

PLANNING COMMISSIONER 101: JUST THE BASICS

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WHY PLAN?

- Saves money
- Sets expectations
- Improves economic development and quality of life
- Provides forum for reaching consensus
- Connects people to the community
- Protects property values
- Reduces environmental damage and conserves resources

WHAT IS A PLANNING COMMISSION?

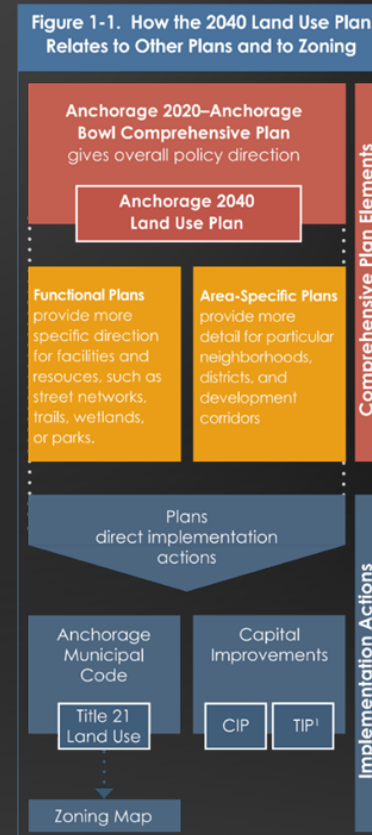
- Established by AK state statute (Title 29)
- The planning commission is a body of citizens that serve local government. The commission is an advisory group to the governing body on issues and activities related to planning, platting, and land use regulation and community development in general.
- The planning commission is responsible for keeping planning and land use-related topics and issues in perspective for the community and should not become lost in the daily decisions and details of life (AK Planning Commission Handbook).

AS 29.40.020. PLANNING COMMISSION

- Each first and second class borough shall establish a planning commission consisting of five residents unless a greater number is required by ordinance.
 - Membership shall be apportioned so that the number of members from home rule and first class cities reflects the proportion of borough population residing in home rule and first class cities located in the borough.
 - A member shall be appointed by the borough mayor for a term of three years subject to confirmation by the assembly, except that a member from a home rule or first class city shall be selected from a list of recommendations submitted by the council.
 - The compensation and expenses of the planning commission and its staff are paid as directed by the assembly.

AS 29.40.020. PLANNING COMMISSION

- In addition to the duties prescribed by ordinance, the planning commission shall:
 - (1) prepare and submit to the assembly a proposed comprehensive plan in accordance with AS 29.40.030 for the systematic and organized development of the borough;
 - (2) review, recommend, and administer measures necessary to implement the comprehensive plan, including measures provided under AS 29.40 040.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ADDITIONAL ROLES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

- Zoning and subdivision maps
- Individual project approvals
- Report on Capital Improvement Plans
- Coordinate planning efforts
- Consider land acquisition
- Special studies

AS 29.40.030. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- The comprehensive plan is a compilation of policy statements, goals, standards, and maps for guiding the physical, social, and economic development, both private and public, of the first or second class borough, and may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - (1) statements of policies, goals, and standards;
 - (2) a land use plan;
 - (3) a community facilities plan;
 - (4) a transportation plan; and
 - (5) recommendations for implementation of the comprehensive plan.
- With the recommendations of the planning commission, the assembly shall adopt by ordinance a comprehensive plan. The assembly shall, after receiving the recommendations of the planning commission, periodically undertake an overall review of the comprehensive plan and update the plan as necessary.

WHAT IS A COMP PLAN?

