

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

CENTRAL REGION DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION  
PRELIMINARY DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECTION

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September 16, 2010

Breck Tostevin, President  
Turnagain Community Council  
3340 Knik Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska 99517

Re: Turnagain Community Council comments on the ANC Lake Hood Air Strip Runway Protection Zone Property Acquisition Draft EA / Project No.52366

Dear Mr. Tostevin:

This letter responds to Turnagain Community Council (TCC) comments on the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Lake Hood Air Strip Runway Protection Zone Property Acquisition project. The following responses are listed in order by the headings in your comments received September 8, 2010 (see enclosure).

### TCC Corrections / Clarifications

#### *Page 5 -4.3 Hazardous Materials, Pollution Prevention and Solid Waste*

- *TCC comment:* Property is not bordered by Spenard Lake to the west. Lake Hood and Hood Creek are to the south and Turnagain Bog wetlands are to the west, south and southeast; Jones Lake is east of the cul-de-sac subdivision. Groundwater flows generally to the north and east from these waterways, according to the State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT &PF) Anchorage International Airport Hydrology Assessment Study, January 2000, Figure 6.
- *DOT&PF response* – The EA was amended to read: “The subject property is bordered by Turnagain Bog wetlands to the west, south, and southeast. Lake Hood and Hood Creek are to the south and Jones Lake is to the east. Groundwater flows generally to the north and east from these waterways. Spenard Lake is located in an area that is remnant of glacier and river activity that deposited an alluvial fan wedge of sand and gravel that thins out westward”.

#### *Page 5 - 4.4 Compatibility Land Zone*

- *TCC Comment:* Subject property is not currently zoned for airport use; it is zoned residential, as stated in the Lake Hood Strip Wendy's Way Property Acquisition Relocation Study in Appendix A of the draft EA

- DOT&PF response – The EA was amended to read: The subject property, totaling 1.5 acres, consists of six residential properties currently zoned residential as stated in the Wendy’s Way Property Acquisition Relocation Study (Appendix A).

*Page 6 -6.0 Coordination*

- *TCC comment:* Turnagain Community Council is not a local government; TCC is a citizen-based, volunteer community group sanctioned by the Municipality of Anchorage Charter
- *DOT&PF response:* The EA was amended to read: “...a public meeting, a Turnagain Community Council meeting (a citizen-based, volunteer community group sanctioned by the Municipality of Anchorage Charter)...”

Appendix A - Wendy's Way Property Acquisition Relocation Study - April 2010

*7.0 Floodplains*

- *TCC comment:* According to the Anchorage Coastal Resource Atlas, December 1980, map, it appears these six parcels are not in the 100-Year Flood Plain, but are directly to the west of property with this designation.
- *DOT&PF response:* No changes to the EA have been made as the Anchorage Coastal Resource Atlas floodplain information agrees with the Federal Emergency Management Agency information contained in this section.

*11.0 Wetlands*

- *TCC comment:* There are gaps in this section that need to be identified in the final EA with regard to the MOA Anchorage Wetlands Atlas. As stated above, the closest wetland is Turnagain Bog, which is generally to the west, south and southeast of the subject property
- *DOT&PF response:* There are no wetlands within the proposed property acquisition area, therefore, no changes have been made to the EA.

*14.0 Secondary (Induced) Impacts*

- *TCC comment:* This project would not significantly reduce the potential for future incompatible land use due to future development on the subject property; the subject property is already fully developed with residential duplexes and current zoning would not allow for any future, higher-density development on these lots.
- *DOT&PF response:* The acquired property is in a Runway Protection Zone and no future development is proposed on these acquired properties, therefore, no changes have been made to the EA.

TCC Comments

*Acquisition*

- *TCC comment:* TCC encourages DOT&PF to work with the affected property owners to the greatest extent possible to avoid eminent domain and condemnation proceedings
- *DOT&PF response:* DOT&PF agrees to work with the affected property owners to the greatest extent possible to avoid eminent domain and condemnation proceedings



### *Zoning*

- *TCC comment:* The EA states the lots will be designated "Vacant" in the Airport Master Plan, but TCC requests that the acquired property be designated "Runway Protection Zone /Buffer" in that plan because 1) this would make it clear the Lake Hood Strip Runway Protection Zone falls into this area; 2) it falls into the 65 DNL contour; and 3) the land is adjacent to the remaining residential area
- *DOT&PF response:* The Airport Layout Plan portion of Anchorage Master Plan already shows RPZ designation for the property to be acquired.

### *Zoning*

- *TCC comment:* It would be inaccurate to show the subject property as residential on the MOA Land Use Map once DOT &PF acquires the property.
- *DOT&PF response:* Residential-zoned property that is vacant does not conflict with the AMP. For that reason, the airport proposes no change to zoning.

