# PLANVALDEZ

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## VALDEZ COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION 2021

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## VALDEZ COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

OCTOBER 2021

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA • OPPORTUNITIES IN EVERY SEASON •

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We respectfully acknowledge that we live, work, learn, and operate on the traditional ancestral lands of the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people.

These lands have been stewarded for thousands of years since time immemorial by the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people. The traditional name of this area in Sugt'stun is Saucit which may come the Alutiiq word for person or people, suk.

Valdez was not traditionally occupied year-round, but was a traditional trading ground between the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq and Ahtna people since time immemorial, and we respect that this land served an important purpose for this region. We acknowledge the past history of colonization, its impacts, and the resilience of the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people who still live here today. Valdez is a unique community in that the Valdez Native Tribe serves all local indigenous residents, and is not specific to the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people. We acknowledge the ancestral, and current Indigenous stewards of this land who reside here today.

## VALDEZ CITY COUNCIL

Sharon Scheidt, Mayor
Jimmy Devens
Dennis Fleming
Susan Love
Dawson Moore
Alan Sorum
Todd Wegner

## VALDEZ CITY STAFF OVERSIGHT

Mark Detter, City Manager
Roxanne Murphy, Assistant City Manager
Kate Huber, Planning Director

## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Colleen Stephens, Chair
Kathy Nielsen, Vice Chair
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Cherise Beatus
John Engles
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Rhonda Wade
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SALT
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ECI
Gordon Smith
Corvus Culture

## THANK YOU

The planning team would like to thank the community of Valdez, City Council (current and past), Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee, Planning and Zoning Commission and other City Boards and Commissions, Focus Group participants, Planning Department and other City Departments, and all who provided input in the development of this plan.

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# YOUR PLAN

The Valdez Comprehensive Plan Revision - ***Plan Valdez*** is a collective vision developed by the community to shape Valdez over the next 20 years. It offers a foundation for determining effective public policy and land use decisions now and into the future. The plan is broken down into themes, goals, and actions that create a framework for informed, directed development and decision making. ***Plan Valdez*** outlines short- and long-term planning actions that will continue to safeguard the City's history and sense of place. Overall, the plan:

- Establishes a blueprint for future land use and infrastructure to effectively and efficiently guide private and public investments;
- Seeks to balance competing demands on land to the greatest benefit for citizens and the community as a whole;
- Identifies areas that will benefit from public infrastructure to promote well-planned, phased development patterns;
- Facilitates the development of work plans, budgets, capital improvements, and recommended amendments to zoning and land use ordinances to achieve desired goals and responsible stewardship of public resources; and,
- Implements a consistent framework for addressing land use issues that will establish a degree of predictably for property owners, businesses, and residents.

***Plan Valdez*** builds on the region's rich history and community values, integrates previous and upcoming plans and projects, and recognizes the contributions of City leaders and community members. It reflects these continuances and changes, as well as the contemporary values and issues of concern within the community. It embodies what Valdez will be for future generations and acknowledges that change is gradual and requires a long-term commitment.

***Plan Valdez*** *was drafted during the health pandemic, COVID-19, and at a time when the nation is actively addressing racial equity. Both of these historic events make planning for the future less certain but also exemplify the need to proactively plan for a healthy and inclusive future.*

## WHO USES A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A Comprehensive Plan means little if it is not implemented. To be successful, the plan strategies must be implemented through the shared responsibility of all stakeholders including residents, private developers, civic groups, businesses, City Staff, Boards and Commissions, local government, and elected officials through capital improvements. The following outlines who and how they would use ***Plan Valdez.***

## THE ROLE OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A Comprehensive Plan serves many functions, and is used in a variety of ways.

PLANVALDEZ

**BASIS FOR COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND DECISION MAKING** The goals and policies guide the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council in their deliberations on zoning, subdivisions, capital improvements, and other matters relating to land use and development. This provides a stable, long-term basis for decision-making.

**BASIS FOR REGULATORY ACTION**
Forms the groundwork for a statutory basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

**LONG-TERM GUIDE** Assists in the long-term evaluation of public and private proposals that affect the community's physical, social, economic, and environmental characteristics.

### COMMUNITY MEMBERS

*(Residents, business owners, developers)*
When submitting a development application or reviewing one, use the plan to document which goals, objectives and actions the proposed project implements.

### CITY STAFF

*(Planning & Development Services)*
Use the plan to conduct analysis of proposed actions for consistency with the plan and local ordinances to make land use and zoning recommendations to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

### PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

*(Community members appointed by City Council)*
Use the plan to provide policy recommendations to the City Council. Base decision-making and findings of fact on consistency with the plan, local ordinances, and regulations.

### CITY COUNCIL

*(Elected by community members)*
Base decision-making and findings of fact on consistency with the plan. Use the plan to guide policy decisions to facilitate plan goals, objectives, and actions.

## PLAN ORGANIZATION

The plan is organized to ensure that City leaders, elected officials, staff, and the community can effectively use the document as a guide for important policies and decisions. To create a framework for the priorities within the plan, seven themes were developed each with specific goals supported by the community's vision with short- and long-term actions to achieve the goals. Through public outreach and input, the themes were chosen to encapsulate ***Plan Valdez.***

Implicit in the themes, goals, and actions is the overarching need to respond to community needs and priorities while respecting the values, character, and opportunities that are unique to Valdez. In turn, there is a desire to respond to and promote Valdez's social, economic, physical, cultural, environmental, and historic characteristics that make up the community's fabric.

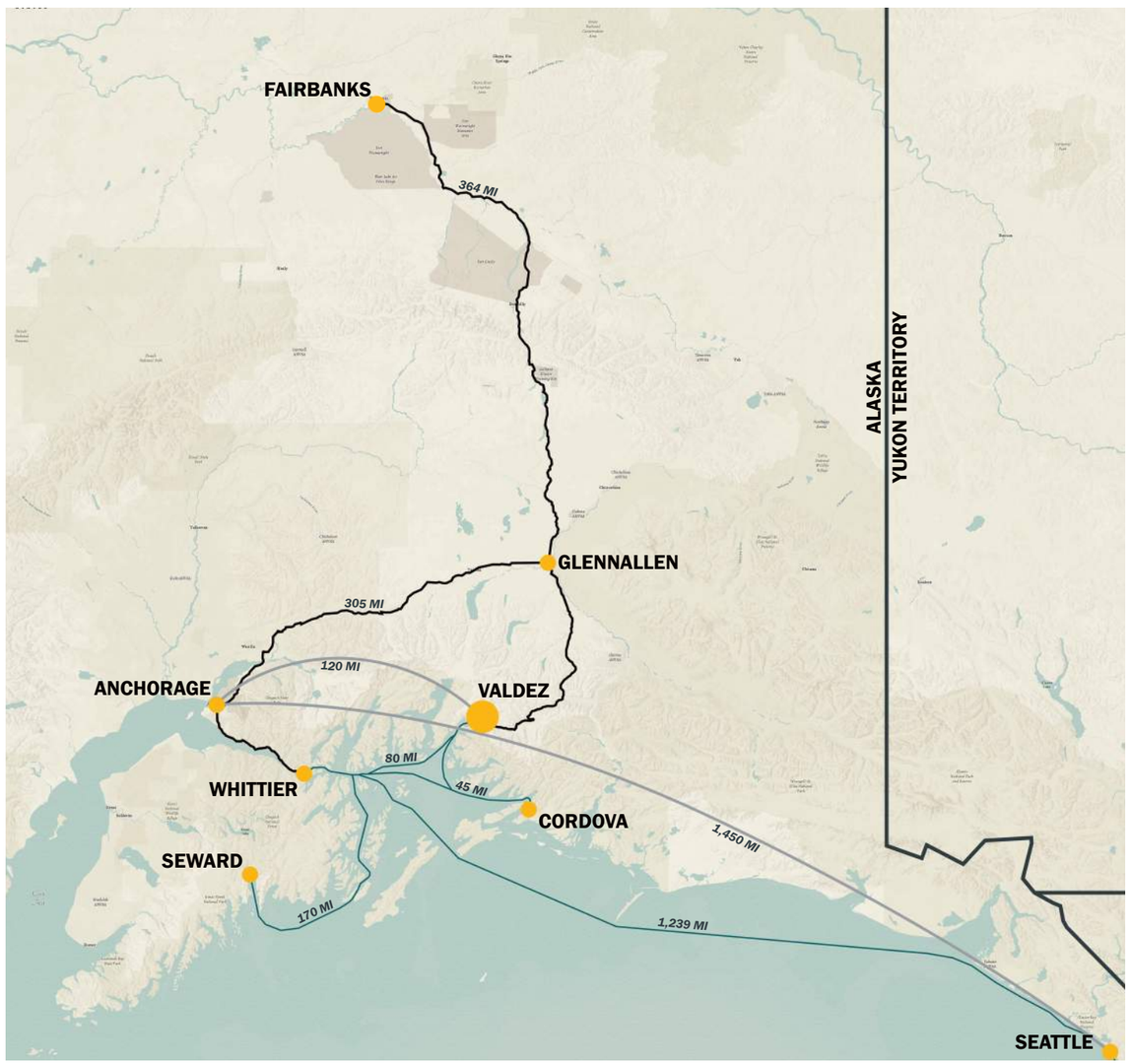
## PLANNING THEMES

## KEEPING THE PLAN UP TO DATE

***Plan Valdez*** is intended to be a living document. Full updates to the plan should be undertaken every 5 years. The plan may also require amendments between updates. A major amendment would result in a substantial alteration of the City's land use mixture or boundary or a rezone of existing parcels and require approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. Major amendments to ***Plan Valdez*** should be done when:

- The extension of facilities and services (road, water, sewer) has changed the optimum intensity of development appropriate for the area.
- The pattern of growth in an area no longer reflects the type of growth expected in the current designation.
- There are new community or neighborhood plans and/or specific planned developments, which may either replace existing designations or which may have policies, elements, or standards which modify, replace, or supersede the plan.
- There is substantial support from residents and property owners for the proposed change.

# ABOUT VALDEZ




## HISTORY OF VALDEZ

Located on the Chugach Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people's ancestral homeland, the Valdez area has the traditional place name of Saucit, and may have the meaning '*the people from the place that rises into view'.* It has been a gathering place since time immemorial for Alaska Native people to meet, hunt, fish, and trade. Seasonal villages existed in the area; however, they were not permanently inhabited before the town's founding by white settlers. Captain Cook was the first non-native visitor to Prince William Sound in 1778. Spanish cartographer Salvador Fidalgo sailed to Alaska in 1790 to reestablish the Spanish claim to the area and named it the Bay of Valdes after Admiral Antonio Valdes.

In the winter of 1897, 4,000 prospectors traveled to the Valdez area as part of the Klondike Gold Rush. Valdez was falsely advertised as the All-American Route to the goldfields of the Interior; however, there was no town or established trail upon their arrival. The prospectors established a tent city that eventually grew into Valdez. The following year, a formal trail was established through Thompson Pass to the Interior. Realizing Valdez as a strategic location, the Army built Fort Liscum at the present day Alyeska Trans-Alaska Pipeline terminal.

The trail provided the only American inland route to Fairbanks and was upgraded to become the Richardson Highway in 1919, with Valdez serving as the primary shipping port in and out of the Interior. During this time, the primary industries included local mining, shipping, fox farming, fishing, and tourism. In 1924, the Alaska Railroad connected the port community of Seward to Anchorage and Fairbanks, and Valdez was no longer the only entry to the Interior. The community entered its first bust period, with the population falling to 500 residents. At the onset of the bust, Fort Liscum closed. Valdez continued as a fisheries, shipping, and local mining community, but at a smaller scale. Over time, the community served a greater role in the shipping of military freight to the Interior.

On Good Friday, March 27, 1964, a magnitude 9.2 earthquake rocked the Valdez area. The earthquake triggered an underwater landslide resulting in several tsunami waves that destroyed the Valdez waterfront, killing 35 people. The townsite (now called Old Town) was condemned and relocated four miles to the west at its present site. In 1973, Federal Government plans approved the Trans-Alaska Pipeline construction with the terminus at Valdez, setting off a growth boom with 8,000 residents. In 1989, the population dropped to 3,500 and has remained near 4,000. Today, Valdez's primary industries are the oil sector, fisheries, transportation and shipping, local government, and recreation-based tourism.

**IN THE BEGINNING**
Ancestral homeland to the Chugach Sugpiaq/Alutiiq people.
Source for fishing, hunting, and trading.

**1741 TO 1867**
Russian and European explorers arrived.

**1867**
U.S. purchase Alaska from Russia.

**1897 TO 1898**
Gold-seekers come to Valdez to follow the "All-American Route" over the Valdez Glacier into the Interior.
Route advertised as a pre-existing trail but miners arrive to find no town or trail and a tent city springs up forming Valdez.

**1898**
Military trail from Port Valdez to Eagle is established.

**1901**
The City of Valdez is incorporated with a population of 300-400 people.
Valdez-Eagle Trail constructed.

> "The town was here before the pipeline and it will be here after. Don't plan for the kids you have now, plan for future generations."
>
> *Valdez Resident*

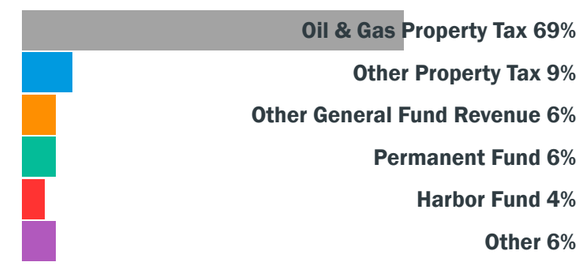
# LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Valdez is a home-rule city. The Home Rule Charter states that the Charter "shall be liberally construed to the end that the City may have all powers necessary or convenient for the conduct of its municipal affairs, including all powers that cities may assume pursuant to the provisions of the state constitution." The city manager serves as the chief administrative officer for the City and is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of, the City Council. The city manager is responsible for the overall supervision and coordination of City operations and the City budget. City of Valdez departments include:

- Administration
- Capital Facilities
- City Clerk
- Economic Development
- Finance
- Fire
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
- Planning
- Police
- Ports and Harbors
- Public Works

## VALDEZ BUDGET SOURCES

The City operates on an annual budget that represents a calendar year fiscal year, beginning on January 1st and ending on December 31st. The annual budget report highlights the financial needs and resources of the City's upcoming fiscal year. These items include capital expenditures, capital improvements, City expenditures, and City revenue. Over the past 6 years from 2016 to 2021, the City budget has ranged from $50M to $73M with an average annual budget of approximately $61M. Property tax revenues have averaged approximately $44.5M.




> "My parents and grandparents, they talk about the cycles. It's been a boom and bust town since the beginning."
>
> *Valdez Resident*

**1902**
Army builds Fort Liscum and installs a telegraph line connecting Seattle, WA, to Eagle, AK (bypassing Canada for the first time – WA-AK Military Cable and Telegraph System).
Keystone Canyon Trail is further developed.

**1906**
Cliff Gold Mine, north shore of Port Valdez, results in approx. 51,740 oz. of gold (roughly $19 million in current prices) and 8,153 oz. of silver.

**1900 TO 1920**
Valdez is a busy town supporting a bowling alley, university, several breweries, a dam and hydroelectric plant, sawmill, the seat of (the Territory of) Alaska's Third Judicial District, a bank, two movie theaters, two newspapers, an Ursuline convent, and an excellent public library, hospital, and public school system. In addition to the main industries of mining and shipping, fox farming, fishing, and tourism provide additional employment and revenues.

**1919**
Valdez-Eagle Trail becomes Richardson Highway.

**1920 TO 1930**
Valdez's first boom has busted. Mining ceases to be profitable.

**1924**
The completion of the Alaska Railroad from Seward to Fairbanks, via Anchorage. Valdez is no longer the only entry to the Interior.

**1925**
Army pulls out of Valdez.

**1964**
Good Friday Earthquake.

**1967**
Town is relocated to its present day site.

**1973**
Trans-Alaska Pipeline is approved.

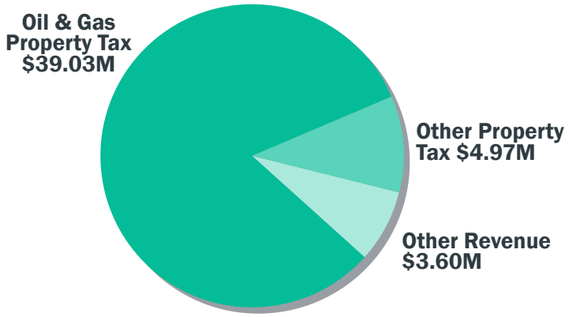
**1977**
First tanker carrying Alaska North Slope crude oil pulls away from its berth at the Valdez Marine Terminal.

**1989**
Exxon Valdez oil spill.

**TODAY**
A diverse economy comprised of oil, winter and summer tourism/recreation, fishing and seafood, transportation, and shipping.

One of the key challenges for the long-term economic viability of the City of Valdez finances is its dependence on property taxes for revenue.

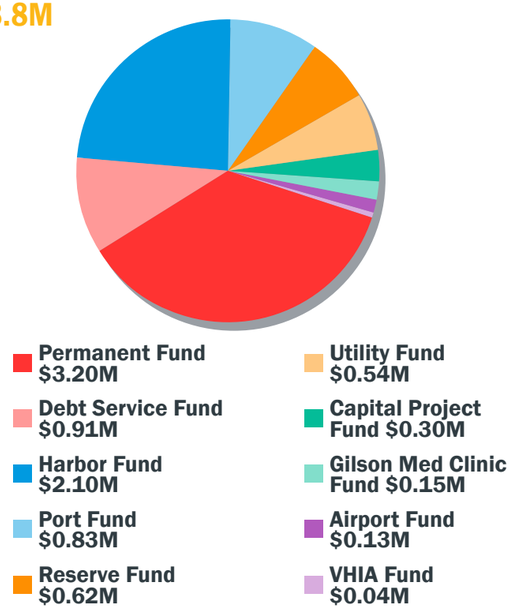
## 2020 GENERAL FUND REVENUES $47.6M



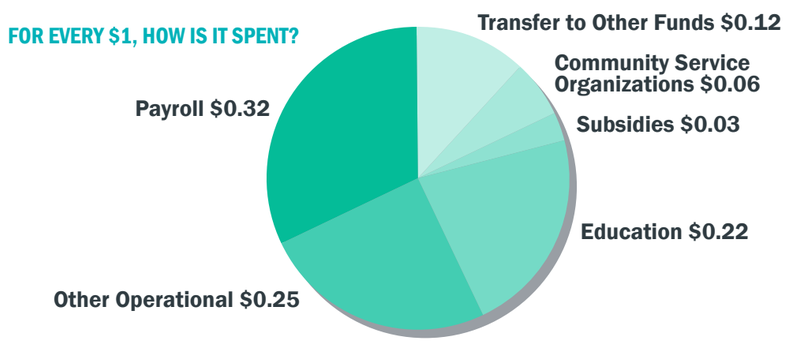

Since 2006, approximately 90% of the city's general fund revenues have been comprised of property taxes. Because the City's tax structure is dependent on property tax revenues, the City does not burden taxpayers with sales tax and substantial fees on City operated utilities. The City's mill rate is 20 mills (2% or $20 dollars for every $1,000 of taxable value) to maximize property tax collections based on the State of Alaska Statutory formula for the taxation of oil and gas. About 90% of the tax revenue comes from the marine terminal, Petro Star's Valdez refinery, and other Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) pipeline facilities. This leaves the City of Valdez especially vulnerable to changes in property valuations for these key properties. Case-in-point, a new valuation for TAPS will be developed in 2021. If that assessment is significantly below current levels, the City of Valdez will have to reassess its fiscal priorities and/or find alternative revenue streams for the community. Both the fairness and the sustainability of the Valdez tax and fee system will be a challenge and focal point for the community looking forward.

The City of Valdez Permanent Fund was established 1977. The City of Valdez charged oil company owners of the pipeline 1%, in exchange for letting the companies use the City's bonding authority to issue tax-exempt bonds. This created a $13.5 million windfall and the permanent fund. The principal of the fund "shall not be spent, but shall be held perpetually in trust for the benefit of the present and future generations of Valdez residents." The purpose of the Valdez Permanent Fund and the fund's long term capability of becoming a source of operational funding for the City will be examined by the City Council. The City should develop a plan for revenue diversification in the event of a significant future disruption to property tax values.

## 2020 REVENUE FROM OTHER FUNDS $8.8M




## HOW DOES VALDEZ SPEND ITS MONEY?




# THE ECONOMY

By many measures, Valdez has the highest median household income in Alaska. Well-paying oil jobs push income levels significantly higher than other Alaska towns. Valdez has the highest total median earnings of any community across Alaska at $63,304 and also has the highest median full-time, year-round earnings at $71,346.

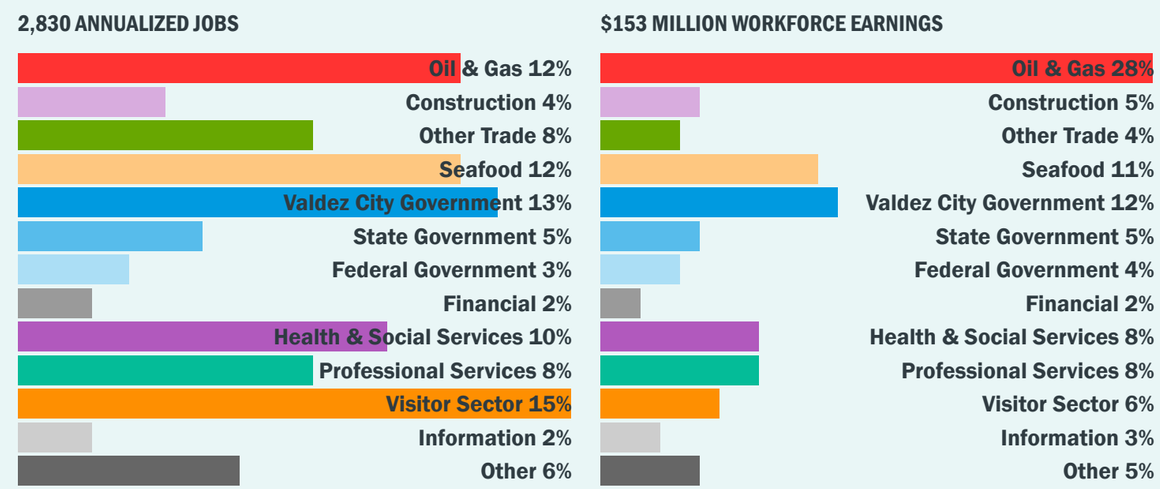
In terms of median household income, Valdez has the 2nd highest level of household earnings of any city in the state. With a median household income of $95,847, the median household income in Valdez is 25% higher than that of Alaska as a whole and 59% higher than the US.

A total of 3,922 non-local workers in the Valdez-Cordova Census Area* in 2018 earned $83.9 million, accounting for 41% of all earnings that year, and comprising 59% of the total workers in the area.

The high level of non-resident workforce is driven by seafood processing and oil refining. In the Valdez-Cordova Census area, 82% of seafood processing workers are non-Alaskans.

In Valdez in 2018, there were 2,830 jobs with an associated $153 million in workforce earnings. The oil and gas sector is the largest provider of local wages, making up 28% of all workforce earnings in 2018. However, oil supports fewer annualized direct jobs, or year-round equivalent jobs, than the visitor sector, the seafood sector, or the Valdez government, which comprise the top three job providers in the community.

## THE WHOLE VALDEZ ALASKA ECONOMY 2018

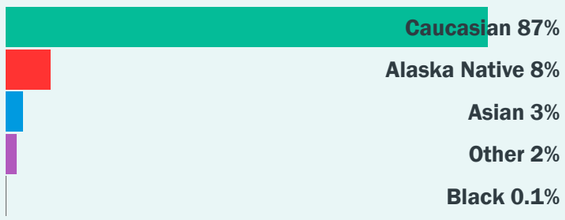



**In 2019, Valdez was split from the Valdez–Cordova Census Area and became part of the newly formed Chugach Census Area along with Cordova and Whittier. At the time data was collected, Chugach Census Area information was not available for this new area.*

"Where can we effectively compete? An airplane factory won't work, we are a hub for transportation, fishing, and tourism."

*Valdez Resident*

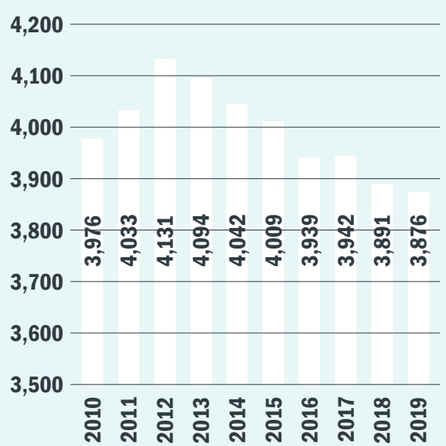
# WHO LIVES HERE?




## RACE

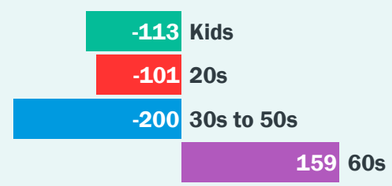
Racially, Valdez is a predominantly white community. The majority of residents are Caucasian, eight percent are Alaska Native, three percent are Asian, and 0.1% are Black. Ethnically, Valdez looks very different from the state of Alaska as a whole, which is approximately two-thirds white, 19% Alaska Native, 9% Asian, and 5% Black.

## 2020 POPULATION: 3,855




In the past seven years, the population has fallen every year but one, for a total loss of six percent, or 255 people. Some specific sub-demographic groups have fallen much more quickly than the total population.

## 7 YEARS OF VALDEZ POPULATION CHANGE -225 PEOPLE -6%




## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Continued Valdez population losses are expected, with 38 fewer residents projected in 2020. The 2025 Valdez population is on track to be the lowest recorded population for the community since the 1980s. According to these pre-COVID-19 estimates, between 2020 and 2045, the community is expected to lose 7% of its population, with a loss of 11% in the three decades between 2015 and 2045.

## WHAT DOES POVERTY LOOK LIKE IN VALDEZ?

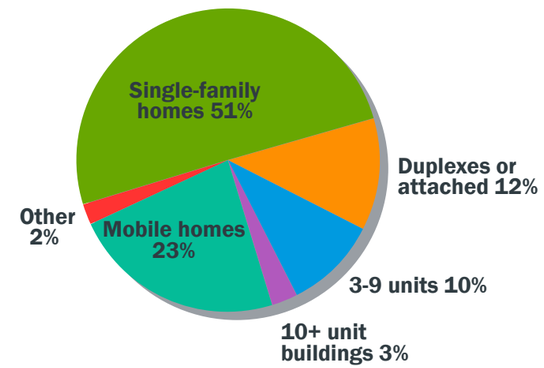
Nine percent of the total Valdez population is below poverty levels, including 16% of school-aged children. In 2018, 8% of the white population in Valdez was below poverty and 56% of Alaska Natives living in the community were living below poverty levels.

> "Sometimes people can't find housing so they choose not to relocate to Valdez for the job."
>
> *Valdez Resident*

# HOUSING

Valdez has a high percentage of mobile/manufactured homes that make up the overall housing stock. Nationally, just 4.6% of all housing stock is made up of mobile homes. In Alaska, that figure is slightly higher at 6.3%, while coastal Alaska is 7.4%. In Valdez mobile homes make up 23%, nearly a quarter, of all housing units.

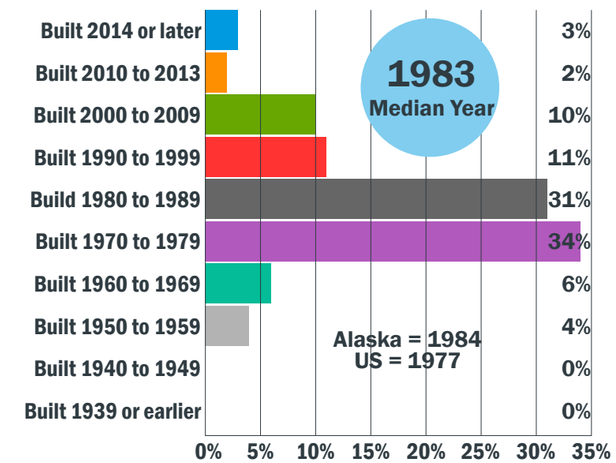
## VALDEZ HOUSING INVENTORY



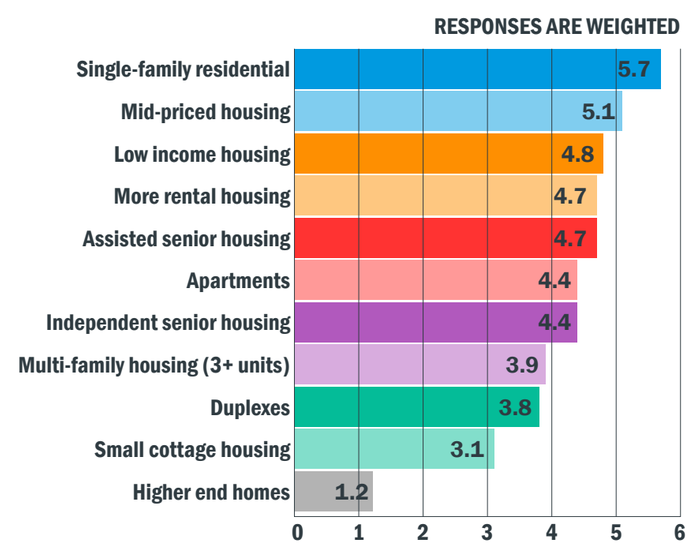

Valdez is also unique in terms of when housing was constructed in the community. Nearly all of the housing was built in the years immediately following the 1964 Good Friday earthquake when the community was relocated, and during the pipeline boom.

## YEAR BUILT IN VALDEZ

### PERCENTAGE OF HOMES BY YEAR BUILT




## HOW IMPORTANT ARE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOLLOWING HOUSING TYPES IN VALDEZ?




Results from the community survey provided feedback for the types of housing that the community feels is missing in Valdez. The top three housing developments that are most important to residents are single-family residential, mid-priced housing, and low-income housing.

> "The availability of housing in general is very important. This is the biggest complaint or concern we get from new hires."
>
> *Valdez Resident*

# COMMUNITY VOICES

**POST CARD MAILERS**
2,190 Mailed

**VIRTUAL MEETINGS**
134 Attendees

**MEETINGS**
29 Total

**DRAFT PLAN COMMENTS**
158 Received

**WEBSITE**
2,000+ Visits

**COMMUNITY SURVEY**
468 Responses

**FOCUS GROUP CONTACTS**
148 People

"When kids graduate they want to explore the world. When they come back to Valdez, they want to meet a partner, get a job, and buy a house. Can they do it?"

*Valdez Resident*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The community of Valdez shared with the planning team their perspective on what the future vision of their ideal community is. These community values, concerns, and aspirations created the foundation for ***Plan Valdez***. To date, throughout the 18-month long process, over 750 voices were heard through multiple opportunities to provide input. These opportunities included virtual public meetings, focus groups, City Commission and Board meetings, City Council work sessions, the community survey, and submitting comments in response to the release of the draft plan.

The planning team typically held monthly meetings with the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee throughout the process. Several meetings were held with the Planning and Zoning Commission, various City Boards and Commissions, the Planning Department, and other City Departments. Valuable input from these diverse groups of stakeholders also helped to shape the plan's vision.

## OUTREACH LIMITATIONS

At the onset of the project, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world and impacted the public engagement process planned for ***Plan Valdez***. Due to travel restrictions, the planning team resorted to virtual meetings throughout the duration of the discovery and planning process. The planning team maintained paper copies and mailers to ensure that people without access to the virtual meetings were included in the process and had chances to participate in ***Plan Valdez***.

While these tools were successful, they do not fully replace direct interaction and idea sharing that occurs through in-person engagement events. Unfortunately, these limitations were insurmountable and required to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

## WHAT WE HEARD

### COMMUNITY VALUES

- Small town spirit and values
- Neighbors helping neighbors
- Resiliency
- Access to recreation
- Culture and history

### CONCERNS

- Protecting character while growing the economy
- Increasing development costs and high cost of living
- Reduced regional transportation services
- Growing quality education and employment opportunities
- Diminishing population
- Access to healthcare
- Limited access to affordable childcare
- Long-term mental and physical health
- Lack of affordable housing and general lack of housing

### ASPIRATIONS

- Be a community where people want to stay
- Have a sustainable, stable, and year-round economy
- Have quality affordable services: education, health care, childcare, and senior living
- Have a variety of housing types to meet different needs and income levels
- Be a model city for wellness
- Grow in a positive and productive trajectory with the public and private sectors partnering in an efficient and effective manner
- Be celebrated for its quality of life
- Balance racial inequities

# OUR LAND

The natural features and resources of Valdez are central attributes that attracted early settlement and continue to attract residents, visitors, and businesses today. The historic and cultural resources of the community represent a living history of the area. Choices made in how the City is developed and how residents live day-to-day affect the quality of these resources. In turn, natural hazards, climate change, and other environmental issues potentially pose a threat to these same resources. Therefore, land use plans and major land use decisions need to be made with the fullest possible understanding of the resources and potential impacts. By integrating the natural, cultural, and built environment, Valdez will preserve and enhance a high quality of life for its residents with clean water, recognition of its historical past, habitat for fish and wildlife, and safe and secure places for people to live and work.

