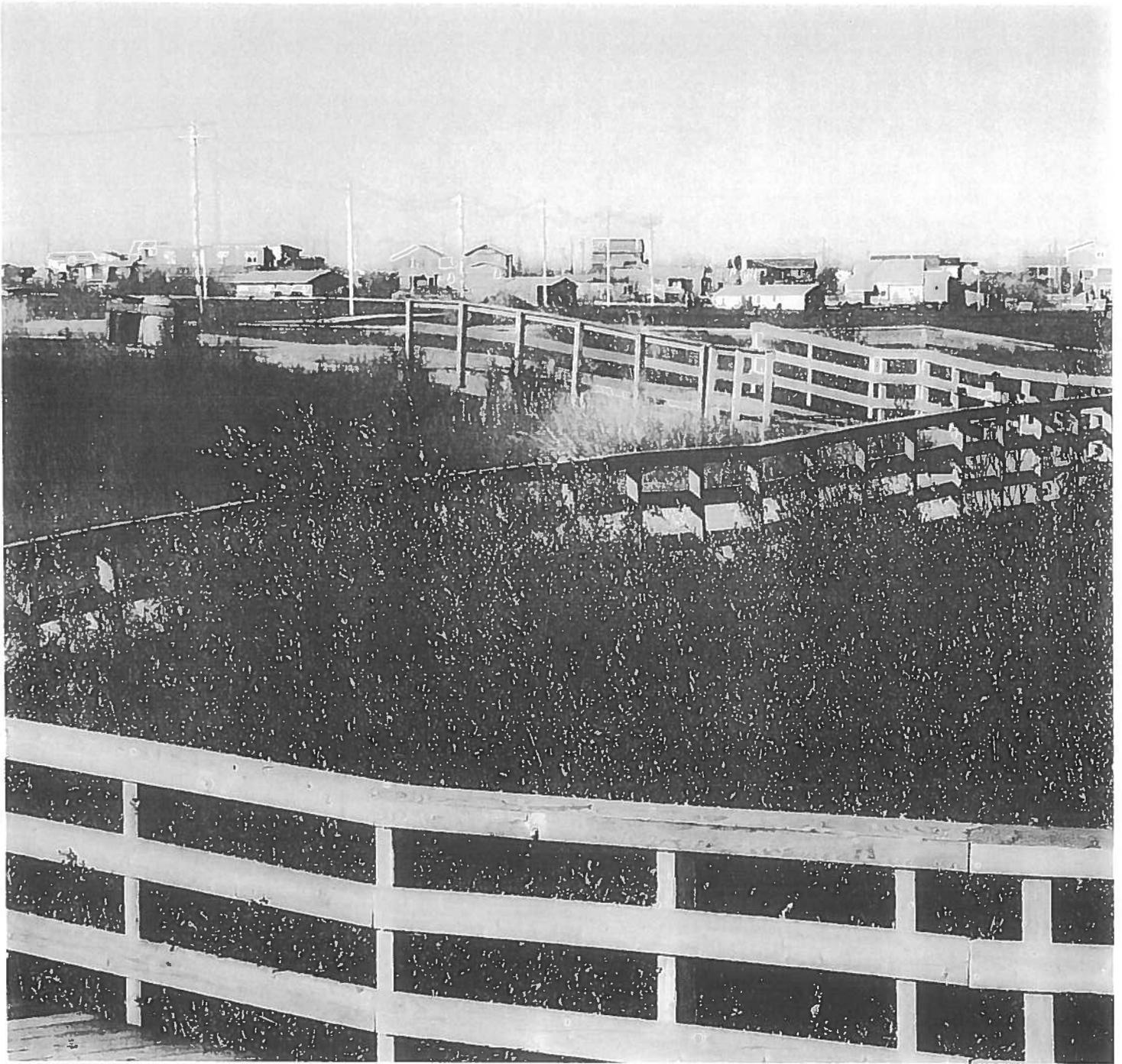
<b>MOVED:</b>	Lorin Bradbury	Motion to adjourn the meeting.
<b>SECONDED:</b>	Shadi Rabi	

<b>VOTE ON MOTION</b>	Unanimous	
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With no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm  
 APPROVED THIS \_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2018

ATTEST: Pauline Boratko, Recorder

Kathy Hanson, Chair



# **BETHEL**

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

# **2035**

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**SEPTEMBER 2011**

prepared by AGNEW::BECK Consulting  
for the City of Bethel, Alaska



## 4. Land Use, Housing and Environment

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### Introduction

Land use in Bethel reflects an ongoing response to human pressures for growth and change as shaped by the challenges of the western Alaska physical environment. The community is located on the Kuskokwim River, which has long served as the primary route for moving people and goods into and within the region. Bethel's specific location is based on its strategic location at a point that can generally be reached by larger oceangoing vessels, and that also serves as a jumping off place to interior villages.

