



## October 11, 2023 Midtown Community Council Update

**Midtown Business Improvement District (BID) Survey Study** ~ A partnership project between Midtown business and property owners and the Anchorage Community Development Authority (ACDA) led by the Boazu-AK team.

### INTRODUCTION

#### Community Input

During 2021, the Midtown Community Council (MCC) expressed a desire to their Assembly Members, Meg Zaletel and Felix Rivera their interest in the potential formation of a Midtown Improvement District. The MCC was awarded \$100,000 in May 2021 to provide assistance for the formation. October 2021, the money was reallocated to ACDA to complete the project, noted in AR 2021-167(S) "it has become clear that the tasks and coordination necessary for potential development of a services improvement district under Title 19 of the Anchorage Municipal Code is more effectively spearheaded by a government agency, and the Anchorage Community Development Authority has been identified as ideally situated to lead such an effort with appropriate funding." ACDA attended its first MCC meeting in February 2022.

### Business Improvement District (BID) - OVERVIEW

#### What is a BID?

A BID is a geographically defined area or assessment district created or extended, only with the approval of the property owners who would bear more than 50 percent of the estimated cost of the improvement or service. An assessment district may be initiated by: 1. Petition of owners of property in the district; or, 2. The Assembly according to Title 19.

#### What can the BID do?

The BID can assess property owners for infrastructure improvements including water and sewer. The BID can also, as in the case of Downtown Anchorage provide other types of services including snow clearing, and safety patrols. The BID proposed for Midtown has the potential to create a non-profit similar to the Anchorage Downtown Partnership.

#### Services a BID can provide

*"Public services.* Assessment districts for public services may be initiated only for public services specified in this subsection A.2. only in the zoning districts designated by [chapter 21.40](#) as "business" (B—), "industrial" (I—), "residential-office" (R-O), and "public lands and institutions" (PLI) and "planned community" ("PC") districts whose permitted and accessory uses are predominantly the same as those in the business, industrial, residential office or public lands and institutions zoning districts.

- a. Maintenance, repair, and upkeep of any public capital improvement created by an assessment district;
- b. Maintenance, including snow removal/disposal and dust suppression, cleaning and beautification, and decoration of public places, areas, facilities, and rights-of-way such as:
  1. Streets, roads, alleys, parkways, street lighting, curbs and gutters, driveways, curb cuts and parking areas and facilities;



2. Sidewalks, trails, and other pedestrian ways and facilities;
3. Parks and recreational areas and facilities;
- c. Visitor and tourism public services;
- d. Security services not including law enforcement services;
- e. Promotion of public events within the assessment district and promotion of the assessment district itself as an area of enhanced public services.”
- f. Other public services closely similar to those listed in subsections A.2.a. through A.2.e. of this subsection are designed to promote the vitality, stability, and improvement of the assessment district as a whole.

### **Anchorage Municipal Code Title 19 (Title 19): Special Assessments**

Title 19 enables special assessment districts and lays out definitions, authorized improvements, and services, the creation and dissolution of an assessment district, general requirements, and limitations. Title 19 provides details on creating the district, assessments for the approved services, collection, application of Alaska State law, and allocation for infrastructure improvements (should the district be created for infrastructure improvements).

### **PROCESS**

#### **Proposed Exploratory Committee**

An Exploratory Committee established for this survey study will become familiar with Title 19 and its requirements as the committee works through this process to help the MTCC, businesses, residents, and property owners to determine whether a BID, that could function similarly to the Downtown BID, is desired and then financially feasible for the Midtown area.

#### **BID Project Scope and Timeline**

ACDA posted a Request for Proposal (RFP) to complete this effort directed by AR 2021-360 and awarded the project to Boazu-AK. A community survey, exploratory committee meetings, and draft and final reports are required elements of this project. It is expected that the project will be completed by the end of the year or early 2024.

What services do Midtown business and property owners desire? The study will provide enabling legislation and other background information, why a committee is proposed, potential BID costs, and how those costs are typically paid for.

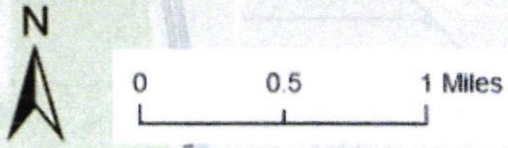
The Boazu-AK team will then discuss how a vision and the goals for the Midtown BID can be useful in directing survey questions. A portion of this first meeting will include a visioning exercise to enable the committee to draft the vision and potential responding goals for the BID.