## LOCAL CULTURE

Valdez is located in Prince William Sound, the ancestral homeland of the Chugach Sugpiaq/Alutiiq people, and is rich in history and culture. There is scant documented information regarding the archaeological and cultural resources of the area; however, indigenous community members indicate there are important cultural resources here. Documented information is similarly lacking for subsistence use areas as the City of Valdez is located in a state Non-Subsistence Use Area and Valdez is considered a non-rural community under federal subsistence regulations. Community members have expressed their support in identifying and preserving the cultural resources in the area, including historic sites, buildings, and sensitive cultural locations.

Currently, the City of Valdez does not have a program that actively manages and considers cultural resources; however, ordinance 97-01 and Chapter 2.36 of Valdez Municipal Code established a Valdez Museum and Historical Archive that supports and enhances goals in heritage preservation, public education and economic development. The City of Valdez does not have a landmark designation program, nor does it maintain an inventory of local places deemed worthy of preservation. There are no properties in the City of Valdez that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and there are no properties listed in the Alaska Landmark Register.

Historic and cultural resource preservation is conducted as part a comprehensive planning framework, combining benefits of preservation with other community planning objectives. While federal and state laws and regulations govern the consideration of these place-based resources during state and federal project planning, consideration and preservation of these resources is most effective at the local level. The goal of ***Plan Valdez*** is to set up a framework that aligns with the private sector, independent organizations, and citizens to increase awareness of, and to protect Valdez's cultural resources.

## WHY WE CARE ABOUT OUR LAND AND ITS RESOURCES

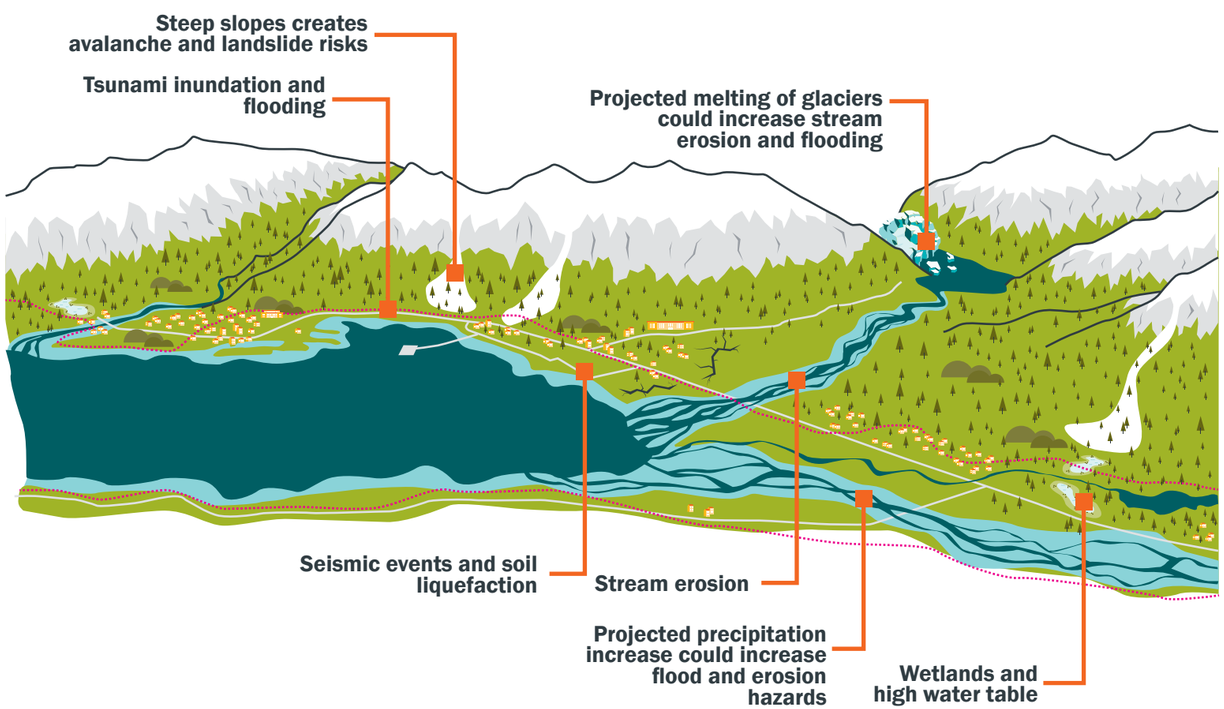
## FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO OUR CULTURAL RESOURCES

# ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Valdez's environmental system is an intricate network of living, engineered, and climatic features working together. The health of the City is directly correlated to recognition of the risks associated with this extreme landscape and the strength of this ecosystem. Developed areas are generally susceptible to flooding, erosion, liquefaction during earthquakes, and landslides and avalanches from the adjacent mountain slopes. Valdez is in an active earthquake zone, although rare, Valdez can suffer from wildfires in hot, dry weather.

Historically, avalanches have been a source of transportation disruption to the community, routinely blocking the Richardson Highway and cutting off road access into and out of Valdez. These avalanches and landslides can be triggered naturally by rain, groundwater fluctuations, and seismic events, and also by human activities. Prince William Sound creeks, streams and rivers surround and flow through the town, which is situated at approximately 100 feet above sea level. This makes Valdez prone to flooding, high ground water, and tsunami hazards.

Understanding the functions and risks associated with natural systems and what types of activities may impact these functions now and in the future as conditions change, is key to protecting sensitive lands and for sustainable development. These environmental conditions often add front-end costs to development projects, and operation and maintenance of systems in order to protect the public. It is therefore essential for the community to recognize natural hazard risks that have the potential to affect development and public safety and plan to be resilient to them. Public safety and critical infrastructure as well as structures that could pose a substantial risk to human life in case of damage or failure such as schools, senior and assisting living facilities, and hospitals should be located in areas with a low risk for hazards.



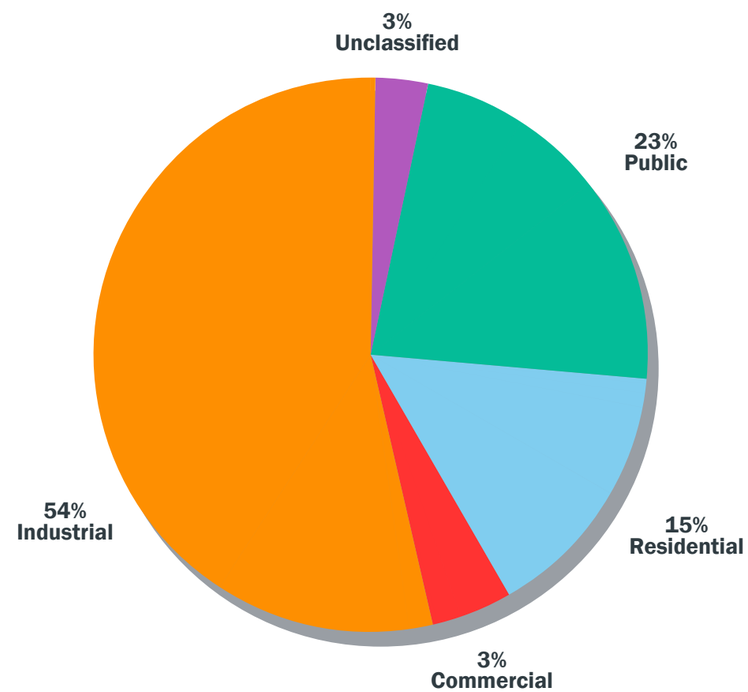

# LAND CLASSIFICATION

## LAND OWNERSHIP

The Valdez city limits encompasses 272 square miles of land and water, with approximately 222 square miles being land. Much of the land within the city limits, 202 square miles, are managed by an agency other than the City of Valdez and includes state and federal lands and are designated as Public Lands. The City of Valdez owns roughly 53% of land in Valdez not managed by state or federal agencies.

With the 202 square miles of lands managed by the state and federal agencies removed from the analysis, the following summaries the existing generalized zoning for the City of Valdez.

## ZONING ANALYSIS



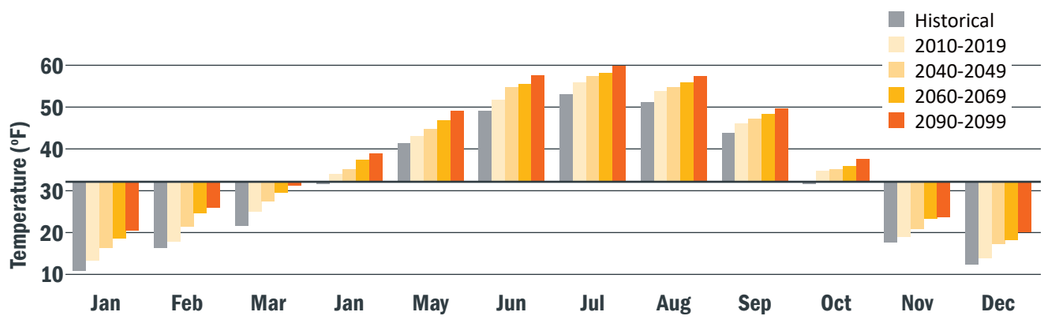

"Valdez is located within one of the most beautiful settings. With that comes impacts; both good ones and those that make life here challenging."

*Valdez Resident*

# CLIMATE PROJECTIONS

Climate change affects the characteristics of the hazards that affect our planning areas, and as such, is a lens through which we can examine planning decisions. Based on a planning horizon within this century, projected climate change impacts include increased temperatures and increased winter rainfall.

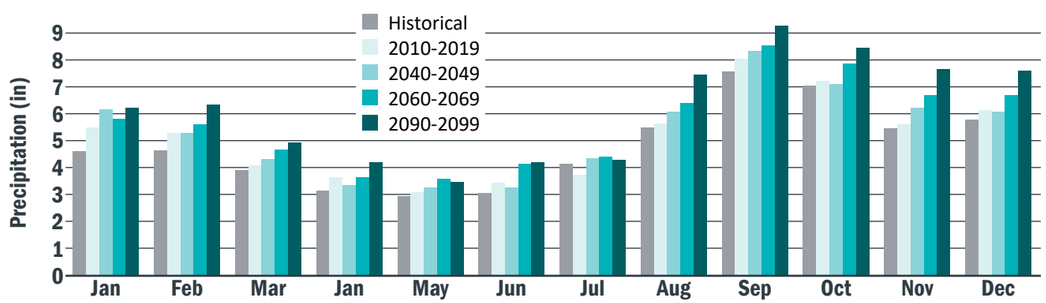
## AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURES FOR VALDEZ, ALASKA*




Average temperatures are expected to warm by about 5.5°F in the next 50 years, with average temperatures in January predicted to rise approximately 8.0°F above current temperatures from only slightly above freezing to well above freezing. Many rivers in the area will shift from a below-freezing to above-freezing temperature regime. The Valdez growing season may be expected to increase from 150 days to approximately 230 days.

* Climate change modeling is based on historical CRU 3.2 and 5 Model Projected Average at 10mm resolution, High Emissions (RCP 6.0) Scenario.

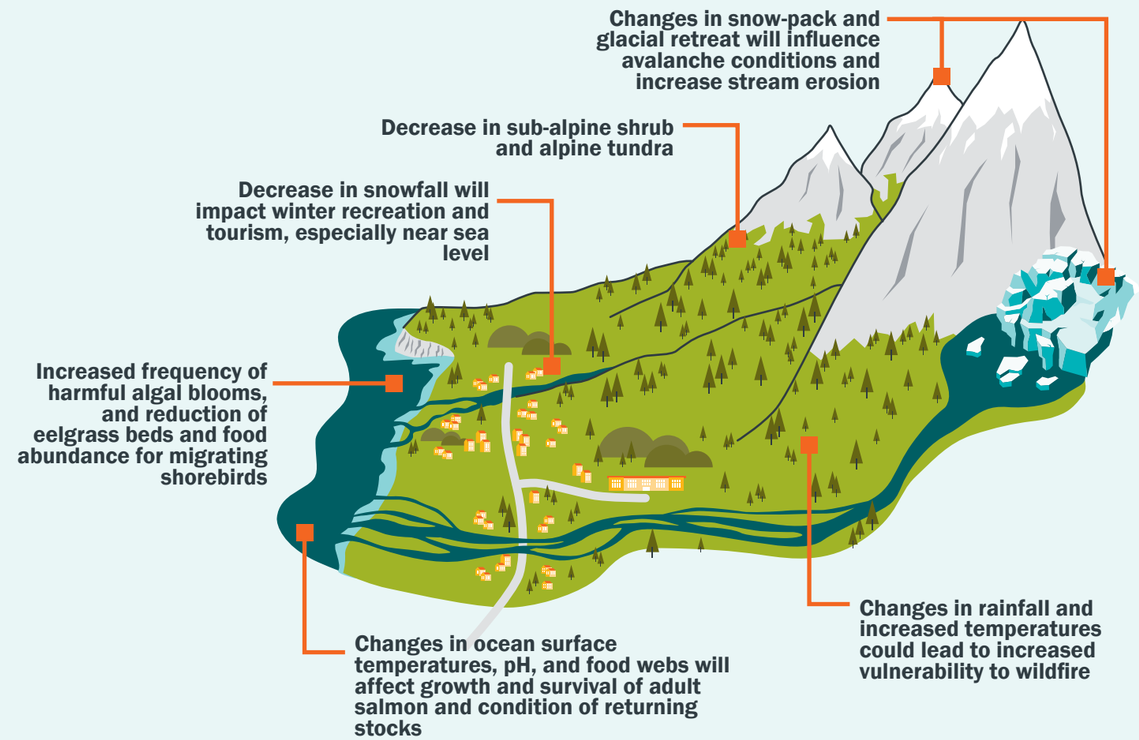
## AVERAGE MONTHLY PRECIPITATION FOR VALDEZ, ALASKA*




Greater precipitation is projected throughout the year, with the most substantial increases occurring from September through May. The proportion of days when precipitation is expected to fall as snow rather than rain is projected to decrease by 23 percent from October to March, with the largest decline in October to November. A potential increase in the frequency and intensity of strong storms is also expected.

* Climate change modeling is based on historical CRU 3.2 and 5 Model Projected Average at 10mm resolution, High Emissions (RCP 8.5) Scenario

# CLIMATE RISKS




# SEVERE WEATHER RISKS

Severe weather is a likely to become an increased threat to Valdez, affecting the whole community and putting over $250,000,000 of infrastructure at risk. These risks may include an increase in winter rain events, flooding, and erosion.

The estimated combined storm surge and tide elevation in Port Valdez with a 100-year recurrence interval is 10.6 feet above sea level, impacting waterfront locations and properties within the river deltas. Indirect flood risks that impact the public safety include road closures, access and response capabilities, limited availability of perishable commodities, and isolation. Flooding and erosion risks are considered likely and impacts to buildings and infrastructure in Valdez could be widespread. Impacts from rising sea levels are not anticipated due to land rebound.

Closures of the Richardson Highway due to snowstorms and avalanches in the Thompson Pass are more-or-less an annual event cutting Valdez off from road transportation for varying periods. The critical issue is frequency and severity, which could be affected by predicted increases in snowfall and temperature, making the snow-pack more unstable and producing larger avalanches. With the reduction of ferry service and recent uncertainty around commercial airline operations, closures of this sort would potentially have a more considerable impact today than five years ago.

While annual snow depths are expected to be reduced, the increase of late winter rain to snow on roof structures will add weight that could impact structures and affect drainage systems.

# DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY MAP

## DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY

Using City of Valdez publicly available data, environmental conditions, and hazard mapping, were overlaid to graphically illustrate and anticipate ecological impacts on development. Polygons were assigned values to display areas with the lowest, medium, and highest development costs based on conditions that would impact construction costs. The development suitability criteria are as follows:

- Low Development Constraints (Green): Areas without environmental impacts and slopes less than 10%.
- Medium Development Constraints (Yellow): Areas with one or more environmental impacts resulting in more extensive groundwork due to moderate slopes (10-15%), less stable soils, as well as areas of partial wetlands where mitigation may be required.
- High Development Constraints (Orange): Areas with one or more environmental impacts where significant groundwork and additional structures may be required. These include slopes 15-25%, significant soil and wetland conditions, and areas prone to flooding.
- Areas with Significant Environmental Constraints (Red): Development is not recommended in these areas due to steep slopes greater than 25%, avalanche and landslide hazards, and areas subject to significant flooding events.

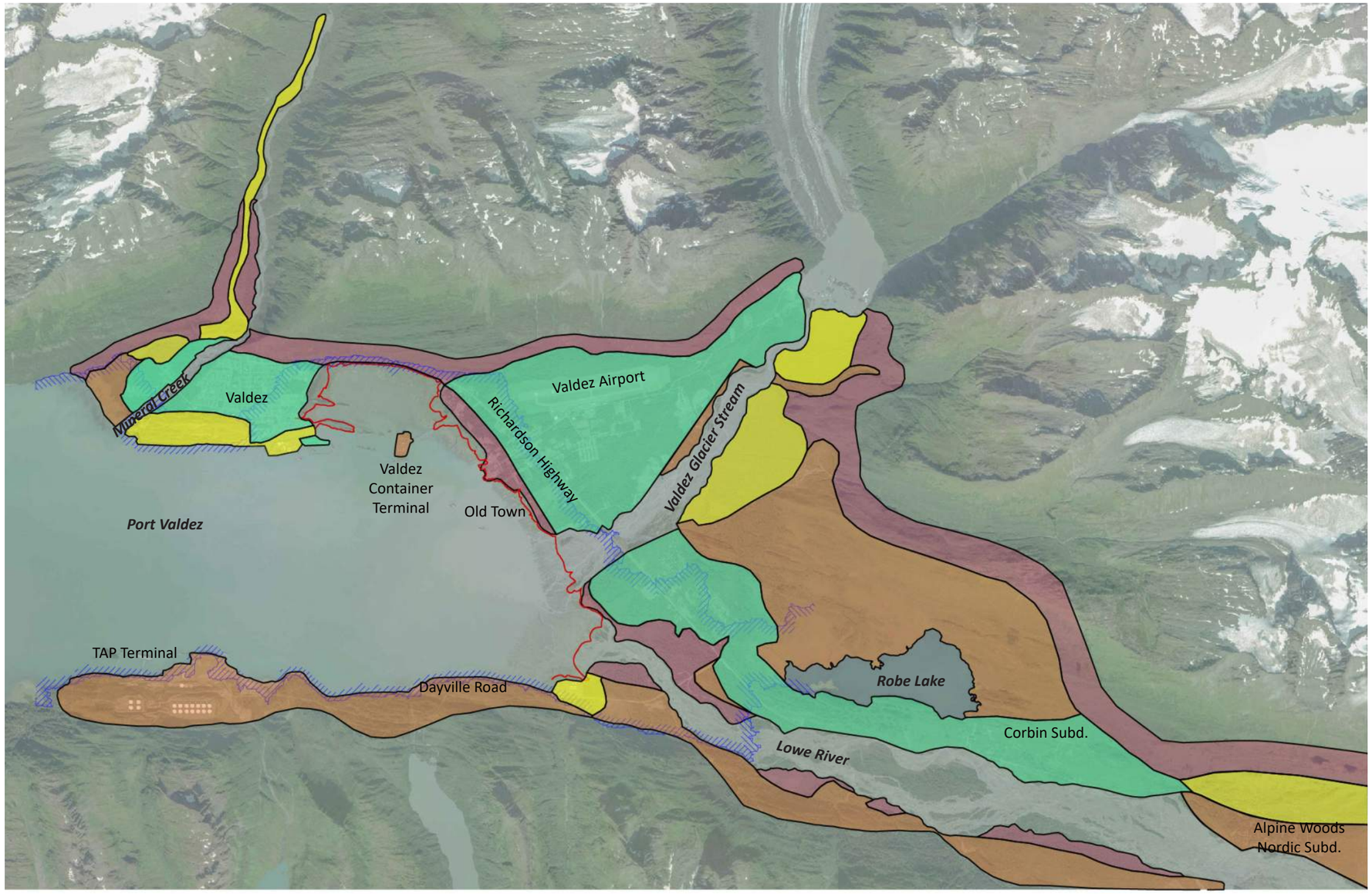
100 Year Storm Surge

Tsunami Inundation Boundary

Development below the 100 year storm surge elevation (10.6' MLLW) should be limited to critical waterfront structures needed for waterfront access. Design of structures in this area should take into consideration the risk of storm surge and flooding.

Development in the Tsunami Inundation area and in areas of steep slopes may be possible, however, the risk of damage and life safety must be carefully assessed and avoided or mitigated during planning.

This conceptual level map graphically illustrates generalized areas and is intended to be a guide to future land use development. The map is based on readily available data from the City and other sources and has not been field verified by the planning team. Actual site-specific environmental conditions and associated development costs may vary from what is shown. Additional information is in the Appendix as technical memorandums and maps.



# PLACE TYPES

The future land use map is a geographic and thematic representation for future land use development in Valdez. It is to be a gradual transition towards a long-term vision. ***Plan Valdez*** describes future land uses in terms of place types that reflect the overall character of Valdez and represent how the community would like to grow moving forward. The place types and corresponding land use maps are based on the goals expressed by the community, existing land uses, future needs, and known hazards. The place types will serve as the framework for future land use patterns encouraged in Valdez and as a guide for future development decisions, infrastructure improvements, and public and private investment.

While the place types will be used to guide future decisions on rezoning, development regulations, and policies, they are not legally binding but they provide direction for these other documents and policies that are. The place types set the stage for planned amendments to the City's zoning code and will help promote a more sustainable pattern of development. ***The intent is to incrementally transition zoning districts over time to implement the vision.***

Due to much of Valdez's land being developed, the proposed place types are generally consistent with existing uses and zoning districts with a few notable exceptions.

- May be different from what is physically on the ground today, indicating that the City expects the current use to gradually change in the future;
- Reflect recommendations to reclassify some industrial lands to better accommodate residential and commercial needs; and,
- Some land uses have been re-designated to Conservation, Recreation, or lands requiring further study with a recommendation they be designated for Future Residential/ Recreation or Future Industrial/Working Waterfront due to avalanche hazards, flood zones, steep terrain, or sensitive landscapes.

It is the intent that zoning will be the regulatory tool used to implement the place type designations. Each color-coded place type provides desired land uses and lists compatible zoning districts. Many of the place type categories have more than one corresponding zoning district, permitting an interpretation of the map based on existing uses and local conditions.

The place types include two overlays (see Specialty), and there may be a need to develop a third overlay to respond to the proposed Alaska To Alberta (A2A) railway development. Planning for the railway is still in its early stages, and if it becomes feasible, a new overlay should be developed as part of a future update of ***Plan Valdez***.

Areas without a place type designation are Public Lands managed by government agencies other than the City of Valdez. Conservation is an allowable land use for all place types. Descriptions of the land use types are found in the Appendix.

### CONSISTENCY STATEMENT & FINDINGS OF FACT

The comprehensive plan is not an ordinance or law, however, land use plans, development plans, subdivision actions, and rezoning decisions must be "consistent" with the adopted plan and future land use map. Consistent means "furthers or does not contradict the objectives, goals, and policies contained in the comprehensive plan."

Consistency statements and/or findings of fact are the specific reasons given to either approve or deny an application or request. Findings of fact should be, as the name implies, based on fact and substantial evidence rather than opinion. The following is an example of a motion and findings of fact related to a rezoning request.

The planning commission recommends that the governing body approve the proposed rezoning based on the following findings of fact: 1. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the ***comprehensive plan's future land use map***. 2. The proposed rezoning is consistent with ***the comprehensive plan's goals and policies*** related to the location of high density residential housing. 3. The proposed rezoning is consistent with adopted plans for the general area. 4. Findings of fact require supporting evidence.

## HOW TO USE THIS SECTION

**PLACE TYPE**

Each page contains a place type that describes the overall character of the area and desired uses.

**PRIMARY LAND USE**

These land uses are more prominent and play a defining role in characterizing the place type.

**SUPPORTING LAND USE**

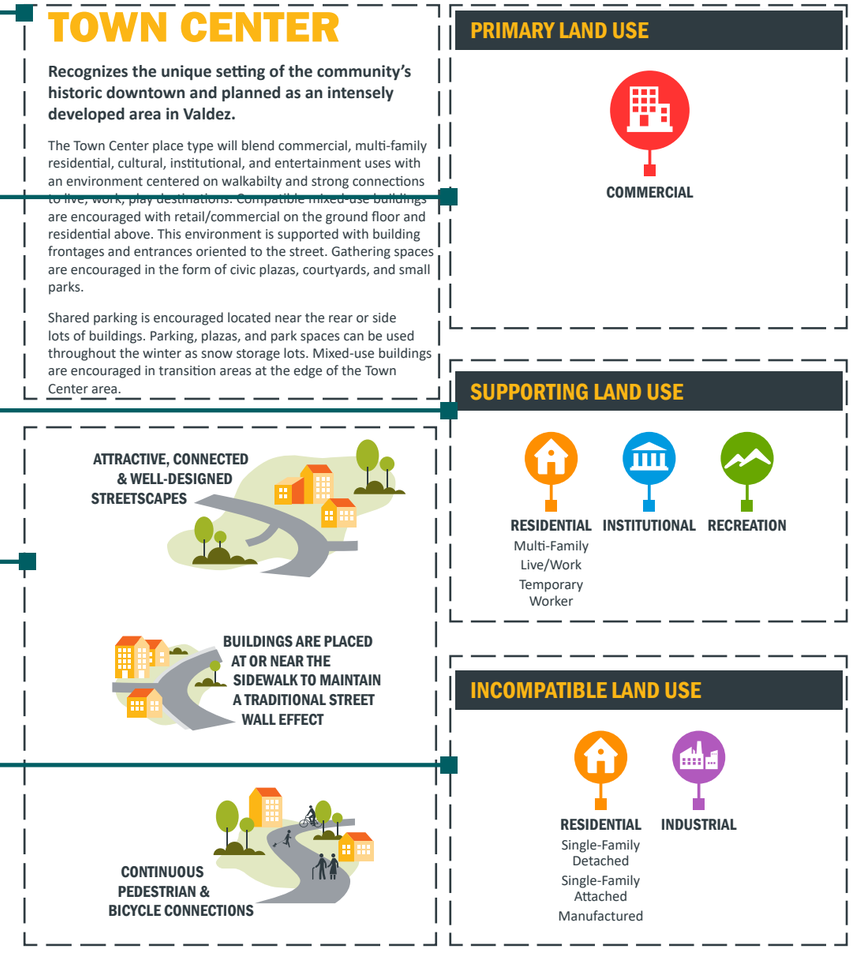
These land uses are less prevalent and serve to support the primary land uses.

**DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS**

These are the characteristics that will define the place type including uses, access and connectivity, visual character, and supporting amenities.

**INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE**

These land uses are not consistent within the place type. It is the intent that existing incompatible uses are transitioned out as the place types redevelop.



# RESIDENTIAL

**The residential place type includes a range of housing choices, including single-family, small lot single-family, townhomes, cottage housing, manufactured homes, and multi-family developments to meet the needs of present and future residents. As the community experiences shifting demographic and market trends, there will be an increasing demand for housing options that support all stages of life, income levels, and lifestyles. New residential development should add diversity to the existing housing stock and create a variety of housing opportunities for families, singles, young professionals, seniors, persons with disabilities, and multi-generational families.**

**Manufactured housing and mobile home parks are an important form of housing in Valdez, in that there is a shortage of affordable housing. While it is expected that existing mobile home parks will remain where they are, the desired long-term vision is for any new affordable housing to be located outside industrial areas to avoid public health, noise, emissions, and other safety impacts, including truck traffic that can be associated with industrial uses in residential areas.**

## NEW TOWNSITE NEIGHBORHOOD

***Characterizes the first area that was developed after the 1964 Good Friday earthquake and the relocation of the community.***

The New Townsite Neighborhood place type will continue to reflect its origins as a planned townsite, characterized by single-family detached homes. As the area continues to mature, the inclusion of more duplexes, townhomes, accessory dwelling units, and small scale multi-family housing is expected.

Multi-family housing and appropriately scaled neighborhood commercial are encouraged when the New Townsite Neighborhood place type transitions towards the Town Center and Mixed-Use Center. Parks, schools, and religious institutions are encouraged, as well as multi-modal connection networks. Distinctive characteristics are reinforced by encouraging developments compatible in scale and design.

**PRIMARILY SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED HOMES WITH SOME HIGHER-DENSITY HOUSING**

**ENCOURAGE CONNECTIONS TO PARKS, SCHOOLS, & COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS**

**CONTINUOUS PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE CONNECTIONS**

### PRIMARY LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Single-Family Detached
Single-Family Attached

### SUPPORTING LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Small Scale Multi-Family
Live/Work
Manufactured

**RECREATION**
All

**COMMERCIAL**
Neighborhood

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Education
Community

### INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Temporary Worker

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

**COMMERCIAL**
General
Major Office

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Medical

# RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

***Single-family homes with public utilities in residential neighborhoods requiring automobile dependency.***

The Residential Neighborhood place type has a dependency on the automobile to reach services and jobs. The Residential Neighborhood may include parks, greenbelts, community centers, and similar amenities. Public services, including water and wastewater services, are readily available or in close proximity with a service expansion plan in place.

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Single-Family Detached
Single-Family Attached

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Manufactured
Multi-Family (Up to and including four-plex)

**RECREATION**
All

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Educational
Community

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Live/Work
Temporary Worker
Multi-Family (Greater than four-plex)

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

**COMMERCIAL**
All

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Medical

# RURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

***Larger lots or clustered on smaller lots to preserve natural features, important vistas, and viewsheds.***

The Rural Neighborhood place type is exclusively used for residential buildings and surrounded by lands that exhibit a more rural character. Development layouts follow land contours, incorporate natural features, and protect sensitive resources. The neighborhoods are automobile dependent and frequently characterized by non-grid street patterns and relatively long distances to the Town Center. Public services are not readily available and large lots are required to support on-site wells and septic systems.

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Single-Family Detached

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Single-Family Attached
Manufactured

**RECREATION**
Parks
Passive

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Live/Work
Multi-Family
Temporary Worker

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

**COMMERCIAL**
All

**RECREATION**
Regional

**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

# COMMERCIAL

**The commercial place types supports shopping, eating, working, and receiving professional and personal services. This designation promotes businesses that typically have direct contact with customers.**

## TOWN CENTER

***Recognizes the unique setting of the community's historic downtown and planned as an intensely developed area in Valdez.***

The Town Center place type will blend commercial, multi-family residential, cultural, institutional, and entertainment uses with an environment centered on walkability and strong connections to live, work, play destinations. Compatible mixed-use buildings are encouraged with retail/commercial on the ground floor and residential above. This environment is supported with building frontages and entrances oriented to the street. Gathering spaces are encouraged in the form of civic plazas, courtyards, and small parks.

Shared parking is encouraged and located near the rear or side lots of buildings. Parking, plazas, and park spaces can be used throughout the winter as snow storage lots. Mixed-use buildings are encouraged in transition areas at the edge of the Town Center area.

### PRIMARY LAND USE

**COMMERCIAL**
All

### SUPPORTING LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Multi-Family
Live/Work

**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

**RECREATION**
All

### INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Single-Family Detached
Single-Family Attached
Manufactured

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

# MIXED-USE CENTER

***As places of economic activity, provides the weekly and convenience shopping needs for Valdez residents and integrates housing options to offer residents the ability to live, shop, and work in close proximity.***

This place type is characterized by a mix of stand-alone retail buildings, larger stores (i.e., grocery store, general merchandise store), offices, and small-scale mixed-use buildings with higher density residential uses such as townhomes, apartments, and live/work units physically and functionally integrated. Uses can be mixed in either a vertical or horizontal configuration. Residential and office above ground-floor commercial should be encouraged. These uses are located along collector and arterial roads and tend to be more automobile oriented with larger parking areas. Pedestrian connectivity should be a priority to reduce the number of vehicle trips between uses.

A MIX OF COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

CONTINUOUS PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE CONNECTIONS

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**COMMERCIAL**
All

**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Single-Family
Attached
Multi-Family
Live/Work
Manufactured

**RECREATION**
All

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Single-Family
Detached

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

# WORKING WATERFRONT

***Activities that range from harbors, seafood processing, workforce housing, commercial, marine services, open space, and fishing charters.***

The Working Waterfront place type is intended to represent water-related activities that derive an economic or social benefit from a waterfront location. Primarily, the uses will relate with commercial/economic enterprises, tourism, or recreation.

Land will continue to be reserved to meet current and future needs for cargo shipping, fishing, passenger cruises, ferries, excursion boats, recreational boats, and other water-dependent activities. Park space, pedestrian connection, and public space is encouraged in the working waterfront.

