

South Addition Community Council: Neighborhood Plan Workshop

Memo Summarizing Community Feedback

Prepared by Agnew::Beck Consulting

Background

In 2023, South Addition Community Council (SACC), in partnership with the Municipality of Anchorage, brought on Agnew::Beck Consulting to support a revived effort to complete the South Addition Neighborhood Plan.

Over the course of several months, the team met to review the previous iteration of the plan, incorporate community comments from previous efforts to develop the plan, and to produce an updated draft. The team then presented draft elements of the plan at a neighborhood workshop to ensure community input into the latest draft.

Overview of Workshop

The workshop took place on November 16, 2023 and was attended by at least 55 South Addition neighbors, on a snowy night where perilous roads and inclement weather conditions closed schools and shuttered businesses.

The workshop was advertised using the following methods:

- Promoted via hand-delivered flyers to households across the neighborhood
- Announced at two Community Council meetings, where attendees were also encouraged to share with their neighbors

The workshop included hands-on opportunities for attendees to weigh in on the draft components of the plan by placing sticky dots next to ideas they wanted to see prioritized and by leaving post-it notes with additional comments. Feedback was also gathered via a worksheet available to all attendees.



The workshop presented the core components of the neighborhood plan:

- Vision statement
- Values
- Goals
- Objectives for each goal
- Implementation activities in each goal area
- Land use plan map
- Next steps for the neighborhood plan

The SACC Executive Committee also posted the materials to the South Addition website and invited residents to share additional feedback via email.

Summarizing Neighborhood Feedback & Priorities

South Addition residents weighed in on different elements of the plan. Several themes rose to the surface:

Adding New Housing, While Preserving Neighborhood Design and Scale

One attendee noted: “I have two goals for South Addition and don’t know how to resolve the contradiction between them: 1) Preserve the current quality of life character. 2) Allow the neighborhood to grow with new residents.”

By and large, neighbors who participated in the meeting seemed to share this desire to encourage new housing in South Addition while being mindful of neighborhood design, scale, and quality of life.

- Residents largely recognized the need for new housing and shared support for increasing housing development in South Addition.
- Many residents also recognized that the new housing that gets built in South Addition is not affordable for many, and that it may be necessary to incentivize different types of housing at different income levels.
- Residents seem to support gentle density and new “missing middle” housing, along with policies to encourage that housing: from ADUs to smaller lots sizes.
- Residents shared differing thoughts on the role of increasing building height to encourage greater density: Some residents support adding a 4th story allowance, while others strongly oppose such a measure.
- Residents by and large shared support for preserving design elements that are core to South Addition, including alleyways, street frontages, sidewalks, and overall neighborhood character.

Making South Addition a More Walkable, Bikeable Neighborhood

Along with housing, transportation was the most commented-on area of the plan. In general, residents support introducing traffic calming measures, making South Addition a more walkable, bikeable neighborhood, and improving snow removal.

- Specific ideas highlighted by attendees include:

- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements
- Complete the sidewalk network in the neighborhood
- Increase connectivity to the Coastal Trail
- Reduce traffic speeds and enhance traffic calming measures
- Making sure sidewalks are shoveled for easy walking
- Address parking during projects/events and during winter, with snow plowing

Overall Appreciation for the Plan and Draft Content

- Several attendees shared positive feedback about the draft content presented at the neighborhood workshop, including the vision, values, and goals shared for the neighborhood.

Recommendation for Potential Change to Plan

Most of the comments shared at the neighborhood workshop were in-line with the existing content and were made as either additions or future considerations. Several comments related to building height allowances were made that might warrant additional consideration by the SACC team for changes to the draft plan.

Building height allowance:

The planning team may want to consider revisiting the project/action recommendation in Goal Area 1, (specifically 1-11) which states: “Adjust the height limits in the multifamily and commercial districts (e.g., the R-3 and RO zones) to allow a fourth story on apartments where building massing and setbacks minimize impacts on adjoining properties.”

This was the most divisive proposal for workshop attendees, garnering some strong resistance to increasing building height allowances, as well as some support for making this change in the zoning areas identified. SACC could consider whether to clarify this recommendation in the plan, by highlighting that the proposed change would not be neighborhood-wide, or could consider removing this specific project/action from the plan given the proposal does not have universal support (or universal opposition) from neighbors.

Additional Recommendation from Consultant Team:

The neighborhood plan is being developed at the same time as proposed regulatory changes are working their way through the Assembly, including triplex/four-plex reform and proposed zoning changes. The consultant team recommends that the South Addition Community Council continues to focus the Neighborhood Plan as a guiding document for years to come. The Neighborhood Plan can be a space to make clear goal statements for the neighborhood that help direct input into parallel processes, but the plan itself does not need to be the forum for responding to specific proposals in the short term.