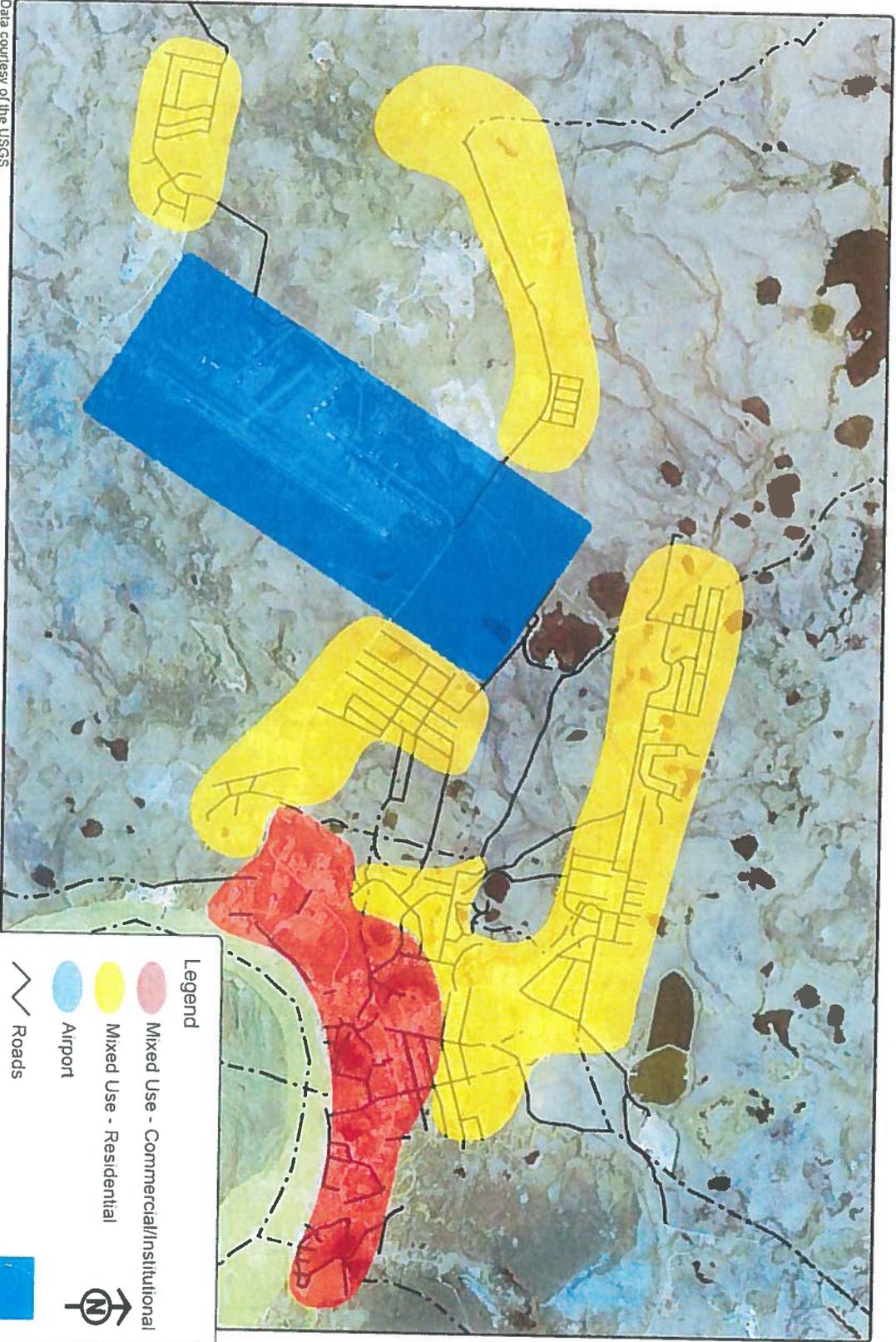
The river has been both the stimulus for settlement and a hazard to development. The original townsite was on the south side of the river, opposite from where it is located today. Because of flooding and erosion, the city moved to its present location. Even at its present location, over the last fifty years the city has had to shift roads and buildings to adjust to the changing forces of the river. As is discussed in the transportation chapter, this critical transportation corridor continues to change course, potentially reducing or even ending water access to the current Bethel port.

Bethel, like much of the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta, is a mosaic of wet and dry tundra, small lakes and streams, where conditions for development range from challenging to very challenging. Almost all the land is underlain by permafrost, and much of the area is poorly drained. Soils are not well suited for on-site septic systems, and many sites do not have the potential for wells. Map 4.2 gives a general picture of the relative degree of physical constraints in different parts of Bethel.

The location of development in Bethel is dominated by the need to use the relatively few areas where soils offer few physical building constraints, and where road access is available. The result has been a community with a small central "downtown" with a gridded road system and relatively concentrated, mixed use development. Extending for miles west from the center are several major roads, which provide access to low density, mostly residential subdivisions, irregularly spaced commercial and public uses, and the airport

Another factor influencing the location of development is the limited supply of private land. Bethel is embedded in the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. As a result, in contrast to many Lower 48 communities, private land is quite limited. In addition, much of the private land that does exist is Native allotments, which present unique development challenges. The advantage of this land ownership pattern is that almost all the land surrounding Bethel is undeveloped public property, which supports the subsistence activities that are an essential part of Bethel residents' way of life.