MIXED-USE WATER DEPENDENT DEVELOPMENT

SAFELY CONNECT PEOPLE WITH THE WORKING WATERFRONT

ACTIVE & VIBRANT HARBORS & UPLANDS

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**COMMERCIAL**
All

**INDUSTRIAL**
Light
Waterfront

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Temporary
Worker

**RECREATION**
Parks
Passive

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Community

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Single-Family
Attached
Single-Family
Detached
Multi-Family
Manufactured

**RECREATION**
Regional

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Education
Medical

**INDUSTRIAL**
Heavy
Aviation

# INDUSTRIAL

**The industrial place type is intended to provide for concentrated areas of employment with a variety of heavy and light manufacturing, warehousing, mini-storage, open storage, multi-tenant industrial parks, automotive repair and similar uses. They also overlap with foreign trade zones to maximize economic opportunities.**

# INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS & PRODUCTION

***Employment and production hub that is predominantly composed of light industrial uses with some complementary office and commercial uses.***

The Industrial Business and Production place type includes light industrial businesses and operations that are consumer oriented and typically create products for the end user. They may include complementary commercial and office spaces. They have less environmental impacts than heavy industrial operations. They will be located by adjoining roadways that will accommodate truck traffic without negatively impacting quieter place types. Where this place type borders other place types setbacks and buffers are used to minimize impacts to adjacent land uses.

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**INDUSTRIAL**
Light

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**INDUSTRIAL**
Aviation
Waterfront

**COMMERCIAL**
All

**RECREATION**
Motorized
Sports/
Facilities

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**INDUSTRIAL**
Heavy

**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

**RECREATION**
All Other

**RESIDENTIAL**
All

# INDUSTRIAL HUB

***Characterized by land uses that generally have more impacts on the environment and surrounding land uses and may have the potential to affect the public health and safety due to sound, odors, and vibrations.***

The Industrial Hub place type typically includes heavy industrial operations and the use of large and heavy equipment and facilities. They have more environmental impacts than Industrial Business and Production and will be required to have appropriate buffers from all other place types to minimize impacts to the environment and the public health and safety. It is important that adjoining transportation facilities provide fast and convenient freight access to the Industrial Hub and that roadway access and designs accommodate large truck traffic where appropriate.

CONVENIENT TRANSPORTATION LINKS

TRUCK TRAFFIC & LOUDER ACTIVITIES

BUFFERS ALONG ADJOINING PLACE TYPE BOUNDARIES

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**INDUSTRIAL**
Heavy

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**INDUSTRIAL**
Light
Aviation
Waterfront

**RECREATION**
Motorized
Sports/
Facilities

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**COMMERCIAL**
All

**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

**RECREATION**
All Other

**RESIDENTIAL**
All

# VALDEZ AIRPORT

***Aviation related services that do not conflict with safe and efficient airport operations.***

The Valdez Airport place type includes the airport and may include aviation support, maintenance facilities, aircraft hangars and tie downs, aviation related tourism, short-term materials and goods storage, and tourist support services (car rental, tours).

AIRPORT RELATED SERVICES

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL USE WITH COMPLEMENTARY OFFICE SPACES

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**INDUSTRIAL**
Aviation

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**INDUSTRIAL**
Light

**COMMERCIAL**
General

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**INDUSTRIAL**
Heavy
Waterfront

**COMMERCIAL**
Neighborhood
Major Office

**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

**RECREATION**
All

**RESIDENTIAL**
All

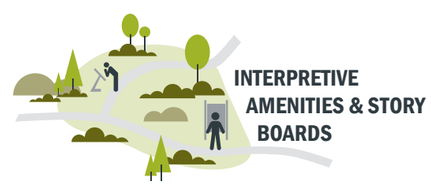
# PUBLIC LAND

**This category includes active and passive recreational activities or areas, such as parks, athletic fields, campgrounds, preserves, habitat areas, and public open space with distinguishable walking, biking, skiing, or motorized trails.**

## HISTORIC TOWN SITE

***In honor of the original Valdez Town Site (Old Town), this area is considered a sacred place and will have activities that complement the history of the site.***

The Historic Town Site place type will have minimal development that is focused in a culturally appropriate manner. Activities are day-use only and are to include passive recreation such as hiking, fishing, and picnicking. Interpretive amenities are encouraged to highlight the story of the original Valdez townsite and the history of Valdez.




### PRIMARY LAND USE

**RECREATION**
Passive

### INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**RECREATION**
Parks
Regional

**RESIDENTIAL**
All

**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

**COMMERCIAL**
All

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

# RECREATION

***Promotes passive and active recreational opportunities that include non-motorized and motorized activities, as well as supporting facilities.***

The Recreation place type focuses on a variety of recreational uses ranging from passive to active. Passive activities include those with minimal facilities including hiking, walking, cross-country skiing, cycling, and day-use areas, as well as approved motorized recreational activities. Developed and active recreation in this place type includes large open recreation space with athletic and sports fields, recreation facilities and buildings, playgrounds, campgrounds, developed fishing areas, urban trails, and parking.

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**RECREATION**
All

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Community

**COMMERCIAL**
Recreation Related

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
All

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Education
Medical

**COMMERCIAL**
All Others

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

# CONSERVATION

***Characterized by mainly undisturbed lands that are protected by local, state, or federal agencies or by public, private, or non-profit organizations because of their valuable natural resources or potential hazards.***

The Conservation place type includes lands designated for conservation that are intended to remain in their natural state. This place type also includes some lands that are identified as hazard lands. There may be opportunities for limited passive recreation such as non-motorized trails, trailheads with parking, and viewing platforms that complement the natural setting. In some cases, after a special study, limited development may be possible but should not include habitable buildings or critical facilities.

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**RECREATION**
Passive

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**RECREATION**
Parks
Regional

**RESIDENTIAL**
All

**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

**COMMERCIAL**
All

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

# SPECIALTY

**These lands have a special overlay, or would benefit from additional studies to better understand opportunities, constraints, and the suitability of the land to support future developments.**

**An overlay adds conditions to the underlying place type and allows continued use by that underlying place type; or recognizes a potential future development where the underlying place type dictates the use of this area until approval of the potential future development that would activate this overlay and its land use.**

## GATEWAY CORRIDOR OVERLAY

***Protects and improves the aesthetic and visual character of the land directly adjacent to roadway corridors.***

The Gateway Corridor place type is an overlay place type that adds conditions to the underlying place type. The underlying place type continues to be a compatible use with an emphasis on creating a positive visual experience along the corridor while providing for continued safe and efficient use of the roadway.

### PRIMARY LAND USE

**PER UNDERLYING PLACE TYPE**

### SUPPORTING LAND USE

**PER UNDERLYING PLACE TYPE**

### INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**PER UNDERLYING PLACE TYPE**

## DESTINATION RESORT OVERLAY

***Lands that are strategically located and there is an existing interest to develop a recreation based destination resort.***

Resorts can become significant economic generators and social gathering places creating employment opportunities, substantially expanding the tax base and enhancing the quality of life for the local community. The Destination Resort Overlay is intended to promote flexibility in development to seamlessly integrate the variety of land uses needed to support a resort ranging from residential, retail, lodging, restaurants, and utility infrastructure. There is emphasis on the need for a specialized Master Plan to promote land use compatibility and sustainability, efficient provision of transportation and utility infrastructure and to suitably protect environmentally sensitive resources, community character, and natural features. Until this project becomes reality, the underlying place type dictates land use.

The Master Plan for the proposed development will indicate the type of uses expected within this overlay and requires City approval prior to development. The land uses to the right are anticipated land uses but does not restrict the potential uses that would be associated with this development.

### ANTICIPATED PRIMARY LAND USE

**RECREATION**
All

### ANTICIPATED SUPPORTING LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
All

**COMMERCIAL**
All

**INDUSTRIAL**
Light

### ANTICIPATED INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

**INDUSTRIAL**
All others

# FUTURE RESIDENTIAL/ RECREATION

***Lands to be considered for future residential and recreational land use activities.***

The Future Residential/Recreation place type is for lands that, in the foreseeable future, are less suitable for development because of the high cost of extending and maintaining public infrastructure and services and high expected development costs. Prior to development, a special study to better understand risks, costs, and benefits of allowing development of the area is recommended.

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**RECREATION**
All

**RESIDENTIAL**
All

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Community

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Education
Medical

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

**COMMERCIAL**
All

# FUTURE INDUSTRIAL/ WORKING WATERFRONT

***Lands to be considered for future industrial areas, are along the waterfront, or are located in known hazard areas.***

The Future Industrial/Working Waterfront place type is for lands that, in the foreseeable future, are less suitable for development because of the high cost of extending and maintaining public infrastructure and services and high expected development costs. Prior to development, a special study to better understand risks, costs, and benefits of allowing development of the area is recommended.

## PRIMARY LAND USE

**INDUSTRIAL**
All

## SUPPORTING LAND USE

**RESIDENTIAL**
Temporary
Worker

**RECREATION**
Passive
Motorized
Sports/
Facilities

**COMMERCIAL**
General

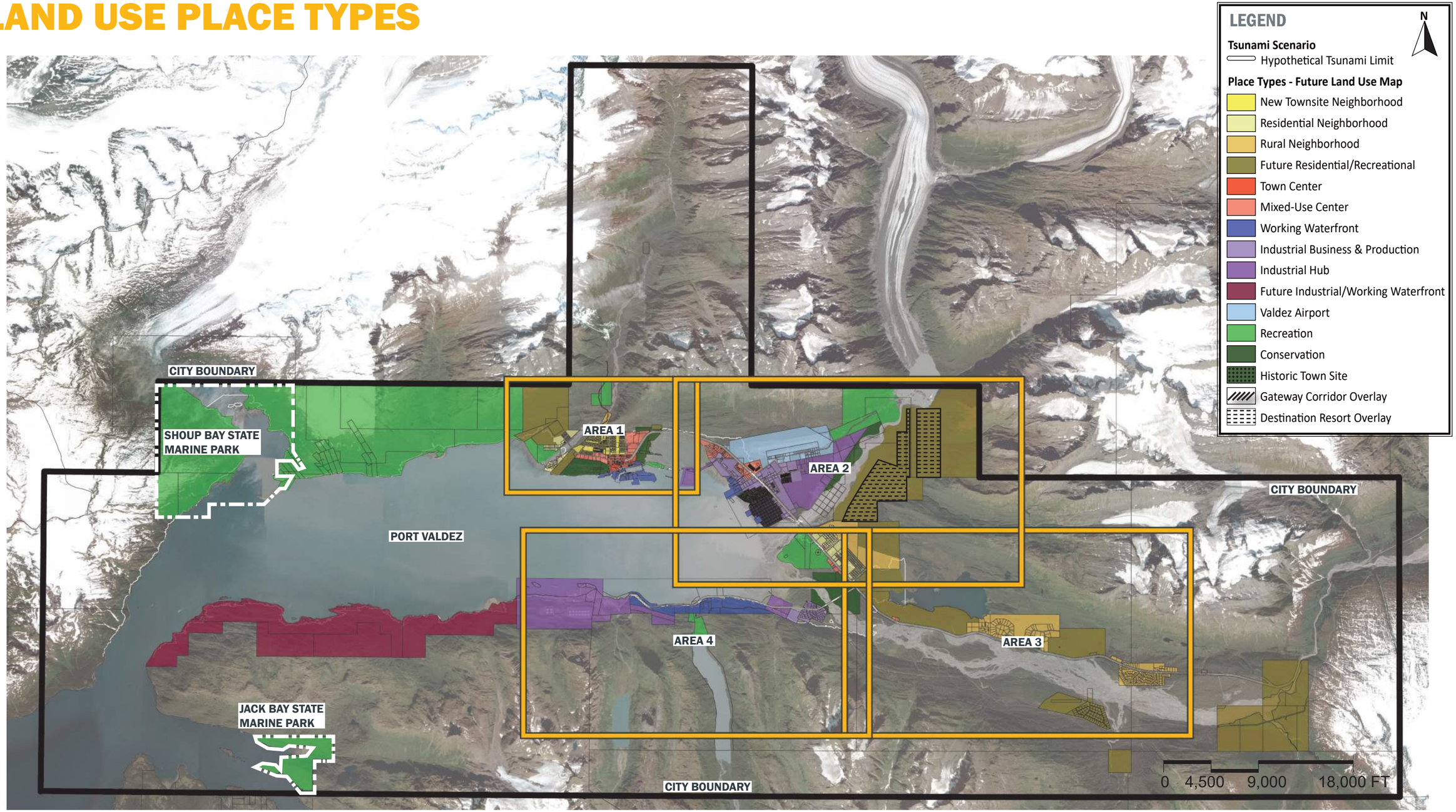
## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE

**COMMERCIAL**
Neighborhood
Major Office

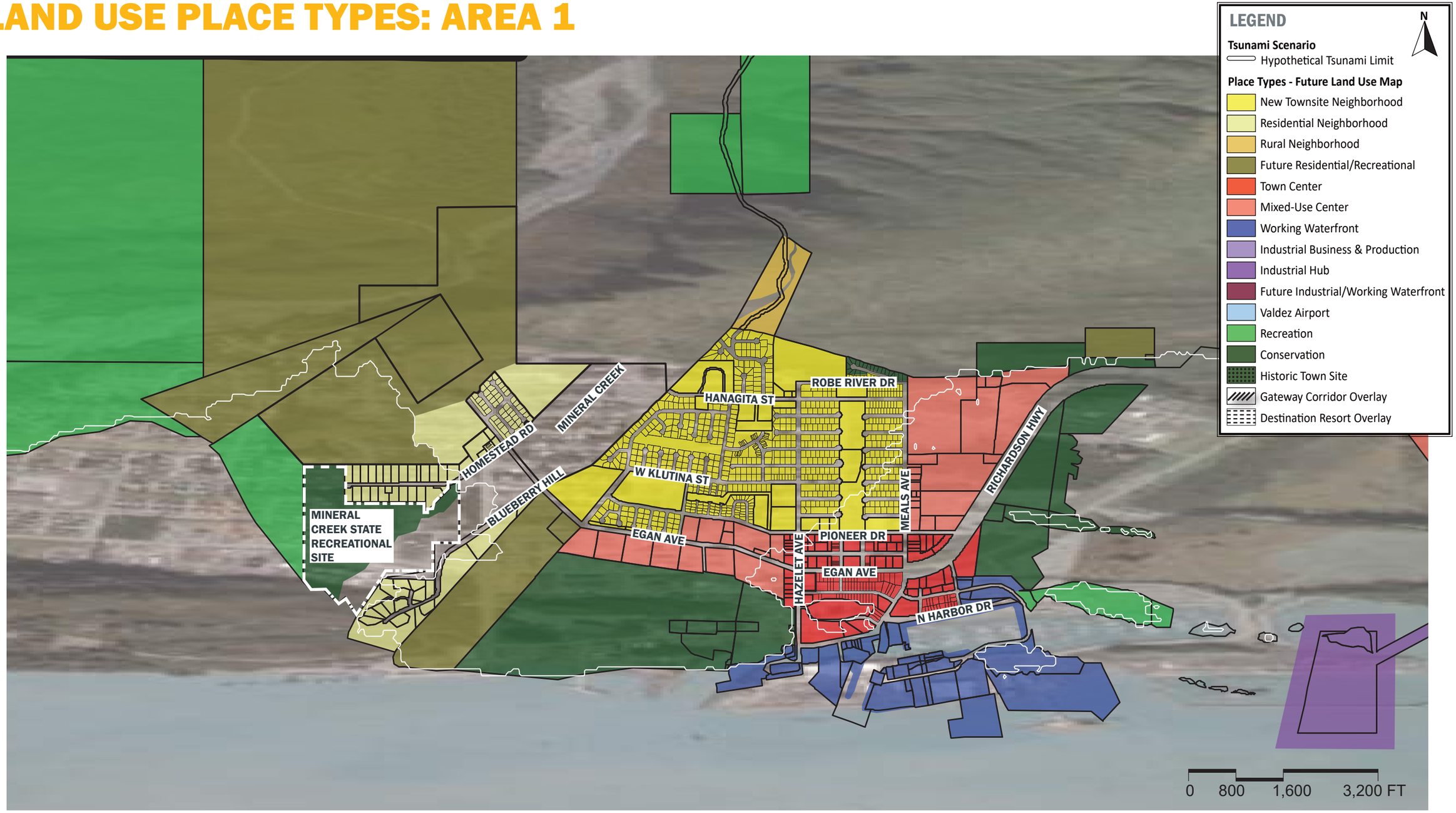
**INSTITUTIONAL**
All

**RESIDENTIAL**
All Other

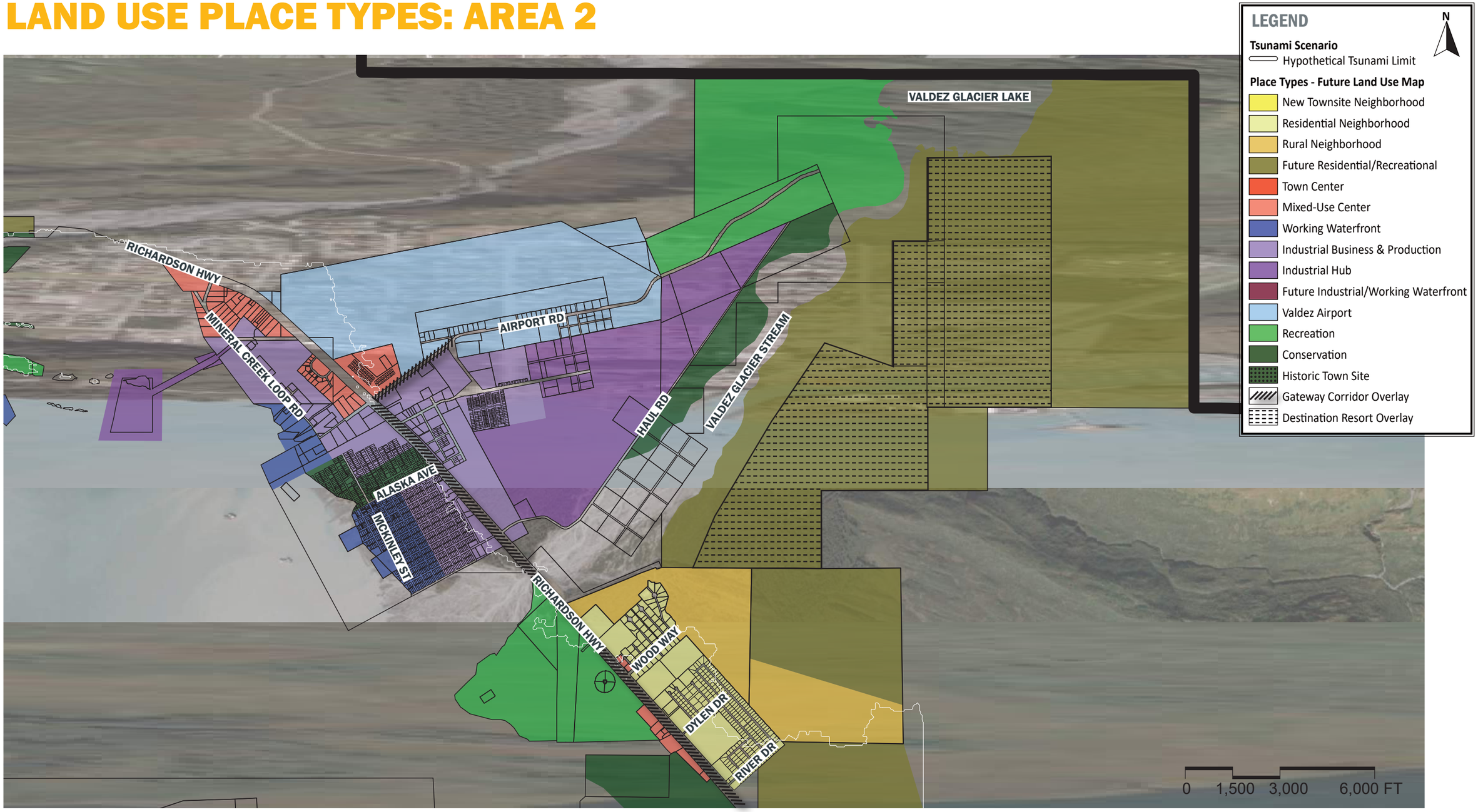
# LAND USE PLACE TYPES



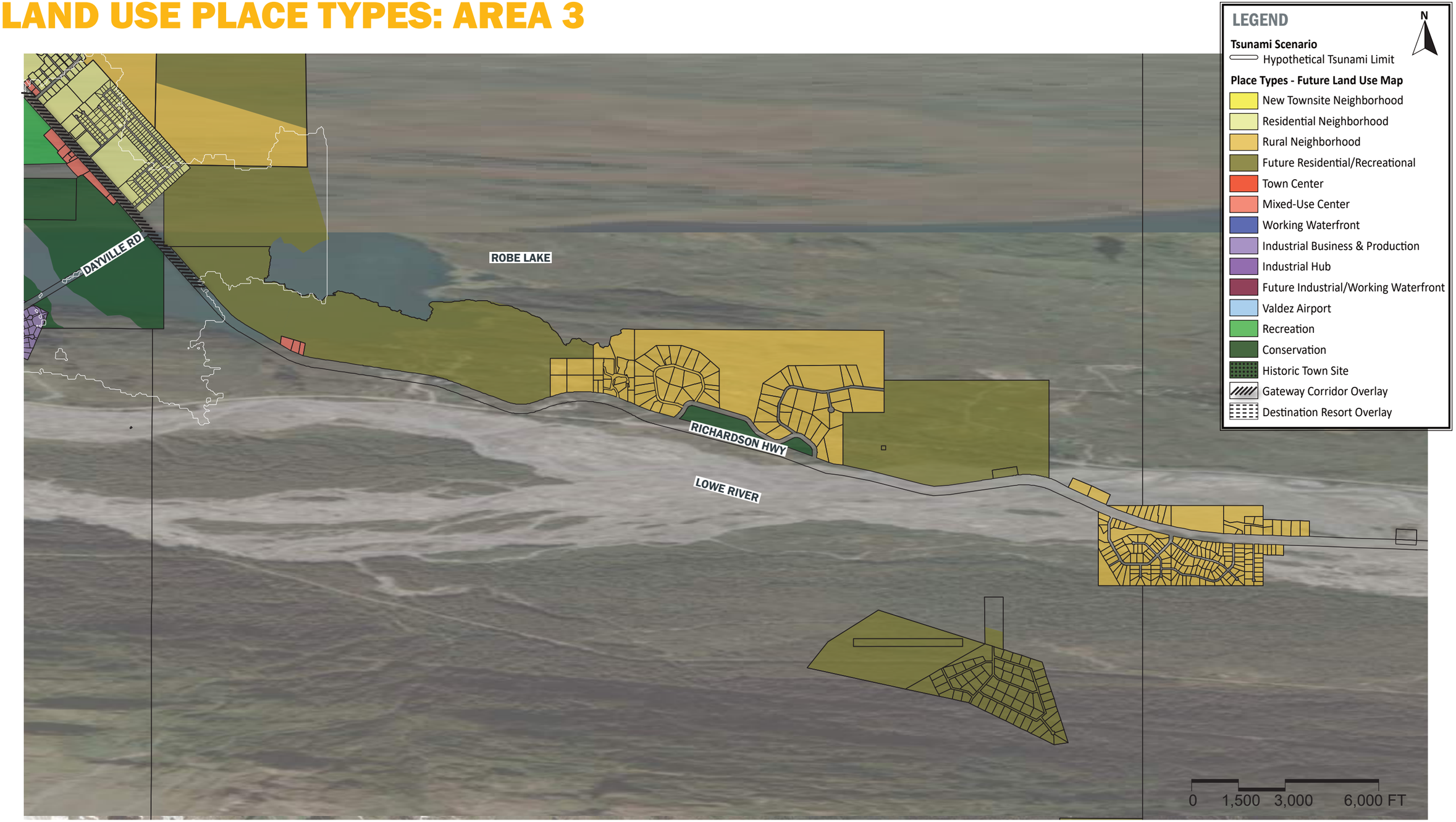
# LAND USE PLACE TYPES: AREA 1



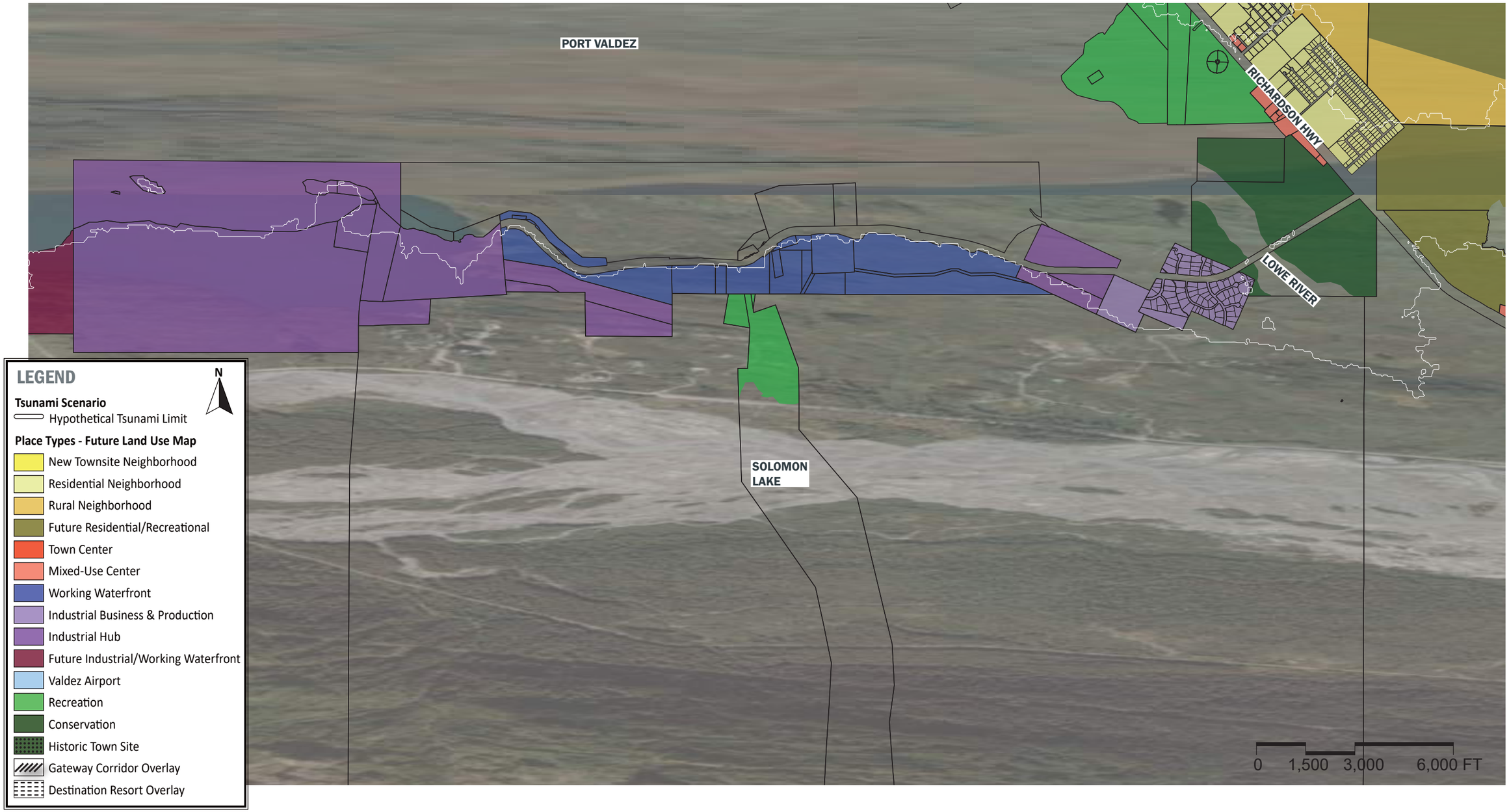
# LAND USE PLACE TYPES: AREA 2



# LAND USE PLACE TYPES: AREA 3



# LAND USE PLACE TYPES: AREA 4



# GOALS & ACTIONS

***Plan Valdez*** is organized into thematic elements. For each theme, specific goals and actions are identified to provide the City of Valdez with incremental steps that will work towards achieving the overall community vision. The goals describe what Valdez hopes to achieve during the 20 year plan and the actions describe implementable and measurable actions to achieve the goals.

Implicit in the themes, goals and strategies is the overarching principal of creating a more equitable community. What historic advantages or disadvantages do residents face? Are there policy barriers that can be removed to close housing, health, education, and wealth gaps? Are engagement and representation inclusive, accessible, and authentic? What policies are available to enhance opportunities for all residents including low-income residents?

**COLLABORATIVE ACCOUNTABLE TRANSPARENT**

**LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

**THRIVING, STABLE & SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY**

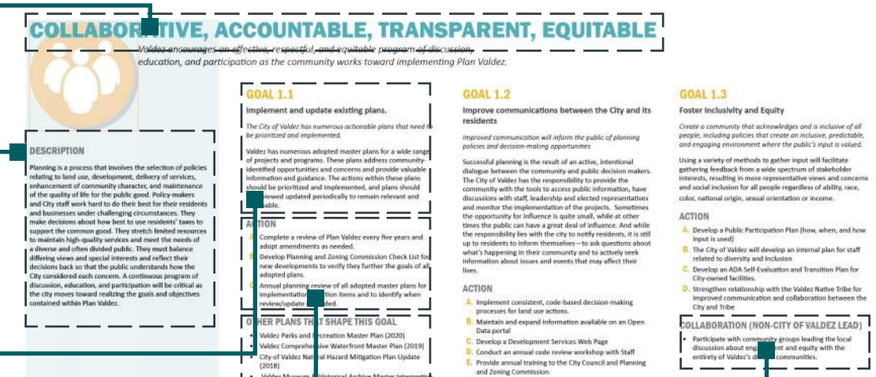
**CONNECTED**

**HEALTHY LIVING**

**ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

**ADAPTABLE & RESILIENT**

## HOW TO USE THIS SECTION




**THEME**

Themes are the elements that when combined, form the overall vision of this comprehensive plan.

**THEME DESCRIPTION**

A description of the theme for how it is used within this plan.

**GOAL**

Goals are what needs to be accomplished to implement the theme.

**ACTION**

Actions are the individual steps needed to achieve the goal.

**OTHER PLANS**

Other plans by the City of Valdez or other entities that contribute to implementation of this goal.

**COLLABORATION**

Actions that occur through partnership and collaboration where the City of Valdez is not the lead.

# COLLABORATIVE, ACCOUNTABLE, TRANSPARENT, EQUITABLE

*Valdez encourages an effective, respectful, and equitable program of discussion, education, and participation as the community works toward implementing Plan Valdez.*

**Collaborative, Accountable, Transparent, Equitable**

Planning is a process that involves the selection of policies relating to land use, development, delivery of services, enhancement of community character, and maintenance of the quality of life for the public good. Policy-makers and City staff work hard to do their best for their residents and businesses under challenging circumstances. They make decisions about how best to use tax revenues to support the common good. They stretch limited resources to maintain high-quality services and meet the needs of a diverse and often divided public. They must balance differing views and special interests and reflect their decisions back so that the public understands how the City considered each concern. A continuous program of discussion, education, and participation will be critical as the city moves toward realizing the goals and objectives contained within Plan Valdez.

## GOAL 1.1

### Implement and update existing plans.

*The City of Valdez has numerous actionable plans that need to be prioritized and implemented.*

Valdez has numerous adopted master plans for a wide range of projects and programs. These plans address community-identified opportunities and concerns and provide valuable information and guidance. The actions within these plans should be prioritized and implemented, and plans should be reviewed updated periodically to remain relevant and actionable.

### ACTION

A. Complete a review of Plan Valdez every five years and adopt amendments as needed.
B. Develop Planning and Zoning Commission Check List for new developments to verify they further the goals of all adopted plans.
C. Annual planning review of all adopted master plans for implementation of action items and to identify when review/update is needed.

### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2020)
- Valdez Comprehensive Waterfront Master Plan (2019)
- City of Valdez Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2018)
- Valdez Museum & Historical Archive Master Interpretive Plan (2016)
- Valdez Visitor Market Profile (2016)
- Competitive Market Analysis and Long Range Planning for the Port of Valdez (2015)
- Community of Valdez Strategic Plan: 2013-2018 (2013)
- Valdez Coordinated Community Transportation Plan (2013)

Several other plans are still being developed or about to be developed and include:

- Meals Hill Master Plan
- Medical Center Master Plan Update
- Valdez Housing Market Assessment and Gap Analysis
- Valdez Pioneer Field Airport Master Plan Update

## GOAL 1.2

### Improve communications between the City and its residents

*Improved communication will inform the public of planning policies and decision-making opportunities*

Successful planning is the result of an active, intentional dialogue between the community and public decision makers. The City of Valdez has the responsibility to provide the community with the tools to access public information, have discussions with staff, leadership and elected representatives and monitor the implementation of the projects. Sometimes the opportunity for influence is quite small, while at other times the public can have a great deal of influence. And while the responsibility lies with the city to notify residents, it is still up to residents to inform themselves—to ask questions about what's happening in their community and to actively seek information about issues and events that may affect their lives.

### ACTION

A. Implement consistent, code-based decision-making processes for land use actions.
B. Maintain and expand information available on an Open Data portal.
C. Develop a Development Services Web Page.
D. Conduct an annual code review workshop with Staff.
E. Provide annual training to the City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission.

