

MEMORANDUM

CITY/BOROUGH OF JUNEAU
155 South Seward Street, Juneau, Alaska 99801

DATE: June 17, 2011
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Eric Feldt, Planner
Community Development Department
FILE NO.: AME2011-0004

PROPOSAL: Extend the Parking District-1 overlay boundary.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A	Scenario 1 Exp. PD-1 District
Attachment B	Scenario 2 Exp. PD-1 District
Attachment C	Scenario 3 Exp. PD-1 District
Attachment D	Willoughby District Plan Boundary
Attachment E	2008 Comprehensive Plan Map
Attachment F	Zoning District Map
Attachment G	2006 Aerial Photograph

INTRODUCTION

The Community Development Department (CDD) is exploring opportunities to expand the Parking District 1 (PD-1) overlay boundary from the downtown commercial core to the Willoughby Avenue neighborhood. The timing of this proposal coincides with the State Library Archive Museum (SLAM) project and the new draft Willoughby District Land Use Plan.

The PD-1 district significantly reduces the normal parking requirement and incentivizes new development. This memorandum focuses on the area from the State Capitol building to Gold Creek (referred to as the 'neighborhood' in this memorandum). Various sections of the neighborhood have unique development potentials and are represented as three alternative scenarios for PD-1 district expansions. (Attachments A – C)

The City and Borough of Juneau Code states in CBJ §49.10.170(d) that the Commission shall make recommendations to the Assembly on all proposed amendments to this title, zonings and re-zonings, indicating compliance with the provisions of this title and the Comprehensive Plan.



BACKGROUND

During the past five years, the CBJ Assembly, in response to recommendations by the Planning Commission has been extending the PD-1 district westward toward Whittier Street in recognizing that the new Downtown Transportation Center (DTC), +270 parking space parking garage and bus station, would capture future parking needs and help reduce automobile dependency. With the new Willoughby District Land Use Plan and SLAM (both are discussed later in this memorandum) indicating future development west of Telephone Hill, Community Development Department (CDD) staff finds these projects warrant another review of potentially expanding the PD-1 district boundary.

Parking Districts 1 & 2

The PD-1 & -2 districts provide an automatic reduction to the regular off-street parking requirement, as can be read in italics below.

CBJ § 49.40.210 (d): Superimposed parking districts. There is adopted the parking district map dated June 5, 2006, as the same may be amended from time to time by the assembly by ordinance. The off-street parking and loading requirements set forth in subsections (a) and (c)(2) of this section may be reduced by 30 percent in the PD-2 parking district. The requirements shall not apply in the PD-1 parking district except in the case of the expansion of an existing building or the construction of a new building, in which case they may be reduced by 60 percent.

Therefore, the PD-1 district provides the greatest parking reduction at 60% for new construction or expansion of existing buildings, and a 100% reduction (no parking required) for conversions of existing building space without expansion. The existing boundaries of the PD-1 & 2 districts are shown as a thick black line in attachments 'A' – 'C'. The PD-1 & 2 districts were established to accomplish the following:

- Encourage the re-use of existing buildings that help preserve historic structures and compact building location;
- Reduce large surface parking lots that result in uninviting, dead space for pedestrians and underutilization of valuable downtown land;
- Facilitate the creation of a compact, walkable environment that supports pedestrian movement and social gatherings; and
- Promote the use of existing parking facilities such as public parking garages to efficiently consolidate off-street parking areas.

Willoughby District Land Use Plan

The CBJ Lands and Resources Department and Sheinberg Associates (local planning consultant) are finalizing a new 'Willoughby District Land Use Plan' (Willoughby District Plan) that addresses the development potential for properties along Willoughby Avenue, Whittier Street and Egan Drive from Telephone Hill to Gold Creek for the next 25 years. Attachment 'D'

illustrates the boundary of this new district. Goals of this plan encourage the redevelopment of this neighborhood into a denser, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environment, similar to the downtown core. Another main goal is to relocate and redevelop several existing surface parking lots into parking garages to facilitate the creation of a downtown environment.

Existing Land Use

Properties between the State Capitol building and Gold Creek consist of a mixture of publicly- (CBJ and State of Alaska) and privately-owned land. Several large office buildings and cultural facilities compose the public sector. The majority of the private sector consists of retail, office, food and beverage businesses, recreational facilities, and a moderate amount of short- and long-term housing. Overall, there are many daytime business in this area such as the State of Alaska offices and smaller private offices, Sandpiper restaurant, The Closet (re-sell clothing store), Andrew Hope Building offices, Salvation Army, Miss Scarlet's Flowers, K³ radio station, Good Hardware/ True Value, City and State Museums, etc. The afternoon through evening businesses (or daytime through evening) include Centennial Hall and the Juneau Arts & Cultural Center (JACC), Alaskan & Proud (A&P), Frozen Yogurt, Juneau Bowling Alley, Kenny's Liquor, Prospector Hotel and TK McGuire's restaurant, Alaska Club (JRC). After 5 pm several businesses close and, after 7pm most daytime and some afternoon businesses are closed. During evening hours the neighborhood receives less destination traffic. Most vehicular traffic during this period is on through-traffic on Willoughby Avenue. Many pedestrians also use Willoughby Avenue to reach bus stops and other destinations.

The large public offices and the Food Land Mall are by far the most intensive uses, bringing hundreds of employees and customers to the area. This creates a spike in traffic volume during the morning and afternoon commutes. The A & P grocery store produces high traffic demand during the lunch period and afternoon commute.

Few residences exist in this neighborhood compared to other areas in the downtown. The large surface parking lots, commercial traffic, and office buildings are evidence of this. A few multi-family houses, single-family dwellings and temporary stay residences (hotels & motels) compose the residential development. This low residential density could be an indicator of specific market forces in the area. However, it is more likely that the primary land owners, who are the CBJ and State, simply do not construct residential development. In an urban, downtown setting, low residential density can often lead to little 'life' on the streets (especially during evenings and weekends) that has an effect on pedestrian atmosphere. The subject neighborhood is unique in that it is located between the commercial core and the Casey-Shattuck neighborhood, near a transfer bus station, and close to the Douglas Bridge, which all contribute to high foot traffic during evening hours.