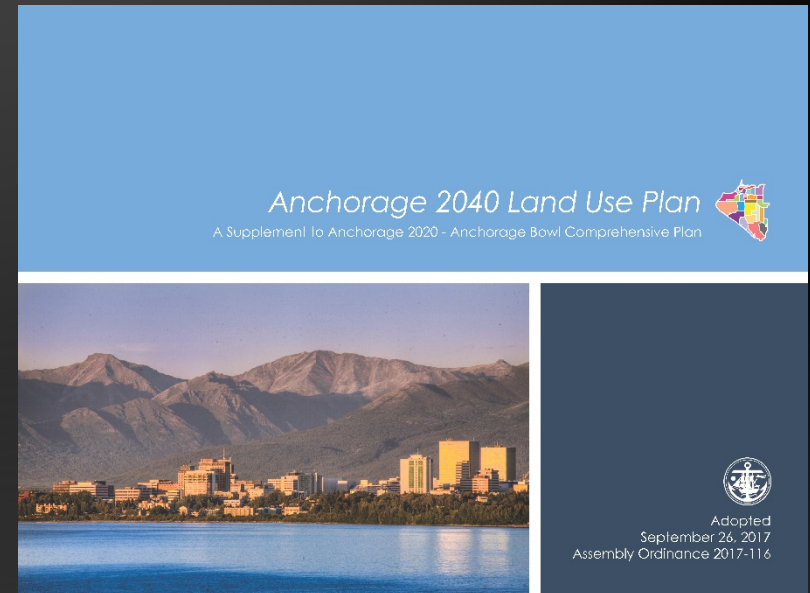
- Blueprint for guiding development in a community.
- Addresses population dynamics and demographics, physical conditions, land use, the environment, transportation, public facilities, open space, and legal and fiscal aspects.
- Reflects the vision and direction of residents.
- Vision, goals, objectives, policies, and implementation strategies provide a framework for decision-making regarding land use, transportation, housing, public facilities, and economic development.
- Based on predictions of needs and resources for a period of time
- Not a new concept
- No national standard
- Called by many different names
- Defined by individual state legislation

GENERAL PURPOSES FOR A COMP PLAN

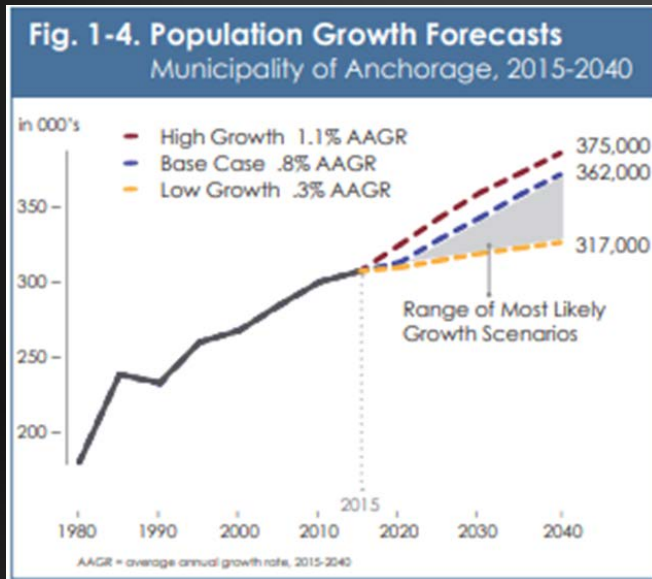
- Source of information
- Estimate of the future
- Indicator of goals
- Technique for coordination
- Device for stimulating public interest and responsibility
- Guide for Planning Commission decisions

3 MAJOR PREMISES OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

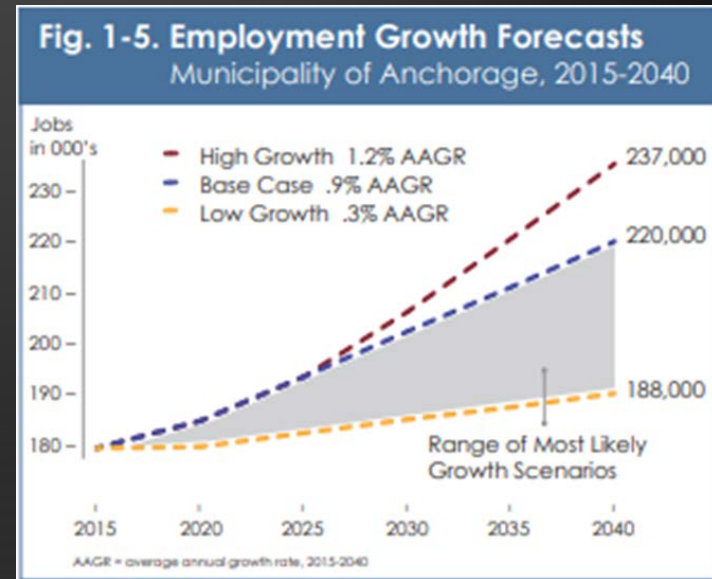
- **Comprehensiveness**
 - Scope of concerns
 - Interaction between elements of development
- **Policy**
 - Statement of interests or position
 - Commitment to desired goals
- **Projection**
 - Identify gap between current and desired conditions
 - Indices of change
 - Measure of performance