## GOAL 1.3

### Foster Inclusivity and Equity

*Create a community that acknowledges and is inclusive of all people, including policies that create an inclusive, predictable, and engaging environment where the public's input is valued.*

Using a variety of methods to gather input will facilitate gathering feedback from a wide spectrum of stakeholder interests, resulting in more representative views and concerns and social inclusion for all people regardless of ability, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation or income.

### ACTION

A. Develop a Public Participation Plan (how, when, and how input is used).
B. The City of Valdez will develop an internal plan for staff related to diversity and inclusion.
C. Develop an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan for City-owned facilities.
D. Strengthen relationship with the Valdez Native Tribe for improved communication and collaboration between the City and Tribe.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

- Participate with community groups leading the local discussion about engagement and equity with the entirety of Valdez's diverse communities.

# LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

*Valdez is an attractive community that integrates daily activities (home, work, education, culture, and leisure) into a high-quality environment.*

**Livable Built Environment**

The small-town character, natural setting, rich history, and sense of community defines Valdez. It is a place where people help people. Maintaining the balance between a growing and evolving economy that attracts long-term residents, employers, and visitors and preserving Valdez's unique character is critical moving forward.

Some existing neighborhoods, commercial developments, and employment centers are aging or underutilized and are vulnerable to disinvestment and decline. There are newer developments that have never realized their full potential and present ideal opportunities for redevelopment. The existing dispersed, low-density development pattern can be expensive to maintain and serve with public utilities and roads and has resulted in land use conflicts between incompatible uses. Studies have indicated limited rentals, lower-cost homes, and senior housing, which negatively impact the quality of life for some residents, the retention of residents, and the attraction and retention of employees.

Four significant challenges hamper market-driven development needed to meet Valdez's future needs:

- Suitable land available for development;
- Limited connectivity to the rest of Alaska and the Lower 48;
- High cost of construction; and
- Declining population.

The high construction costs are related to transportation and material costs, engineering and building life-safety code requirements related to seismic and snow load considerations, and the costs of putting in roads and utilities such as sewer and water. Together these make it challenging for developers to make a profit from construction and running a business.

Moving forward, reinvestment in the community should aim to keep the downtown core and waterfront as Valdez's economic and cultural heart and diversify and improve the quality of housing throughout Valdez.

## GOAL 2.1

**Plan for responsible growth.**

*Responsible growth occurs through deliberate planning, resulting in decisions that are predictable, equitable, and cost-effective.*

Prioritizing and concentrating development where facilities, infrastructure, and services have the existing capacity and in areas where the Police and Fire Departments are best able to respond will improve service and reduce operation and maintenance costs. Best practices include planning for future growth and development in areas that can achieve the highest real estate tax revenues per acre. The City of Valdez will focus growth near existing infrastructure to support development in a fiscally sound manner, where the market forces will be the strongest for new residential and employment development.

### ACTION

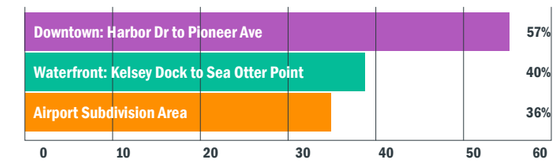
A. Adopt two new zoning districts: Residential/Recreation Planned Development District; and, Industrial/ Working Waterfront Planned Development District.
B. Rezone City of Valdez parcels to align with the future land use map.
C. Create a Destination Resort Overlay District.
D. Conduct a comprehensive rewrite of Title 17-Zoning, and Title 16-Subdivisions to implement Plan Valdez.
E. Rezone parcels to align with the Future Land Use Map (included within this comprehensive plan).
F. Prioritize funding for the operation and maintenance of existing public infrastructure and related services before new extensions are considered.
G. Investigate development standards to establish a fair allocation to developers of the costs for required off-site improvements needed to help support the impacts of development projects on public infrastructure.
H. Establish standards with which to assess existing and/or needed infrastructure improvements and associated cost for developments during review processes.
I. Prioritize code enforcement of known nuisances (as defined under Titles 8 and 17) that pose a threat to public health and safety and/or the environment.
J. Update Title 17 to better differentiate between nuisance types and verify coordination with recent Title 8 update.
K. Enforce zoning code infractions based on zoning updates (in both Title 8 and 17).
L. Conduct research on innovative approaches for "Rehabilitation of Abandoned and Dilapidated Buildings" in other states/ cities to see if a similar program would be feasible in Valdez.
M. Identify special use standards in Title 17 for helicopter landing areas.
N. Ensure that snow storage sites are maintained and assessed to match development and community needs.
O. Officially adopt other City of Valdez district, special use areas, and master plans developed.

### OTHER DOCUMENTS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Title 8-Health and Safety, Title 17-Zoning and Title 16-Subdivisions

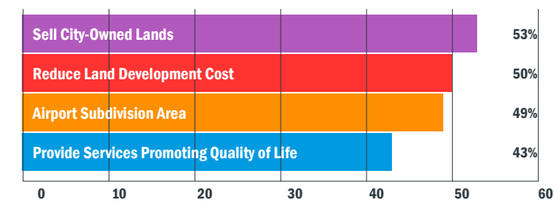
### DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREAS

Areas prioritized by survey respondents for development over the next decade. (From Community Survey)




### CITY OF VALDEZ ROLE IN SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Limited to elements that can be integrated into ***Plan Valdez***. (From Community Survey)



# LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT (CONT'D)

## GOAL 2.2

### Encourage redevelopment and new development

*Appropriate (re)development that meets the greater needs of the community in an economic and efficient manner.*

Finding ways to streamline, facilitate and incentivize development will help to generate higher quality development, new investment in under-performing properties and aging buildings, and new construction. Reinvestment programs should include smaller-scale redevelopment efforts or infill development and feature more targeted programs to improve building quality, adaptive reuse of parcels and buildings.

### ACTION

A. Assess feasibility of pursuing differed jurisdiction from the State Fire Marshal for fire plan review and inspection.
B. Create an incentive program for the infill/redevelopment of properties already served by public water and sewer.
C. Develop a land management plan for management of City of Valdez lands.
D. Implement a Storefront Improvement Program to build on past and current beautification efforts.
E. Identify strategic vacant and/or underdeveloped parcels for redevelopment that may benefit from a public private partnership.
F. Encourage the remediation of Department of Environmental Conservation identified contaminated sites.
G. Investigate utility extensions to connect existing Septic/Well sites to city water/sewer to improve public health, emergency response (fire hydrants) and reduce environmental contamination.
H. Extend sewer and water utilities to service future development.

### OTHER DOCUMENTS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Title 17-Zoning

## GOAL 2.3

### Promote, protect, and build quality housing

*Quality housing is housing that meets community needs including a range of incomes, housing types, and locations; and is built with longevity in mind*

Without dedicated resources or programmatic priorities to support more diverse housing types, the city's capacity to help residents find housing best suited to their needs, has been limited. Adopting a policy direction that promotes an inclusive, diverse, and flexible housing environment will contribute to a capable workforce, retain residents in the community, and help develop a sturdy customer base to sustain local businesses and population. Various housing options will enable residents to find suitable local housing regardless of income level.

### ACTION

A. Identify and adopt strategic housing investment areas.
B. Revise residential zones in the Title 17, Zoning Code.
C. Revise Title 17 to provide guidelines for short term rental housing and accessory dwelling units.
D. Provide expedited development review and permitting for new housing construction in Strategic Housing Investment Areas.
E. Develop Housing-Directed Incentive Programs.
F. Investigate a Healthy Housing Funding Program to maintain and increase quality of housing, including energy and health-related needs.
G. Monitor new loan and grant programs from state and federal housing agencies for local opportunities.
H. Evaluate land for consideration for future manufactured homes and other forms of lower cost housing.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

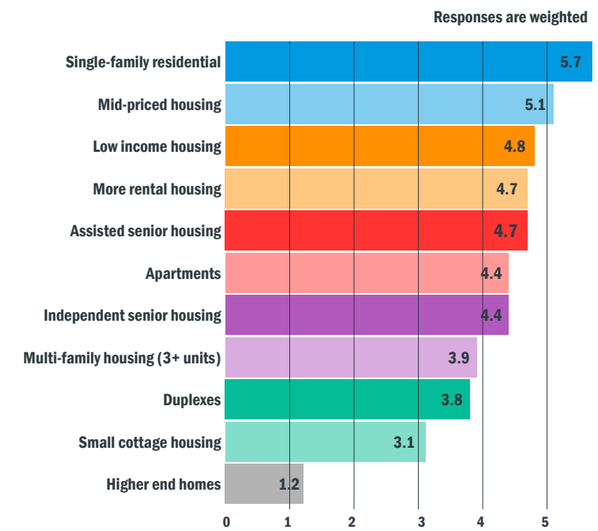
- Develop partnership with Tribe and others who have access to infrastructure and housing programs/funding.

### OTHER DOCUMENTS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Housing Market Assessment and Gap Analysis (when approved 2021)
- Valdez Title 17-Zoning and Title 16-Subdivisions

### HOW IMPORTANT ARE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOLLOWING HOUSING TYPES IN VALDEZ?

(From Community Survey)



# THRIVING & SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

*Valdez proactively plans for and adapts to economic cycles and industries as they change and evolve.*

**Thriving & Sustainable Economy**

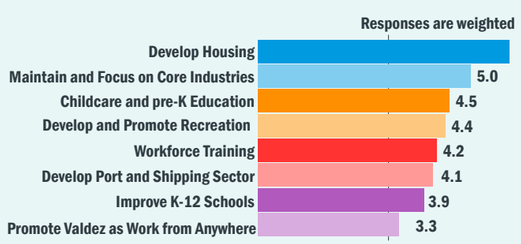
Valdez has a unique economy for a coastal community. The rich oil and gas sector provides many highly-paid jobs for non-residents, while the remainder of the economy closely resembles that of a typical coastal Alaska community. It is the wealthiest community in Alaska by many measures, yet more than half of its Alaska Natives live in poverty. Valdez residents are among those able to afford housing in the state, yet trailers make up nearly a quarter of all homes in the community.

One of the unique components of the Valdez workforce is the high level of non-residents working in the community. Non-residents are one dataset for which there is only high-level Census area data for the larger Valdez-Cordova Census area. Valdez represents approximately half of the jobs and wages in this census area.

From an economic perspective, the community's most important focus should be to increase the availability of housing stock, especially to create more rental housing and entry-level housing for the Valdez workforce. Since housing is being considered elsewhere in this document, this section will deal with other goals that will improve and grow the Valdez economy.

### WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS TO FACILITATE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE FUTURE?

(From Community Survey)




## GOAL 3.1

### Build upon Valdez's core economy

*Continue to expand Valdez's core industries (shipping, tourism, oil, and fisheries) and status as a premier port community.*

The pipeline has traditionally provided the City with stable employment as well as a steady source of tax revenue. More than a quarter of all local wages and 12% of all jobs in Valdez are in this sector. Oil is also the primary source of income for the City of Valdez with oil and gas property tax earnings. Seafood follows oil as the next most important source of jobs and workforce earnings for Valdez. The Valdez fishery is important to the community due to the number of fishermen the rich fishery supports, but also due to the logistical road connection the community provides, making it an excellent place to locate fish processing facilities. Continuing to support these industries is critical to the economic future of Valdez.

The Valdez waterfront serves as the driver for future growth, preservation, and the enhancement of Valdez as a community. Finding ways to ensure that it remains a first-class working waterfront should be encouraged. Opportunities and activities to build out the elements of the Comprehensive Waterfront Master Plan to strengthen Valdez as a premier port in Prince William Sound are important to the economic future of the community. According to the survey of nearly 500 residents developed for this project, 59% of residents call implementation of the Valdez Waterfront Comprehensive Master Plan a medium, medium-high, or highest level priority.

### ACTION

A. Continue to advocate for the core economies (shipping, fishing, oil, tourism).
B. Continue to partner on the feasibility and exploration of large-scale economic projects that benefit Valdez and State.

### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Pioneer Field Airport Master Plan Update (ADOT&PF)
- Waterfront Comprehensive Master Plan
- Competitive Market Analysis and Long Range Planning for the Port of Valdez
- Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (ADOT&PF)
- Alaska Statewide Long Range Transportation and Freight Plan (ADOT&PF)

## GOAL 3.2

### Pursue a diverse and self-reliant economy

*Pursue a diverse and self-reliant local economy through working with local industries, workforce, education systems, entrepreneurs, and businesses to retain and attract businesses and residents who want to work and live in Valdez, year-round.*

While the pipeline provides steady employment and a source of tax revenue, the community is concerned with the longevity of these benefits as production declines. The community desires to be proactive in creating a diverse and self-reliant economy that better insulates the City from a 'boom and bust' economy and the expected decline in oil revenue and employment. In the community survey, focus on the core industries is the priority with diversification the next economic priority. Identifying and attracting new local economic opportunities will help address this concern. Directly linked to developing a diverse economy is the need to address housing, childcare and other lifestyles issues.

### ACTION

A. Participate in private/public partnerships to support small businesses.
B. Develop City incentives for new business development.
C. Continue to work with and provide support for industries (both new and existing) to develop new opportunities that diversify and support the local economy.
D. Continue to monitor and participate in discussions around Borough formation.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

- Continue to be partners to facilitate hospital expansion.
- Continue to work with industry partners to identify local workforce needs and expand on workforce and trades training with UAA, high school and local businesses.

### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Waterfront Comprehensive Master Plan
- Competitive Market Analysis and Long Range Planning for the Port of Valdez

## GOAL 3.3

### Promote Valdez as a destination

*Promote the community as a year-round visitor and recreation destination while effectively balancing the benefits with possible impacts.*

Prior to the pandemic, Valdez captured four percent of Alaska's non-resident visitor market, and is a recreation draw for Alaskans on the road system. When adjusted to annualized employment, the visitor industry accounted for 15% of all year-round equivalent jobs in the community (2019). The visitor sector is the top provider of jobs in Valdez, and one of the fastest growing sectors. However, the visitor industry provided only six percent of total community workforce earnings, making it the 6th most significant wage provider. There are many opportunities to increase total visitors and total visitor spending.

### ACTION

A. Develop a tourist carrying capacity study, including the target number of cruise ship port calls/annually.
B. Ports and Harbors: Upgrade Kelsey Dock for cruise ships (structural, motor coach staging, wayfinding, seawalk).
C. Enhance the Old Town site as an important destination.
D. Enhance trail facilities by adding wayfinding and installing trailhead facilities.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

- Partner to enable cultural, recreation, and business opportunities.
- Support partners in their development of recreation opportunities (non-motorized and motorized).
- Develop new 'local' shore excursions (eco and cultural).
- Expand shoulder season for fishing with hatchery.
- Continue to partner to market Valdez tourism.
- Increase and develop new local attractions (independent and organized tourism).

### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Waterfront Comprehensive Master Plan
- Valdez Visitor Market Profile
- Valdez Museum & Historical Archive Master Interpretive Plan
- Meals Hill Master Plan (when approved 2021)

# CONNECTED

*Valdez has a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation network that supports future generations' health and mobility needs, enhances economic vibrancy, and improves local and regional connectivity.*

**Connected**

Each of us relies on a network of transportation options every day: walk, fly, ferry, bicycle, bus, or drive. It's how we connect with each other, our families, jobs, and essential services like medical care. It's how we receive our food, fuel, packages, and basic goods that contribute to our quality of life. When these networks stop functioning, there are real impacts on our everyday lives - lost time, missed opportunities, and service interruptions. Maintaining a well-connected, reliable, and diverse transportation network requires planning, especially in a remote environment like Valdez.

Valdez residents, visitors, and workforces rely on the Richardson Highway, the Port of Valdez, the Alaska Marine Highway Ferry System, the Valdez Marine Terminal, and the Valdez airport for travel and cargo. One or more of these may not be operational at any given time due to extreme weather or funding constraints. Recently, air service has been disrupted, due to carrier problems and ferry service has been sporadic at best due to an aging fleet and budget constraints. It is not uncommon for the Richardson Highway to have multiple closures throughout the winter. In addition to getting to and from Valdez, making connections within the community are critical. How does someone arriving at the airport get to the Town Center or Working Waterfront? Are there designated freight routes to facilitate the efficient movement of freight and minimize conflicts with other modes? If you are visiting from a cruise ship, can you easily walk to your destinations? If you don't have a car in Valdez, can you get to work, school, and medical facilities? Moving forward, Valdez needs to ensure that these are working components of their city model.

We are in a time of transformational technologies, including fiber optic networks and 5G communications, connected and automated vehicles, mobility as a service, big data analytics, and alternative fuels. These emerging technologies are changing the way people, goods, and information move. The City of Valdez should monitor these technologies to prepare for them and assess how and if they can help achieve the City's vision.

## GOAL 4.1

### Improve regional connectivity

*Advocate for and participate in initiatives to improve regional connectivity across multiple transportation modes including air, water, and road.*

A well-connected transportation network reduces the time and distances traveled to reach destinations and increases the options for routes of travel. Planning for an integrated transportation system looks at not only how all of the individual components work independently, but also how they complement each other and function together for the safe, reliable and efficient movement of people and freight. While the City has little control over the regional network, strong community engagement in regional and state planning processes can help to identify and advocate for connectivity needs and gaps.

### ACTION

A. Identify and plan for needed connections between transportation modes for efficient regional travel times.
B. Maintain and/or acquire right of way for potential future transportation uses and connectivity through subdivision actions, redevelopment, and purchases.
C. Participate in the statewide and regional transportation planning and advocacy.
D. Monitor emerging technology and statewide planning efforts.
E. Continue to advocate for reliable ferry and air service.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

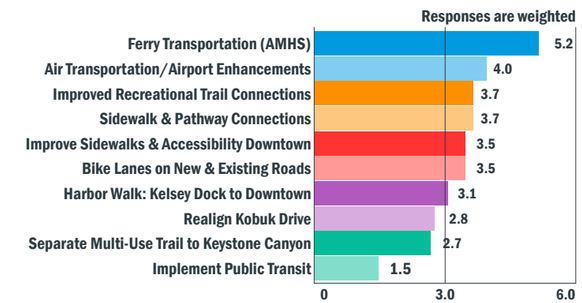
- Collaborate with coastal communities for a healthy AMHS system.

### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

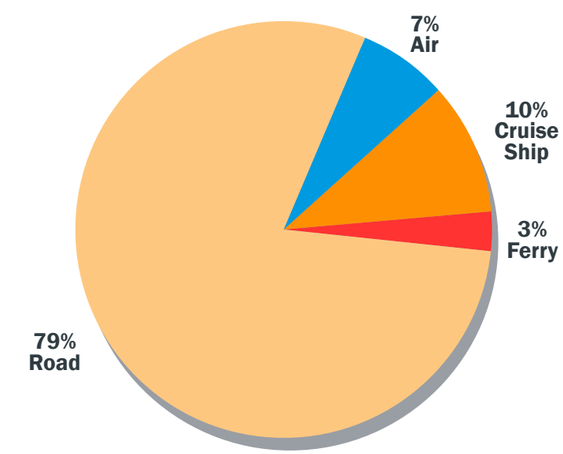
- Valdez Pioneer Field Airport Master Plan Update (ADOT&PF)
- Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (ADOT&PF)
- Alaska Statewide Long Range Transportation and Freight Plan (ADOT&PF)

### HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE FOLLOWING CONNECTION IMPROVEMENTS?

(From Community Survey)




### PASSENGER ARRIVALS IN VALDEZ BY MODE OF TRAVEL IN 2019



# CONNECTED (CONT'D)

## GOAL 4.2

**Improve community transportation connections**

*Develop a safe, convenient, and linked year-round multi-modal transportation network to neighborhoods, destinations, and services.*

Creating a multi-modal transportation system requires enhancing the current automobile/truck oriented system to include a network of improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities. More people walking and biking is good for the local and visitor economy and enables all members of the community to interact with each other and the surrounding environment. While all place types will benefit from a safer, walkable and bikeable network, connectivity between the Town Center and Working Waterfront should be a priority.

### ACTION

A. Update and modernize road standards inclusive of non-motorized facilities.
B. Develop a pedestrian and bicycle plan (specific to area bounded by North Harbor Drive, Pioneer Drive, Hazelet Avenue and Chitna Avenue).
C. Work with ADOT&PF to complete key intersection safety studies (Hazelet Ave from Meals Avenue to Pioneer Drive).
D. Implement "park once" improvements in the Harbor and Town Center area that encourage people to park and walk to multiple destinations.
E. Coordinate with ADOT&PF to prioritize the extension of multi-use pathways (one for each, motorized (ORV) and non-motorized use) to Keystone Canyon including within the Duck Flats (ADOT&PF is lead).
F. Coordinate with ADOT&PF to prioritize the improvement of the "Welcome to Valdez" sign site (pull-out and pedestrian crossing facilities) (ADOT&PF is lead).
G. Monitor cruise ship passenger travel and assess when visitor volumes trigger a need for transportation improvements.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

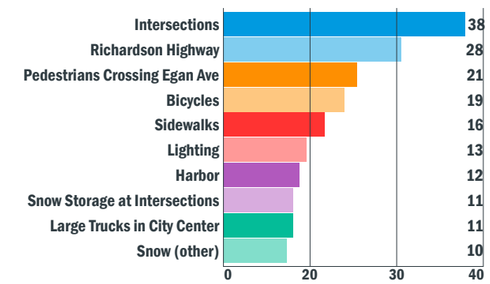
- Coordinate with local non-motorized and motorized groups for funding/implementation of improvements.
- Upgrade Richardson Highway to support movement of larger sized cargo from port to interior.
- Work with ADOT&PF to identify funding through the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program funding for transportation alternatives (TA). These set aside funds include smaller scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, trails, and safe routes to school projects.
- Work with ADOT&PF to identify opportunities for improvements to include pull outs for short-term parking, scenic views and a potential pathway along Dayville Road.

### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Pioneer Field Airport Master Plan Update (ADOT&PF)
- Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (ADOT&PF)

### WHAT SAFETY CONCERNS DO YOU HAVE RELATED TO TRANSPORTATION?

(From Community Survey)



# HEALTHY LIVING

*Valdez supports and integrates health, services, and vibrant activity centers (active living, arts and culture, health and human services, and education) to lay the groundwork for generations to come.*

**Healthy Living**

***Plan Valdez*** focuses on land use, housing, access to recreation, transportation, and public facilities that directly link to healthy lifestyles. Healthy living includes access to physical activity and the natural environment, as well as social and cultural connections. A healthy Valdez also means access to health care, child care, education, and overall public health, safety, and welfare of its citizens. Healthy lifestyles result in a reduction in mortality, morbidity, and disability and create a stronger sense of pride in who we are through enhanced connections with our community, heritage, and cultures.

A healthy community is an equitable community. It is essential that when addressing healthy living, we address the economic and social concerns related to equity. Having an equitable community means a community that provides the same opportunities regardless of ability, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or income. It is important that local traditions are acknowledged and interwoven into the community fabric.

"We have a great hospital and medical facility and a college that offers a nursing program. We should expand that program, build senior housing, and develop an economic program around our medical community...and create a town known for its senior care." *Valdez Resident*

## GOAL 5.1

### Provide community services

*Provide safe, equitable, and convenient access to healthcare, education, childcare, wellness, and social support services.*

Quality of life is directly linked to a community's ability to provide safe, convenient and equitable access to facilities and services related to childcare and education, healthcare, wellness and social services support. When one or more of these are missing, the community becomes less desirable at retaining and attracting new families and creates economic impacts. As residents age, they rely on different services and programs but all are needed for the long-term retention of families and creating healthy lifestyles and quality of life. In the Community Survey, the top three improvements to improve the quality of life in Valdez are increased childcare/preschool options, community self-sufficiency, and support services for lower-income residents. Increased access to health care, improved K-12 education and mental health care support were prioritized by 24% or more of community members. The Survey also found that providing childcare and pre-K education was a top three priority to support economic growth. The top City facilities to be expanded or renovated included the senior center, school renovations, and hospital expansion.

#### ACTION

A. Maintain high-quality educational facilities.
B. Expand and support community cultural events.
C. Continue to assess and fund community service organization annual funding based on allocation of available grant funding.
D. Explore options for museum enhancement.

#### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

- Encourage workforce training for core Valdez industries (maritime, trades, healthcare, service sectors)
- Update the Community Health Needs Assessment/ Health Improvement Plan every three years

#### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Medical Center Master Plan Update (when approved 2022)

## GOAL 5.2

### Provide programs and facilities for active lifestyles

*Provide quality parks, recreation facilities, and a variety of amenities and programs to empower year-round active lifestyles.*

Safe and convenient access to recreation plays a fundamental role in the support of mental and physical health for people of all abilities, ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and ethnicities. This was made more apparent due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to gain access to safe outdoor recreation. Access to recreation reduces obesity and incidence of chronic disease, reduces stress levels, allows for social interaction, and improves mental health. Valdez residents place a high value on recreation and access to the outdoor recreation, year-round. The Community Survey indicates that access to recreation and open space is a top priority interwoven into the many needs of the community, beyond just healthy lifestyles. Even with abundant recreation, the Survey indicated that 34% of the participants wanted even more year-round access and was the fourth priority for quality of life.

#### ACTION

A. Develop a recreational trails map for motorized and non-motorized users.
B. Develop interpretive plan for Old Town Site
C. Update Title 17 to include conditions for the approval for new motorized sport facilities.

#### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

- Update MOU and partnerships with land-managing agencies that provide recreation amenities around Valdez
- Engage in conversations with DNR, Cruise Companies, and others for possible public private partnerships for key facility management/development (i.e. trailheads)

#### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Waterfront Comprehensive Master Plan
- Meals Hill Recreation Plan (when approved 2021)

## GOAL 5.3

### Provide a safe community

*Provide the programs and level of service to protect life and property and create a safe community.*

Valdez residents rely on the City's police and fire departments to keep them safe and to protect their property. Monitoring existing growth patterns and carefully planning for future growth helps to ensure that the city's emergency personnel have the equipment and personnel necessary to respond to calls throughout the community. Careful planning also ensures that the city's neighborhoods, schools, work places, and other gathering places are sited so as to minimize risks to life and property from natural hazards (see Goal 7.1).

#### ACTION

A. Expand emergency response radio system to areas not served.
B. Maintain personnel, resources, and training necessary within the City to provide the response called for in the City of Valdez Emergency Operations Plans and in support of emergency management disaster response plans.
C. Monitor and develop system to assist vulnerable population during emergency events.

#### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan

# ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

*Valdez protects the natural and cultural environment through conservation and sustainable practices.*

**Environmental Stewardship**

Valdez residents highly value the surrounding natural environment and consider it a primary factor in contributing to their quality of life. There is the need for active stewardship of the natural environment for both present and future generations to continue to experience this quality of life; as well as for the many benefits afforded by land and water protection. These benefits include economic value through recreation-based tourism, supporting local businesses and major industries that rely on the area's abundant natural resources (including seafood), and generating City revenue through fish taxes, sales tax, and other funding sources. Valdez's citizens are concerned about the protection of open space and landscapes including those with high environmental value such as wetlands, anadromous streams, wildlife habitat areas, and even those that contribute to the scenic beauty of the region.

Other priorities include the protection of natural areas through preservation/conservation and minimizing impacts from air and water pollution, municipal solid waste, and environmental toxins. In the 2020 Community Survey, residents were asked to select the top three priorities they felt the City should put more focus on. Expanded recycling, and preservation of natural areas and open space, both received near 50% support and were the top two responses. Environmental quality and pollution control was the fifth priority and received a priority rating by 27% of the respondents. Valdez citizens clearly understand the link between their natural environment and its contribution to the community, quality of life, and economic well-being. This is evident from the Exxon Valdez striking Bligh Reef in 1989 and spilling 10.8 million gallons of crude oil into surrounding Prince William Sound. The oil spill soiled the natural environment, significantly impacted the commercial fishing industry, and impacted the community's economy for many years.

## GOAL 6.1

### Protect important lands

*Protect natural resources, critical habitats, historic and cultural places, and recreation lands.*

Continue to commit to our legacy of responsible and conscientious environmental stewardship to ensure that the abundant wildlife, quality natural resources and scenery, and open space we experience today last long into the future. Protect and appropriately celebrate places of cultural and historic significance. These lands and places contribute to the sense of place, quality of life, and economic well-being of Valdez. The preservation and protection of natural areas and open space was the number two priority (49% support) that the City needs to put more emphasis on, as selected by the community in the Community Survey. This is accomplished through the establishment and implementation of policies and practices that preserve, protect and improve lands and places with high environmental value, those with recreation, subsistence, historic and cultural significance, and hazard lands.

### ACTION

A. Develop a heritage preservation program.
B. Inventory historic and cultural resources and develop local landmark register.
C. Initiate communication and coordination with Valdez Native Tribe for consultation processes for review of ground-disturbing development.
D. Assess and update environmental mapping as needed.
E. Update City GIS mapping with new hazard and environmental data from other sources as becomes available.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

- Encourage conservation options/tools for high value lands in private ownership, such as conservation easements and donations.

### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan

## GOAL 6.2

### Minimize environmental impacts

*Minimize the community's impact on the environment and public health.*

The community puts great value in its natural environment and needs to protect its residents from harmful pollutants and a variety of wastes. Improving and maintaining the City's utilities and facilities and controlling waste and pollution at the source are key strategies to minimize impacts. The proper use and disposal of sewage, stormwater, pollution and other materials limits the risk to the community and its surrounding landscape. In the 2020 Community Survey, Valdez residents were asked to rank public funding priorities. Housing was number one, with expanded public water and service being the second priority. When asked about supporting economic development in the community, providing new water, sewer and road connections was seen by the community as the third highest priority and received 49% support in the survey. This is accomplished by making infrastructure improvements to reduce impacts from hazardous materials, stormwater, sewage and landfill impacts, and establish policies and practices that support air and water quality.

### ACTION

A. Monitor and maintain compliance with new state and federal environmental legislation.
B. Maintain lands designated for future landfill expansion and develop when additional capacity is needed.
C. Advocate for and secure funding at a state and federal level to protect resources.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

- Inform residents and businesses of best practices to minimize impacts on environment and public health.
- Collaborate on ocean acidification monitoring program.
- Monitor and respond to invasive species.

## GOAL 6.3

### Promote efficient uses of resources

*Promote responsible and efficient use of resources and materials including energy consumption, waste reduction, and recycling.*

The most effective method to reduce waste is to not create it, however this is a challenge. The reduction of waste, recycling, and responsible disposal protects the natural environment, saves energy and costs, reduces demand on landfills, and reduces pollution from the creation of new materials or improper disposal. The efficient use of resources and materials protects the environment and preserves resources and the environment for future generations. This is accomplished by incentives, education, and collaboration to increase energy conservation efforts including use of technological solutions and a reduction in consumption, policies and practices for new development and redevelopment that support energy conservation and efficiency, and programs and practices that encourage and support the reduction of waste through recycling, reuse, and composting.

### ACTION

A. Monitor recycling economics for possible re-establishment of recycling program.
B. Assess City of Valdez buildings for cost effective upgrades that allow more efficient utility use.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

- Encourage cost benefit analyses for economic assessment of possible sustainability upgrades.
- Encourage fleet and residential use of low or emission vehicles and equipment.
- Help to make people aware of resources like the Cold Climate Housing Research Center recommendations for insulation and design.
- Inform residents and businesses of best practices to reduce waste and be energy efficient.
- Monitor utility-scale opportunities for energy efficiency, sufficiency, economy.

# ADAPTABLE & RESILIENT

*Valdez responds to, adapts, and thrives under changing conditions and disruptive threats related to natural or human-caused hazard events.*

**Adaptable & Resilient**

A significant portion of the developed areas in Valdez are within natural hazard areas susceptible to tsunamis, flooding, erosion, liquefaction during earthquakes or landslides, and avalanches. Valdez can suffer from wildfires in hot, dry weather, and in cold, wet weather Valdez can accumulate more than 500 inches of snow. Additionally, the community is at risk from disruptions to transportation and communications, shifting demographics and economic volatility, and the high costs associated with power, infrastructure, and construction. These disruptions also significantly increase social and economic threats that result in societal "stresses," such as unemployment and poor access to housing, education, health care, and other essential services. These social and economic stresses are sometimes harder to see in Valdez but can be exposed and exacerbated during a crisis or disaster.

## GOAL 7.1

### Reduce the community's vulnerability to natural events

*Plan for and reduce the community's vulnerability from extreme weather events and natural hazards including landslides, flooding, avalanches, earthquakes, tsunamis, significant precipitation, and other events. This includes impacts from climate change.*

Valdez's scenic setting brings with it a number of natural hazards and risks. Flooding, avalanches, landslides, earthquakes, and on rare occasions, tsunamis. These have all posed a threat to Valdez at some time in the past and will likely do so again in the future. Day-to-day decisions made about where and how growth will occur can affect the impact that natural disasters have on the community when they do happen. Planning and development in Valdez should be accomplished to limit risk to persons and property to the greatest extent possible. A resilient community has strategies in place to respond, adapt, and thrive under changing conditions. Resiliency planning can include updating land use codes, zoning, development standards, incentive programs, and other plans or policies to better prepare for likely disruptions while also developing measures that allow for action in the face of uncertainty or unexpected events, and gradual impacts from climate change.

