

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE



Planning Department

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Mayor Dave Bronson

10-Year Review of Community Council Boundaries Project Update – May 3, 2023

Project Summary:

- **What:** Every 10 years the Municipality must review community council boundaries and seek input as to whether any boundaries between community council districts should be adjusted. Last review was in 2013.
- **Objective:** Reassess community council district boundaries and adjust as needed to ensure the districts continue to reflect and represent Anchorage's natural, geographic neighborhood communities.
- **Outcome:** Assembly Ordinance (with maps) amending AMC Section 2.40 to adjust community council districts if necessary; OR an Assembly Resolution if no immediate changes are found to be needed.

Roles of Participants:

- **Assembly** will ultimately hold a public hearing and decide regarding any proposed changes.
- **Planning and Zoning Commission:** PZC will review Planning staff recommendations, hold a public hearing taking in public comments from the Community Councils, and forward its recommendations to the Assembly.
- **Community Councils:** Providing feedback to staff preparing recommendations on boundary issues; will review staff's recommendations, and then submit formal community council resolutions to PZC and Assembly.
- **Boundary Advisory Committee:** Project committee of 12 volunteer community council representatives, serving as a sounding board for project staff and the PZC in evaluating the boundary issues.

Public Process and Schedule:

- **Step 1: Identify Boundary Study Areas.** (November 2022 – February 2023) Began process with letters and visits to the Federation of Community Councils, and an online questionnaire regarding community council boundaries. 420 responses and emails received by end of February. ¼ of respondents identified boundary issues, which staff grouped into 39 boundary study areas. A "Boundary Study Area" means only that there will be further evaluation of a boundary issue, not necessarily any recommended change.
- **Step 2: Evaluate Boundary Study Areas (WE ARE HERE).** Planning staff and Boundary Advisory Committee are evaluating the boundary changes proposed by members of the public, using the *boundary review criteria* based on municipal code. Seeking initial thoughts from Community Council boards. Preparing a public hearing draft report that will make recommendations as to any boundary changes.
- **Step 3: Public Hearings and Action.** There will be a public review period of at least 2 months during which Community Councils will be encouraged to submit their recommendations as formal resolutions to the PZC. The PZC will hold a public hearing and forward its recommendations to the Assembly.

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<https://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Planning/Projects/Pages/CommunityCouncilBoundariesReview.aspx>
or search your web browser for "Community Council Boundaries 10-Year Review Project."

Boundary Study Areas #6, #7, #8, and #9 in Northeast and Scenic Foothills Community Councils

The Planning Department emailed a project update to all community council officers in March and then sent follow up emails to the Northeast and Scenic Foothills executive boards in April, identifying “boundary study areas” that may affect your Community Council district boundaries. These boundary study areas are based on the survey questionnaire responses and email comments that the Planning Department received for this project.

These are Boundary Study Area #6, #7, #8, and #9 in the draft White Paper No. 2, available on the project web site. A map showing these boundary study areas in orange is provided below. A “Boundary Study Area” means only that there will be further evaluation of a boundary issue, using the boundary review criteria in White Paper No. 1 (on the project website); it does not necessarily mean there will be any recommended change.

The project team appreciates the Scenic Foothills executive committee and/or membership thinking about and discussing how your council would respond if the proposal in these boundary study areas were to be recommended by the Planning Department or the project’s Boundary Advisory Committee. Any initial feedback or thoughts that you can provide in May would be appreciated.

Based on initial discussions by the Scenic Foothills executive committee, the map below shows an area highlighted in yellow, bounded by Patterson Street Park, JBER, Northern Lights Boulevard, and Chester Creek (including the segment of Chester Creek running through Chanshtnu Muldoon Park). It is staff’s understanding that the Scenic Foothills executive committee has discussed proposing to Northeast Community Council to consider expanding Boundary Study Area #7 (shown in orange) to include the yellow highlighted area and transferring both from Northeast Community Council to Scenic Foothills Community Council. This proposal could be taken up for consideration by the project’s Boundary Advisory Committee in June. Any initial feedback from the community council boards or members in May would be appreciated.

No formal resolutions from community councils are necessary or requested at this step in the project. Later, after the Planning Department releases a public hearing draft report with recommendations, there will be a public comment period during which time the Municipality will request formal positions and resolutions from community councils.