THE ANCHORAGE EXAMPLE

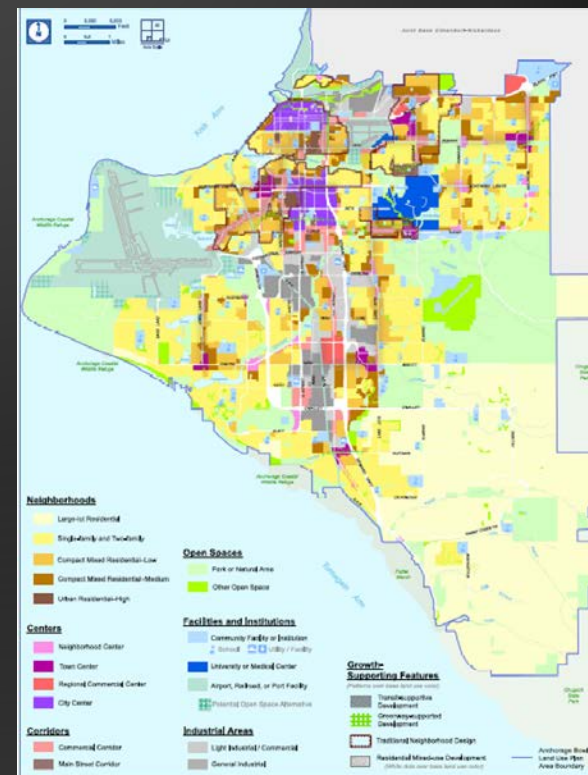


- 47,000 People
- 21,000 New Households



- 44,000 Jobs
- 220,280 Total Employment

THE ANCHORAGE EXAMPLE



THE CHALLENGE OF IMPLEMENTATION

- How to achieve the goals of the plan
 - Get buy in early
 - Have champions
 - Develop implementation strategy
- Primary tools to implement the plan
 - Zoning
 - Other land use regulations
 - Subdivision process
 - Public works/ capital improvements
 - Protections of mapped streets

MAKING THE COMP PLAN CONNECTION

- Read, discuss, and understand your Plan
- Decide on level of detail/specificity desired in your Plan
- Update the Plan periodically
- Allow for added elements
 - Neighborhood and/or community plans
 - Economic development
 - Continuity Plan/Disaster Recovery Plan
 - Trail Plan or Parks and Recreation Plan
 - Solid Waste or Recycling Plan

MAKING THE COMP PLAN CONNECTION

- Examine your implementing regulations
 - Achieving your Goals? If not, why?
 - How can they be improved?
 - More Specific
 - Decision Criteria
 - Definitions
 - Too vague
 - Broad enough to accommodate change over time
 - Code expressly authorizes interpretation
 - Use specific standards
- Use Plan Routinely
 - Staff Reports
 - Findings

AS 29.40.040. LAND USE REGULATION

- In accordance with a comprehensive plan adopted under AS 29.40.030 and in order to implement the plan, the assembly by ordinance shall adopt or amend provisions governing the use and occupancy of land that may include, but are not limited to,
 - (1) zoning regulations restricting the use of land and improvements by geographic districts;
 - (2) land use permit requirements designed to encourage or discourage specified uses and construction of specified structures, or to minimize unfavorable effects of uses and the construction of structures;
 - (3) measures to further the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan.

DISCUSSION