### ACTION

A. Work with partners to compile and maintain hazard mapping and make easily available to the public.
B. Identify public facilities and other critical infrastructure within hazard areas and develop plans for relocation. Coordinate with other entities as needed (such as ADOT&PF for Valdez Glacier Stream bridge).
C. Identify and secure sites for future locations of critical infrastructure out of areas that could be impacted by natural disasters or climate change impacts.
D. Update land use mapping and code to exclude inappropriate development from areas of concern (hazards lands, etc.).
E. Monitor changing conditions and update building codes to reflect climate change.
F. Monitor extreme weather events and their impacts.
G. Report to the community annually with information related to how climate change and weather related events for how they have and are expected to affect the community.
H. Work with state and federal agencies for mapping and policy related to climate change.
I. Continue to implement and update the Emergency Operations Plan and Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. Discourage new subdivisions and increased density in hazard areas subject to flooding.
J. Coordinate with state and federal officials when developing response plans and seismic ordinance standards.
K. Discourage new subdivisions and increased density in hazard areas subject to flooding.
L. Coordinate work and obtain 2021/2022 Alaska Avalanche Hazard Inventory and implement recommendations.

### COLLABORATION (NON-CITY OF VALDEZ LEAD)

- Encourage hazard risk assessment by developers.
- Educate residents on the possible impacts of climate change and natural hazards on their property, community and livelihoods by providing publicly accessible information and interactive maps that show the potential risks of developing in different areas.
- Work with state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, and local industries to understand economic impacts due to climate change (impacts to salmon species) and prepare for change.
- Monitor, map, and record climate change impacts (including storm surges, increased precipitation, flooding, avalanche) and report to the community.
- Develop scenarios to assess potential climate change impacts and include in future land use and planning; including infrastructure sizing/design.

### OTHER PLANS THAT SHAPE THIS GOAL

- Valdez Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan

# MAKING IT HAPPEN

***Plan Valdez*** is a visionary document that presents an ambitious long-range plan to support a sustainable, healthy, and thriving community. It encapsulates the extensive efforts undertaken to determine how the City will bring about its future vision and includes a set of action priorities in each element to direct future City work. The actions need to be quantifiable and actionable supported by metrics of success. For a successful outcome there are three key implementation components: role of stakeholders, priorities for action, and plan monitoring.

## Role Of Stakeholders

The City cannot do the work alone. Turning ***Plan Valdez*** into reality will take concerted, consistent attention to implementation. This requires that the City administration, departments and present and future Commissions and City Councils use the Comprehensive Plan as a key reference for all decisions and actions, consistent with the goals and actions. The successful implementation of the plan will also require collaboration and partnerships with external agencies, institutions, private businesses, and the public. The role of each stakeholder is to work together to define the principles and vision, stay informed and involved and provide feedback.

## Priorities For Action

These new initiatives and ideas may be lost without common understanding of their importance to the vision of the community and the role that each City department and stakeholder plays. The tables below provides a list of priority actions needed to implement this plan, by theme. City staff and planning officials will need to update this table on an annual basis, or as necessary, to keep the responsibilities and actions current. The "Action" column identifies what is to be accomplished, the "Need" identifies the barrier, deficiency or other factors that supports the action, and the "Description" provided more detail to the action. The "Importance" column lists three levels for implementing actions: (1) - High Priority, those that should receive immediate attention and effort. (2) - Medium Priority, those that are important, but can wait for investments of attention and effort until High Priority actions have been addressed. (3) - Low Priority, those that can be done as opportunities present themselves for low cost/effort investments. There may be opportunities where circumstances present themselves that Medium and Low priority items may be completed prior to High priority actions. "Effort" identifies the ease or difficultly in completing the action. And finally, "Metric" quantifies the action and the measurable outcome that needs to be completed for each action item.

## Plan Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluating the progress helps to ensures the success of ***Plan Valdez*** and provides opportunities for adjustments in response to economic, social and regional changes. Monitoring activities will include development of community indicators to determine how effective the ***Plan Valdez*** has been at achieving its vision. An annual report card should be prepared to review progress made in achieving indicator targets over the course of the year and whether a change in policy may be needed.

# HOW TO USE THIS SECTION

**GOAL**

Goals are what needs to be accomplished to implement the theme.

**GOAL 1.1**

**Implement and update existing plans**

*The City of Valdez has numerous actionable plans that need to be prioritized and implemented.*

Valdez has numerous adopted master plans for a wide range of projects and programs. These plans address community-identified opportunities and concerns and provide valuable information and guidance. The actions within these plans should be prioritized and implemented, and plans should be reviewed updated periodically to remain relevant and actionable.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1.A | Complete a review of Plan Valdez every five years and adopt amendments as needed. | Over time, community needs and priorities will change and new opportunities will arise. A review and update of this plan allows the community to respond to changes, and assess that action items are current and continue to reflect the community. | At a minimum of five-year intervals, the Planning Department will convene a workshop for appropriate City staff, members of the Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Council to review, propose and adopt amendments to Plan Valdez to ensure it is current and reflects development policies and practices. | High | | Plan Valdez reviewed every 5 years. Full re-write for 10 years (contracted by 2029). |
| 1.1.B | Develop Planning and Zoning Commission Check List for new developments to verify they further the goals of all adopted plans. | Information relevant to review of planning actions and new developments exists in multiple documents and throughout the code. A checklist would facilitate reviews and result in more consistent and code-based decision-making that implements the goals outlined in Plan Valdez and other adopted plans. | Develop a reference document that would provide direct guidance for review, and references to documents or code sections that should be referenced in more detail in findings of facts as part of the decision-making process. This tool would also be useful for applicants and new businesses so they can understand process and submit the necessary information to facilitate and expedite reviews. | Medium | | Completion of reference document. |
| 1.1.C | Annual planning review of all adopted master plans for implementation of action items and to identify when review/update is needed. | The community has been involved with numerous planning efforts (some incomplete) and numerous plans have been adopted. These plans have been followed/implemented to varying extents, and 'planning weariness' has been a factor within new planning processes. Identified action items were determined to be needed for the community, and should be imp-lamented or determined to be obsolete. It is critical that plans are followed and implemented in order to grow Valdez, for the community to see progress, and for the community to support planning processes and outcomes. | Existing plans provide valuable guidance and ongoing knowledge/awareness of plans is needed to identify and build on success, and identify when materials begin to be obsolete or "next steps" are needed. Plans include the Valdez Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2020), Valdez Comprehensive Waterfront Master Plan (2019), City of Valdez Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2018), Valdez Museum & Historical Archive Master Interpretive Plan (2016), Valdez Visitor Market Profile (2016), Competitive Market Analysis and Long Range Planning for the Port of Valdez (2015), Community of Valdez Strategic Plan: 2013-2018 (2013), Valdez Coordinated Community Transportation Plan (2013). Several other plans are still being developed or about to be developed and include the Meals Hill Master Plan, Medical Center Master Plan Update, Valdez Housing Market Assessment and Gap Analysis, Valdez Pioneer Field Airport Master Plan Update, and others. | High | | Annual review of plans to identify completed actions and determine when plans need to be reviewed/ updated. |

**ACTION**

Actions are the individual steps needed to achieve the goal

**NEED**

This describes the barrier to overcome, or the opportunity to be optimized

**DESCRIPTION**

Describes the action and an overview of implementation

**IMPORTANCE**

Provides a general assessment of importance of this action to achieving the goal

**EFFORT**

Provides a general assessment of how easy or difficult an action may be to implement

**METRIC**

Establishes a measurable outcome that can be assessed

# COLLABORATIVE, ACCOUNTABLE, TRANSPARENT, EQUITABLE

*Valdez encourages an effective, respectful, and equitable program of discussion, education, and participation as the community works toward implementing Plan Valdez.*

## GOAL 1.1

### Implement and update existing plans

*The City of Valdez has numerous actionable plans that need to be prioritized and implemented.*

Valdez has numerous adopted master plans for a wide range of projects and programs. These plans address community-identified opportunities and concerns and provide valuable information and guidance. The actions within these plans should be prioritized and implemented, and plans should be reviewed updated periodically to remain relevant and actionable.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
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| 1.1.A | Complete a review of Plan Valdez every five years and adopt amendments as needed. | Over time, community needs and priorities will change and new opportunities will arise. A review and update of this plan allows the community to respond to changes, and assess that action items are current and continue to reflect the community. | At a minimum of five-year intervals, the Planning Department will convene a workshop for appropriate City staff, members of the Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Council to review, propose and adopt amendments to Plan Valdez to ensure it is current and reflects development policies and practices. | High | Moderate | Plan Valdez reviewed every 5 years. Full re-write for 10 years. Initiated in 2029. |
| 1.1.B | Develop Planning and Zoning Commission Check List for new developments to verify they further the goals of all adopted plans. | Information relevant to review of planning actions and new developments exists in multiple documents and throughout the code. A checklist would facilitate reviews and result in more consistent and code-based decision-making that implements the goals outlined in Plan Valdez and other adopted plans. | Develop a reference document that would provide direct guidance for review, and references to documents or code sections that should be referenced in more detail in findings of facts as part of the decision-making process. This tool would also be useful for applicants and new businesses so they can understand process and submit the necessary information to facilitate and expedite reviews. | Medium | Simple | Completion of reference document. |
| 1.1.C | Annual planning review of all adopted master plans for implementation of action items and to identify when review/update is needed. | The community has been involved with numerous planning efforts (some incomplete) and numerous plans have been adopted. These plans have been followed/implemented to varying extents, and 'planning weariness' has been a factor within new planning processes. Identified action items were determined to be needed for the community, and should be imp-lamented or determined to be obsolete. It is critical that plans are followed and implemented in order to grow Valdez, for the community to see progress, and for the community to support planning processes and outcomes. | Existing plans provide valuable guidance and ongoing knowledge/awareness of plans is needed to identify and build on success, and identify when materials begin to be obsolete or "next steps" are needed. Plans include the Valdez Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2020), Valdez Comprehensive Waterfront Master Plan (2019), City of Valdez Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2018), Valdez Museum & Historical Archive Master Interpretive Plan (2016), Valdez Visitor Market Profile (2016), Competitive Market Analysis and Long Range Planning for the Port of Valdez (2015), Community of Valdez Strategic Plan: 2013-2018 (2013), Valdez Coordinated Community Transportation Plan (2013). Several other plans are still being developed or about to be developed and include the Meals Hill Master Plan, Medical Center Master Plan Update, Valdez Housing Market Assessment and Gap Analysis, Valdez Pioneer Field Airport Master Plan Update, and others. | High | Moderate | Annual review of plans to identify completed actions and determine when plans need to be reviewed/ updated. |

## GOAL 1.2

### Improve communications between the City and its residents

*Improved communication will inform the public of planning policies and decision-making opportunities*

Successful planning is the result of an active, intentional dialogue between the community and public decision makers. The City of Valdez has the responsibility to provide the community with the tools to access public information, have discussions with staff, leadership and elected representatives and monitor the implementation of the projects. Sometimes the opportunity for influence is quite small, while at other times the public can have a great deal of influence. And while the responsibility lies with the city to notify residents, it is still up to residents to inform themselves—to ask questions about what's happening in their community and to actively seek information about issues and events that may affect their lives.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.2.A | Implement consistent, code-based decision-making processes for land use actions. | Consistency, simplicity and accountability are critical for a predictable process. | Develop consistent, code required review processes specific to development actions to facilitate predictable reviews for developers and the public. The process should describe the steps in each review process by land use action type, required applications, approximate timelines, when the public is able to provide input, who is the reviewing body, etc. | Medium | Simple | Process documented and adopted. |
| 1.2.B | Maintain and expand information available on an Open Data portal. | The public does not currently have easy access to land use information. | Make City of Valdez GIS mapping available with a priority on the Future Land Use Map, zoning maps and natural hazard mapping. | Medium | Moderate | GIS mapping accessible on-line. |
| 1.2.C | Develop a Development Services Web Page. | Developers have requested a more streamlined process for tracking applications. | Develop a website that provides access for the public to apply for and track permits, inspections, and plan review. The website will also help users understand what is needed, the requirements, and how to apply for the various permits, as well as the needed forms. | Medium | Moderate | New Development Services web page created and maintained. |
| 1.2.D | Conduct an annual code review workshop with Staff. | Identification of code issues and implementation of code updates is critical for maintaining a logical and predictable process and ensuring the code provides and is clear for situations. | Establish an annual workshop at which the Planning Department and Planning and Zoning Commission review the Land Development Code and identify needed updates that further the vision of Plan Valdez and promote quality development. | Medium | Moderate | Annual workshop held. |
| 1.2.E | Provide annual training to the City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission. | Consistency in the application of code between reviewers is critical for a predictable process. | Train commission members on responsibilities related to Robert Rules of Order, Conflicts of Interests, Ex-Parte Communication, Municipal Codes, Comprehensive Plans, and public process. | High | Moderate | Annual training held. |

## GOAL 1.3

### Foster Inclusivity and Equity

*Create a community that acknowledges and is inclusive of all people, including policies that create an inclusive, predictable, and engaging environment where the public's input is valued.*

Using a variety of methods to gather input will facilitate gathering feedback from a wide spectrum of stakeholder interests, resulting in more representative views and concerns and social inclusion for all people regardless of ability, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation or income.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.3.A | Develop a Public Participation Plan (how, when, and how input is used). | The public has indicated that the City needs consistency in communicating with the public related to input, involvement, and ensuring the right people are involved at the right time. | Identify toolbox of appropriate communication methods, when to use them, and roles and responsibilities of city staff and the public regarding City actions. Engage with representative organizations and community leaders to provide focused input on methods and tools for culturally appropriate outreach and education. | High | Advanced | Plan adopted. |
| 1.3.B | The City of Valdez will develop an internal plan for staff related to diversity and inclusion. | Currently there is no plan but this is a desired action. | There is the desire to better inform and train staff in diversification and inclusion policy for existing staff and new hires. May require external assistance. | High | Advanced | Plan completed (internal document). |
| 1.3.C | Develop an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan for City-owned facilities. | The transition plan is a formal document available to the public outlining a city's compliance with ADA. If a city employs more than 50 people, a self evaluation and formal transition plan is required in some cases in order to receive federal funding. | A transition plan is a road map that inventories and can prioritize what and when improvements to existing infrastructure should occur. It identifies barriers in City programs and activities that prevents persons with disabilities from access (includes evaluation of barriers within public rights of way, buildings, and policies/practices). | High | Moderate | Plan adopted. |
| 1.3.D | Strengthen relationship with the Valdez Native Tribe for improved communication and collaboration between the City and Tribe. | Communication and collaboration is inconsistent and there is the desire by both Tribe and City to improve relationships with each other. | Work with the Tribe to establish regularly scheduled meetings between the Tribe and City. These meetings would facilitate improved communication, sharing of ideas, and discussion for projects that might require coordination with the Tribe. | High | Moderate | Regularly scheduled meetings. |

# LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

*Valdez is an attractive community that integrates daily activities (home, work, education, culture, and leisure) into a high-quality environment.*

## GOAL 2.1

**Plan for responsible growth.**

*Responsible growth occurs through deliberate planning, resulting in decisions that are predictable, equitable, and cost-effective.*

Prioritizing and concentrating development where facilities, infrastructure, and services have the existing capacity and in areas where the Police and Fire Departments are best able to respond will improve service and reduce operation and maintenance costs. Best practices include planning for future growth and development in areas that can achieve the highest real estate tax revenues per acre. The City of Valdez will focus growth near existing infrastructure to support development in a fiscally sound manner, where the market forces will be the strongest for new residential and employment development.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1.A | Adopt two new zoning districts: Residential/Recreation Planned Development District; and, Industrial/ Working Waterfront Planned Development District. | The intent of these districts is to better align the zoning with the goals of Plan Valdez and the adopted future land use map to provide the maximum benefit for public safety and welfare development and design of building sites, roadways, and other service amenities. | The zoning districts should outline a process that describes the minimum subdivision, development, and design standards based on site characteristics. For example, it should require that the nature and intensity of development be supported by adequate utilities, transportation network, drainage systems and open space to serve the development, and to minimize impacts on adjacent existing and future development and sensitive lands. | High | Advanced | New zones adopted within two years of Plan Valdez. |
| 2.1.B | Rezone City of Valdez parcels to align with the future land use map | Rezoning City parcels is the first step to implementing Plan Valdez. | Rezoning that is consistent with the land use map provides predictable direction on how these lands could be developed. | High | Moderate | Evaluate properties and create timeline for rezone actions. |
| 2.1.C | Create a Destination Resort Overlay District. | The purpose of the destination resort overlay zone is to provide a process for the siting of destination resorts on lands designated on the Future Land Use Map as eligible for this purpose. The resort overlay is intended to provide for carefully planned destination resort facilities, which will enhance and diversify the recreational opportunities and economy for the city of Valdez. | A "Destination resort" generally means a self-contained development providing visitor-oriented accommodations and developed recreational facilities in a setting with high natural amenities. The destination resort overlay will ensure resort development that complements the physical attractiveness and constraints of an area without significant adverse effects on adjacent rural residential subdivisions, or the significant natural and cultural features which contribute to the setting. The Overlay District should include require an approved master plan for development and schedule for development with reverted clauses. The Zoning district should outline permitted uses, design standards, minimize tract sizes, and so forth. | Medium | Advanced | Destination Resort Overlay District adopted within two years of Plan Valdez Adoption. |
| 2.1.D | Conduct a comprehensive rewrite of Title 17, and Title 16 Subdivisions to implement Plan Valdez. | The current code has become a patchwork of amendments and revised regulations which in some cases are outdated, overly complex, and inconsistent. | Update and align Title 17 and Title 18 to remove inconsistencies and make it easier administer. The code should be modernized to address new uses and initiatives, be more user friendly to all users (such as including illustrations for development standards), and codify processes. | Medium | Advanced | Title 17 rewritten within 2 years of Plan Valdez adoption. |
| 2.1.E | Rezone parcels to align with the Future Land Use Map (included within this comprehensive plan). | Rezoning parcels is a critical step to implementing Plan Valdez. | Work with property owners to identify willing participants to rezone lands to bring them into conformity with the adopted future place type mapping and reduce incompatible land uses. The City should consider sponsoring the rezones at no cost to the property owner. | High | Moderate | Inform impacted property owners of future land use map changes and rezone process within 1 year of Plan Valdez adoption. |

## GOAL 2.1 (CONT'D)

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1.F | Prioritize funding for the operation and maintenance of existing public infrastructure and related services before considering new extensions. | It is fiscally responsible to maintain and upgrade existing infrastructure and expected levels of service before considering expansion. | Extending, replacing and repairing aging infrastructure in established neighborhoods/ commercial areas should be the first priority. Replacement infrastructure should be sized to meet increased demands from higher-density development reflected on the future land use map. Prioritize Town center and "downtown" working waterfront infrastructure. | Medium | Moderate | Existing facilities upgraded/extended per Pavement Management Plan. |
| 2.1.G | Investigate development standards to establish a fair allocation to developers of the costs for required off-site improvements needed to help support the impacts of development projects on public infrastructure. | Some new developments require upgrades to public infrastructure to serve the development and protect the health, welfare and safety of the public. The burden of the costs should be fairly allocated between the tax payer and the developer. | Establish standards to assess off-site infrastructure demands related to new developments. Consider developing a scorecard/checklist system for new development proposals which objectively assesses the appropriateness of new development based on short and long-term infrastructure costs and burdens on public infrastructure and services. Revise code to implement a cost sharing plan for the impact to off-site improvements (sidewalks, utilities, roads). | High | Moderate | Development standards revised and checklist created within 2 years of Plan Valdez adoption. |
| 2.1.H | Establish standards with which to assess existing and/or needed infrastructure improvements and associated cost for developments during review processes. | The public indicated concern that developments might place too high a burden on the City of Valdez for infrastructure and services. | Develop a scorecard/checklist system for new development proposals which objectively assesses the appropriateness of new development based on short and long-term infrastructure costs and burdens on public infrastructure and services. | High | Advanced | System complete. |
| 2.1.I | Prioritize code enforcement of known nuisances (as defined under Titles 8 and 17) that pose a threat to public health and safety and/or the environment. | Compliance with existing codes is intended to preserve neighborhood integrity, maintain safe living conditions, and protect the environment through responsive enforcement. | A nuisance is an activity or physical condition that is offensive to the senses, or interferes with another person's reasonable use and enjoyment of life or property. Because nuisance abatement are often complex, the city should, when appropriate, work with other government and social service agencies to facilitate negotiations and mitigation strategies. | High | Advanced | Initiate enforcement to known nuisances that pose threat to public health, safety and environment. |
| 2.1.J | Update 17 to better differentiate between nuisance types and verify coordination with recent Title 8 update. | Updating and streamlining the code will provide a better definition of public nuisance types and what constitutes a violation which will facilitate enforcement of the code. Title 8 was recently updated in 2019 and needs coordination with Title 17 updates. | The city code should have different purpose statements in their preambles, and contain different administrative procedures for different nuisance types, specifically vehicle storage requirements and dilapidated buildings. | High | Advanced | Titles 17 updated and adopted. Update Title 8 as needed for coordination. |
| 2.1.K | Enforce zoning code infractions based on zoning updates (in both Title 8 and 17). | Once the zoning code is updated, enforcement is required. | Current code is not clear on types and procedures for enforcement. There needs to be clearly defined and defendable code that allows enforcement that would be developed under 2.20. | Medium | Advanced | Initiate enforcement to known nuisances. |
| 2.1.L | Research innovative approaches for "Rehabilitation of Abandoned and Dilapidated Buildings" in other states/ cities to see if a similar program would be feasible in Valdez. | Rehabilitation of dilapidated buildings will enhance conditions of appearance, habitability, occupancy, use and safety of all structures and premises in the city and promote economic activity. | Some jurisdictions have identified a receivership tool that fosters partnerships through a receivership program between local governments and private sector and nonprofit organizations to remedy problems associated with hazardous structures and help save demolition costs. The program helps avoid the costly process of condemnation and increases the opportunities of salvaging property instead of using demolition to abate the problem. | Medium | Moderate | Complete research and develop recommendations for rehabilitation of abandoned and dilapidated buildings. |
| 2.1.M | Identify special use standards in Title 17 for helicopter landing areas. | Current code does not include language for helicopter use outside the airport and industrial districts and new facilities beyond the airport could create negative impacts to existing land uses. | Standards shall take into account definitions of landing facility types, distance from residential uses, frequency of use, hours of operation, and weight/size of helicopter. Zoning regulations for landing facilities should consider permitting heliports by right in industrial zones, as conditional uses in commercial zones, and as conditional uses for public purposes in residential zones. | Medium | Advanced | Develop and adopt policy related to helicopter landing areas in Title 17. |
| 2.1.N | Ensure that snow storage sites are maintained and assessed to match development and community needs. | Snow storage is a critical need in developed areas but is not mapped or monitored. | Future land use and development in the community may modify the need, location, and size of snow storage areas to allow the community to operate in winter. Climate change over time may also modify snow storage needs. Mapping and monitoring will allow assessment of snow storage needs over time in the developed areas. | Medium | Moderate | Develop a snow storage inventory and map, assign staff to assess whether snow storage requirements align with capacity needs over time. |
| 2.1.O | Officially adopt other City of Valdez district, special use areas, and master plans developed. | Several plans have been recently developed or will be completed in the near term and needs to be approved by the City. | Adoption of these documents which includes, but not limited to, include district, special use area, trails and parks, and land use master plans that will allow incorporation of their goals and recommendations into the Comprehensive Plan. | Medium | Simple to Moderate | Approval of plans. |

## GOAL 2.2

### Encourage redevelopment and new development

*Appropriate (re)development that meets the greater needs of the community in an economic and efficient manner.*

Finding ways to streamline, facilitate and incentivize development will help to generate higher quality development, new investment in under-performing properties and aging buildings, and new construction. Reinvestment programs should include smaller-scale redevelopment efforts or infill development and feature more targeted programs to improve building quality, adaptive reuse of parcels and buildings.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.2.A | Assess feasibility of pursuing differed jurisdiction from the State Fire Marshal for fire plan review and inspection. | Streamline commercial building permit process to reduce timeline for plan review and approval. | Conduct a review of requirements for local jurisdiction from the State Fire Marshal to expedite plan reviews for commercial building projects, and provide commercial fire inspection services. | Medium | Advanced | Complete assessment and make recommendations to Council on how to proceed regarding differed jurisdiction. |
| 2.2.B | Create an incentive program for the infill/redevelopment of properties already served by public water and sewer. | Because of logistics and the associated high costs of construction, incentive programs can help facilitate the implementation of Plan Valdez by facilitating quality development where it is most needed. | Identify programs and eligibility standards to make infill/redevelopment projects more attractive to developers, including regulatory and financial incentives such as tax credits/ abatements/waivers, waiver or reduction in permit/plan review fees, expedited review process, and/or flexible zoning regulations. Priority areas should include the Town Center, and adjacent working waterfront and mixed use place types. | Medium | Moderate | Incentive program approved, one new development. |
| 2.2.C | Develop a land management plan for management of City of Valdez lands. | The city owns a significant amount of land within the City limits. Lands should be managed to their highest and best use and to the benefit of present and future residents of Valdez. | The plan should address how to preserve and enhance the value of city-owned land assets through active management including specific guidelines for land banking, acquisition, disposal and development, leases, future public purposes, and conservation. | Medium | Advanced | Land Management Plan adopted. |
| 2.2.D | Implement a Storefront Improvement Program to build on past and current beautification efforts. | The look and feel of the commercial areas are important for community pride, economic vitality and to support the tourism industry. | Provide matching grants for exterior business remodels in the Town Center and adjacent Mixed Use and Working Waterfront districts and within the Gateway Corridor Overlay District. A local example of this program is the City of Soldotna who provides a 50% matching grant to encourage private investment to improve aesthetics in key area. | Low | Moderate | Grant program adopted. Grants awarded. |
| 2.2.E | Identify strategic vacant and/ or underdeveloped parcels for redevelopment that may benefit from a public private partnership. | Lands should be managed to their highest and best use and to the benefit of present and future residents of Valdez. | The City should consider subdividing, rezoning, and extending utilities and roads as part of a development agreement with private developers to encourage preferred developments in strategic areas. | Medium | Moderate | Redevelop parcels through partnerships. |
| 2.2.F | Encourage the remediation of Department of Environmental Conservation identified contaminated sites. | There are over a dozen sites in Valdez that are listed as DEC contaminated sites. | Identify if any parcels are eligible for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Land Revitalization Program/Brownfields Program and improve them as funding becomes available. The program develops, tests, and advances a range of approaches that help communities safely reuse their underused, contaminated and potentially contaminated properties and EPA offers a variety of grants to support clean up and redevelopment: https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/ types-epa-brownfield-grant-funding. | Low | Moderate | Reduction or elimination of contaminated City of Valdez sites. |
| 2.2.G | Investigate utility extensions to connect existing Septic/Well sites to city water/sewer to improve public health, emergency response (fire hydrants) and reduce environmental contamination. | Existing septic and water systems in high density development areas are failing or expected to fail in areas with high water tables. This will create public health/environmental issues. | To eliminate the possibility of site contamination and to ensure quality of drinking water, connect developments to City sewer and water. This will also increase fire protection coverage. Areas to be prioritized are based on data related to health and safety, development density, and lot sizes. Priority areas include Blue Spruce, Northern Lights, and Robe River Subdivisions. Explore options for shared costs for utility extensions and hook-ups. | Medium | Moderate | Include high priority neighborhoods on CIP list for future funding consideration. |
| 2.2.H | Extend sewer and water utilities to service future development. | High water tables are found in the community and older developments on private well and septic systems are failing. The public indicated interest in having new large developments connected to City sewer and water to prevent future issues. | To eliminate the possibility of site contamination and to ensure quality of drinking water and health issues, connect new developments to City sewer and water with a priority along perimeter of service areas. This will also increase fire protection coverage. Priority areas include Mineral Creek and high priority future housing areas. Explore options for shared costs for utility extensions and hook-ups. | Medium | Advanced | As new development occurs along perimeter of service areas, include utility extensions. |

## GOAL 2.3

**Promote, protect, and build quality housing**

*Quality housing is housing that meets community needs including a range of incomes, housing types, and locations; and is built with longevity in mind*

Without dedicated resources or programmatic priorities to support more diverse housing types, the city's capacity to help residents find housing best suited to their needs, has been limited. Adopting a policy direction that promotes an inclusive, diverse, and flexible housing environment will contribute to a capable workforce, retain residents in the community, and help develop a sturdy customer base to sustain local businesses and population. Various housing options will enable residents to find suitable local housing regardless of income level.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.3.A | Identify and adopt strategic housing investment areas. | Studies have indicated that there are limited rentals, lower cost homes, and senior housing which impacts retention of residents and the attraction and retention of employees. | Targeting and scaling programs and policies can increase near-term impact. It is recommended these areas are targeted within the New Town site, Town Center, and Mixed Use Place Types. | High | Advanced | Three strategic housing investment area adopted within two years of Plan Valdez adoption. |
| 2.3.B | Revise residential zones in the Title 17, Zoning Code. | Studies have indicated that there are limited rentals, lower cost homes, and senior housing which impacts retention of residents and the attraction and retention of employees. | A significant portion of residential land in is zoned as single family residential. All residential zoning should be revised with a focus on the strategic housing investment areas to provide higher density housing where appropriate to achieve the vision in Plan Valdez and make it more attractive to developers. | High | Advanced | Title 17 Revision Complete. |
| 2.3.C | Revise Title 17 to provide guidelines for short term rental housing and accessory dwelling units. | Title 17 zoning code for short term rental housing is out of date and needs be updated. There is a need for accessory dwelling unit language. | There is a need for both short term rental units and accessory dwelling units to make housing more affordable. Revisions should strike a balance between demand for short term and long term rental housing in the community. | High | Advanced | Title 17 Revision Complete. |
| 2.3.D | Provide expedited development review and permitting for new housing construction in Strategic Housing Investment Areas. | Studies have indicated that there are limited rentals, lower cost homes, and senior housing which impacts retention of residents and the attraction and retention of employees. | This can help support diverse types of development by limiting the uncertainty associated with project review, zoning, permitting, entitlement, and other approval processes. | High | Simple | Expedited review available. |
| 2.3.E | Develop Housing-Directed Incentive Programs. | Constructing new housing is expensive, including transportation and materials, necessary engineering and building life-safety code requirements related to seismic and snow load considerations, and costs associated with putting in roads and utilities such as sewer and water. | Identify programs and eligibility requirements to support new construction and renovation of single-family homes, multifamily homes, and apartments as well as conversions of nonresidential buildings to residential units. Examples include leverage vacant or underutilized City-Owned Properties, direct investment of public housing funds, tax-increment financing, bonds, revolving loans, tax abatements, density bonuses for in-fill and development connected to City utilities, and/or other proven public-private partnership models. Priority should be placed on new dwellings that increase the efficiency of providing city services. | High | Moderate to Advanced | Incentive programs established. |
| 2.3.F | Investigate a Healthy Housing Funding Program to maintain and increase quality of housing, including energy and health-related needs. | The housing stock is aging - 70% of housing was constructed between 1965 and 1989 and the cost heating homes is high. | Offer "incentive" funding to assist with housing repairs and energy efficient upgrades. Examples of programs could include no-cost weatherization for low-income homeowners, forgivable low-interest loans or grants for home repairs to address building code violations or major systems repairs such as roof replacement, replacement or upgrades to plumbing, electrical and HVAC, a low-interest loan fund, based on financial need, in which the owner-occupant can defer repayment of the loan for 15 years or until they sell the house, whichever comes first. | Low | Moderate | Incentive program implemented. |
| 2.3.G | Monitor new loan and grant programs from state and federal housing agencies for local opportunities. | The intent is to off-set the high cost of construction related to the cost of transportation and materials, necessary engineering and building life-safety code requirements related to seismic and snow load considerations, and costs associated with putting in roads and utilities such as sewer and water. | City staff will continue to research and explore new housing programs offered by a variety of state and federal agencies that might be appropriate for Valdez. | Medium | Simple | Staff assigned to participate and monitor. |
| 2.3.H | Evaluate land for consideration for future manufactured homes and other forms of lower cost housing. | Mobile home parks and manufactured homes provide a needed source for affordable housing however many are located within industrial areas. | Evaluate all land zoned for residential, mixed use, and commercial, except for single family and rural residential areas, for consideration for future manufactured and other forms of low cost housing to offset any future loss of existing residential units in industrial areas. As housing is phased out of industrial areas, the intent in a no-net-loss, or increase in housing. | High | Moderate | Options for manufactured homes and other forms of lower cost housing incorporated into zoning districts, as appropriate during Title 17 Revision. |

# THRIVING & SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

*Valdez proactively plans for and adapts to economic cycles and industries as they change and evolve.*

## GOAL 3.1

### Build upon Valdez's core economy

*Continue to expand upon Valdez's core industries (shipping, oil and fisheries) and status as a premier port community*

The pipeline provides the City with stable employment as well as a steady source of tax revenue. More than a quarter of all local wages and 12% of all jobs in Valdez are in this sector. Oil is also the primary source of income for the City of Valdez with oil and gas property tax earnings. Seafood follows oil as the next most important source of jobs and workforce earnings for Valdez. The Valdez fishery is important to the community due to the number of fishermen the rich fishery supports, but also due to the logistical road connection the community provides, making it an excellent place to locate fish processing facilities. Continuing to support these industries is critical to the economic future of Valdez.