Support for Plan Proposed Projects

The below tables show how participants at the workshop prioritized different proposed projects shared in the Implementation section of the plan. Across all goals, the top-supported projects¹ included:

Goal 1: Growth and Design

- Utilize the historic function of alleys as a service space, including for utilities, refuse removal, and parking, to preserve street frontages and neighborhood character. *(Collaborative Project; 17 votes)*

Goal 2: Transportation & Mobility

- Work with the Municipality and Alaska Department of Transportation to improve non-motorized and pedestrian access at 9th Avenue to the Coastal Trail and its key downtown destinations. *(Collaborative Project; 17 votes)*
- Implement traffic calming measures on arterial streets, such as building wider sidewalks, bulb outs, median plantings, chicanes, and other strategies whenever possible. *(Municipality-Led Project; 15 votes)*
- Complete the sidewalk network throughout the neighborhood with a particular focus on finishing the following areas: 9th Ave from P Street to Stolt Lane, I Street from 15th to Fireweed, E Street from 16th to Chester Creek, A Street from 15th to Fireweed, B Street from 12th to 15th. *(Municipality-Led Project; 15 votes)*

Goal 3: Parks, Natural Spaces, Sustainable Systems

- Create and implement a Delaney Park Master Plan that includes a future vision for the Park Strip as a community and regional open space asset. *(Municipality-Led Project; 18 votes)*
- Host an annual neighborhood clean-up day, sustainability workshops and sustainable landscaping classes. *(Neighborhood Project; 15 votes)*

Goal 4: Neighborhood Cohesion

- Where appropriate install additional benches, lighting, and trash receptacles to make public space more accommodating and usable. Identify recommendations for trash receptacles, such as along trails, at schools, and at Municipal parks. Add branding elements to these public amenities. *(Municipality-Led; 24 votes)*
- Create a communications plan and a neighborhood calendar of events for South Addition to inform and engage neighbors about events and neighborhood issues. *(Neighborhood-Led; 18)*





Goal 5: Safety, Resilience, Hazard Mitigation








- Educate and inform South Addition residents about emergency preparedness related to earthquakes, wildfires, floods and other disasters as outlined in the MOA All Hazard Mitigation Plan. *(Neighborhood Project; 12 votes)*

¹ *List comes from participants at South Addition Neighborhood Plan workshop and those who submitted feedback after the meeting. Participants are not necessarily a representative sample. List here includes the top priority in each goal area, as well as any additional projects that received at least 15 votes.










Goal I: Growth and Design






Municipality-Led Projects	Votes
Recognize and regulate Short-term Rentals (STRs) as a type of use, like Bed-and-Breakfasts and allowed residential uses. Accompany this code amendment with guidance/informational materials for property owners.	10
Reform the zoning rules to allow for small-lot and small-scale multi-unit housing on urban lots to provide “missing middle” housing that fits with the intended scale, walkability, and design of the neighborhood.	9
Increase financial incentives for infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse projects that meet design compatibility criteria meeting the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood plans.	6
Adjust the height limits in the multifamily and commercial districts (e.g., the R-3 and RO zones) to allow a fourth story on apartments where building massing and setbacks minimize impacts on adjoining properties.	4
Survey and nominate all or a part of the potential “east” and “west” districts to the Local Landmark Register, as recommended in the Original Neighborhoods Historic Preservation Plan.	4
Develop a neighborhood overlay district to align future development with neighborhood design desires without compromising economic viability. Review and adopt new standards for residential, commercial, and open spaces in this overlay design process.	3
Modernize and expand residential parking permit programs to reduce congestion, provide on-street parking supply, coordinate with street maintenance, and improve the pedestrian environment	3
Maintain an updated land use, housing, and buildable lands inventory from the South Addition Neighborhood Plan process, available to the public.	3
Focus the annual CIP alley paving and improvement program by prioritizing alley segments most likely to support infill housing development and encourage pedestrian-friendly site design.	3
Set maximum allowed lot sizes for new single-family and duplex homes in multifamily zones to promote efficient use of lands meant to provide more housing opportunities near Downtown	2
Evaluate the feasibility and identify appropriate locations for the development of neighborhood-serving commercial activity centers and consider adjusting zoning accordingly.	2
Establish the Reinvestment Focus Areas (RFAs) for Third Addition and western Fairview, and western Downtown, as recommended in the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan.	1