Pedestrian activity is the highest during commute times, especially during the afternoon period. When offices in the area close and the afternoon commute ends, some of the large parking lots become empty blank sections of the neighborhood. These parking lots are uninviting for pedestrians. Adding new housing and relocating these parking spaces into a garage while

redeveloping the surface lot are two ways that could facilitate additional pedestrian activity. This would make the area more attractive for new commercial businesses and cultural facilities.

Parking

Vehicular parking is by far the dominating feature of the neighborhood. There are a few parking garages in the area (SOB garage and the DTC), and several large surface parking lots. The SOB garage quickly reaches capacity with state employees, while the DTC always has available spaces, as its use is not free. The parking lot in front of the A & P grocery store is open for customers and usually has available space. This parking lot, however, is dedicated to the businesses in the strip malls, and therefore, has high turnover. Large surface parking lots cover most of the landscape in the neighborhood and create a very auto-centric feel, more akin to suburban development. Most of these lots are assigned to state workers during the day, and later become available for public use during the evenings and weekends. Some smaller lots in the neighborhood have become assigned for specific users due to the high parking demand in the area.

Due to the lack of interconnecting pathways between parking lots and buildings, pedestrians must navigate around other parked cars and moving vehicles to reach their destination. This creates an unsafe situation for both pedestrians and drivers. The existing sidewalks along Willoughby Avenue, Whittier Street and Egan Drive only provide linkages around the blocks. Interior pathways do not exist. Creating interior pathways that separate pedestrians from vehicles that would connect to buildings would greatly improve the safety of pedestrians and vehicles, and decrease automobile dependency. Relocating the surface parking spaces into new parking garages would reduce some of the auto-centric feel of the area.

Anticipated Development

Significant development is anticipated in this neighborhood in the next ten years, such as a new State Library Archive Museum building, expansion of Centennial Hall and the JACC, restoration of Gold Creek, a new parking garage next to the Federal Building and improvements to existing streets and sidewalks. These future projects will help spur additional development and take advantage of the PD-1 parking discount and reduce development costs.

The Willoughby District Plan hopes to promote a build-out scenario of 350-400 new residential units (condominiums and apartments), 150,000 square feet of new commercial space, +100,000 square feet of new office space, 300,000 square feet of new mixed use buildings (commercial, office, residential buildings), and +300,000 square feet of new civic, art, or cultural uses in the next 25 years. The new off-site parking spaces generated for these uses would amount to a small increase beyond what exists due to the assumed PD-1 expansion overlaying the entire Willoughby District Plan and additional parking reductions through creating new parking bonuses. These bonuses are explained in the plan.

A significant amount of new parking would be required using the regular parking requirement for calculating new retail, restaurant, office and residential uses (see Compliance with CBJ Land

Use Code). This would greatly increase development costs and limit development growth. Alternatively, by expanding the PD-1 district to the boundaries of the Willoughby District Plan, the full build out could be reached more easily.

State Library Archive Museum project (SLAM)

A proposal to replace the entire State of Alaska museum with a new larger building is anticipated in the next several years, called the State Library Archive Museum project (SLAM). Designs for this project are still in preliminary form and have not been released for permitting. However, CDD staff had the opportunity to review the preliminary designs for compliance with the Land Use Code, including the parking requirement. The new larger building will require more spaces than the existing building's parking requirement. If the PD-1 district was expanded to this site, the parking requirement would be greatly reduced. This could help facilitate the museum's goal of creating a larger space for the public.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2008 Comprehensive Plan

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan designates all properties in the area as Mixed Use (Attachment E). This land designation is defined below.

Mixed Use

These lands are characterized by high density residential and non-residential land uses in Downtown areas and around shopping centers, the University, major employment Centers, and public transit corridors, as well as other areas suitable for a mixture of retail, office, general commercial, and high density residential uses at densities ranging from 18 to 60 residential units per acre. Residential and non-residential uses could be combined within a single structure, including off-street parking. Ground floor retail space facing roads with parking behind the retail and housing above would be an appropriate and efficient use of the land.

The Comprehensive Plan encourages buildings to have several different uses within them to maximize the value of the property and add diversity. This can facilitate a 'live-work' situation where those living in the building could also work in the same building or neighborhood. Privately owned properties are more likely to be redeveloped into a live-work atmosphere, than publicly owned parcels.

The following elements of the Comprehensive Plan are germane to this proposal:

Design on a Human Scale

Compact, pedestrian- friendly communities allow residents, workers and visitors to walk to shops, services, cultural venues, and jobs, reduce traffic congestion and improve people's health. Commercial space should face the street and should mimic a traditional Main Street development pattern with clear display windows, multiple entrances, all weather canopies and seating areas. There should be no blank walls facing public streets or walkways. Parking should be provided in the rear of structures with access roadways

limited to side streets. Pedestrian pathways should be well- lit and protected from rain and snow.

Provide Choices

People want variety in housing styles and size and want conveniently accessible shopping, recreation, entertainment, transportation and employment. A variety of pedestrian-friendly uses create dynamic neighborhoods and accommodate residents in different stages of their lives. Residential densities should be a minimum of 10 dwelling units per gross acre of land within the development with higher densities of 30 to 80 units per acre encouraged. These densities facilitate the efficient provision of frequent transit service, convenient shops and services, affordable development, and help create vibrant street life.

POLICY 5.3. IT IS THE POLICY OF THE CBJ TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN DOWNTOWN JUNEAU AS A SAFE, DYNAMIC AND PLEASANT CENTER FOR GOVERNMENT AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES, PUBLIC GATHERINGS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS, AND RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES IN A MANNER THAT COMPLEMENTS ITS RICH HISTORIC CHARACTER AND BUILDING FORMS.

Implementing Actions

5.3.IA1 Encourage new high-density residential development as in-fill housing above ground-floor commercial space or as adaptive re-use of historic commercial or other non-residential buildings. Encourage development of housing for residents who would not own or need to park automobiles in the Downtown area, such as student, elder and Downtown workers. Encourage Single-Room-Occupancy (SRO) units, loft-style housing and live-work space in the Downtown area.