Map 4.1  
**City of Bethel Existing Land Use**



Data courtesy of the USGS  
 BLM, and Agnew, Beck. This map was  
 compiled for the City of Bethel with assistance  
 from Agnew, Beck Consulting

Alaska State Plane, Zone 4, NAD 1983  
 File: Bethel\_LandUse 4/05/11

**Legend**

- Mixed Use - Commercial/Institutional
- Mixed Use - Residential
- Airport
- Roads
- Trails

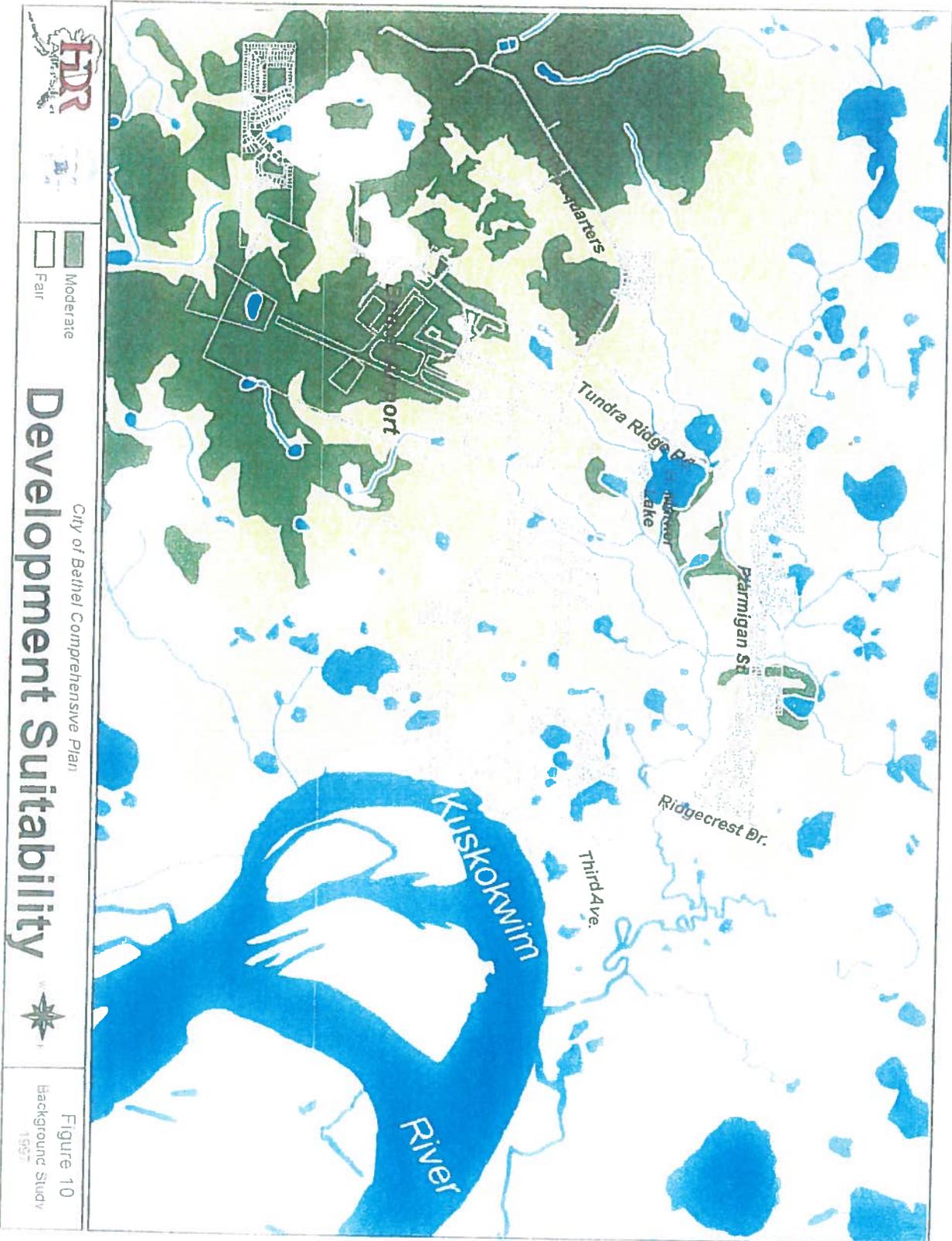
AGNEW  
 BECK

Map 4.1 gives a very generalized picture of the patterns of land use in Bethel. The yellow areas indicate areas of town that are predominantly (but not exclusively) residential. Included in this area are a set of residential subdivisions and scattered commercial, institutional or industrial uses. The red areas indicate portions of town that are mostly commercial, institutional and/or industrial uses, but include some residential development.

Map 4.2 is a physical suitability map from the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. It indicates the relative physical constraints for land development in Bethel, considering limitations due to hydrology, soils, wetlands, riparian areas, floodplains, elevation, and drainage. As noted previously, all of this land is relatively challenging to develop. The map identifies areas as fair to moderate where these constraints are less extreme. Though not labeled in the map's legend, the white area in the map generally has poor development suitability.

Map 4.2 helps explain the city's development patterns. The original settlement focused near the river (regardless of poor physical development suitability). The remaining, more recently developed areas spread out along major roadways and near the airport, largely in areas where the land is higher, drier, and more stable.

Map 4.2



## Goals and Strategies

### General Land Planning

#### **GOAL 1: Reserve space for critical anticipated community needs, including commerce, transportation, housing, community facilities and infrastructure.**

**Strategy 1:** Reserve land for specific uses that are a) critical to the future of the community, and b) almost certainly will need space for expansion or relocation.