### *Training*

- *TCC comment:* TCC supports the use of acquired property by the Anchorage Police Department and/or the Anchorage Fire Department for training purposes before the structures are demolished as long as burning is not part of the training - only nonflammable training occurs because 1) any use of fire in the training would likely cause temporary air pollution and negatively impact air quality in the neighborhood; 2) there would be potential for trees in the immediate area to suffer damage from flames; and 3) TCC supports as much material as possible be salvaged for reuse (see below).
- *DOT&PF agrees to items 1 and 2 above. See next response to *Salvage Materials**

### *Salvage Materials*

- *TCC comment:* TCC supports as much material as possible be salvaged for reuse.
- *DOT&PF response:* Per the TCC meeting discussion on September 2, 2010, structure removal is bid 'as is'. DOT&PF encourages all contractors to consider reducing landfill impacts by reusing each structure as a whole or in pieces whenever practicable, but leaves to each salvage business the decisions about what time, energy and salvage value to place on each element.

### *Existing Trees*

- *TCC comment:* TCC endorses DOT&PF's statement at our September 2 meeting that no existing trees will be removed from the subject property. TCC requests that DOT&PF includes in its demolition contract that caution be used during demolition to avoid damage to the tree root systems, bark and limbs, to the greatest extent possible.
- *DOT&PF response:* TCC's paraphrase of the DOT&PF assurance of reasonable care to retain standing vegetation does not include qualifiers also expressed at the September 2, 2010 meeting. While leaving trees for aesthetic reasons is desirable, trees close to structures may need to be removed or incur unavoidable damage. Trees may also need to be removed for airspace clearance reasons.

### *Rehabilitation*

- *TCC comment:* TCC requests that only native species are planted in the filled/graded areas once the structures are removed and that the land gradually be allowed to turn into a

naturally-vegetated area to match land directly adjacent to the south. This action is preferred, rather than planting the area with grass, which would have to be mowed/maintained or it will make the cul-de-sac look neglected. Whatever vegetation is planted, TCC requests long-term maintenance of the area (i.e., water anything that is planted until it is established).

- *DOT&PF response:* As discussed at the TCC September 2, 2010 meeting, after structure and utility service removal, the project would be guided by the following considerations: The existing ground would be graded and seeded to prevent water accumulation or soil erosion. Planting trees would not be consistent with the airport goals for maintaining clear approach and departure paths for aircraft. Vegetation that does not attract wildlife is preferred by the airport.

#### *Future Use*

- *TCC comment:* TCC opposes the building of any new structures, airplane parking or equipment storage on this Runway Protection Zone designated land, once acquired by DOT&PF. We also oppose any extension of the Lake Hood Strip and accompanying safety areas north of its current position.
- *DOT&PF response:* Current land use plans are to leave the acquired area vacant and the ALP does not show a future extension of the runway or safety area expansion.

#### *Trails*

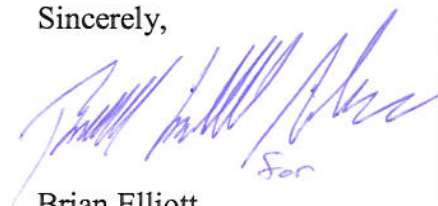
- *TCC comment:* TCC does not support building any trails at the end of the cul-de-sac. In the Anchorage Bike Plan, the shoulder area of Aircraft Drive is designated as a multi-use path, so there is no need for a path to be built at the end of Wendy's Way into wetlands or heading toward the gravel airstrip. It would be undesirable for trail traffic to go through the neighborhood to connect up with a trail into airport property.
- *DOT&PF response:* There are no plans for a future trail within the RPZ property.

#### *Fencing*

- *TCC comment:* There was considerable discussion at TCC's meeting regarding fencing of the subject property, once acquired by DOT&PF. Pros and cons of the three options 1) leave the fence in its current location; 2) relocate the fencing to reflect the new airport boundaries after purchase of the lots; or 3) remove the fencing south of the properties.
- *DOT&PF response:* A decision about fence changes will follow structure removal and assessment of the prevailing conditions and regulations at that time. Thank you for presenting the pertinent factors regarding changes to the fence.

Thank you for your comments on the draft EA.

Sincerely,



Brian Elliott  
Environmental Manager



Enclosure:

Turnagain Community Council Draft EA comments for the *Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (ANC) Lake Hood Air Strip Runway Protection Zone Property Acquisition*

cc: Wolfgang Junge, P.E., Project Manager, Aviation Design, DOT&PF  
Thede Tobish, Senior Planner, Municipality of Anchorage