The Valdez waterfront serves as the driver for future growth, preservation, and the enhancement of Valdez as a community. Finding ways to ensure that it remains a first-class working waterfront should be encouraged. Opportunities and activities to build out the elements of the Comprehensive Waterfront Master Plan to strengthen Valdez as a premier port in Prince William Sound are important to the economic future of the community. According to the survey of nearly 500 residents developed for this project, 59% of residents call implementation of the waterfront master plan a medium, medium-high, or highest level priority.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1.A | Continue to advocate for the core economies (shipping, fishing, oil, tourism). | Core economies need to be maintained and grown. | Fishing, shipping, oil and tourism are the primary economies of Valdez and has supported the community for years. These industries need to be supported as the back-bone of the local economy providing jobs, services, and lifestyle. | Medium | Moderate | Ongoing. |
| 3.1.B | Continue to partner on the feasibility and exploration of large-scale economic projects that benefit the City and the State. | Large scale projects provide an opportunity for economic growth and should lobbied/leveraged to the extent they provide benefit to Valdez. | Several new opportunities and development are being explored or may come about that could help diversify the local economy. These include the Alberta to Alaska (A2A) railway, expanded shipping into the Interior, Asian Pacific shipping of seafood, mariculture, and others. | Medium | Moderate | Ongoing. |

## GOAL 3.2

### Pursue a diverse and self-reliant economy

*Pursue a diverse and self-reliant local economy through working with local industries, workforce, education systems, entrepreneurs, and businesses to retain and attract businesses and residents who want to work and live in Valdez, year-round;*

While the pipeline provides steady employment and a source of tax revenue, the community is concerned with the longevity of these benefits as production declines. The community desires to be proactive in creating a diverse and self-reliant economy that better insulates the City from a 'boom and bust' economy and the expected decline in oil revenue and employment. In the community survey, focus on the core industries is the priority with diversification the next economic priority. Identifying and attracting new local economic opportunities will help address this concern. Directly linked to developing a diverse economy is the need to address housing, childcare and other lifestyles issues.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.2.A | Participate in private public partnerships to support small businesses. | Funding or prioritization of improvements for tourism, new businesses, or other new economic opportunities can be challenging. | Providing more attractions and business opportunities for locals and visitors contributes to the local economy. Consult with the private sector to determine possible opportunities and to develop of guidance for how the City of Valdez can participate and partner. Focus of support from City should be through education programs, tools, 'economic gardening' and other opportunities. | High | Moderate | Develop programs and tools to support small businesses. |
| 3.2.B | Develop City incentives for new business development. | Collective or individual assistance is often critical for the establishment of businesses. | Providing more attractions and business opportunities for locals and visitors contributes to the local economy. The City can assist through supporting businesses through such things as expedited permitting, "buy local" campaigns, tourism and economic marketing, temporary land leases, or other services. Consult with the private sector to determine possible opportunities and to refine or develop programs to provide assistance. | Medium | Moderate | Develop incentives program to support small businesses. |
| 3.2.C | Continue to work with and provide support for industries (both new and existing) to develop new opportunities that diversify and support the local economy. | New local industries reduce reliance on the core industries and creates a diversified economy. | The core industries support much of the Valdez economy and Valdez has a history as a boom-bust community. Diversification through supporting new opportunities helps reduce these cycles and provides a more varied and self-reliant economy. Continue to support, as possible, these new opportunities. | Medium | Moderate | Evaluate how City might assist in supporting these new opportunities, and provide support when appropriate. |
| 3.2.D | Continue to monitor and participate in discussions around Borough formation. | To understand the opportunities and impacts related to long and short term economic benefits and governance sustainability. | Various proposals for Borough formation that could include Valdez have been discussed in recent years. Although preliminary, it is necessary to articulate and quantify the tangible benefits communities and individuals could receive from being in a Borough, as well as potential costs. More information and analysis are needed to understand opportunities, impacts, and costs. | Medium | Simple | Evaluate Borough formation and if appropriate pursue formation. |

## GOAL 3.3

### Promote Valdez as a destination

*Promote the community as a year-round visitor and recreation destination while effectively balancing the benefits with possible impacts.*

In pre-pandemic time, Valdez captured four percent of Alaska's non-resident visitor market, and is a recreation draw for Alaskans connected by the road system. The visitor sector is the top provider of jobs in the community of Valdez. When adjusted to annualized employment, the visitor industry accounted for 15% of all year-round equivalent jobs in the community in 2019. It was also one of the fastest growing sectors. However, the visitor industry provided just six percent of total community workforce earnings, making it the 6th most significant wage provider. There are many opportunities to increase total visitors and total visitor spending.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.3.A | Develop a tourist carrying capacity study, including the target number of cruise ship port calls/annually. | Unplanned tourism growth will result in unanticipated negative consequences. | While cruise ship visitation provides economics opportunities, they can also create impacts including vehicle and pedestrian congestion, new development not consistent with the character of the town, and environmental impacts. Assess existing and future visitor demand and community visitor capacity to forecast needed growth or caps on growth to establish the desired balance between positive economics and negative visitor impacts. | Medium | Advanced | Develop study as required by increased cruise ship visitation. |
| 3.3.B | Ports and Harbors: Upgrade Kelsey Dock for cruise ships (structural, motor coach staging, wayfinding, seawalk). | Kelsey Dock requires upgrades in order to continue to service existing uses and to properly service desired future uses. | Kelsey Dock is in need of structural improvements to support the continue use by cruise ships and other vessels that use the dock year round. Weight restrictions are now in place for vehicles driving on the deck creating operations and safety concerns. Plan, design, and construct the needed improvements. | Medium | Advanced | Upgrade dock. |
| 3.3.C | Enhance the Old Town site as an important local destination. | Old Town suffers from a lack of investment in illustrating and telling the story of Valdez. | Old Town (West of Alaska Avenue) has the potential to be a key destination for Valdez (and the state) and has stories that are not being told effectively. Developing in a sensitive and appropriate manner with a focus on interpretation and passive recreation is desired. Include partners in telling these stories. Develop a carrying capacity study to protect the site resources. | Medium | Advanced | Develop facilities at Old Town within ten years. |
| 3.3.D | Enhance trail facilities by adding wayfinding and installing trailhead facilities. | Trails can be difficult for visitors to find and often lack trash and sanitation facilities. | Installation of additional highway and pedestrian signage identifying trails in Valdez to help visitors find and use trails more easily. Include trash cans, restroom facilities (where appropriate), organized parking, and other typical trailhead facilities. | Medium | Moderate | Trailhead signage and facilities installed. |

# CONNECTED

*Valdez has a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation network that supports future generations' health and mobility needs, enhances economic vibrancy, and improves local and regional connectivity.*

## GOAL 4.1

### Improve regional connectivity

*Advocate for and participate in initiatives to improve regional connectivity across multiple transportation modes including air, water, and road.*

A well-connected transportation network reduces the time and distances traveled to reach destinations and increases the options for routes of travel. Planning for an integrated transportation system looks at not only how all of the individual components work independently, but also how they complement each other and function together for the safe, reliable and efficient movement of people and freight. While the City has little control over the regional network, strong community engagement in regional and state planning processes can help to identify and advocate for connectivity needs and gaps.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1.A | Identify and plan for needed connections between transportation modes for efficient regional travel times. | Transfer between transportation types is not streamlined or clear. | Connections from other communities to Valdez can be challenging for those without personal vehicles. Visitors may need to take multiple transportation types that may not be integrated or convenient. Look for options for improving connectivity to Valdez. | High | Moderate | Connections identified and mapped. |
| 4.1.B | Maintain and/or acquire right of way for potential future transportation uses and connectivity through subdivision actions, redevelopment, and purchases. | There is a risk that unavailable land would impact the success of future projects. | Maintain and/or acquire right of way for potential future transportation uses and connectivity through subdivision actions, redevelopment, and purchases. | Medium | Moderate | Parcels acquired by City of Valdez. |
| 4.1.C | Participate in the statewide and regional transportation planning and advocacy. | There is a risk that opportunities could be missed without actively monitoring key topics, groups, and resources and advocating within/for them. | Participate in the State-wide Long Range Transportation and Freight Plan and Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan to identify needs and advocate for projects within Valdez. Include air, water and land transportation for the efficient movement of people and goods. Connect the community with State Highway Funding, airport funding, and the Alaska Marine Highway System. | Medium | Simple | Staff assigned to participate and monitor. |
| 4.1.D | Monitor emerging technology and statewide planning efforts. | There is a risk that opportunities could be missed without actively monitoring key topics, groups, and resources and advocating within/for them. | Some examples of these transformational technologies include fiber optic networks and 5G, connected and automated vehicles, big data analytics, and alternative fuels. Valdez should focuses on the applications of new technologies for: Passenger and goods movement, Data collection and information sharing, System management and logistics, and Government services. | Medium | Simple | Staff assigned to participate and monitor. |
| 4.1.E | Continue to advocate for reliable ferry and air service. | Valdez has significant historical and ongoing risks to ferry and air service. | Build appropriate institutional relationships involving public and private sector users, providers and regulators of the regional transportation system for ongoing dialogue on the efficiency of the systems and service improvements. Ensure adequate airport navigational aid maintenance and runway quality. | High | Simple | Staff assigned to participate and monitor. |

## GOAL 4.2

**Improve community transportation connections**

*Develop a safe, convenient, and linked year-round multi-modal transportation network to neighborhoods, destinations, and services*

Creating a multi-modal transportation system requires enhancing the current automobile/truck oriented system to include a network of improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities. More people walking and biking is good for the local and visitor economy and enables all members of the community to interact with each other and the surrounding environment. While all place types will benefit from a safer, walkable and bikeable network, connectivity between the Town Center and Working Waterfront should be a priority.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.2.A | Update and modernize road standards inclusive of non-motorized facilities. | Developing Citywide transportation standards creates consistent, safe and functional systems. | Develop a Design Criteria Manual (DCM) for road standards including non-motorized facilities for consistent development within the City of Valdez. DCM should be adopted by the City Council. Remove references to design standards in the Municipal code and refer to the DCM. This approach facilitates amendments to the document that are based on design objectives and sound engineering principals to meet specific goals for safety, functionality, constructibility, and maintenance. | Medium | Advanced | Staff assigned to develop and implement. |
| 4.2.B | Develop a pedestrian and bicycle plan (specific to area bounded by North Harbor Drive, Pioneer Drive, Hazelet Avenue and Chitna Avenue). | Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity to benefit residents and tourists. | Develop a pedestrian and bicycle plan the area generally bounded by North Harbor Drive, Pioneer Drive, Hazelet Avenue and Chitna Avenue. Prioritize critical gaps in pedestrian and bicycle networks with a focus on efficient and safe roadway crossings and improved lighting . Establish design standards for new pedestrian and bicycle facilities and develop an ADA transition plan for improvements to facilitate access for residents and cruise ship passengers. | Medium | Advanced | Plan adopted. |
| 4.2.C | Work with DOT&PF to complete key intersection safety studies (Hazelet Ave from Meals Avenue to Pioneer Drive). | Improve mobility and safety for all roadway users. | Review crash history and operations to determine if improvements are required at intersections along Hazelet Avenue from Meals Avenue to Pioneer Drive. | Medium | Moderate | Improvements completed. |
| 4.2.D | Implement “park once” improvements in the Harbor and Town Center area that encourage people to park and walk to multiple destinations. | Reduce traffic in the harbor and Town Center area reducing conflicts with pedestrians and increasing walkability. | Encourage “park once” in the Harbor and Town Center area. To improve the pedestrian environment by reducing the number of vehicles during busy summer months, consider parking lots on the periphery of the core area with clear “parking” wayfinding signage by vehicle type (passenger, RV, Truck/Trailer). Identify spaces in shared lots for 2 hour parking and longer-term parking. This meets the community desire to reduce vehicle congestion, promote walk-ability, reduce parking management, and promote economic opportunities. | Medium | Moderate | Parking Study complete. |
| 4.2.E | Coordinate with DOT&PF to prioritize the extension of a multi-use pathway (one for each, motorized (ORV) and non-motorized use) to Keystone Canyon including within the Duck Flats (ADOT&PF is lead) | Provide connectivity for both non-motorized and motorized (ORV) transportation modes and improve safety by providing separated pathways. | It is expected that the extend pathway would be within the highway right-of way. Work with ADOT to establish the multi-use pathways for both motorized and non-motorized users. | Low | Advanced | Improvements completed. |
| 4.2.F | Coordinate with DOT&PF to prioritize the improvement of the “Welcome to Valdez” sign site (pull-out and pedestrian crossing facilities) (ADOT&PF is lead). | The sign is a popular destination for vehicles and pedestrians and lacks adequate pull out and pedestrian facilities. | Coordinate with ADOT&PF to improve the “Welcome to Valdez” sign area to include a safer pull out to accommodate vehicle and safe pedestrian facilities and crossings. | High | Advanced | Improvements completed. |
| 4.2.G | Monitor cruise ship passenger travel and assess when visitor volumes trigger a need for transportation improvements. | Future visitor demand may require additional transportation options. | To promote economic opportunity and support of local businesses and attractions, expand seasonal transportation options. Monitor cruise ship passenger travel and assess when visitor volumes would support a response such as a seasonal City of Valdez shuttle to transport visitor to the destinations within the City. | Low | Moderate | Staff assigned to monitor. |

# HEALTHY LIVING

*Valdez supports and integrates health, services, and vibrant activity centers (active living, arts and culture, health and human services, and education) to lay the groundwork for generations to come.*

## GOAL 5.1

### Provide community services

*Provide safe, equitable, and convenient access to healthcare, education, childcare, wellness, and social support services*

Quality of life is directly linked to a community's ability to provide safe, convenient and equitable access to facilities and services related to childcare and education, healthcare, wellness and social services support. When one or more of these are missing, the community becomes less desirable at retaining and attracting new families and creates economic impacts. As residents age, they rely on different services and programs but all are needed for the long-term retention of families and creating healthy lifestyles and quality of life. In the Community Survey, the top three improvements to improve the quality of life in Valdez are increased childcare/preschool options, community self-sufficiency, and support services for lower-income residents. Increased access to health care, improved K-12 education and mental health care support were prioritized by 24% or more of community members. The Survey also found that providing childcare and pre-K education was a top three priority to support economic growth. The top City facilities to be expanded or renovated included the senior center, school renovations, and hospital expansion.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1.A | Maintain high-quality educational facilities. | The high school and elementary school are currently in need of renovations. | High-quality educational facilities are essential to recruit and retain staff and businesses. | High | Advanced | Improved High School and Elementary School. |
| 5.1.B | Expand and support community cultural events. | There are opportunities to enhance and expand community events. Cultural events are under-represented. | The City offers and enables a good selection of events. These should be expanded as possible, including cultural events. Current community events include fun days, races and challenges, and community celebrations such as Fourth of July and Gold Rush Days. Work with local groups to facilitate participation by cultural groups or hosting of dedicated cultural events. | Medium | Moderate | New or expanded events. |
| 5.1.C | Continue to assess and fund community service organization annual funding based on allocation of available grant funding. | The City provides funding opportunities to local organizations that provide facilities and services for community benefit. | Ongoing and identified funding opportunities include: future senior center expansion, future for child care facility, expanded community access to early childhood development and education, expanded community access to occupational, physical therapy, and counseling, future support services for people experiencing homelessness, expanded spectrum of local care including hospital, out-patient, assisted living, long-term care, hospices, and expanded resources for mental illness. | Medium | Moderate | Annual grant funding is allocated, and grantees meet goals of received grants. |
| 5.1.D | Explore options for museum enhancement. | There is the need for an expanded, improved and/or consolidated museum experience. | The museum is currently undergoing planning efforts, and looking at funding and management strategies to best understand options for enhancement of the museum. | Low | Moderate | Museum enhancement options established. |

## GOAL 5.2

### Provide programs and facilities for active lifestyles

*Provide quality parks, recreation facilities, and a variety of amenities and programs to empower active lifestyles, year-round*

Safe and convenient access to recreation plays a fundamental role in the support of mental and physical health for people of all abilities, ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and ethnicities. This was made more apparent due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need to gain access to safe outdoor recreation. Access to recreation reduces obesity and incidence of chronic disease, reduces stress levels, allows for social interaction, and improves mental health. Valdez residents place a high value on recreation and access to the outdoor recreation, year-round. The Community Survey indicates that access to recreation and open space is a top priority interwoven into the many needs of the community, beyond just healthy lifestyles. Even with abundant recreation, the Survey indicated that 34% of the participants wanted even more year-round access and was the fourth priority for quality of life.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.2.A | Develop a recreational trails map for motorized and non-motorized users. | The public indicated that access to recreation and a connected trail network to destinations is a priority. | Access to recreation and a connected trail network to destinations is a community priority for both non-motorized and motorized users. New development should include trail easements to maintain and expand trail networks to destinations and neighborhoods. The development of a recreation trails map will inventory existing trails, identify missing links, and make recommendations for a connected trail network for both OHV and non-motorized users. This will help identify areas where easements may be needed through public and private property and where future development will benefit from new trail corridors. As possible, include trail users in mapping and inventory to engage them in the process. | Medium | Moderate | Recreational trails map complete and adopted. |
| 5.2.B | Develop interpretive plan for Old Town Site. | Old Town suffers from a lack of investment in illustrating and telling the story of Valdez. | Old Town was identified as a priority area for development for passive recreation use and interpretation. Develop an Old Town Interpretive Plan that includes the Pioneers', Valdez Native Tribe, Museum, and others. The Plan will guide the development of passive and interpretive facilities that include trails, day-use recreation facilities, and interpretation. Any plans and development must be done in a sensitive and appropriate manner. | Medium | Moderate | Old Town Interpretive Plan adopted. |
| 5.2.C | Update Title 17 to include conditions for the approval for new motorized sport facilities. | Conditions in Title 17 are needed to allow for the approval for any new motorized sport facilities. | There is the desire to develop motorized sport facilities in the community, especially in those areas with an Industrial place type. Updated Title 17 would include conditions for approval related to noise and minimum separation from incompatible adjacent uses (ie. residential). | Low | Advanced | Update Title 17 with conditions of approval for new motorized sports facilities. |

## GOAL 5.3

### Provide a safe community

*Provide the programs and level of service to protect life and property and create a safe community.*

Valdez residents rely on the City's police and fire departments to keep them safe and to protect their property. Monitoring existing growth patterns and carefully planning for future growth helps to ensure that the city's emergency personnel have the equipment and personnel necessary to respond to calls throughout the community. Careful planning also ensures that the city's neighborhoods, schools, work places, and other gathering places are sited so as to minimize risks to life and property from natural hazards. Also see Goal 7.1.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.3.A | Expand emergency response radio system to areas not served. | Emergency services does not have radio service in several outlying developed areas. | Radio repeaters are needed for the community emergency response radios. Areas of concern include Alpine Woods and other development in and beyond this area. | High | Advanced | Radio repeaters installed. |
| 5.3.B | Maintain personnel, resources, and training necessary within the City to provide the response called for in the City of Valdez Emergency Operations Plans and in support of emergency management disaster response plans. | The community requires adequate level of service by all departments to create a safe community. | The sprawling nature of the community and the area's natural hazards needs to ensure that emergency management plans, personnel, equipment and services are sufficient to respond to potential emergency and disaster responses. | Medium | Advanced | Response times, management, needed resources, and programs to respond to emergencies are at an appropriate level of service. |
| 5.3.C | Monitor and develop system to assist vulnerable populations during emergency events. | Vulnerable populations are to receive the same level of service and can be located within hazard areas. | Developing a system to identify vulnerable populations, their needed, resources, and locations will allow the City to assist in the event of a disaster or emergency. | Medium | Moderate | Vulnerable populations identified and are being appropriately assisted. |

# ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

*Valdez protects the natural and cultural environment through conservation and sustainable practices.*

## GOAL 6.1

### Protect important lands

*Protect natural resources, critical habitats, historic and cultural places, and recreation lands.*

Continue to commit to our legacy of responsible and conscientious environmental stewardship to ensure that the abundant wildlife, quality natural resources and scenery, and open space we experience today last long into the future. Protect and appropriately celebrate places of cultural and historic significance. These lands and places contribute to the sense of place, quality of life, and economic well-being of Valdez. The preservation and protection of natural areas and open space was the number two priority (49% support) that the City needs to put more emphasis on, as selected by the community in the Community Survey. This is accomplished through the establishment and implementation of policies and practices that preserve, protect and improve lands and places with high environmental value, those with recreation, subsistence, historic and cultural significance, and hazard lands.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.1.A | Develop a heritage preservation program. | Valdez currently does not have a heritage preservation program. Preserving and celebrating the community's history and culture was a survey and focus group priority. | Knowing what resources exist allows Valdez to advise on potential impacts to cultural and historic resources and identify preservation incentives and priorities, and access funds. Develop a Historic Preservation Program including a Plan supported by an ordinance, Certified Local Government Certification, a local landmark register, and staff support. | Medium | Advanced | Obtain Certified Local Government (CLG) certification. Heritage Preservation Plan or Plan Element completed. |
| 6.1.B | Inventory historic and cultural resources and develop local landmark register. | Implementation of the heritage preservation program will require a local landmark register (inventory). Valdez has historic and cultural resources but few are inventoried. An inventory would protect these resources, a community and Valdez Native Tribe priority. | A local landmark register recognizes the places that a community has identified as being significant to its culture and history. To develop this register, there will need to be an inventory of the built environment, identification of archaeological sites, oral interviews with community members, consultation with the Valdez Native Tribe, and similar actions that identify possible cultural and historical resources. Criteria established in the heritage preservation plan will help to review these places for possible inclusion in the local landmark register. This inventory and register information is used to identify areas that will require a higher level of consideration during planning, construction and development. It also identifies opportunities for interpretation and preservation. As this is a significant effort and new resources are becoming historic over time, this inventory should be developed incrementally. | Medium | Advanced | Establish local historic and cultural resources inventory criteria (after completion of Heritage Preservation Plan or Plan Element). |
| 6.1.C | Initiate communication and coordination with Valdez Native Tribe for consultation processes for review of ground-disturbing development. | The Valdez Native Tribe is concerned about sensitive cultural resources being impacted by construction. Protection of these resources is a community and Valdez Native Tribe priority. | Valdez Native Tribe consultation is essential to the identification, consideration, and protection of sensitive cultural resources within Valdez. The City of Valdez should establish protocol for communication with the Valdez Native Tribe. | Medium | Moderate | Established policy and process prepared in cooperation with Valdez Native Tribe in one year. |
| 6.1.D | Assess and update environmental mapping as needed. | Environmental mapping is incomplete and dated. The City of Valdez wishes to have these maps updated to manage sensitive lands. | Update environmental mapping. Priority areas include Meals Hill, Cottonwood Subdivision expansion, Valdez Glacier Stream Area. | Medium | Advanced | Updated GIS environmental mapping. |
| 6.1.E | Update City GIS mapping with new hazard and environmental data from other sources as becomes available. | Hazard and environmental mapping is incomplete and dated. The City of Valdez wishes to have the most up to date mapping including those from other sources to better manage lands. | Work with other agencies to obtain GIS data and incorporate into the City GIS mapping system for use by the public and the City. | Medium | Moderate | Staff assigned to monitor, gather, and update mapping with information from other sources as becomes available. |

## GOAL 6.2

### Minimize environmental impacts

*Minimize the community's impact on the environment and public health*

The community puts great value in its natural environment and needs to protect its residents from harmful pollutants and a variety of wastes. Improving and maintaining the City's utilities and facilities and controlling waste and pollution at the source are key strategies to minimize impacts. The proper use and disposal of sewage, stormwater, pollution and other materials limits the risk to the community and its surrounding landscape. In the 2020 Community Survey, Valdez residents were asked to rank public funding priorities. Housing was number one, with expanded public water and service being the second priority. When asked about supporting economic development in the community, providing new water, sewer and road connections was seen by the community as the third highest priority and received 49% support in the survey. This is accomplished by making infrastructure improvements to reduce impacts from hazardous materials, stormwater, sewage and landfill impacts, and establish policies and practices that support air and water quality.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.2.A | Monitor and maintain compliance with new state and federal environmental legislation. | The City of Valdez is subject to compliance with other entities. | Work with other agencies to monitor new environmental legislation, policy and guidelines from state and federal sources. Validate if new policy or changes impacts City code. Share information with the public. | Medium | Moderate | Staff assigned to monitor compliance requirements and update City of Valdez code to remain in compliance. |
| 6.2.B | Maintain lands designated for future landfill expansion and develop when additional capacity is needed. | The two City landfills are near capacity and will need to be expanded. | The City currently has ADEC approval for the expansion of the two City landfills. When required, expand these facilities to minimize impacts to the environment. | Medium | Moderate | Expand landfills as needed. |
| 6.2.C | Advocate for and secure funding at a state and federal level to protect resources. | Funding is available for the protection of resources that the City may not be fully participating in. | The protection of the natural environment and its resources is a community priority and several programs existing that provide funding for the protection of these lands. With the assistance from state and federal funding sources, these resources can be protected. | Medium | Moderate | Staff assigned to monitor, advocate and secure funding from various government agencies. |

## GOAL 6.3

### Promote efficient uses of resources

*Promote responsible and efficient use of resources and materials including energy consumption, waste reduction, and recycling*

The most effective method to reduce waste is to not create it, however this is a challenge. The reduction of waste, recycling, and responsible disposal protects the natural environment, saves energy and costs, reduces demand on landfills, and reduces pollution from the creation of new materials or improper disposal. The efficient use of resources and materials protects the environment and preserves resources and the environment for future generations. This is accomplished by incentives, education, and collaboration to increase energy conservation efforts including use of technological solutions and a reduction in consumption, policies and practices for new development and redevelopment that support energy conservation and efficiency, and programs and practices that encourage and support the reduction of waste through recycling, reuse, and composting.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.3.A | Monitor recycling economics for possible re-establishment of recycling program. | The public indicated a desire for the future reestablishment of a recycling program. | Past recycling efforts in the community has not be profitable due to recycling economics and Valdez's remote location. Evaluate and research programs that may make recycling more feasible and re-establish if possible. The Valdez Native Tribe has expressed an interest in a partnership to bring recycling back to Valdez. | Medium | Simple | Staff assigned to monitor. |
| 6.3.B | Assess City of Valdez buildings for cost effective upgrades that allow more efficient utility use. | Utility costs will continue to increase and are a significant cost. | Identify facilities where utility usage appears to be more intensive than would be expected. Perform building energy audit and cost benefit analysis to understand costs and energy savings strategies. | Medium | Moderate | Facilities assessed for possible benefit. |

# ADAPTABLE & RESILIENT

*Valdez responds to, adapts, and thrives under changing conditions and disruptive threats related to natural or human-caused hazard events.*

## GOAL 7.1

**Reduce community's vulnerability to natural events**

*Plan for and reduce the community's vulnerability from extreme weather events and natural hazards including landslides, flooding, avalanches, earthquakes, tsunamis, significant precipitation, and other events. This includes impacts from climate change.*

Planning and development in Valdez should be accomplished to limit risk to persons and property to the greatest extent possible. A resilient community has strategies in place to respond, adapt, and thrive under changing conditions. Resiliency planning can include updating land use codes, zoning, development standards, incentive programs, and other plans or policies to better prepare for likely disruptions while also developing measures that allow for action in the face of uncertainty or unexpected events, and gradual impacts from climate change.

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7.1.A | Work with partners to compile and maintain hazard mapping and make easily available to the public. | The public does not currently have online access of hazard mapping and mapping of hazards are in need of update and information kept current. | Update area wide hazard land mapping including geologically unstable, seismic, avalanche, floodplains, wildfire, and tsunami inundation zones. Work with state, and federal partners to compile and maintain mapping. | High | Moderate | Hazard mapping updated and made available. |
| 7.1.B | Identify public facilities and other critical infrastructure within hazard areas and develop plans for relocation. Coordinate with other entities as needed (such as ADOT for Valdez Glacier Stream bridge). | Some critical facilities and infrastructure are located within hazard areas and are at higher risk for damage/destruction and should be relocated out of hazard zones. | During the planning of new or replacement facilities (or facilities that are feasible to relocate), include evaluation of location based on current and predicted future hazard mapping. This will optimize the likelihood that a facility will be out of immediate danger for it's operable life. | Medium | Moderate | Timeline developed for relocation of critical public infrastructure and facilities within hazard zones. |
| 7.1.C | Identify and secure sites for future locations of critical infrastructure out of areas that could be impacted by natural disasters or climate change impacts. | Public infrastructure should be located outside of hazard areas. | It is recommended that identified sites focus on public infrastructure related with emergency services. | Medium | Moderate | Sites identified and secured. Recommended actions reviewed as part of annual reporting by the City. |
| 7.1.D | Update land use mapping and code to exclude inappropriate development from areas of concern (hazards lands, etc.). | Maintaining updated information is critical for effective decision making. | Lands deemed unsafe or environmentally sensitive are zoned to exclude inappropriate development. | Medium | Advanced | Sensitive and at risk areas are permanently zoned for appropriate or no development. |
| 7.1.E | Monitor changing conditions and update building codes to reflect climate change. | Climate change could change the underlying criteria used for building design. | Monitor and advocate for changes to building code that encourage energy efficiency and resilient or adaptive construction techniques. | Low | Moderate | Building code incorporates changes for energy efficiency and other impacts. |

## GOAL 7.1 (CONT'D)

| | ACTION | NEED | DESCRIPTION | IMPORT. | EFFORT | METRIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7.1.F | Monitor extreme weather events and their impacts. | Climate change could change the underlying criteria used for planning and decision making. | Keep a register of extreme events including characteristic/data of the event and specifics of its impacts on infrastructure, other City facilities, and private properties. | High | Moderate | Register collaboratively updated after every major event by Public Works and Planning Department under the direction of the City Manager. Evaluate impacts over time. |
| 7.1.G | Report to the community annually on how climate change and weather-related events have, and are expected to, affect the community. | There is no program in Valdez where climate change and weather impacts are reported to the community. | Monitor extreme weather events and their impacts and report out annually to community. Providing information to the public allows the community to be proactive in response to these impacts. | Medium | Moderate | First annual report completed and findings shared with the public. |
| 7.1.H | Work with state and federal agencies for mapping and policy related to climate change. | Mapping related to climate change is incomplete and dated. | The City of Valdez wishes to have the most up to date mapping including those from other sources to better manage lands and understand how others are responding with climate change policy. Ensure that consideration of climate change is included in updates to area wide hazard land mapping including geologically unstable, avalanche, floodplains, and tsunami inundation zones. | Low | Moderate | Consideration of climate change incorporated into statements of work or contract documents for these types of mapping. |
| 7.1.I | Develop, maintain and regularly update the emergency operations plan. | This contributes to public safety and effective City operations. | The emergency operations plan needs to be current to allow for response of all hazards including information on critical facilities including, but not limited to, dams, bridges, roads, and other critical utilities and facilities. | Medium | Moderate | Updated emergency operations plan. |
| 7.1.J | Coordinate with state and federal officials when developing response plans and seismic ordinance standards. | This contributes to public safety and effective City operations. | Both documents are current but require update to be responsive when new information is available. This protects public safety and the operations of the City. | Medium | Moderate | Evaluate after each event and update to be responsive. Implement for each event as needed. |
| 7.1.K | Discourage new subdivisions and increased density in hazard areas subject to flooding. | Additional development in areas subject to flooding puts people and facilities at risk and is costly to control and maintain. | The City of Valdez has invested a great deal of resources to mitigate hazards associated with development that exists in the areas most prone to flooding. Increased density in these areas could create a further financial burden and put people and facilities at risk. | Medium | Simple | Expand flood review associated with subdivision applications. |
| 7.1.L | Coordinate work and obtain 2021/2022 Alaska Avalanche Hazard Inventory and implement recommendations. | Avalanche hazard mapping and recommendations is incomplete and aging and creates a public safety issue. | Work is underway for the development of the Alaska's Avalanche Hazard Inventory (AHI). Coordinate work and obtain information from the AHI. Review and implement recommendations as appropriate. | Medium | Moderate | AHI completed and appropriate recommendations implemented. |

# APPENDIX

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

As part of the larger Comprehensive Planning Revision project, documents and summary reports were developed by the planning team that provided the foundation, framework, and guided the development of this ***Plan Valdez*** document. These include:

- Valdez Existing Conditions Report (June 2020)
  *This document reviews the community's demographics and provides an in-depth inventory of the City's existing land use, zoning, city guidelines, housing, infrastructure, economic development, and environmental practices. The report identifies potential growth areas, economic opportunities, and challenges.*

- Public Meeting Summary (August 2020)
  *This document summarizes the input from the first public meeting hosted remotely on July 23, 2020. The public provided input to understand community needs, priorities, and opportunities that needed to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan Revision. The public comment period was open for two weeks after the live meeting to allow for additional input.*

- Discovery Month Public Input Summary Document (November 2020)
  *During the month of October, the planning team hosted 15 focus group meeting through Zoom to collect specific insight related to the group's area of expertise (healthcare, education, youth, seafood industry, etc.). Each focus group was asked to respond to the issues, opportunities and priorities related to the seven themes. Input was also received from the various City Departments.*

- Community Survey Summary (January 2021)
  *This document summarizes the input received from the public survey open to all Valdez residents. The purpose of the survey was to understand the goals and priorities of Valdez citizens regarding housing, roads, infrastructure, land use, and other programs in the Valdez community over the next 20 years. Over 450 Valdez residents participated in the community survey.*

- Draft Goals and Themes (January 2021)
  *This summarized the seven themes and the draft goals that reinforced each of the themes as guided by the Community Survey and previous public input. The goals are supported by specific actions.*

- Draft Comprehensive Plan Revision Public Comment (July 2021)
  *This document summarizes the public and City department input received based on the release of the Draft Comprehensive Plan Revision in April 2021. Input was received from the public presentations of the draft plan, and an extended two month period allowing public comment.*

- Downtown Valdez Underperforming Property Study (September 2021)
  *Underperforming properties are those parcels that are not currently developed to their "highest and best use". The study identifies underperforming properties (private, City owned and other government owned), with a focus on the extended Downtown. The study makes recommendations for these properties.*

*The supporting documents listed above can be found on the project website: https://valdezcompplan.blogspot.com/. In addition to these documents, the project website provides a record of the planning process in chronological order that includes meeting exercises, materials, and summaries of input received, maps and plans, interim planning documents for review and public input received, and guidance from the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee, City departments, and others.*

## PLACE TYPE LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS

### RESIDENTIAL PLACES

**Single-Family Detached Residential:** Single-family detached residential areas consist primarily of homes on lots subdivided in an organized and planned manner. Single-family detached homes are the most prevalent residential building type in the city.