*These include:*

- *Port expansion and/or relocation. The current port site may not be useable in the future, due to changes in the river's course. Development of the Donlin Creek mine may create a need for new expanded port facilities.*
- *Sewer lagoon and/or new wastewater treatment facilities.*
- *Expanded "downtown" commercial and housing development, including land within areas already accessible by road and the land adjoining the easternmost of the possible "donut hole" routes (a new north-south road and water/sewer line just west the existing downtown Bethel).*
- *Commercial/industrial activities near the airport.*
- *Energy infrastructure ( e.g., new or supplemental fuel storage, land for wind farms).*
- *Landfill.*
- *Institutional Corridor piped water improvements.*

**Action 1a:** Identify and map critical anticipated community needs (Map 4.3).

**Action 1b:** Work with existing landowners in priority growth areas to reach agreements that would allow needed growth to occur (e.g., purchase land, land trade, secure easements). *Priority varies with use: a new or alternative treatment option for the sewer lagoon is currently of the highest priority.*

*For example, work with ONC and holders of Native allotments to open up options for expanded port development.*

**Strategy 2:** Reserve adequate rights of way for access and public utilities when land is subdivided.

**Action 2a:** Review and revise (as necessary) Bethel's existing subdivision code (BMC Title 17) to ensure that the code presents reasonable, practical requirements for access and easements.

*Particular subjects include road dimensions (e.g., revising road standards to better provide space for winter snow management), pedestrian connectivity, utility requirements and requirements for setbacks from water bodies.*

**Action 2b:** Work with the ONC and Native allotment owners to better understand advantages and disadvantages of complying with BMC; agree upon recommended subdivision and land use standards to preserve and enhance value, recognizing the special status of these lands.

**Policy 2c:** Continue to enforce BMC by not accepting subdivisions that do not comply with City subdivision code.

*For private subdivisions that have met City standards, the City of Bethel receives ownership of roads and rights of way and is thereafter responsible for maintenance of these features. When the City does not accept the subdivision because it does not comply with City standards, e.g., roads do not have acceptable base material or acceptable width, it means the subdivision will not be eligible for use of City water and sewer or City road maintenance. The City's rationale for this approach is understandable: maintenance on substandard roads is more costly than roads that meet City standards, and result is that City takes on a burden that would have been avoided if the subdivision was developed correctly. This policy can, however, result in problems, as described below for the Haroldson subdivision.*

### Background

The supply of land in Bethel is constrained by physical limitations, ownership, and limited road access and other infrastructure. Given these constraints, a more proactive approach is needed to

first anticipate specific uses that are vital to the future of the community and will need space, then to ensure adequate amounts and locations of land are available to meet these needs.

Local governments have the authority to set rules for the subdivision of private land<sup>1</sup>. Responsibility for ensuring quality subdivisions is one of the basic services provided by local governments all over America. Subdivision ordinances, including the existing Bethel ordinance, customarily include standards for roads and pedestrian access, utilities, and the dimensions of lots. Local government authority for subdivision design comes from the need to protect public health, safety and welfare; for example, by ensuring that streets are wide enough to accommodate emergency vehicles and that easements are reserved to create efficient layouts for water and sewer lines, as well as other utilities. Communities and individuals benefit from subdivision standards because property boundaries (once in place) tend to endure, and poorly laid out subdivisions can create costly, difficult-to-solve access, utility and drainage issues for decades into the future.

In the past, some subdivisions in Bethel were developed without adequate rights of way for roads and other infrastructure. This lack of infrastructure ultimately creates a number of problems: it limits connectivity (e.g. by blocking access to adjoining lands, or through an imperfect internal road network), creates safety issues (e.g., by creating barriers to emergency access), and limits options to provide for improved services, such water and sewer. All of these impacts in turn can reduce land values and resident quality of life.