5.4.IA2 Expand the Centennial Hall Convention and Civic Center facilities as needed in coordination with a combined or separate performing arts complex within a cultural campus area of Downtown Juneau generally bounded by Gold Creek, Willoughby Avenue and Egan Drive. This cultural campus would provide a much-needed venue for arts and cultural performances for residents and summer visitors to enjoy as well as additional exhibition and meeting space for events, conventions and meetings held at Centennial Hall and additional space for Legislators, staff and visitors to the Capital City.

POLICY 10.2 IT IS THE POLICY OF THE CBJ TO ALLOW GREATER FLEXIBILITY AND A WIDER RANGE OF CREATIVE SOLUTIONS IN RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED USE LAND DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE URBAN SERVICE AREA

POLICY 10.13 IT IS THE POLICY OF THE CBJ TO PROVIDE FOR MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT THAT INTEGRATES RESIDENTIAL, RETAIL AND OFFICE USE IN DOWNTOWN AREAS, SHOPPING CENTERS, ALONG TRANSIT CORRIDORS, AND IN OTHER SUITABLE AREAS.

Standard Operating Procedure

10.13.SOP1 Maintain a category on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Maps and the Zoning Maps that allows high density residential and retail and office uses as mixed use developments. Provision of public transit services to mixed use developments would justify lower parking requirements, particularly for housing to be occupied by students, seasonal workers, the elderly and/or mobility-impaired persons.

POLICY 10.14 IT IS THE POLICY OF THE CBJ TO RESERVE SUFFICIENT LANDS AND FACILITIES TO SUPPORT THE STATE CAPITAL FUNCTIONS IN DOWNTOWN JUNEAU, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, COMMERCE, COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES.

Implementing Actions

15.1.IA2 Promote the development of a Juneau Performing Arts Center in Downtown Juneau to provide venues for live performances, visual arts, receptions, public meetings, and convention-related presentations.

15.1.IA3 Support the concentration of arts, entertainment, dining, museum and cultural activities and venues as a cultural campus that integrates such things as artists workshops, housing, and joint-use parking in the area of Downtown Juneau near the Capitol Complex.

Overall, the Comprehensive Plan encourages the development of mixed use buildings, expansion of the State Capitol Complex, creation of new high-density housing, and expansion of cultural arts facilities. The PD-1 overlay is one of many tools that can help facilitate this type of development.

COMPLIANCE WITH CBJ LAND USE CODE

The off-site parking and loading regulations are located in Title 49, Land Use code under 49.40.210. The Zoning District map indicating the zoning of the neighborhood. See attachment 'F'. Listed in the table below are the most common land uses in the downtown area. The associated parking requirements with and without the PD-1 reductions are also shown. The commercial uses are based on gross floor area.

Table 1: Parking Requirements

		Current Parking Req.	PD-1 Parking Requirement
Land Use			60% Reduction
Retail		1 space per 300 SQ FT	1 space per 750 SQ FT
Restaurant		1 space per 200 SQ FT	1 space per 500 SQ FT
Office		1 space per 300 SQ FT	1 space per 750 SQ FT
Residential			
Single Family		2 spaces	.6 spaces; rounds to 1 space
Apt. 1 Bedroom		1 space	.3 spaces
Apt. 2 bedrooms		1.5 spaces	.45 spaces
Apt. 3 & 4 bedrooms		2 spaces	.6 spaces

There is a significant reduction in the number of parking spaces required under the PD-1 Parking Requirement column.

The neighborhood currently falls under two zoning districts: Mixed Use (MU) and Mixed-Use 2 (MU-2). Though both districts permit the development of diverse uses within buildings, and the MU-2 district encourages additional residence development

Parking District Expansion Scenarios

Both public and private land ownerships are well represented in the area, and have varying development potential and parking needs. Based on land ownership and development potential, CDD staff created three different expansion areas, labeled Scenarios 1 – 3 under attachments ‘A’ – ‘C’, Each scenario is discussed below.

Scenario 1 (Attachment A)

This area covers three blocks: 1st Block: From the State Office Building (SOB) east to Seward Street incorporating many State of Alaska office buildings; 2nd Block: From the SOB west to Whittier Street incorporating State and City property; and the 3rd Block: All properties between Willoughby Street and the drainage ditch behind the State Museum. Most of the land in this scenario is under State of Alaska and CBJ ownership, with a few privately owned parcels. The PD-1 district would facilitate growth of the Capitol

complex and help retain State offices in Juneau. This is strongly endorsed by the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. Staff was informed that many State departments provide 1 parking space for each employee. This results in more parking spaces than what is required as the minimum in the Land Use code. Because of this fact, the PD-1 may not have as strong of an influence for redeveloping some State land, as compared to the few privately owned properties in the area. However, with private property located adjacent to State buildings, some commercial uses could take advantage of the PD-1 parking reduction during future expansions. Further, commercial uses may rely on attracting nearby State office workers as customers.

Scenario 2 (Attachment B)

This area covers all properties under Scenario 1 plus the parcels between the State Museum and Gold Creek to the west. Property in this new block is all privately owned, and therefore, would react to pressures from the market forces. Retail in this area has been changing most frequently and is heavily influenced by the market. These properties would have a high redevelopment potential if located in the PD-1 district.

Scenario 3 (Attachment C)

This scenario includes properties in Scenario 1 & 2, and would match the boundary of the Willoughby District Plan and closely match the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Mixed Use land use designation boundary. This expansion is ideal because the PD-1 district would help meet the goals of the Willoughby District Plan and Comprehensive Plan by facilitating denser development without requiring high parking requirements. This scenario differs from the first and second scenarios by incorporating properties on the north side of Willoughby Avenue such as the Salvation Army site, Fireweed Home, Indian Village, Andrew Hope Building, State Farm Insurance office, Bowling Alley, and the Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC) strip mall. The State Capitol complex and other nearby state and city buildings are incorporated to aid in the growth of the State Capitol, as encouraged in the Comprehensive Plan.

49.70.900-49.70.1097 COASTAL DEVELOPMENT, HABITAT, AND WETLANDS

This section of the Land Use code is not germane to this proposal.

ALASKA COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (ACMP)

Not applicable. This project does not require a state-coordinated ACMP review.