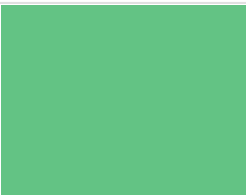

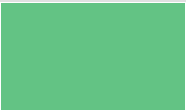
Neighborhood-Led Projects	Votes
Create a visual and detailed guidebook of neighborhood design elements that promotes the existing character of South Addition, consult neighborhood residents on final guidebook elements to ensure widespread support. Organize a design competition or other means to generate example designs.	 14
Support the update/expansion or replacement of existing schools to accommodate the planned growing number of families who will live in South Addition.	 13
Work with developers to ensure that all new development applications showcase how a project integrates into the South Addition neighborhood and desired design standards	 12
Advocate for the development of Accessory Dwelling Units and conduct educational outreach to neighbors about the benefits of ADUs in the neighborhood; and reference Municipal applicant guidance materials.	 6
Support nonprofits that provide housing assistance and emergency housing to individuals living in South Addition through fundraisers, advocacy efforts, and volunteering.	 6
Encourage and organize neighbors to provide public testimony at Planning and Zoning Commission and Anchorage Assembly meetings in support of projects that align with neighborhood values and goals.	 5
Establish a neighborhood led land use, housing, and urban design review committee	 1

Collaborative Projects	Votes
Utilize the historic function of alleys as a service space, including for utilities, refuse removal, and parking, to preserve street frontages and neighborhood character.	 17
Facilitate the adaptive reuse of older structures, or, if necessary to save or enhance the resource, relocation of historic resources.	 13
Continue to work with CEA to underground utility lines including along P St., R St., David Place, W. 9th Ave, Inlet place from W 15th Ave to W 12th Ave and near the intersection of 10th Ave and E St.	 12
Nominate historic and cultural Landmarks identified during previous public processes and historic surveys to Anchorage's Local Landmark Register and the National Historic Register.	 11
Survey and nominate Block 13 (Pilot's Row) as a historic district on Anchorage's Local Landmark Register.	 9
Partner with developers to construct high quality, mixed-income housing that is consistent with neighborhood design standards.	 9
Facilitate rezonings that fulfill the Comprehensive Plan and South Addition Neighborhood Plan.	 4

Goal 2: Transportation and Mobility

Municipality-Led Projects	Votes
Implement traffic calming measures on arterial streets, such as building wider sidewalks, bulb outs, median plantings, chicanes, and other strategies whenever possible.	 15
Complete the sidewalk network throughout the neighborhood with a particular focus on finishing the following areas: 9th Ave from P to Stolt Lane, I Street from 15th to Fireweed, E Street from 16th to Chester Creek, A Street from 15th to Fireweed, B Street from 12th to 15th	 15
Reform the local street design criteria for urban neighborhood streets to emphasize separated sidewalks, snow storage capacity, and pedestrian accessibility, then carry out a street and sidewalk improvement program.	 8
Improve bicycle parking and security throughout the neighborhood through the installation of additional bike racks.	 6
Improve the funding and advocacy for enforcement of snow removal parking restrictions and work with residents to clear snow and ice to ensure streets and cleared efficiently.	 6
Improve and add additional pedestrian crossing infrastructure like crosswalks, HAWKS, Rapid Overhead Flashing Beacons, etc. along key streets and roadways to increase pedestrian mobility and safety.	 6
Design transportation infrastructure projects that retain or restore the historic street grid of South Addition and adjoining neighborhoods	 3
Construct a new enhanced shared roadway connection for bicyclists on 13th Avenue from Nelchina Street to S Street (with a segment being on 12th Avenue between A and C Streets).	 3
Create and implement a South Addition subarea plan under the Anchorage Vision Zero Action Plan.	 2

Neighborhood-Led Projects	Votes
Report street, sidewalk and intersection deficiencies to the Municipality of Anchorage and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.	 13
Implement a neighborhood wide bicycle and pedestrian safety and encouragement campaign.	 9
Advocate for the creation of neighborhood wide traffic calming with an emphasis on high traffic intersections and roadways near heavily used activity centers.	 6
Conduct an annual survey of neighbors regarding their commuting and travel behaviors, transportation needs and perceptions of safety, to assess desired priority projects.	 6
Add bike service and repair stations at key public spaces to encourage biking and non-motorized transportation throughout the neighborhood. Look into grants or other funding opportunities to support this.	 2