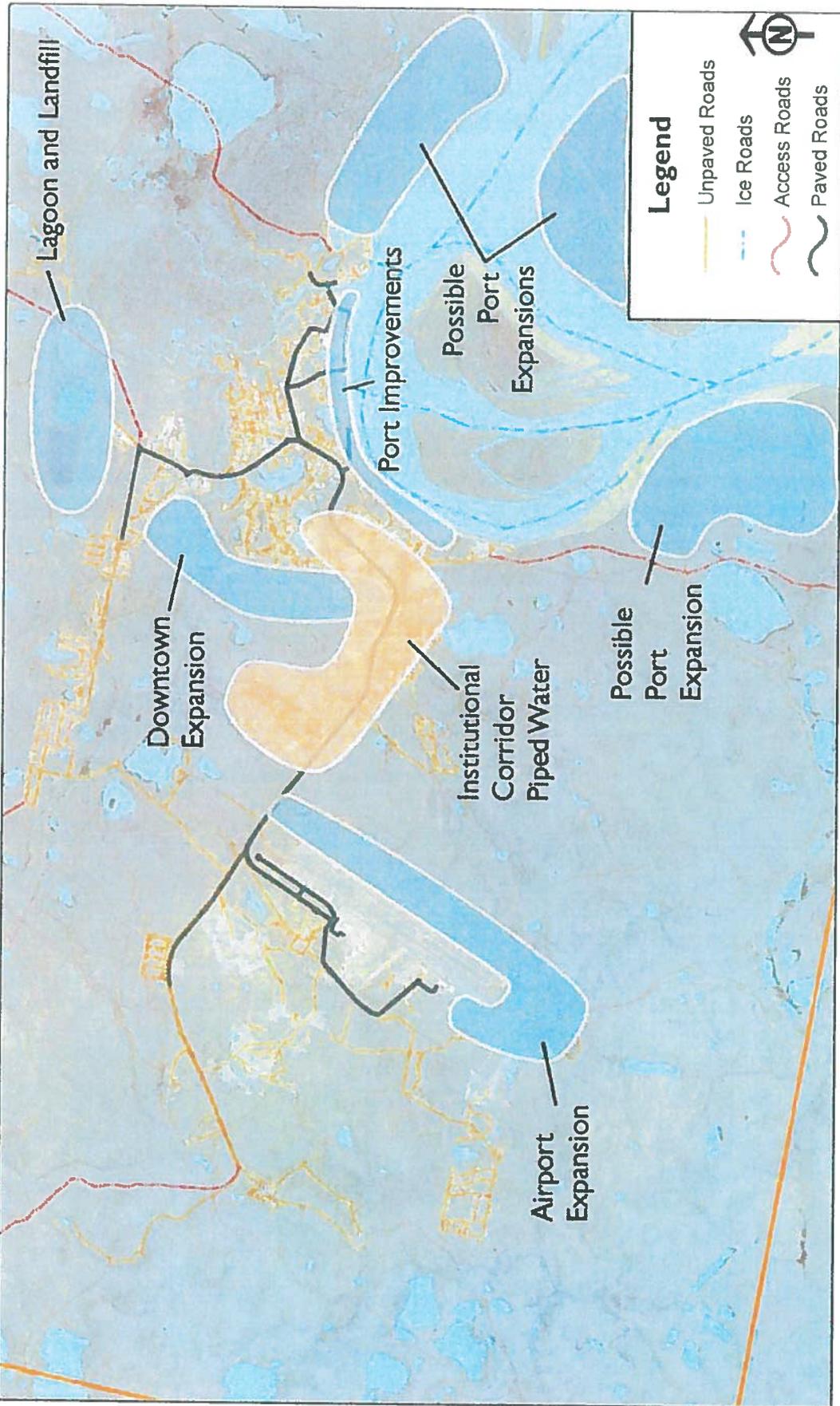
Native allotments are not subject to local government subdivision rules. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is increasingly working with holders of Native allotments all over Alaska to comply with local government subdivision requirements, in order to avoid the issues mentioned above.

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<sup>1</sup> The exception to this statement is for Native allotments, which are exempt from local government land use regulations as well as property taxes.

Map 4.3

### City of Bethel Priorities for Future Community Uses



## Growth Patterns

**GOAL 2: Encourage future growth to locate near existing employment centers and public services. Coordinate plans affecting the location of growth with plans for the location of water, wastewater and roads, as economically feasible.**

**Strategy 1:** Explore policies (including infill and redevelopment) that could be used to encourage development of lands within or adjoining existing developed areas that have the potential to accommodate new growth.

**Action 1a:** Identify and map areas within or adjoining existing developed areas that have the potential to accommodate new growth; these include vacant or underutilized lands served by roads, with good access to public services and employment.

*Candidate areas include:*

- *The developed areas of "downtown Bethel."*
- *Undeveloped land immediately adjoining downtown Bethel, for example, the land adjoining the easternmost of the possible "donut hole" road routes – a new north-south road and water/sewer line just west the existing downtown Bethel.*
- *River front land downriver from the existing port, and the vicinity of the East Harbor.*

**Action 1b:** Review and work to remove barriers that discourage infill and redevelopment (e.g., lack of access to properties, excessive restrictions in the BUC).

**Action 1c:** Create appropriate incentives for individual landowners to redevelop property and/or carry out infill projects that would otherwise not be feasible.

*This might include assisting land owners apply for façade improvement grants, energy-related building upgrades or temporary reductions in taxes (this latter is a strategy that typically applies in communities with property taxes, and may not be possible in Bethel).*

**Action 1d:** Plan for and develop expanded infrastructure, as needed, to support priority uses.

*For example, water and sewer lines serving expanded or relocated port facilities.*

**Policy 1e:** Protect the interests of current users as land is redeveloped.

*For example, if the City partners with a private developer in redeveloping land currently used for housing, take steps to provide affordable housing available to households currently living on the property.*

**Strategy 2:** Remove regulatory hurdles and/or create incentives for more concentrated development.

**Action 2a:** Review and revise (as necessary) Bethel's existing parking requirements; where possible, reduce parking requirements and encourage shared parking or access for alternative transportation modes (e.g., pedestrian facilities, public transit).

*Public discussion indicated some concern about new retail businesses having adequate off-street parking. BMC Chapter 18.48 Article II. Off-Street Parking and Loading includes parking requirements for all uses. If there is a lack of parking, this code could be revised to require additional spaces. However, if development is concentrated (particularly in central commercial areas) and transportation policies promote alternative modes (e.g., sidewalks for walking or bicycling, legal access for snowmachines), the need for off-street parking can be reduced. Likewise, the need for larger parking areas can be reduced through the use of shared parking arrangements.*

### Clarification of Neighborhood Revitalization Terms

*Infill* refers to new development on undeveloped parcels within areas that are already largely developed. Often these parcels have problems (such as poor soils or difficult access) that caused them to be passed over.

*Redevelopment* refers to replacing older, and/or underutilized current uses with new, higher intensity uses.

*Underutilized* refers to a parcel that has some current use (such as storage, an older vacant structure or perhaps a still used but rundown structure), where the current use does not take full advantage of the potential value of the property.