Discussion

As stated earlier, each of the three PD-1 expansion scenarios benefit specific users whom have different redevelopment needs.

Scenario 1 overlays mainly public property. This scenario would facilitate Capitol complex growth, as encouraged by the Comprehensive Plan. Some of these properties are expected to be redeveloped in the near future, and would benefit from having a reduced parking requirement. As

stated earlier, these properties are not likely to react to market forces in the same fashion as privately-owned land. Also, many State departments must provide parking for their employees, often much higher than the minimum parking requirement. Therefore, the significant parking reduction may not be fully taken advantage of in this scenario alone, but does offer some development incentive.

Scenario 2 would overlay all properties in scenario 1 and a large block of private property that could greatly benefit from parking reductions. This would meet the goals of the Willoughby District Plan, but would not cover the entire boundary of this plan. In turn, Willoughby Avenue would define the PD-1 district line and create the “other side of the tracks” feel, where one side does not have the same benefits of the other side. Properties on the north end of Willoughby Avenue would feel some effects from development on the other side of the road, but could not use the same parking requirement reduction to complement adjacent development.

Scenario 3 enlarges the previous scenarios to match the boundary of the Willoughby Plan including the entire traditional Village site and reaches more of the Mixed Use boundary of the Comprehensive Plan. This would encourage more new and re-development of land areas where mixed-used, high density housing is preferred.

Taking no action would continue the normal parking requirement for downtown buildings that has proven ineffective in facilitating mixed-use, high density development.

Findings

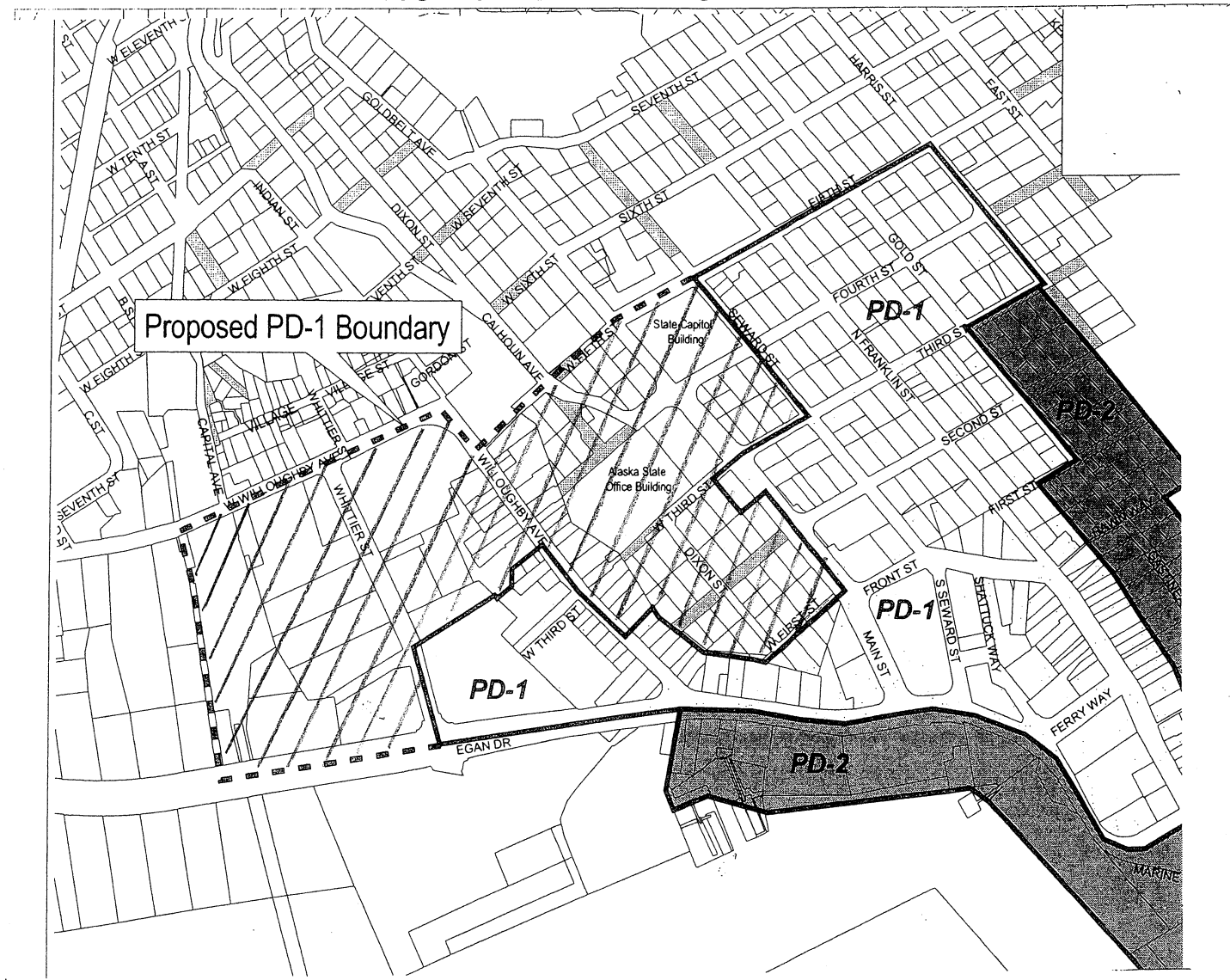
Based on the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Code zoning map, and draft Willoughby District Land Use Plan, staff finds scenario 3 being most favorable for the PD-1 district at this time.

During the required public noticing for this proposal only property owners under scenario 1 were notified. This reflects a previously preferred area for expanding the PD-1 District. If the Commission favors Scenarios 2 or 3, staff would send out a second public notice to those additional property owners and schedule this proposal for a later public hearing for further review.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the Director's analysis and findings and recommends approval to the CBJ Assembly to extend the existing PD-1 parking district as shown under Scenario 3 (Attachment C). As stated above under ‘Findings’, if Scenarios 2 or 3 are preferred, staff will reschedule this proposal to a later meeting to expand the public noticing to additional property owners.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING



PROPOSAL: Expansion of the Parking District - 1 overlay boundary.

