

## **DRAFT Turnagain Community Council comments on the Home Initiative**

The Turnagain Community Council appreciates the opportunity to submit the following comments to the Planning and Zoning Commission on the Home Initiative.

We recognize the severity of the current housing crisis and the need to facilitate construction of new housing that is more affordable to buy and rent.

We applaud efforts by the Assembly sponsors to hold community meetings on the proposed changes prior to Assembly action.

We support the concept to reduce the number of residential zoning districts from 13, as long as it is:

- done with adequate community involvement,
- it doesn't substantially increase housing density as residential zoning districts are consolidated without community involvement or rezoning if needed, and
- any required revisions to the 2040 land use plan are made with adequate community involvement.

However, we have several concerns we would like to express related to timing of community meetings with regard to Planning and Zoning Commission action, how and when the existing 13 residential zones will transition to the five residential zones on the ground, how and when use tables will be developed for each of the new residential zones, and the timing and nature of revisions to the 2040 land use plan.

Timing of community meetings with regard to Planning and Zoning Commission action – The update on the Home Initiative indicates that community meetings will be held in April and May after scheduled Planning and Zoning Commission action in mid-March. This does not allow the public to be informed about the proposed ordinance in time to make meaningful comments to the Planning and Zoning commission. Planning and Zoning Commission action on the Home Initiative should be postponed until after the scheduled community meetings. This can be done by either rescheduling the Commission meeting to take action after community meetings have been held, or the public hearing should be continued to a later meeting in order to allow the public to provide meaningful comments.

How and when the existing 13 residential zones will transition to the five residential zones on the ground – seeing how the new zones line up on the 2040 land use map compared to the old zone will be key. As we have stated above, if it doesn't substantially increase housing density as residential zoning districts are consolidated, it is relatively straightforward. However, if there are substantial increases in residential density in some areas, the public needs to be involved.

How and when use tables will be developed for each of the new residential zones – Zone specific use tables define which residential uses will be designated as a permitted use, administrative review use, conditional use, or prohibited use, and it is difficult to understand the implications of the zoning changes without seeing these tables. The public needs to have adequate information and input into developing the use tables before the proposed zoning changes are implemented. It is unclear how and when this will occur.

Timing and nature of revisions to the 2040 land use plan – like many people across Anchorage, Turnagain residents put a lot of time and effort in participating in the 2040 land use plan process. Other than a brief reference that the proposed zoning changes will be paired with changes to the 2040 land use plan, no details are provided as to how and when this will occur, and what opportunities there will be for

public involvement. This may not be an issue if residential densities on the ground do not change substantially under the new zoning districts, but again this is unclear. This needs to be resolved before the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Assembly takes action.

We conclude by sympathizing with the need for prompt action to address the housing crisis in Anchorage, but it should not be done at the expense of adequate public involvement and responsible community planning. As they say, “the devil is in the details”. Enough time should be provided for the public to digest information on suggested changes, and participate and provide meaningful comments. Any actions approving the proposed changes should set conditions for involving the public in the implementation of the zoning changes, including developing use tables and revising the 2040 land use plan. We believe this can be done equitably and efficiently without excessive delays.

Thank you for considering these comments.