### Background

Multiple benefits can come from concentrating new development in locations with existing road access, existing water and sewer lines and close-by access to jobs and services:

- Reduce or avoid the need to install new infrastructure. For example, by serving new growth with existing roads *versus* requiring new roads.
- Reduce infrastructure operation costs. Concentrated development is easier to serve (e.g., fewer school bus miles, fewer miles of roads to maintain).
- Improve quality of life for residents (e.g., ability to walk to jobs, to shopping, services).
- Reduces energy use. For example, concentrated development reduces driving, and if attached housing is built, such housing is less costly to heat, because of shared walls, than detached housing.
- Can either reduce the need for taxes or free up money for other more important uses.
- Provides one of the few viable options for reducing the cost of living in Bethel.

### Redevelopment Case Study: Haroldson Subdivision

Haroldson subdivision is Bethel's forgotten subdivision, located northeast of the landfill/lagoon. For reasons that are not clear, the original subdividers did not develop the subdivision road to City standards. Consequently, the City did not accept the subdivision and does not provide normal services to the area. A handful of people live in the subdivision without running water, sewer service or electricity.

This situation clarifies the reasons why a city imposes subdivision standards. If a subdivision is developed correctly, the City can provide standard services at normal costs. If, however, the subdivision is not developed correctly (for example, if the roads are substandard), the City is either stuck with ongoing higher maintenance costs and/or having to retrofit the road without any good way to fund the improvement.

Some solution is now needed for this subdivision. The City currently allows ambulance and fire trucks to serve the area, and Bethel Public Works has occasionally put sand and gravel on the road. Options to bring the subdivision road up to City standards include a combination of using City general funds, seeking out one time grant funds or a legislative appropriation, and partnering with land owners in the subdivision who might help raise funds from third party sources, or themselves contribute money and or sweat equity to improve the road.

Map 4.4

### City of Bethel Future Land Use Plan Map



This is a courtesy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska State Parks Zone 4, H&O, 563 from Auburn, Alaska Consulting

0 1,320 2,640 5,280 Feet

## Land Use Compatibility

**GOAL 3: Provide for compatibility among adjoining land uses, so future development maintains or improves the quality of life or land values of surrounding uses.**

**Strategy 1:** Review and revise Bethel land use regulations.

**Action 1a:** Examine existing Bethel code and existing land uses; revise and simplify land use designations to better fit the reality of Bethel's mixed use land use patterns.

*A first suggestion for these uses includes the following categories:*

- *Low density residential areas*
- *Mixed use - residential primary (residential and limited, residential-compatible uses)*
- *Mixed use (mix of commercial & residential, fewer constraints on size and character of commercial).*
- *Industrial/heavy commercial zone,*
- *Public Use*
- *Airport and related uses*

**Action 1b:** Use the generalized future land use designations in the Land Use Plan Map (Map 4.4), which broadly identifies areas intended for various uses, as the starting point for revising the zoning code in BMC Title 18 (Bethel zoning code).

*For example,*

- *Low density residential areas. This zone takes in several specific subdivisions, e.g., Tundra Ridge, Larson and Blueberry. In these areas uses should be generally limited to residential uses. Exceptions would be for small home-based businesses with minimal off-site impacts, or perhaps neighborhood serving commercial, such as a small grocery store.*
- *Mixed use. This use is intended to be the most common land use zone, made up of residential and residential-compatible uses. Examples of residential compatible uses include schools and other community serving, non-industrial facilities, and churches, office and professional services uses (e.g. health facilities), and neighborhood-serving commercial*
- *Industrial/Heavy Commercial. This zone is intended for uses that are generally incompatible with residential, and consequently need to be located where they do not disrupt adjoining residential or residential-compatible uses. This zone includes such uses as warehousing, storage, construction-related industries, marine and aviation-related industries. Key industrial locations include the tank farm, the port, the airport and portions of the waterfront between Second Avenue and the waterfront and the airport.*

**Action 1c:** Modify code to require a conditional use review process for large- scale uses or any other use likely to have significant off-site impacts.

*Examples of such projects include a large scale public building, or a private use such as car repair.*

## Background

Alaskans are known for not welcoming rules controlling what they can do on their property. At the same time, most Alaskans (particularly when it comes to their homes) want a quiet, peaceful place, where adjoining uses do not create noise, glare, excessive traffic or other problems.

Zoning codes are the standard tool for addressing these issues and providing compatibility among uses. Zoning typically includes two categories of rules: first, uses are allowed or not allowed in any specific location, and secondly, the character of uses is regulated (e.g., rules on building setbacks or building heights).

The primary way to better achieve the goal of compatibility among land uses in Bethel is by improving the City's existing zoning code. The general theme of this effort should be to simplify the code, so that it focuses only on the most important issues, where public and political support is strong, and where the Planning Department and City Council have the capacity to enforce the rules. A starting assumption for revising the zoning code is acceptance that land uses are mixed in much of Bethel. As a result, it is not practical to impose a complex zoning code or one that attempts to separate most uses by category, as is done in most U.S. towns (e.g., establishing areas that are purely residential, purely commercial). Instead the code should generally allow for a continuation of mixed use development in much of the community, but set standards so that serious incompatibility can be avoided (for example, a noisy industrial use or auto repair shop in a predominately residential neighborhood).