FILE NO: AME2011 0004	APPLICANT: CITY & BOROUGH OF JUNEAU
TO: Adjacent Property Owners	Property PCN: VARIOUS
HEARING DATE: Jun 28, 2011	Owner(s): PUBLIC & PRIVATE
HEARING TIME: 7:00 PM	Size: N/A
PLACE: ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS Municipal Building 155 South Seward St Juneau, Alaska 99801	Zoned: MULTIPLE DISTRICTS
	Site Address: DOWNTOWN JUNEAU
	Accessed via: N/A

PROPERTY OWNERS PLEASE NOTE:

You are invited to attend this Public Hearing and present oral testimony. The Planning Commission will also consider written testimony. You are encouraged to submit written material to the Community Development Department no later than 8:30 A.M. on the Wednesday preceding the Public Hearing. Materials received by this deadline are included in the information packet given to the Planning Commission a few days before the Public Hearing. Written material received after the deadline will be provided to the Planning Commission at the Public Hearing.

If you have questions, please contact Eric Feldt at 586-0764 or email: eric_feldt@ci.juneau.ak.us

Planning Commission Agendas, Staff Reports and Meeting Results can be viewed at www.juneau.org/plancomm.

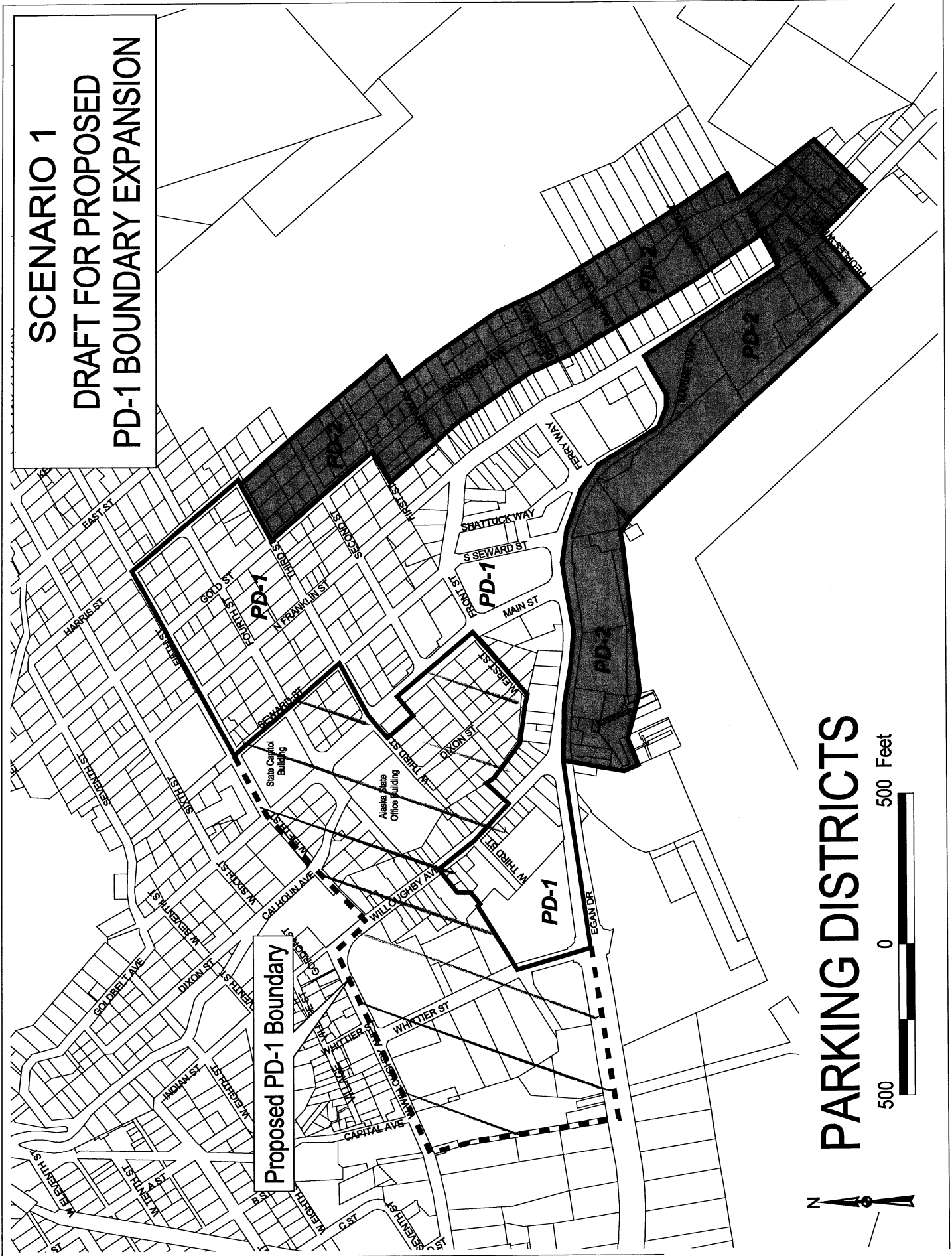
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SCENARIO 1
DRAFT FOR PROPOSED
PD-1 BOUNDARY EXPANSION