**Single-Family Attached Residential:** Single family attached structures contain multiple units divided by common or shared walls, with each unit having their own direct access to outside. Examples include duplexes and townhouses.

**Multi-Family Residential:** Multifamily residential structures contain multiple housing units and are usually stacked vertically and attached horizontally, with each unit having its entrance on a common hallway or lobby. Examples of multifamily residential developments include apartment buildings, condominiums, workforce housing, student housing, and senior housing.

**Live/Work:** A Live/Work unit is a building or space within a building used jointly for commercial and residential purposes by a person living within the same building or space. The residential space is secondary or accessory to the primary use as a place of work.

**Manufactured Housing:** Manufactured housing is defined as a structure that is mass produced in a factory, and designed and constructed to be transported to a site for installation and connected to the required utilities. It is built on a chassis and designed for long-term residential use by a family and includes a kitchen, bathroom and sleeping facilities.

**Temporary Worker:** Housing provided by an employer for their employees for temporary or seasonal occupancy, located at the place of employment.

### COMMERCIAL PLACES

**Neighborhood Commercial**: Neighborhood-scaled commercial should consist of low-intensity uses on small sites that will have a limited impact on adjacent residential areas especially in terms of visible parking areas, lighting, signage, traffic, odor, noise, and hours of operation such as restaurants, coffee shops, medical offices, small service establishments like salons, small offices, day care centers, and convenience stores with limited hours of operation. Examples of uses which are considered unacceptable include fast-food restaurants, 24-hour convenience stores, and gas stations. The intent is to enable residents to obtain necessary goods and services without having to drive a long distance, and if possible, walk or bike.

**General Commercial:** Theses are larger and more intense commercial uses that are more automobile oriented such as retail, service industries, professional offices, grocery stores, banks, some wholesale, office-front/warehouse/shop businesses, local distribution, automobile sales and service, coffee shops, restaurants, arts, entertainment and related uses, health care clinics and facilities, hotel, motels, tourist-oriented services, small shopping centers, etc.

**Major Office**: Uses that consist predominantly administrative, professional, or clerical services. Examples include: law offices, accounting firms, clinics (but not hospitals), and veterinary clinics.

## INSTITUTIONAL/PUBLIC/QUASI PUBLIC PLACES

**Institutional:** Land uses are primarily for religious, governmental, educational, social, cultural or major health care facilities (where they have beds for overnight stay). Examples include: schools, synagogues, cemeteries, hospitals, nursing homes, city halls, county and state fairgrounds, convention centers, and museums.

**Education:** A place where people gain an education and may include preschools, childcare, elementary schools, high schools, colleges, universities and other education facilities. The can be located on a campus with supporting land uses and learning spaces.

**Community:** Community land uses include government facilities, social and cultural facilities, places of worship, community and convention centers, museums and art galleries, cemeteries, and fairgrounds.

**Medical:** Medical land uses include hospitals, extended care facilities, major health care facilities (where they have beds for overnight stay), and assisted living, nursing homes, and senior/elder care facilities.

## INDUSTRIAL PLACES

**Light Industrial:** Oriented to industries that are less impactful to surrounding land uses, require lighter utility use, cleaner in operations and emissions, and located in areas that are easily accessible by large vehicles such as processing, warehousing and manufacturing of goods, storage, flex space (office/warehouse/shop) development, wholesaling, distribution, marijuana cultivation services, and construction trade sales office, and landscape/horticultural center/services.

**Heavy Industrial:** Heavy Industrial land uses are generally more impactful to the environment and surrounding land uses. They have a potential to affect the public health and safety due to sound, odors, vibrations. They require more intensive utility service connections and large vehicle access. Example uses include storage of hazardous waste, the Valdez Container Terminal, petroleum exploration and development operations and services, manufacturing, asphalt/concrete plants, waste and recycling services, and intense automobile repair and salvage services.

**Waterfront:** Water-related and primarily those uses that are particularly related to marine industries such as boat harbors, boat repair facilities and storage yards, ferry terminals, fuel piers, seafood processing plants and facilities, shipyards, and storage and warehouse facilities. Waterfront uses also include workforce housing provided by employers.

**Extractive:** Natural resource extraction such as gravel pits or quarries.

**Aviation:** Principal land uses within these areas should be aviation-related such as air taxi operations, aircraft hangars and tie-downs, aviation sales, and service, rental car agencies, flight schools, and aviation freight offices and warehouses.

## PARKS AND RECREATION PLACES

**Parks and Recreation:** These facilities vary in size and function and include recreational facilities such as a recreation center, pools, community gardens, small neighborhood parks with playgrounds, as well as larger community-wide parks with ball fields and recreation programs and open spaces such as plazas, natural settings, pathways, and trails.

**Parks:** Public owned community parks serving the local neighborhood with a variety of recreation facilities including sports fields, playgrounds, day-use recreation, restrooms, parking, trails, pavilions and gathering areas, and open space. They may include larger adjacent natural areas.

**Passive**: Public owned recreation lands that minimize impacts to the existing environment and do not include highly developed sites. Typical activities include walking, hiking, cycling, canoing, cross country skiing, wildlife viewing, and similar activities. Facilities included in this land use includes trails, overlooks, parking, trailheads, interpretation, and may include restrooms and small scale day-use recreation areas.

**Regional:** Regional parks are publicly-owned open spaces and facilities designed to serve a broad (regional) area that may include multiple government jurisdictions and feature both natural areas for passive recreation and active recreation facilities.

**Motorized Sports/Facilities:** Racetracks or contained trail systems for the use of motorcycles, snow machines, race cars or other motorized vehicles.

## CONSERVATION

**Conservation:** Examples of preferred land uses are passive in nature such as wildlife viewing, nature walks, educational and interpretive uses and other uses that do not change the character of the land or disrupt fish and wildlife. It may include a visitors center. Conservation lands may be undeveloped and typically have site specific legal restrictions of allowable use(s).

# TECHNICAL MEMORANDUMS

Technical Memos were generated by members of the team to provide an overview of issues related to natural hazards, climate change, and cultural resources. These studies are based on a limited review of existing reports, and publicly available data and maps.

## TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM – AVALANCHE AND LANDSLIDES

***Prepared by: Claire Ellis, EIT (PND Engineers, Inc.)***

**General Description**

Avalanches and, to a lesser extent, landslides, are known hazards which occur around Valdez. Valdez experiences significant amounts of rain and snowfall throughout the year, and the Chugach Mountains surrounding it provide opportunity for direct avalanche and landslide impacts to the community. Historically, avalanches have been a source of transportation disruption to the community, routinely blocking the Richardson Highway and cutting off road access into and out of Valdez. Avalanches and landslides can be triggered naturally by rain, groundwater fluctuations, and seismic events, and also by human activities. Significant seismic events have affected Valdez in years past, and this remains a trigger for future avalanche and landslide events in the area. Recommendations as to future land development and safety protocols are provided to inform land use opportunities and planning.

**Issues Identification**

***Avalanches:***

Avalanches can occur when the strength of the snowpack is decreased, or from added stress on the snowpack resulting from drifted or fresh snow loadings. Most avalanches occur on slopes with angles between 25% and 50%, and less frequently on slopes with angles greater than 50%, although it is important to note that avalanches in high elevations can trigger avalanches below on slopes less than 25%. The accompanying map of Valdez denotes slopes between 25% and 50%, and slopes greater than 50%. Winter snow-bearing storms coupled with predominate north winds and south facing slopes around much of the city and portions of the Richardson Highway create conditions conducive to avalanche events. Events of concern that can trigger avalanches include:

- Seismic Activity - Earthquakes can trigger avalanches directly through shaking and we subsidence, and uplift of mountain-slopes. Seismic activity can also weaken snowpacks and destabilize slopes, leaving them susceptible to triggering by human disturbance or rain and snowfall.
- Rain and Snowfall – Rain can weaken snowpacks, leading to snow slope instability. Snowfall, particularly heavy snowfall, can overload snow slopes and lead to avalanches. When snowfall occurs in conjunction with wind, overloading can be exacerbated as additional snow is blown from the windward to the leeward slopes. Rain is a major contributing factor to land and mudslides.
- Human Disturbance – Avalanches can be triggered by human activity such as skiing, snowboarding, snow-machining, and snowshoeing.

Numerous factors contribute to the creation of snow conditions conducive to the occurrence of avalanches. These include:

- Wind and Wind Direction – Snow from the windward side of the mountain can be blown to the leeward side of a mountain, resulting in snow overloading on the leeward slope, placing it at higher risk for avalanches. The predominate wind direction in Valdez during the winter season is from the north, placing the south facing slopes surrounding Valdez to the north at an increased risk of snow overload. Wind can also weaken snowpacks by drying out binding snow layers.
- Aspect – Aspect, or the orientation of a particular slope to the sun, is important in predicting avalanche hazards, particularly in mid latitudes and describes the orientation of a particular slope to the sun, deter mining relative sun exposure. Depending on the amount of sunlight a slope receives, the snowpack will develop differently. Typically, more persistent weak layers of snow develop on cold snowpacks receiving less sun, making them more prone to slab avalanches.
- Anchors- Features such as trees, boulders, and outcroppings assist in anchoring snow slabs and serve to stabilize large slopes against movement. The mountains immediately surrounding the community of Valdez are predominately forested, providing anchoring for many slopes that might otherwise be at high risk for avalanches.

***Landslide*:**

Landslides are a result of ground failure, and can be triggered by heavy rains, seismic activity, and ground destabilization caused by human activities such as excavation or blasting. Factors that contribute to whether hazard of a given area include slope, geology, lithology, vegetation, and groundwater. Landslides can be:

- Seismic Activity – Earthquakes can trigger landslides directly through shaking, subsidence, and uplift. Slopes underlain with potentially liquifiable soils can fail during earthquake shaking. Seismic activity can also destabilize and weaken slopes and soils, making them more prone to sloughing and slides during future events.
- Rain and Snowfall – Heavy rain can saturate soils, causing mudslides and slope failures.
- Groundwater Fluctuations - Groundwater fluctuations change the pore water pressure in affected soil, which can trigger failure and sliding.
- Human Disturbance – Activities such as excavation and road construction can destabilize and trigger slopes, or leave them susceptible to triggering by other events.

Minimal documentation is available publicly regarding recent landslide risks in Valdez. Evidence exists of historic landslides around Port Valdez, however, including around a road cut constructed for the TAPS system 1.5 km east of the Valdez Marine Terminal VMT. Submarine landslides can also occur, and are commonly triggered by earthquakes, causing destructive tsunamis such as occurred during the 1964 earthquake.

**Opportunities**

Development should occur with avalanche and landslide risks in mind. Housing and vulnerable populations such as senior centers, schools, and hospitals should be located outside the bounds of anticipated or predicted avalanche and landslide runs. Avalanche and landslides impacts are possible at all areas along the foothills of the Chugach Mountains, with specific areas in Valdez within the hazard zone identified as follows:

- 10-Mile Alpine Woods Nordic Subdivision
- Corbin Subdivision
- Valdez Glacier Stream valley
- Slater Creek and Corbin Creek valleys
- Valdez Airport
- Mineral Creek Drainage
- Richardson Highway MP 0.0 to MP 3.0 (within the City), and MP 10.0 to MP 20.0 (approx. City limits of Valdez and of study area).

The Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGS) is currently producing a Landslide Hazard Assessment and Avalanche Hazard Map for Valdez. These documents should be included in future planning and assessment efforts.

**Planning Context**

Structures that could pose a substantial risk to human life in case of damage or failure such as schools, senior and assisting living facilities, and hospitals should be located in areas at low risk for hazards from landslides and avalanches. Critical facilities required for emergency response efforts should be located to optimize and maintain road, ferry, and air access. The Richardson Highway is deemed to be the component of the Valdez community most susceptible to impact from avalanches and landslides. Both landslides and avalanches have historically disrupted travel along this highway, and as recently as 2017 have fully blocked road travel to Valdez. This poses a risk to leaving visitors stranded in Valdez or residents unable to return home, and should it coincide with a seismic and tsunami event, could restrict evacuations from the City.

**References**


- James Beget, P. A. (2007). Earthquake, Landslide and Tsunami Hazards in the Port Valdez area, Alaska: Consultation to the Prince William Sound Regional Citizen's Advisory Council.
- Weather Spark. (2020, December 11). Average Weather in Valdez. Retrieved from Weather Spark.

# TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM – FLOODING AND TSUNAMI

***Prepared by: Chad Ringler, Staff Engineer (PND Engineers, Inc.)***

**General Description**

The City of Valdez is located at the base of the Chugach Mountains at the eastern end of Port Valdez, in an area that is primarily flat with the mountains rising steeply behind the City. The City, being situated at approximately sea level to 200 feet above sea level, with creeks, streams, and rivers flanking the towncenter, has historically been prone to flooding and tsunami hazards. Impacts of these hazards pose health and safety concerns to both public and property, and are discussed in the following paragraph, as are recommendations for planning and development.

**Issues Identification**

***Flooding:***

As shown in the attached FEMA Flood Zones map and related FEMA Flood Zone Definitions (Appendix A & D), specific areas in and around The City of Valdez are susceptible to flooding, from both upland water sources, and from combined storm surge and high tide flooding. Rainfall, snowmelt, and glacier melt also contribute to flooding at Valdez, with soil deposition, erosion, and contaminated water from such hazards affecting existing, and future development of the City.

Developed and developable areas of Valdez are located around three waterways that are prone to flooding events; Valdez Glacier Stream, Lowe River and Mineral Creek. Areas of development in proximity to these waterways include, but are not limited to Cottonwood Subdivision, Dump Road, and Brown's Creek. Riverine and glacier-dammed outburst flooding have historically occurred from these sources, with primary factors affecting the magnitude of the riverine flooding such as: the size of the drainage basin contributing to the flow of the river; the distribution of the precipitation on the basin; size and location of lakes, wetlands, or water storage basins within the drainage basin; and the size and location of the glaciers within the drainage basin.

Storm surge and high tide flooding due to winter storms in the Gulf of Alaska, vary in severity from factors such as coastline topography, speed and direction of the storm center, and by local conditions through the Valdez Narrows. Estimated combined storm surge and tide elevation in Port Valdez with 100 year recurrence interval is 10.6 feet above Sea Level pose a flooding risk to the entire Port Valdez shoreline. Flooding in the uplands area of Valdez due to this type of storm occurrence is generally small due to the steep terrain, with river deltas in the lowland areas allowing for a greater flooding potential. Coastal areas within Valdez; Cottonwood Subdivision, New and Existing Boat harbors, In Town, Mineral Creek Loop Road, and Old Town are all susceptible to storm surge and high tide flooding. Future development within this flood zone is at an increased risk of damage due to storm events, and efforts to mitigate this damage must be considered.

***Tsunami:***

Shown in the attached Tsunami Inundation Map (Appendix B), the City of Valdez is vulnerable to both distant source, and locally generated tsunamis and seiches generated by seismic activity or ground failure. In Valdez, the most serious threat is from locally generated tsunamis and/or seiches originating in the Port of Valdez. These waves have reached heights of 170 feet. Impact from a tsunami or seiche may cause incidents of industrial and technological emergencies; disruption of vital services; and damage and/or disruption of port and harbor facilities. This disruption could include the Trans Alaska Pipeline Marine Terminal, which is located in the Port of Valdez.

The In Town area of Valdez, situated on the Mineral Creek fan, which is a more stable area, provides some natural protection from sea waves, however, all coastal areas below 100 feet in elevation and/or within one mile of the waters edge are vulnerable to tsunami or seiche damage from destructive wave action or flooding. As shown on Appendix B, coastal areas that are at risk of tsunami related damage include Cottonwood Subdivision, Container Terminal, Old Town, as well as Dayville Road. Appendix C illustrates hazard vulnerabilities of existing structures and infrastructure to both flooding and tsunami damage throughout the City of Valdez.

**Opportunities**

Land use guidelines should be predicted on the constraints of the environment as well as the needs of the community. Using FEMA generated flood maps and Tsunami inundation mapping, future development and land use can best proceed to limit damage from the types of hazards as described above. Development in areas of flood hazards from storm surge and riverine flooding should take into account the effect and impact on the existing stream-side materials, vegetation, as well as proximity to the flow channels and shoreline. Development in areas of tsunami inundation should limit the risk to human life and safety, which could include low population development in the hazard zones listed above.

**Planning Context**

Planning and development within the City of Valdez should be accomplished to limit risk to persons and property to the greatest extent possible, using both historic and current data and investigative tools. Development in areas of high flooding risk, such as around Valdez Glacier Stream, Lowe River and Mineral Creek, as well as areas of flatlands and shoreline should not include high densities of structures that could have large scale economic impact to a flooding event. This would include residential structures that would sustain the greatest amount of damage due to flooding.

In the coastline area of tsunami inundation, development should not include structures and facilities that are necessary to the health and safety of human life, such as hospitals or utilities. Beyond the coastline, but within the inundation zone, the City should preclude development of all residential construction, with development of low-density activities only requiring intermittent occupancy, such as lay-down areas and storage. At the furthest extent of the inundation zone, low-density and light industrial/commercial developments would be acceptable. Utilities could be developed within this area.

**References**


- DOWL Engineers. "Old Town Hazards Assessment". City of Valdez, 1984.
- Bechtol Planning and Development. "Local Hazards Mitigation Plan". City of Valdez, 2004.

# TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM – SOILS (STABILITY, WETLANDS, GROUNDWATER)

***Prepared by: Cameron Klatt, EIT (PND Engineers, Inc.)***

**General Description**

In general, the soils found in the old and new townsites of Valdez are fairly consistent. Historical data suggests that the inter-tidal zones and the seafloor of Port Valdez mostly consist of fine-grained sands and silt, with uniform fine- to medium-grained sands more prevalent in upland areas. Discontinuous lenses of loose sand, cobbles, and boulders have also been encountered in the new townsite area (Shannon and Wilson 2018; PND, 1995). Historical geotechnical data south of Port Valdez is generally consistent with soils on the north side of the bay aside from shallow bedrock and historic landslides that have been identified at locations both offshore and along Dayville Road (PND 1995, 2010; Alaska Geological Consultants and National Soil Services, 1969). The relative density of the soil in Valdez generally varies from loose to medium dense and potentially liquifiable layers are present throughout the area. Available bathymetry and soils data indicate potential offshore slope instability on the North side of Port Valdez that must be considered during design (PND 2019). Shallow bedrock has been encountered offshore on the south side of Port Valdez (Alaska Geological Consultants and National Soil Services, 1969).

The groundwater in Valdez is tidally influenced. Geotechnical investigations by DOWL (1983) and PND (2019) in the Old Town Valdez area identified groundwater between 3 feet below ground surface (bgs) and 10 feet bgs. In the new townsite area near the Valdez Harbor, water seepage indicative of groundwater was observed at depths between 2 and 10 feet bgs in test pits conducted by PND in 2001. Further inland, near the intersection of Hazelet Avenue and Pioneer Drive, groundwater was encountered at a depth of about 18 feet bgs (Shannon and Wilson 2018). Based on review of the historic geotechnical data, the depth to groundwater increases moving inland, with the water table as shallow as 3 feet bgs near-shore in Old Town Valdez and as deep as 18 feet 0.5 miles away in New Town Valdez. South of Port Valdez, groundwater was encountered between 22 and 25 feet bgs at the Petro Star facility (PND 2010).

There are three types of wetlands that are prevalent in the Valdez city limits: estuarine and marine wetlands, as well as freshwater wetlands. Estuarine and marine wetlands are characterized by their tidal influence, unconsolidated deposits, sparse vegetation, and landforms such as beaches and sand bars. (U.S. Fish & Wildlife, 2020). A wetlands map showing the type and areal extent of wetlands in the Valdez area is provided in Appendix A.

**Issues Identification**

While the potential soils issues within the City of Valdez are relatively consistent, a geotechnical investigation is strongly recommended for any and all construction projects in order to identify and address issues that cannot be quantified without site-specific geotechnical data. The following is a general list of issues and concerns regarding the soils in Valdez.

- Liquifiable Soils – Potentially liquifiable soils have been identified throughout Valdez and are especially prevalent in the vicinity of Old Town Valdez. During the 1964 earthquake, wide-scale liquefaction and lateral spreading occurred in the old townsite, and modern investigations suggest that the risk is still present (PND 2019).
- Lateral Spread – Any construction works on pads or adjacent to slopes have the risk of lateral spread occurring during seismic events. This is of particular concern in Old Town Valdez and any other area where there is development adjacent to a slope.
- High Groundwater Table – The elevation of the groundwater table varies throughout the study area and tends to be closest to the ground surface near waterfront and wetland areas. The presence of groundwater may result in additional development costs associated with dewatering and the long term performance of the development may be negatively affected (e.g., septic systems and crawl spaces).
- Frost Susceptibility - Frost susceptible soils are prone to frost heaving and jacking and are not suitable for use as a construction material. Frost susceptible soils are expected in the inter-tidal zones, and may be found in upland areas as well.
- Bank Erosion - Erosion of coastal areas and stream banks. During tidal action, storm surges, and periods of increased stream flow rates, erosion of stream banks and coastal areas can cause the undermining of foundations and other damage to waterfront infrastructure.
- Offshore Slope Instability - Available bathymetry and soils data indicate potential offshore slope instability due to the presence of soft soils. Near- and off-shore projects should have slope stability analysis performed and consider alternative foundation types to reduce the risk of failure due to offshore slope displacements.
- Wetlands - Impacts to wetlands should be avoided wherever practicable. Where impacts cannot be avoided, they must be minimized, compensated, and permitted by applicable agencies. In Alaska, wetlands permitting is the responsibility of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, with additional local requirements as applicable.
- Contaminated Soils - When contaminated soils are encountered, development of the land containing the contaminated soil must follow federal, state, and local regulations. Known contaminated sites are shown on the Contaminated Sites map, located in Appendix A.

**Opportunities**

Soil conditions vary throughout Valdez and the available data suggests the presence of discontinuous lenses of liquifiable soil. Based on the geologic setting of the area, there is potential for frost susceptible soils and soils prone to large settlements and deformation under certain loading conditions. Future developments must consider liquefaction potential, lateral spreading, and the presence of frost susceptible and weak soils. Ground improvement methods such as vibration compaction, wick drains, or the use of stone columns may be required to reduce the potential for liquefaction. Deep foundations may also be used in lieu of ground improvement. Site-specific geotechnical data is required for projects in accordance with the IBC and municipal codes; no site-specific recommendations can be made without a geotechnical site investigation.

**Planning Context**

Detailed recommendations regarding land development require site-specific geotechnical investigations. Considering the available historical data, all future developments must consider the potential for liquefaction and the presence of frost susceptible or weak soils. Development near slopes require a slope stability analysis and retention systems as appropriate. Development of wetlands should be avoided wherever possible; when impact to wetlands cannot be avoided, the impacts must be minimized, compensated, and permitted according to applicable agencies. South of Port Valdez, projects within historic landslide footprints may encounter boulders and erratics underlying the surficial soils. Areas upland of historic landslides may have shallow bedrock. In general, landslides and glaciers may deposit boulders and erratics, which typically require additional efforts during excavation and will affect foundation recommendations.

**References**


- Alaska Geological Consultants and National Soil Services. “Foundation Investigation for Tank Storage and Marine Terminal”. Trans Alaska Pipeline System, 1969.
- DOWL Engineers. “Old Town Hazards Assessment”. City of Valdez, 1984.
- Peratrovich, Nottingham, & Drage (PND). “Valdez Harbor Improvements-Vehicle Parking and Vessel Maintenance Stations”. City of Valdez, 2001.
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- PND Engineers. “Solomon Gulch Warehouse Foundation Test Holes”. Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., 1995.
- PND Engineers. “Petro Star Valdez Refinery Buildings—Geotechnical Report”. Burkhart Croft Architects, 2010.
- PND Engineers. “Valdez Waterfront Master Planning-Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation Report”. City of Valdez, 2019.
- Shannon and Wilson. “Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation-407 West Pioneer Drive-Skate Park Property-Valdez,Alaska”. City of Valdez, 2018.
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Published October 1, 2020. National Wetlands Inventory. https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html. Accessed December 9, 2020.

# TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM – CLIMATE CHANGE

***Prepared by: Gordon Smith***

**General Description**

Climate change is not a specific hazard where a single action or approach can mitigate its impacts. Instead, it is a factor that affects the characteristics of the hazards that affect the planning areas, and as such, it is a lens through which we examine planning decisions. The impacts of climate change occur in two ways:

- Slow-changing cumulative effects that do not require an emergency response, e.g., changes in annual precipitation rates or average temperatures.
- High impact events requiring emergency response, e.g., intense rainstorms or storm surge.

How we respond to each of these situations will be slightly different.

How we address climate change can be broken down into two types of responses:

- **Mitigation** is about what the City and individuals can do to reduce the driver of climate change—greenhouse gas emissions. Actions like improving building codes and enhancing walkability/active transportation links provide mitigation benefits and have other beneficial impacts such as cost savings and health improvements. Emphasizing the multi-purpose benefits of these types of actions can improve acceptance.
- **Adaptation** refers to actions that the City and individuals can take to reduce the negative impact of climate change. Adaptation often has immediate direct impacts, and the collateral benefits are less apparent. Migrating or moving a home directly impacts a family's lifestyle and is expensive. Unless that family has already directly experienced a related impact of climate change, like flooding, the benefit of the move is not apparent. Similarly, the cost-benefit analysis for a city of moving a major infrastructure facility can be murky. Thinking of adaptation actions like insurance is one approach. Saying there is only a chance of this happening once every 50 years; however, your house or your sewage treatment plant will be destroyed if it does happen. By moving to this location, you will protect your family and the investment you have in your home or infrastructure.

Based on a planning horizon within this century (i.e., up to approximately 2100), projected climate change impacts include (Hayward et al.):

- Average temperatures expected to warm by about 3°C in the next 50 years, with average temperatures in January predicted to rise approximately 4.5°C above current temperatures from only slightly above freezing to well above freezing. Many rivers in the area will shift from a below-freezing to above-freezing temperature regime.

Regionally, large coastal and near-coastal land areas are projected to shift from early spring thaw to the "rarely freezes" category. This shift is likely to correspond to a lack of winter snowpack and an altered hydrologic cycle. Farther from the coast and at higher elevations, spring thaw is projected to occur from 3 to 10 days earlier, on average. Projected autumnal changes are to be slightly greater than those seen in spring, with the freezing point shifting to noticeably later in the year in just a single decade. For example, an increase in the growing season from about 150 days to approximately 230 days may be expected in Valdez.

- Greater precipitation is projected throughout the year, with the most substantial increases occurring from September through May. The proportion of days when precipitation is expected to fall as snow rather than rain is projected to decrease by 23 percent from October to March, with the largest decline in October to November. A potential increase in the frequency and intensity of strong storms are also expected.
- Changes in the timing and depth of snowpack and changes in glacier extent will influence avalanche conditions. Also, the portion of the winter with enough snow at trailheads for skiing and snowmobiling will decrease significantly in some areas, impacting winter recreation and tourism.
- Relative sea level is expected to remain more-or-less the same in Valdez, in contrast to many other coastal areas in the world where sea level rise is a key concern. The lack of sea-level rise is due to tectonic forces and the rebound of the land related to glacial retreat after the last ice age. Marine and related ecosystems and infrastructure are therefore unlikely to be threatened by climate-change-induced sea-level rise.
- Ecological characteristics of the coast will change:
  - Prince William Sound, which receives up to 50 percent of its freshwater runoff from the region's tidewater glaciers, could experience significant changes in the frequency of harmful algal blooms, the extent of eelgrass beds, and the abundance of food for migrating shorebirds.
  - While some evidence suggests there is potential for increases in pink salmon abundance due to warmer ocean temperatures, salmon populations are impacted by changes in ocean conditions across much of the north Pacific where ocean surface temperatures, pH, and food webs will affect the growth and survival of adult salmon and the condition of stocks returning to the area's largely intact freshwater systems.
  - Modeling suggests that the coastal temperate rain forest will retain most of its current distribution. Simultaneously, subalpine shrub and alpine tundra are likely to decline as forests and shrublands move upward in elevation.
  - Anecdotal information suggests that changes in the rainfall regime could impact the forest in the area, leading to an increased vulnerability of the built landscape to wildfire.

**Issues Identification**

Based on Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (City of Valdez, 2018), the highest concerns are:

| Hazard | Percent of City's Geographic Area | Percent of Population | Percent of Building Stock | Percent of Community Facilities and Utilities |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Avalanche | 15% | 15% | 15% | 15% |
| Dam Failure | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Earthquake | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |
| Flood & Erosion | 20% | 20% | 0% | 0% |
| Landslides | 5% | 0% | 0% | 5% |
| Severe Weather | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |
| Tsunamis | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |
| Volcanic Hazards | 50% | 50% | 50% | 50% |
| Wildfire | 25% | 25% | 25% | 25% |

Of these, severe weather, flood and erosion, avalanche, and wildfire are potentially exacerbated by climate change.

Severe weather is considered highly likely to occur and will affect the whole community putting over $250,000,000 of infrastructure at risk.

With the increase in winter rain events, any snow that remains on a roof may act as a "sponge" holding water and creating additional weight. The rise in freeze-thaw cycles may also create ice build-ups that could cause problems associated with weight and ice jams. These impacts could cause increased snow and ice loading on buildings.

The estimated combined storm surge and tide elevation in Port Valdez with a 100-year recurrence interval are 10.6 feet above sea level. Such flooding can occur along the entire Port Valdez shoreline. Because of the steep terrain, the area affected by the hazard is generally small; however, the relatively flat land of the river deltas allows for more significant flooding. Flooding events, even for those properties unaffected directly, will suffer due to road closures, impacts to public safety (access and response capabilities), limited availability of perishable commodities, and isolation.

Flooding and erosion can potentially impact the Trans-AK Pipeline Terminal, the Robe River Subdivision Reservoir, Glacier Stream, Lowe River, Mineral Creek, Alpine Woods Subdivision, road bridges in the area, piped water supply and wastewater, and port and harbor facilities. The probability of such impacts is considered likely and could potentially affect approximately $155,000,000 worth of buildings.

The airport, Trans-Alaska Pipeline Terminal, Gibson Middle School and Valdez High School, city and state-owned roads, bridges, the Copper Valley Telephone Co-Op, the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, the Solomon Gulch Hydroelectric Facility, and piped water supply and wastewater are potentially affected by avalanches. At-risk building value is estimated at approximately $86,000,000.

## TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM – CLIMATE CHANGE (CONT'D)

Closures of the Richardson Highway due to snowstorms and avalanches in the Thompson Pass are more-or-less an annual event cutting the City off from road transportation for varying periods with a major avalanche closing the highway for ten days in 2014. The critical issue is frequency and severity, which could be affected by predicted increases in snowfall and temperature, making the snowpack more unstable and producing larger avalanches. With the cancellation of ferry service and uncertainty around commercial airline operations, closures of this sort would potentially have a more considerable impact today than they did even five years ago.

While the extent of wildfire is considered limited, and the probability of occurrence is considered unlikely, a wildfire has the potential to damage the Trans-AK Pipeline Terminal and put almost $200,000,000 worth of buildings at risk.

**Opportunities**

Monitor changes in annual precipitation rates, seasonal variations and type, document monthly mean temperatures, and keep a record of extreme events including characteristic/data of the event and specifics of its impacts on infrastructure, other City facilities, and private properties. Tying this information in with projections of future climate change-induced events will provide a more comprehensive understanding of potential impacts and costs, enabling a better proactive planning response.