### **"Conditional Use" Definition**

A "conditional use" is a category of use identified in a zoning code. Most Alaska communities and boroughs have a conditional use process, with the specific goal of guiding land uses that have potential for significant off-site impacts, such as adult oriented businesses, or auto-wrecking yards. Elements of a conditional use process typically include:

- A list of uses that require such a permit (which can vary by location).
- A list of general conditions for consideration in the approval of specified uses (e.g., standards for traffic or safety impacts).
- A review process, typically including a public hearing, where the specific conditions of approval are required of the planned use.

## Housing

**GOAL 4: Encourage a range of housing opportunities for current and future Bethel residents, including more housing within the purchasing or rental capabilities of young families, single people, school teachers and other workers.**

**Strategy 1:** Improve existing housing stock, as needed.

**Action 1a:** Adopt standards for basic level of housing quality.

**Action 1b:** Create a fund to help property owners upgrade housing to meet minimum standards.

**Strategy 2:** Encourage cooperative programs to provide additional housing.

**Action 2a:** Document housing needs.

**Action 2b:** Identify and, through zoning and infrastructure provision, encourage new housing development in appropriate areas (*Land Use Goal 1*).

## Background

Bethel would benefit from upgrades in the quality and availability of housing. Several specific neighborhoods are in particularly poor condition. A suggestion was made during one of the public workshops to redevelop the BIA hospital, potentially as a rental housing development.

## Safe, High Quality Neighborhoods

**GOAL 5: Create safe, livable neighborhoods centered around community facilities such as schools, parks, the teen center, and the senior center.**

**Strategy 1:** Encourage neighborhood revitalization and development.

**Action 1a:** Craft a cooperative strategy to upgrade select neighborhoods (among the City and Bethel-based regional organizations; e.g. AVCP, ONC).

**Action 1b:** Form a revitalization task force (working with residents and landowners) to identify and prioritize most important revitalization needs.

*Take an integrated approach, tackling crime, underdeveloped infrastructure, high energy costs, inadequate housing, lack of parks and open space.*

**Action 1c:** Work with the City and regional organizations to find funding or other needed resources for carrying out priority projects and programs.

**Strategy 2:** Establish better neighborhood public safety programs.

**Action 2a:** Establish a neighborhood watch/citizen patrol program.

*Bethel does not currently have a neighborhood watch program.*

**Action 2b:** Establish a "safe routes to schools" program.

**Action 2c:** Establish a "Kids don't float" program to educate and distribute flotation devices and coats for kids; keep people from drowning.

**Policy 2d:** Locate and design community facilities in central areas with high visibility.

## Environmental Conservation

<b>GOAL 6: Maintain and protect the quality of the water, land, and biological resources within the City; encourage the sustainable use of those resources for current and future generations.</b>
<b>Strategy 1:</b> Conserve and protect natural resources and features that serve valuable functions in the community.
<b>Action 1a:</b> Identify (and record in the City's land use records) natural resources and features, open spaces, cultural and historic sites that should be protected from development through the City's land use regulatory mechanisms.
<b>Action 1b:</b> Set standards in Bethel Municipal Code to protect these natural resources and features. <i>For example, establish setbacks from important water bodies</i>
<b>Action 1c:</b> As funding allows acquire suitable land for open space preservation.
<b>Action 1d:</b> Identify and clean up brownfields (contaminated lands) within the City of Bethel. <i>Brownfields refer to areas that have been developed and used in the past, and are currently vacant or underutilized, and have development constraints such as blighted structures or contaminated soils.</i>
<b>Policy 1e:</b> Prohibit and prevent the dumping of hazardous substances. <i>(Related actions: Public Facilities and Services Goal 1, Objective B: Water and Sewer, Action 4b and Objective C: Solid Waste)</i>
<b>Policy 1f:</b> Limit discharges from existing and future development to meet applicable state or federal environmental quality statutes, rules and standards.
<b>Policy 1g:</b> Encourage wider use of the Planned Unit Development/"Conservation Subdivision" approach to development in Bethel
<b>Strategy 2:</b> Engage in regional efforts to protect the integrity of natural resources.
<b>Action 2a:</b> Coordinate with other villages in the region, state and federal agencies to monitor and address any Kuskokwim River water quality problems.

### Background

Bethel is located in the biologically rich landscape of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

Bethel has a Planned Unit Development (PUD) section in the land use code, but this approach has never been used in the community. A planned unit development (or conservation subdivision) provides an opportunity for greater flexibility and creativity in site development.

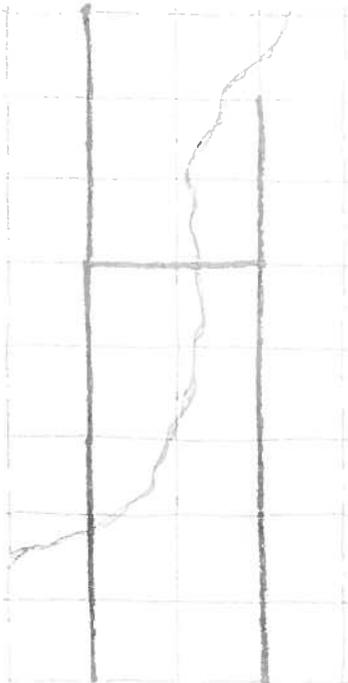
In a planned unit development, for example, a developer might be able to use smaller lot sizes than would otherwise be permitted, and consequently be more able to set aside land for open space or trails. The PUD overlay zone can be used in conjunction with any zoning classification in Bethel. Benefits of the use of a PUD approach include:

- Encourages imaginative design and the creation of permanent open space.
- Preserves, protects and enhances special site features, such as stream corridors, wildlife habitat, or subsistence areas.
- Provides diverse and convenient recreational opportunities, such as neighborhood "pocket parks."
- Allows for the development of a variety of housing types, and/or mixed uses.
- Encourages the development of street, pedestrian and bicycle paths that contribute to a system of fully connected multi-use routes.
- Facilitates the economical and adequate provision of public services.
- Promotes land use patterns that support a sense of community.