PARKING DISTRICTS

500 0 500 Feet

Proposed PD-1 Boundary



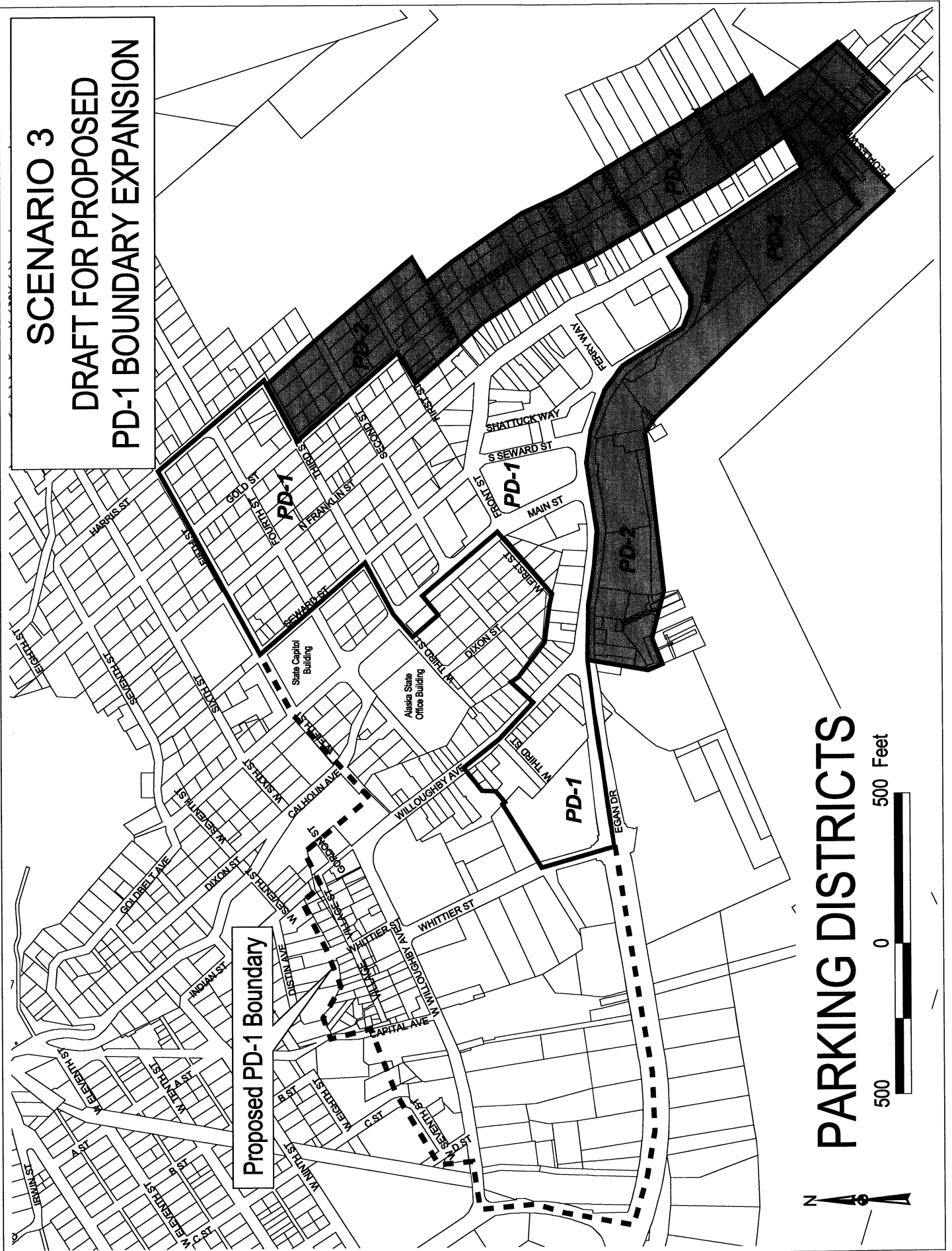
SCENARIO 2

DRAFT FOR PROPOSED

PD-1 BOUNDARY EXPANSION



SCENARIO 3 DRAFT FOR PROPOSED PD-1 BOUNDARY EXPANSION



PARKING DISTRICTS

500 Feet

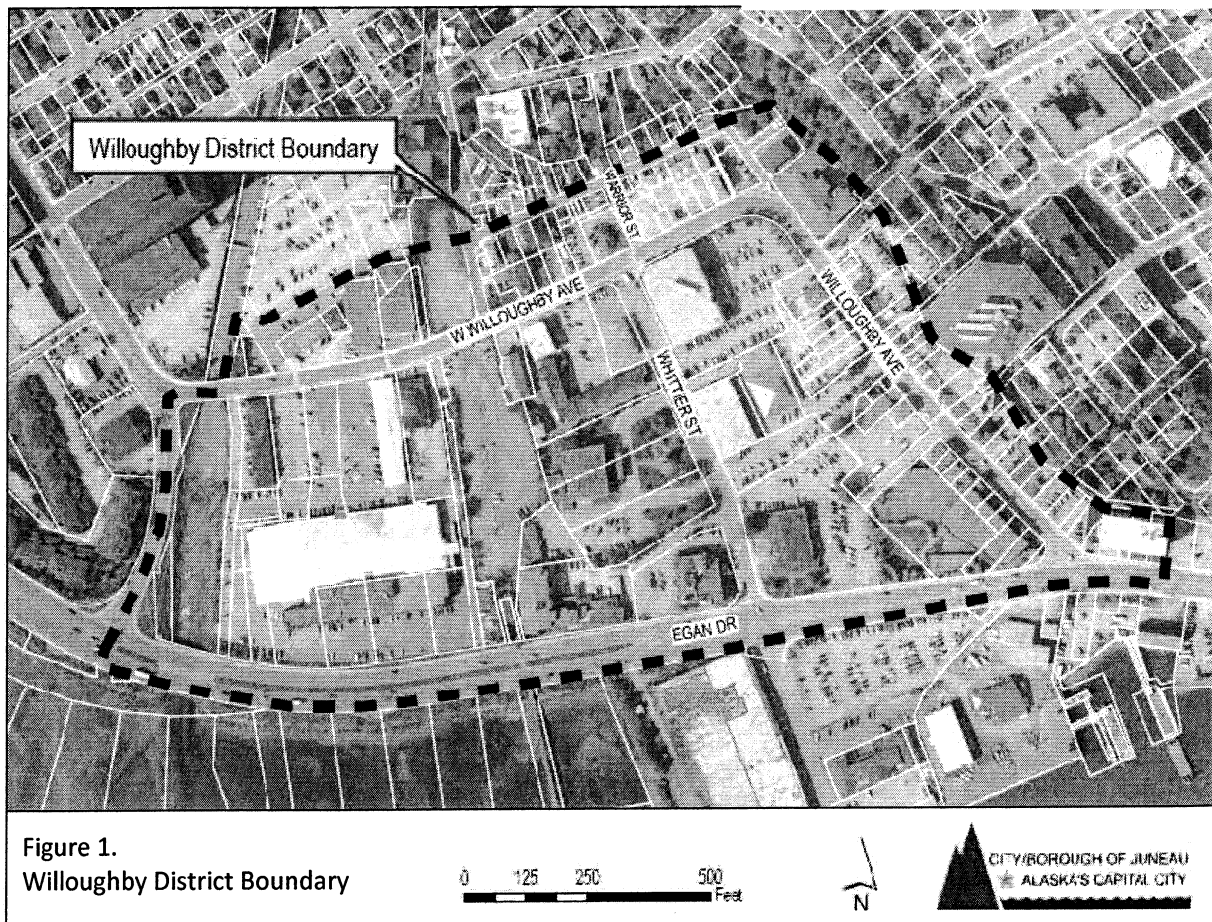
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*** Not Adopted as of 6/21/11 ***