Education is key. Showing people what the potential future could be will help them to make better decisions. Given the uncertainty of those future projections, it is essential to show how they are an extrapolation of past trends and tie them to actual events. Examples like the storm ten years ago and showing how high the waters came or looking at trends that show how the number, intensity, and duration of storms impacting the Richardson Highway closures have increased provide real-life examples to which people can relate. People can then consider the impacts of a larger similar-type event or these events occurring more often.

Make mapping of projected impacts publicly available. Showing people the risk to particular properties helps them make better decisions, e.g., people may decide not to build a house in a location because it is at risk from river flooding or coastal storm the potential storm surge. Consider the development of an online map with satellite imagery and street view that show people:

- Flooding both temporary and permanent (Division of Geological and Geophysical Services has a Potential Maximum Permanent Flooding map)
- Avalanche hazard (under development by Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys)
- Erosion risk

**Planning Context**

Considering climate change should not be done in isolation. There are often opportunities to improve efficiencies, save operating costs, reduce risk from multiple types of events, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and adapt to potential changes with little or no cost increase to operations. Addressing climate change looks like good planning and wise use of funds to reduce municipal costs in the long run.

Continue to support the implementation of Mitigation Actions in the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (City of Valdez, Alaska, 2018). Actions in that plan that specifically relate to planning include:

- Accurate flood maps that delineate areas of flooding should be made publicly available.
- All new structures should be constructed according to National Flood Insurance Program requirements and set back from the river shoreline to lessen future erosion concerns and costs.
- New construction in avalanche hazard zones should be discouraged or prohibited, even if structures are not intended for habitation. Delineation of the Avalanche Zoning District where development and use are limited to low-density, seasonal use should be reviewed against current avalanche risk information.
- Removal of vegetation in areas prone to landslides should be prohibited through the land use zoning code.
- Public disclosure of avalanche risk should be linked to deed or title of property and require owners to notify renters of the hazard before occupancy.
- The City should continue to support the Avalanche Awareness Center and educate the public about avalanche and landslide hazards.
- Weather-resistant building materials and practices should continue to be encouraged through the land use zoning code.
- The Division of Geological and Geophysical Services Potential Maximum Permanent Flooding map should continue to be considered when reviewing new zoning or rezoning applications, emergency planning, and better evacuation route planning.
- Fire Wise building design, siting, and construction materials should continue to be promoted through the land use zoning code.

While not land use or planning responses, the City could also consider the following climate change mitigation actions:

- Install energy efficiency upgrades for older municipal buildings, such as insulation and window and door upgrades.
- Install a Direct Digital Control (DDC) or Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system to improve monitoring and the efficiency of operations of Town facilities including buildings and the water and wastewater pump inventory;
- Ensure regular maintenance of the vehicle fleet and regularly review that the right-sized vehicles are being used for their intended purpose.
- Ensure critical infrastructure has back-up power.
- Regularly update annual snowfall and winter rainfall projections and review municipal structures for snow loading.

**References**


- Hayward, Gregory D., Steve Colt, Monica L. McTeague, and Teresa N. Hollingsworth, eds. (May 2017). Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for the Chugach National Forest and the Kenai Peninsula. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station Portland, Oregon General Technical Report PNW-GTR-950.
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# TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM – ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

***Prepared by: Tracie Krauthoefer (Corvus Culture)***

**General Description**

Cultural resources are generally defined as the tangible representations of our history and heritage. Cultural resources include archaeological sites and objects, historic buildings and structures, cultural landscapes that demonstrate human expression and manipulation of the land, and ethnographic resources such as a traditional berry-picking patch, the location of which has been shared from generation to the next. Cultural resources often include intangible expressions of human culture and the continuity of cultural systems, such as Native languages, religious beliefs and subsistence activities.

While federal and state laws and regulations govern the consideration of these place-based resources during state and federal project planning, consideration and preservation of these resources is most effective at the local level. Cultural resources are often considered and managed at the local level through historic and heritage preservation programs involving ordinances and historic or heritage preservation plans/plan elements. Heritage preservation programs are commonly intertwined with economic development, education, and beautification goals and efforts through programs such as Main Street America and the federal Certified Local Government (CLG) program.

**Existing Conditions**

Valdez is situated within Prince William Sound, the ancestral homeland of the Chugach Sugpiaq/Alutiiq people. The Valdez area has, since time immemorial, been a gathering place for Alaska Native people from throughout the region to meet, hunt, fish and trade. Though there is scant documented information regarding the archaeological and cultural resources of the Valdez area, indigenous community members (represented by the Valdez Native Tribe [VNT], a 501c3 non-profit organization that provides health, social, educational, and cultural services to Alaska Native and American Indian beneficiaries living in the Valdez area ) have indicated the presence and importance of cultural resources within Valdez. Notably, community members have indicated the importance of the Old Town area in Valdez's identity, culture and history.

Documented information is similarly lacking for subsistence use areas as the City of Valdez is located in a state Non-subsistence Use Area and Valdez is considered a non-rural community under federal subsistence regulations.

The City of Valdez does not have a program that actively manages and considers cultural resources. Ordinance 97-01 and Chapter 2.36 of Valdez Municipal Code established a Valdez Museum and Historical Archive (VMHA) to support and enhance goals in heritage preservation, public education and economic development, though the main purpose of the VMHA is to conduct programs that support public education and visitor industry development. The VMHA operates two museum facilities, as well as online exhibits, and is in the process of designing a new museum facility to consolidate collections and exhibits under one roof. The Museum's mission is to preserve, present and interpret the heritage and culture of Valdez, the Copper River Basin, and Prince William Sound.

The City of Valdez is not a CLG under the federal program administered by the State of Alaska Office of History and Archaeology (OHA). The City of Valdez does not have a landmark designation program, nor does it maintain an inventory of local places deemed worthy of preservation. There are no properties in the City of Valdez that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation) and there are no properties listed in the Alaska Landmark Register (the state's list of historic properties worthy of preservation).

**Area-Specific Issues and Opportunities**

***Old Town***

Prior to the 1964 earthquake, the City of Valdez was concentrated on the shore of Port Valdez near Valdez Glacier Stream, what is now referred to as Old Town, across the Richardson Highway from the current airport. Many of the buildings and infrastructure in Old Town were destroyed by the 1964 Earthquake and associated submarine slide and seiche waves. Following the earthquake event, Valdez was reconstructed three miles to the west, at Mineral Creek. More than 50 buildings were moved from Old Town to the new townsite at Mineral Creek, and the Old Town area was razed. All visual remains of Old Town have been extensively razed east of Alaska Avenue, while some remnants remain to the west of the road and along the waterfront.

Although no longer extant, Old Town remains an important historical place for Valdez area residents. Old Town represents the place many residents grew up in, the significant loss of life the community experienced during the earthquake event (31 people perished in Valdez ), and the devastating destruction of the community itself.

During Focus Group meetings for the Revised Valdez Comprehensive Plan, residents expressed concern for development in Old Town given its significant and sensitive history. Additionally residents requested that Tribal elders be consulted regarding development projects in the area around Old Town, to ensure projects do not disturb culturally and historically sensitive places.

In 2019, Valdez completed a Comprehensive Waterfront Master Plan that identified a portion of Old Town to be set aside as the Old Town Historic Site and conserved for passive recreation use, including interpretive signage and trails, walking, and fishing opportunities. The Old Town Historic Site is located between Alaska Avenue and the City's sewage treatment plant. Areas to the east and west of the Old Town Historic Site are proposed for use as working waterfront.

The Old Town Historic Site will include development of interpretive trails and signage, parking area and restroom. To address concerns and issues raised in Focus Group meetings for the Revised Valdez Comprehensive Plan, the City should consider:

- Project review and consultation with VNT for ground-disturbing development within the Old Town Historic Site, and for the areas immediately east and west of the Old Town Historic Site identified for use as "working waterfront," to protect sensitive cultural resources.
- Collaboration with VNT and residents of color to identify and create interpretive and wayfinding elements that are inclusive and authentic representations of the many histories of the people of Valdez.

**Non-Area Specific Issues**

A number of non-area-specific issues were raised during Focus Group meetings and in the Revised Comp Plan Survey.

- Indigenous community members expressed frustration with a lack of transparency and communication with the City planning department and City government in general.
- Community members from diverse backgrounds felt that existing interpretation of the community's history was one-sided and did not celebrate Alaska Native history and culture or reflect the diversity of Valdez.
- Some community members expressly pointed out a desire to encourage the preservation of downtown Valdez's historic buildings but to discourage the use of fake and inauthentic historical facades.
- Community members from diverse background expressed concerns that construction and development projects might harm cultural resources as little information is documented about cultural resource locations and their significance (with the understanding that this information may not be appropriate for the public at large).

**Opportunities**

Several respondents to the public survey indicated that encouragement of aesthetics and historic building facades was a priority, and 27% of respondents suggested historic preservation should be a priority. These priorities, as well as the concerns discussed previously, suggest the City of Valdez should consider building a right-sized heritage preservation program. Two main opportunities address the creation of a program:

***1. CLG certification***

Concerns raised during Focus Group meetings and priorities indicated in the Revised Comp Plan Survey suggest greater consideration of cultural resources (particularly indigenous cultural resources) by City planning, development and construction efforts is desired.

The federal Certified Local Government process provides a well-established pathway for local governments to incorporate consideration of cultural resources into City planning. In Alaska, the CLG program is administered by the State of Alaska Office of History and Archaeology. The Office of History and Archaeology is available to provide technical support to communities seeking CLG certification. Communities in Alaska that have been certified and receive assistance though this program are the cities of Cordova, Dillingham, Kenai, Ketchikan, Nome, Seward, and Unalaska, as well as the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Fairbanks-North Star Borough, Municipality of Anchorage, and North Slope Borough.

## TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM – ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES (CONT'D)

With CLG certification, Valdez can access technical assistance in establishing and delivering their heritage preservation program, funds and training for community members who participate in administering the preservation program, and federal grant opportunities specific to the identification, consideration and preservation of cultural resources.

***2. Heritage Preservation Plan or Plan Element***

During focus group meetings and in the community survey, residents indicated a variety of concerns and ideas related to cultural resources and heritage preservation.

Valdez would benefit from a dedicated heritage preservation plan (created in cooperation with the VNT and through a public involvement process) that reflects and identifies community-wide goals and objectives for cultural resources and preservation, and the actions the City will encourage and take to achieve those stated goals and objectives. It is important to note that heritage preservation is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Through an engaged preservation planning process, Valdez can define what heritage preservation will mean for the community and the approach that is best-sized and best-suited to address community needs.

**Planning Context**

The City of Valdez has created a great Museum with interpretation elements throughout the community, but work is needed to accurately discuss the many histories of Valdez's people (the Indigenous community in particular) and places. Consideration of cultural resources by the City in land use planning and decision-making has not necessarily occurred and the locations of sensitive cultural resources have not necessarily been identified or documented. There is community support to more widely identify and preserve existing cultural resources, including historic buildings and structures.

To address concerns and build on current community support, the City of Valdez should consider the following opportunities:

- Project review and consultation with VNT for developing in the Old Town Historic Site and adjacent areas designated as working waterfront
- Collaboration with VNT and residents of color to create authentic and inclusive interpretation and wayfinding representative of the many histories of the people of Valdez
- Certification as a CLG to access resources to begin the foundation of a City heritage preservation program
- Development and implementation of a heritage preservation plan or plan element that identifies community priorities for cultural resource identification, consideration, interpretation, education and preservation.

And lastly, concerns expressed by representatives from the Indigenous community regarding lack of communication from the City extend beyond the subject of archaeological and cultural resources. The City of Valdez should consider development of a government-wide consultation policy to encourage meaningful communication and engagement with the VNT.

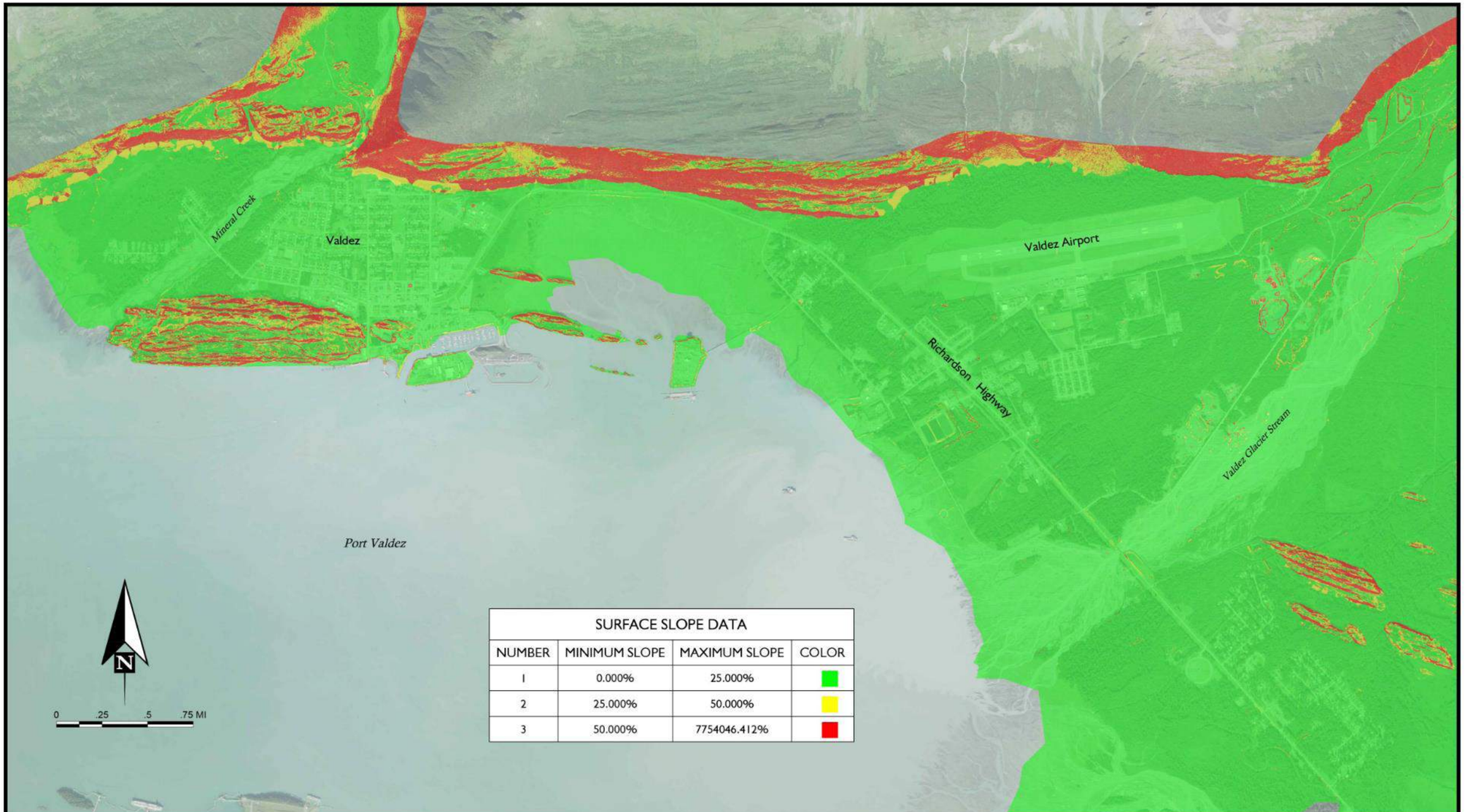
**References**


- National Park Service, 1998. NPS-28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline. NPS Office of Policy.
- Valdeznativetribe.org Accessed 12/16/2020
- Chugachmiut.org Accessed 1/1/2021
- Valdez Convention and Visitor's Bureau: https://www.valdezalaska.org/discover/history/1964-good-friday-earthquake/


# TECHNICAL MAPS

On the following pages are the GIS maps developed by the planning team that supports the Technical Memos related to slopes (avalanches, landslides), flood and tsunami inundation, and soils (wetlands and contaminated soils). These maps were overlaid in GIS to create a composite map that identifies the varying levels of environmental concerns within the planning area. The composite map was used as the basis for the land suitability map found within the body of ***PlanValdez***. These maps are conceptual in nature and are to be used for planning purposes only.

## GROUND SLOPE ANALYSIS MAP




| SURFACE SLOPE DATA | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| NUMBER | MINIMUM SLOPE | MAXIMUM SLOPE | COLOR |
| 1 | 0.000% | 25.000% | |
| 2 | 25.000% | 50.000% | |
| 3 | 50.000% | 7754046.412% | |

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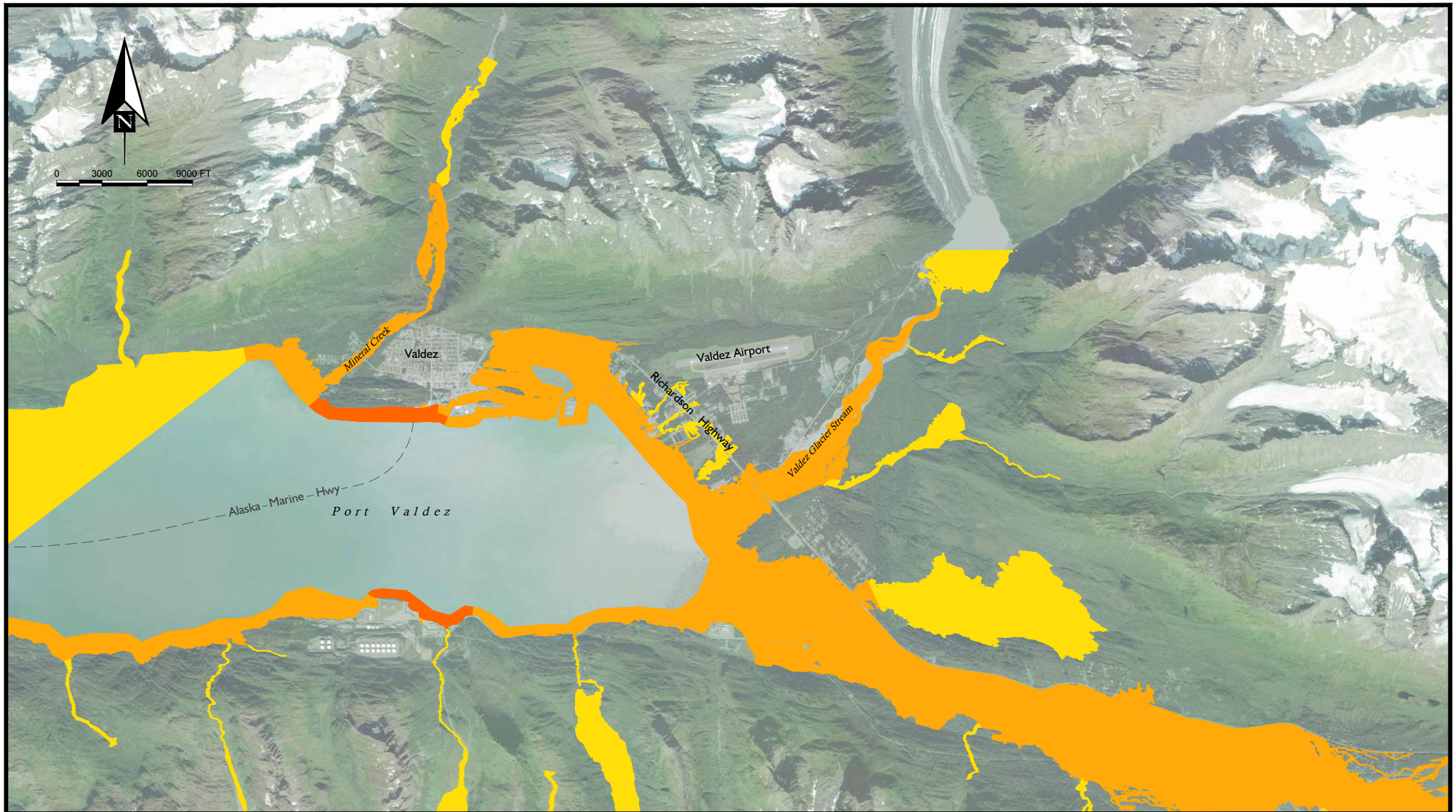
PND ENGINEERS, INC.

PROJECT: VALDEZ LAND SUITABILITY MAP

TITLE: GROUND SLOPE ANALYSIS

DESIGNED BY: –
CHECKED BY: –
DATE: 10/2/20
PROJECT NO: 201076
SHEET NO: 1 OF 1

## FEMA FLOOD MAP




FEMA Flood Zones

Zone A

Zone VE

Zone AE

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PROJECT: VALDEZ LAND SUITABILITY MAP

TITLE: FEMA FLOOD ZONES

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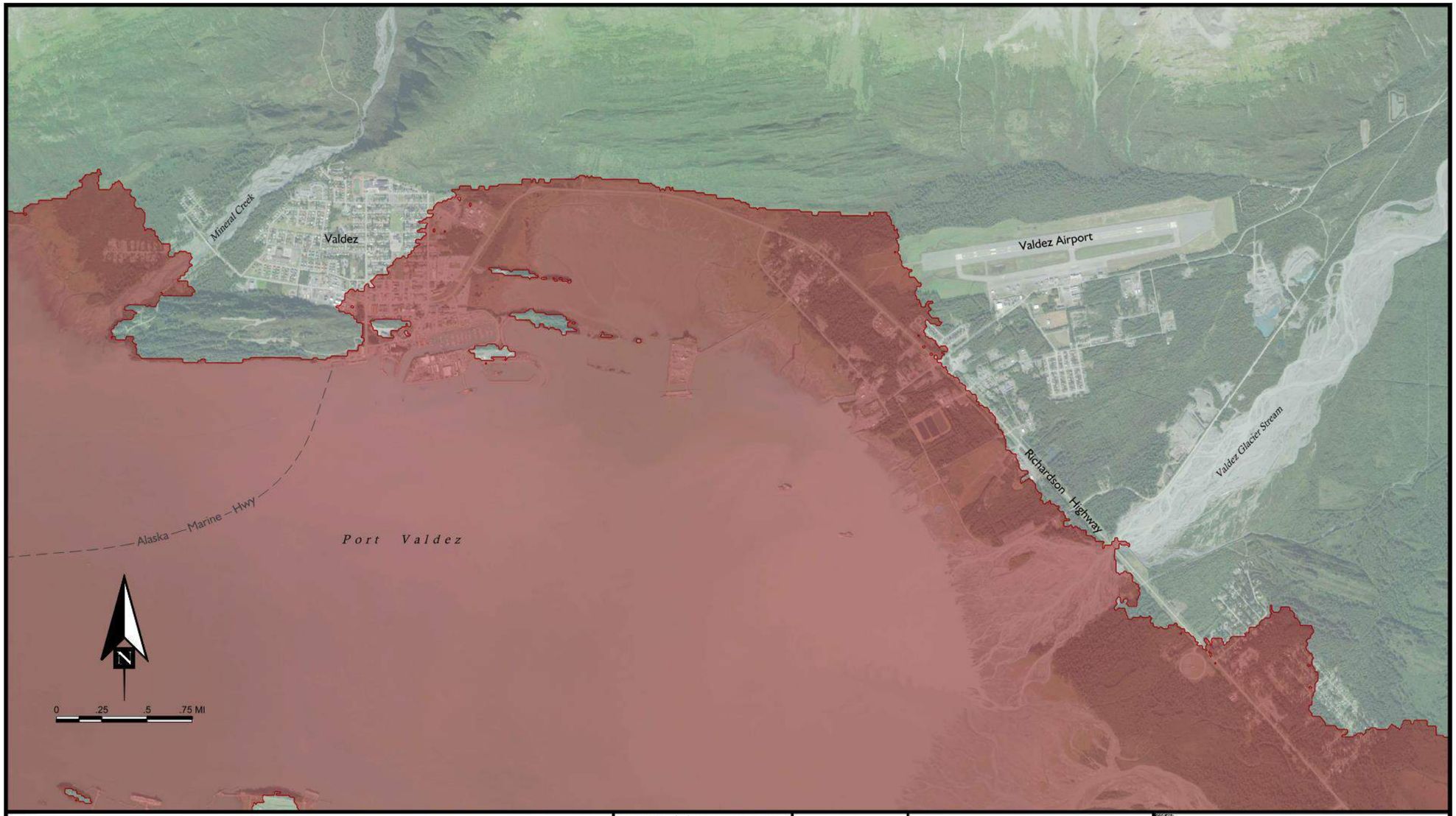
|---|---|---|---|
| DESIGNED BY: | – | DATE: | 10/8/21 |
| CHECKED BY: | – | PROJECT NO: | 201076 |

SHEET NO: 1 OF 1

## TSUNAMI INUNDATION MAP

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PROJECT: VALDEZ LAND SUITABILITY MAP

TITLE: ESTIMATED "MAXIMUM CREDIBLE SCENARIO" TSUNAMI INUNDATION EXTENTS

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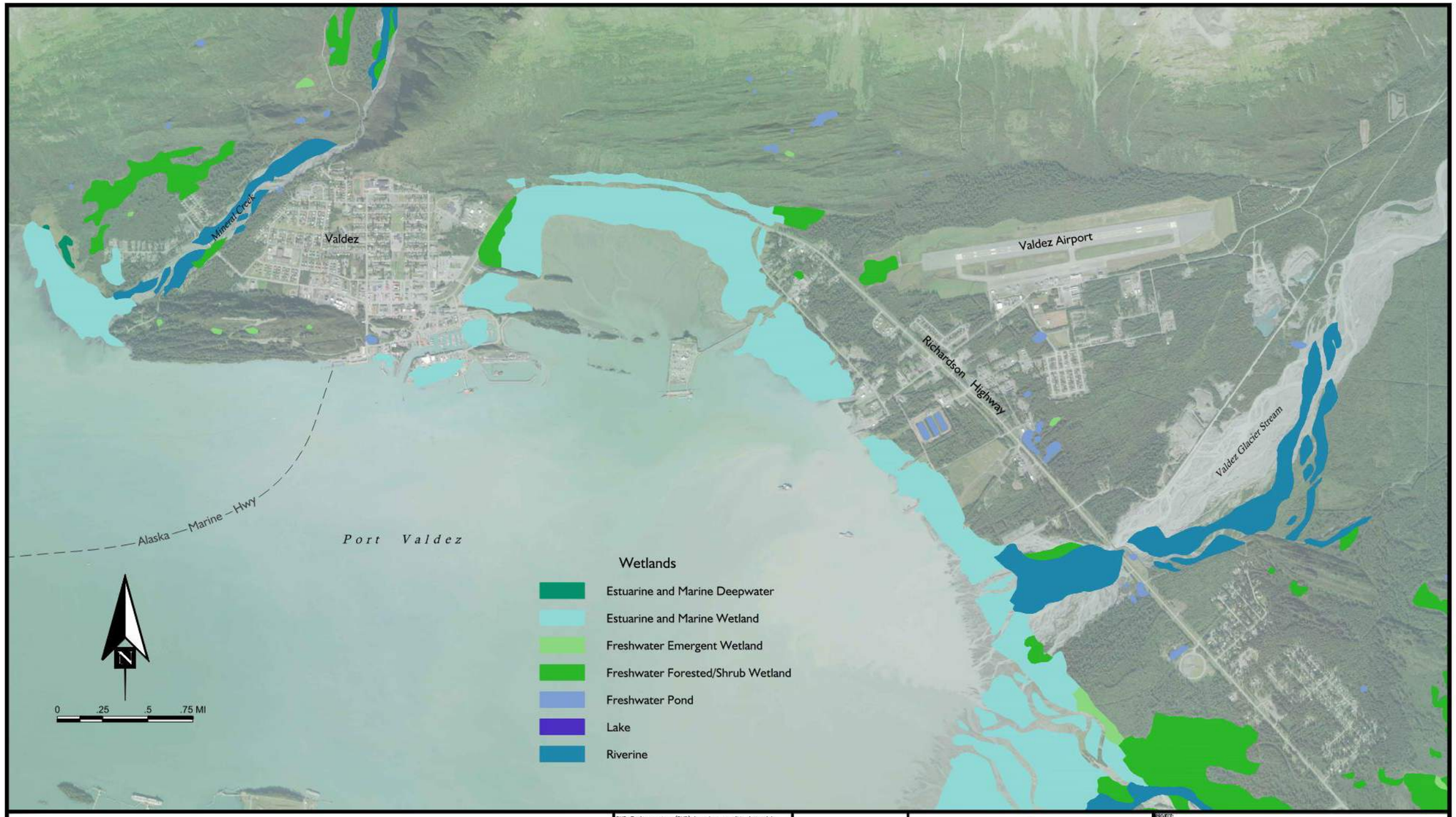
| DESIGNED BY: | - | DATE: | 12/8/20 |
| CHECKED BY: | - | PROJECT NO: | 201076 |

SHEET NO: 1 OF 1

## WETLANDS MAP

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TITLE: WETLANDS

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PROJECT NO: 201076
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## CONTAMINATED SITES MAP

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PROJECT: VALDEZ LAND SUITABILITY MAP

TITLE: CONTAMINATED SITES

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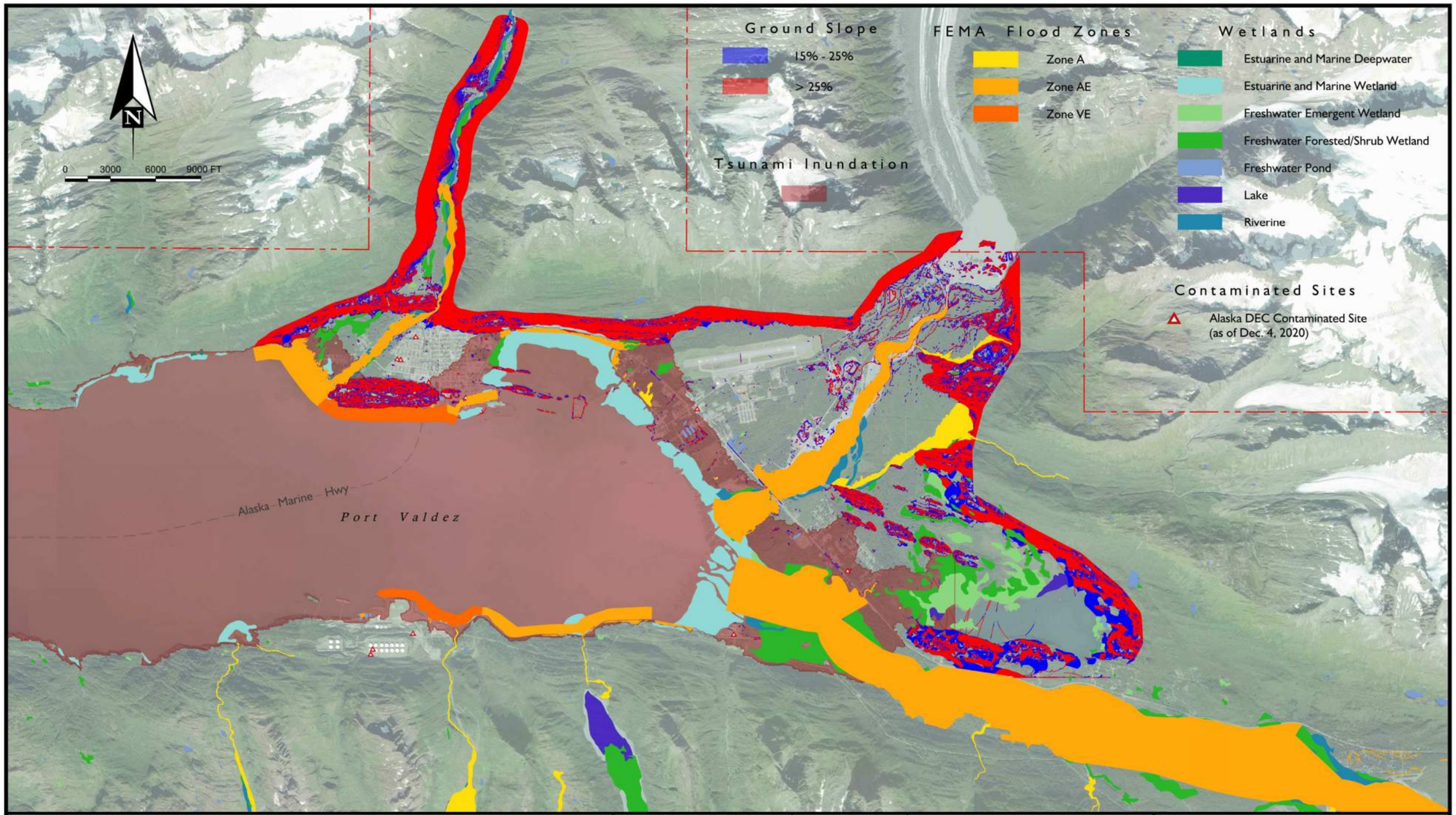
| DESIGNED BY: - | DATE: 12/8/20 | SHEET NO: 1 OF 1 |
| CHECKED BY: - | PROJECT NO: 201076 | |

## COMPOSITE OVERLAY MAP

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PROJECT: VALDEZ LAND SUITABILITY MAP

TITLE: COMPOSITE MAP

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