Collaborative Projects	Votes
Work with the Municipality and Alaska Department of Transportation to improve non-motorized and pedestrian access at 9th Avenue to the Coastal Trail and its key downtown destinations.	 17
Construct separated bikeways on the following arterial and collector streets as called for in the Non-Motorized Plan: C Street, from Downtown to Midtown, 15th Avenue, from Ingra St. to N Street, E Street, W. 17th, and Arctic Blvd., between Downtown and Fireweed Ln, Cordova Street north of 15th, L Street, north of 13th, M Street, from 5th Ave to Elderberry Park	 12
Improve safe routes to schools and install additional school crossings at key locations, including C St. between 11th and 13th.	 10
Encourage People Mover bus ridership by working with MOA Public Transportation Department to increase the frequency of stops and improved routes based on community feedback.	 9

Goal 3: Parks, Natural Spaces, Sustainable Systems

Municipality-Led Projects	Votes
Work with the State of Alaska to inventory, maintain and improve upon the tree canopy in South Addition.	13
Create and implement a plan to and protect sunlight access at the Delaney Park Strip to minimize shadowing cast by structures outside the park.	14
Create and implement a South Addition noise plan with viable enforcement mechanisms.	10
Create and implement a Delaney Park Master Plan that includes a future vision for the Park Strip as a community and regional open space asset.	18
Adopt a dark skies ordinance to improve night sky views and reduce neighborhood glare and light trespass. Work to improve existing lighting fixtures to reduce light pollution.	10

Neighborhood-Led Projects	Votes
Work with the State of Alaska to inventory, maintain and improve upon the tree canopy in South Addition.	6
Host an annual neighborhood clean-up day, sustainability workshops and sustainable landscaping classes.	15
Educate neighbors about the importance of a healthy tree canopy, how to maintain existing trees, and where to plant additional trees	8
Create a community tool library for residents to check-out landscaping equipment to better maintain their homes and public spaces.	5

Goal 4: Neighborhood Cohesion

Municipality-Led Projects	Votes
Where appropriate install additional benches, lighting and trash receptacles to make public space more accommodating and usable. Identify recommendations for trash receptacles, such as along trails, at schools, and at Municipal parks. Add branding elements to these public amenities.	24

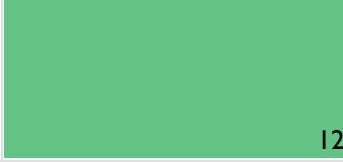


Collaborative Projects	Votes
Improve and install new lighting at key locations on streets and in alleyways throughout the neighborhood.	9
Increase Anchorage Police Department presence in South Addition and change patrol zones to expand more frequently into the neighborhood. Increase crime prevention / CPTED efforts within parks and greenbelts.	13

Neighborhood-Led Projects	Votes
Create a communications plan and a neighborhood calendar of events for South Addition to inform and engage neighbors about events and neighborhood issues.	18
Organize neighborhood-serving events such as block parties, movie nights, National Night Out Events, neighborhood clean-up days, etc.	11
Support the installation of new public art and beautification efforts, whenever possible integrate and call-out to South Addition's rich history and unique character.	13
Create a neighborhood events and communication committee, to help plan events and distribute information.	6
Work with the Municipality of Anchorage to create gateway signage, street sign toppers, wayfinding signs and other branding elements to help strengthen South Addition's brand and identity.	7
Review and update the South Addition Neighborhood Plan every 5 years to ensure that the vision, goals, and actions are still representative of community and neighbor interests.	11

Goal 5: Safety, Resilience, Hazard Mitigation

Municipality-Led Projects	Votes
In discretionary land use decisions such as rezonings, zoning code amendments, conditional use approvals, and changes to the land use plan amendments, consider natural hazards and avoid locating more people and property in areas where they would be at most risk.	6
Continue to update and revise the All Hazard Mitigation plan with specific recommendations for individuals and neighbors.	4
Amend the land use regulations to place limitations on critical and sensitive land uses such as public and community facilities, medical facilities, or high-density housing in areas with the greatest hazards for seismically induced ground failure and flooding.	4
Educate individuals and businesses about hazards, disaster preparedness and mitigation.	4
Increase the availability of supportive housing and other needed social services in South Addition.	9

Collaborative Projects	Votes
Reduce vehicle speeds on A and C Streets, and I and L Streets, to 20-25 MPH to make new roadway improvements to create a safe multi-modal street environment.	11

Neighborhood-Led Projects	Votes
Educate and inform South Addition residents about emergency preparedness related to earthquakes, wildfires, floods and other disasters as outlined in the MOA All Hazard Mitigation Plan.	 12
Create a communications network with neighbors to report outages to Chugach Electric and educate neighbors on the benefits of lighting and motion detectors.	 8
Create a neighborhood emergency support and advocacy group to maintain emergency preparedness plans and participate in any updates to MOA plans related to hazard mitigation.	 4