1.1 Willoughby District Boundary

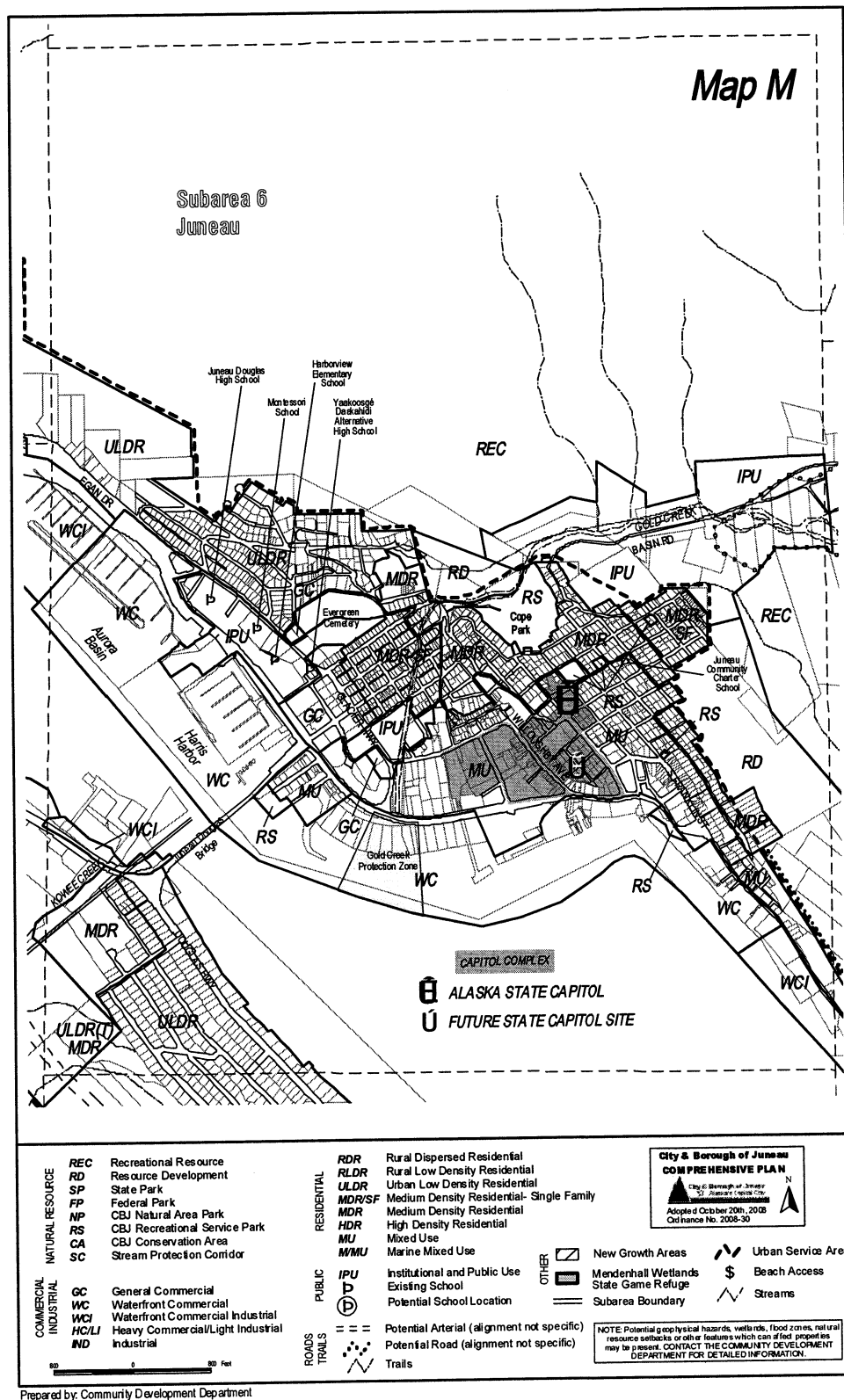
The Willoughby District is the area bounded by Gold Creek, Egan Drive, Willoughby Avenue, and Village Street.