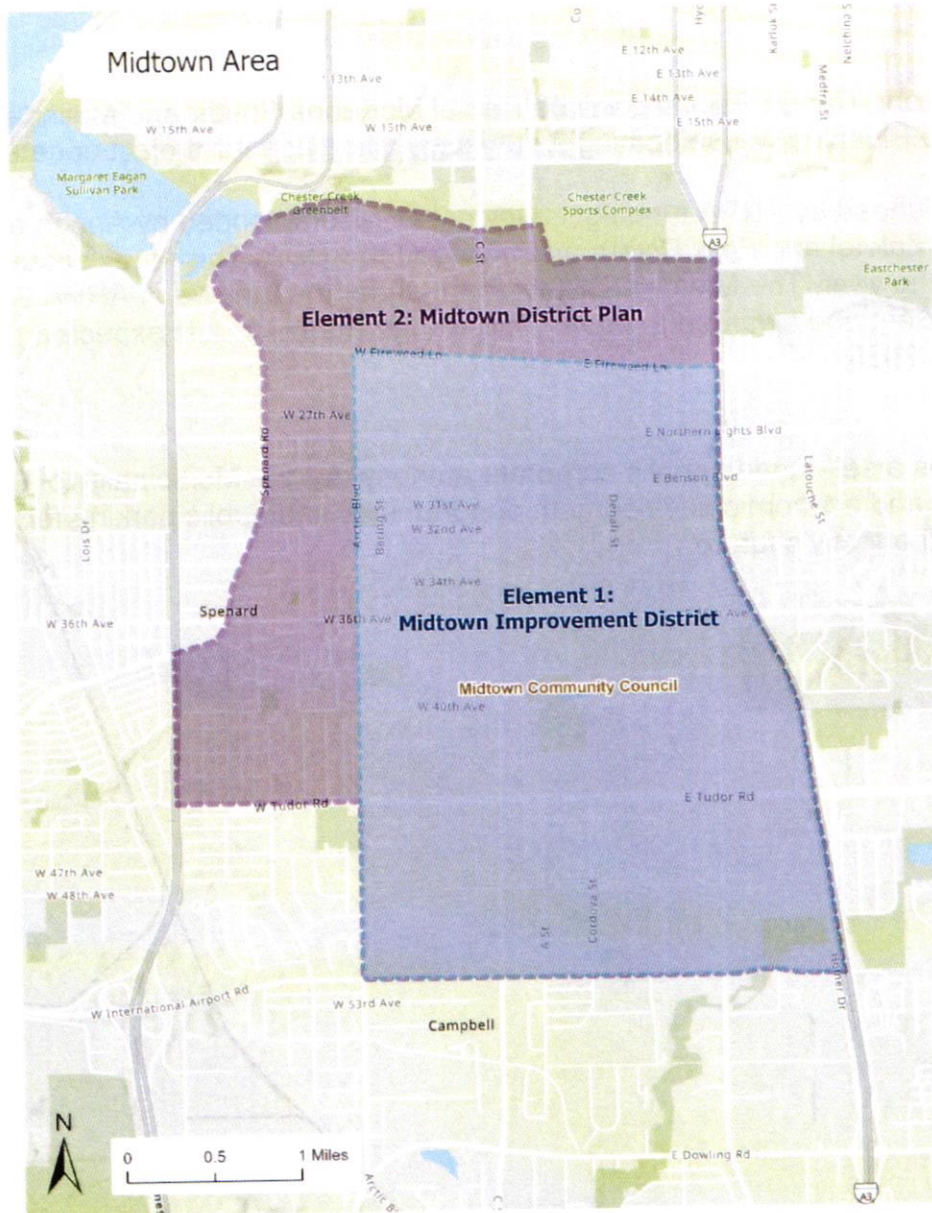
# Midtown Community Council Boundary



**Legend**

Ca  Midtown CC Boundary





## ACDA Awards Boazu-AK Contract for the Midtown District Plan and Business Improvement District Study

ACDA has selected Boazu-AK of Anchorage, Alaska, to explore the feasibility of a Midtown Business Improvement District (BID) and develop a Midtown District Plan that encompasses three community council areas.

The Boazu-AK group is comprised of principal owner, Kristine Bunnell, who brings 25 years of experience in the public sector, which includes long-range planning. She most recently led the completion of “Our Downtown Plan” which was approved in 2022. Holly Spoth-Torres, owner and principal of Huddle, AK will manage the public engagement and outreach while Shanna Zuspan, owner and principal of Agnew::Beck, will manage the gathering and translation of complex technical data.

“This is a major step of progress for ACDA,” said Mike Robbins, Executive Director for ACDA. “ACDA is aligning their community development decisions with the adopted plans of the Municipality of

Anchorage, which was recommended by ACDA's Board of Directors during their 2022 strategic planning process."

Project leads for MOA's Long-Range Planning will be Daniel McKenna Foster and Melinda Gant of ACDA. MOA Long-Range Planning will be hosting a [public website page](#) for project updates.

The BID study has been funded by ARPA funding 1, which was recommended by Anchorage Assembly Members Meg Zaletel and Felix Rivera and awarded to ACDA. This study should be completed by the end of the year. The Midtown District Plan, under the funding of ARPA 2, was a grant written by Melinda Gant and awarded to MOA Long-Range Planning. It is expected that the Plan will be completed by 2025.

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Founded in 1984, ACDA is a self-funded public corporate authority for the Municipality of Anchorage that facilitates community and economic development opportunities and public parking for a safe and vibrant community to build our city's future.



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