Figure 4.5 Planned Unit Development/Conservation Subdivisions

**Subdivision Options - Three Illustrative Alternatives**  
 Illustrative 80 acre parcel

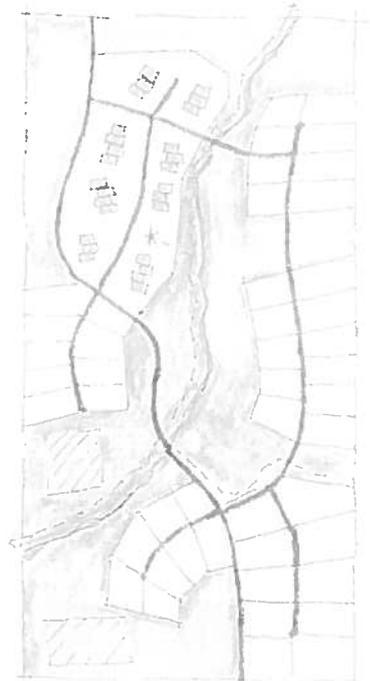
**A. Traditional Subdivision**  
 32 lots, 2.5 acre per lot  
 No reserved open space  
 (onsite wells and septic)



**B. Open Space Subdivision**  
 36 lots, 1.5-2.5 acres per lot  
 Approximately 15 acres open space  
 (onsite wells and septic)



**C. Open Space Subdivision**  
 50 lots, about 50-75 ac/lot (20-30,000 SF)  
 Approximately 35 acres open space  
 (sewer or 'neighborhood' septic system)



**Natural Disaster and Hazards**

**GOAL 7: Protect life and property from natural disasters and hazards.**

**Strategy 1:** Discourage development in areas more susceptible to natural disasters.

**Action 1a:** Investigate alternative ways to reduce the flood hazard within Bethel City Limits.

**Policy 1b:** Use City land use regulations to direct development to locate outside floodplains, natural drainage ways, steep slopes, and other hazardous areas.

**Policy 1c:** Use City land use regulations to limit land use in the undeveloped floodplain within the urban growth area to open space, recreation or other appropriate uses that a) minimize the potential loss to life or property and b) comply with federal and state regulations.

**Policy 1d:** As part of development review process, require site specific information clearly determining the degree of hazard present from applicants who seek approval to develop residential, commercial, or industrial uses within known areas of natural disasters and hazards.

## Land Records System

**GOAL 8: Improve the City's ability to provide quick access to current and accurate information on land status, easements and rights of way, and zoning and other land use regulations.**

**Strategy 1:** Upgrade the land records system for all property in the City of Bethel.

**Action 1a:** Develop a city-wide, Geographic Information System (GIS) land records system; update as lands are subdivided or developed, and make data available for use by City staff and the general public.

## Background

Bethel's ability to make sound decisions about future growth and change is hindered by the lack of a basic, 21<sup>st</sup> century, land records system. Current land records are out of date, incomplete and difficult to use. Accurate and complete land record information is the foundation for both public and private sector land use activity, and for both near term parcel-specific issues and for citywide long range planning. Good land use records are needed, for example, as a reference for real estate transactions and land development, to manage lands held by the City, and to plan new or improved roads, water and sewer and other infrastructure.

## City Land Management

**GOAL 9: Improve the City's ability to effectively and efficiently manage City-held lands.**

**Strategy 1:** Upgrade the system for managing lands held by the City of Bethel.

**Action 1a:** Prepare an inventory of the location, current use, and physical capability of all land held by the City of Bethel.

*This can be done as part of this goal and the evaluation of priority future land use needs in the community (Goal 1).*

**Action 1b:** Working with the community, designate the appropriate intended future uses all City of Bethel land (e.g., disposals, public facilities, parks and recreation).

**Action 1c:** Establish code sections that outline procedures for ongoing management of City land, including sales, permits, rights of way, long-term retention for public uses (e.g., parks and open space).



To: Pete Williams, City Manager  
From: Betsy Jumper, Planner  
Subject: March Manager's Report  
Date: April 30, 2018

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- Had a Planning Commission meeting on the 12th.
- Residential site plan applications came in and were processed.
- Answer public's questions on miscellaneous topics.
- Met with an AT & T consultant to discuss cell tower placement in the same footprint as the 260' tower that was demolished in 2017.
- Vacation April 16-26<sup>th</sup>.
- The Administrative Assistant is going to attend the FEMA training in Anchorage April 30<sup>th</sup>-May 3.
- Coordination with the City Manager, the Public Works Director, CRW Engineers, on the LKSD Ayaprun Elitnaurvik Replacement School project.