Aerial photo taken June 2006

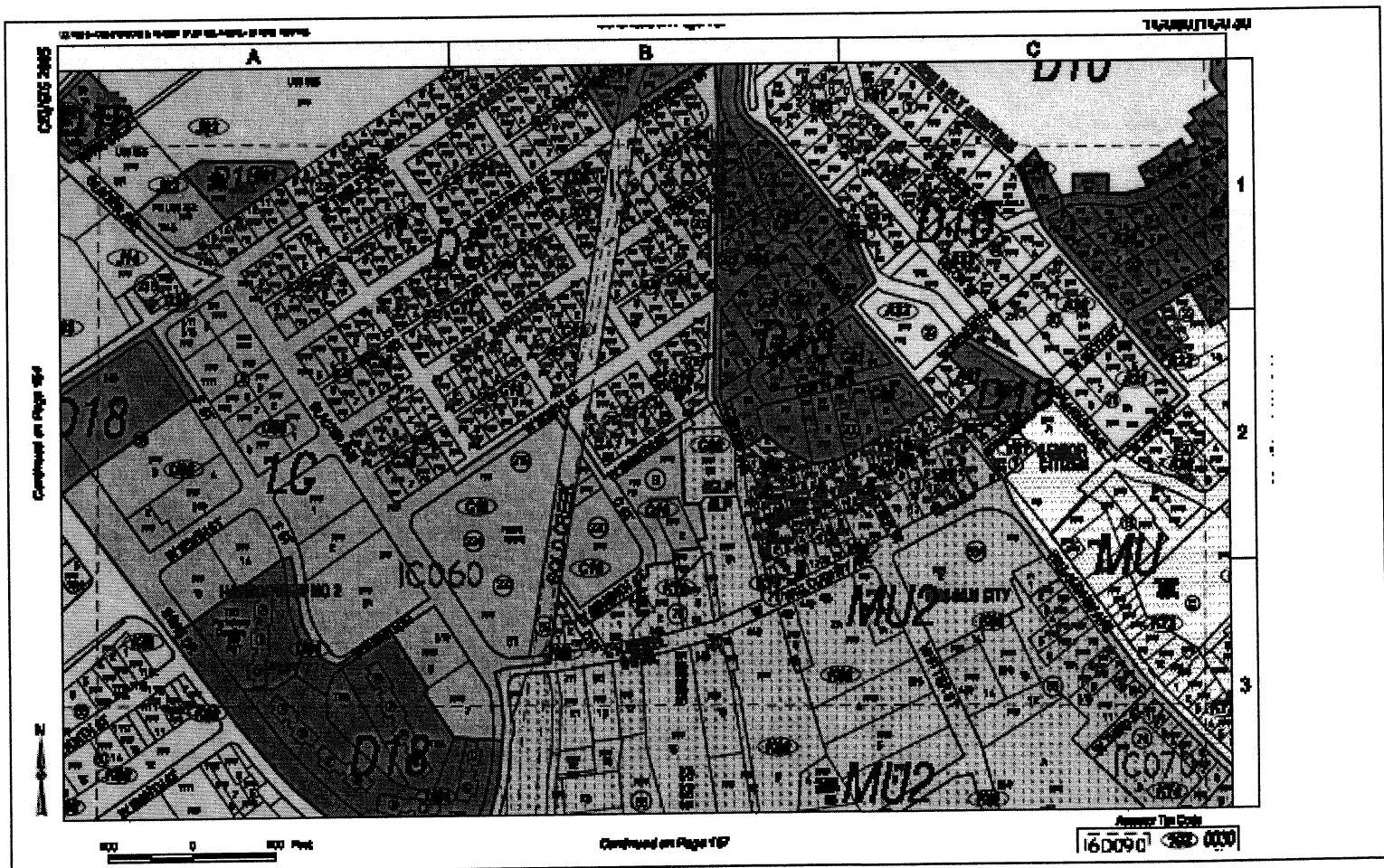
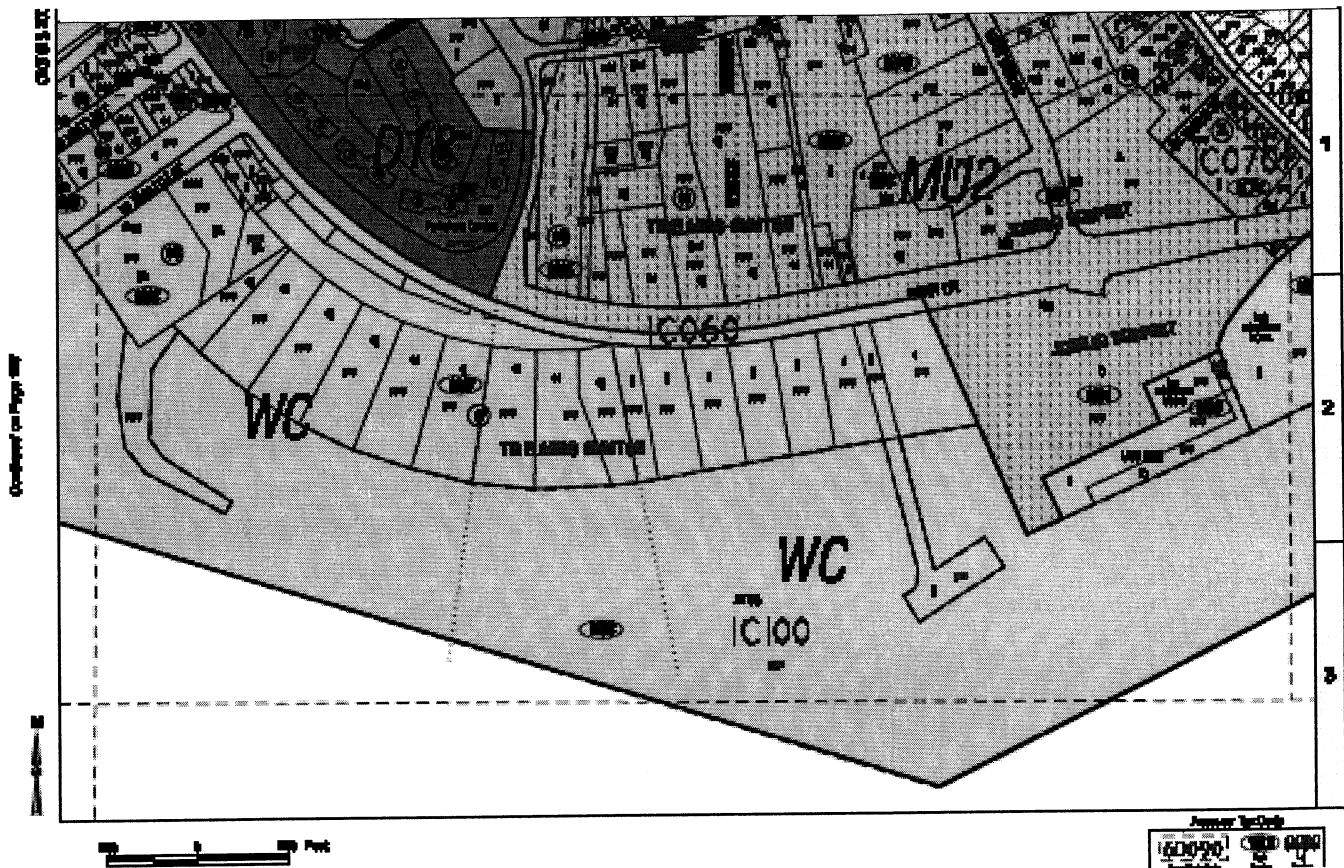
Map created Oct. 20, 2010

2008 Comprehensive Plan Map



Map M

ZONING DISTRICT MAP OF DOWNTOWN JUNEAU





ATTACHMENT G