

**CITY OF UNALASKA  
PLANNING COMMISSION & PLATTING BOARD  
2022 ANNUAL REPORT**



This annual report is designed to serve multiple functions: to summarize the planning activities of the Unalaska Planning Commission; to serve as a resource document; to project future planning needs and activities; and to meet the requirements of § 2.60.090, Unalaska Code of Ordinances.

The Planning Commission, Platting Board, Department of Planning, and Unalaska City Council refer to the adopted Comprehensive Plan, Platting and Subdivision Regulations, Zoning Code of Ordinances, Zoning Map, and other applicable codes for all decisions rendered.

The following residents of Unalaska served on the City of Unalaska's Planning Commission and Platting Board in 2022:

**Chair, Travis Swangel**  
**Vice Chair, Caroline Williams**  
**Ian Bagley**  
**Virginia Hatfield**  
**Rainier Marquez**

The Planning Commission and Platting Board are supported by the City of Unalaska's Planning Department, which consists of:


**William Homka**, AICP, Assistant City Manager,  
Acting Planning Director (As of November, 2022)  
**Thomas Roufos**, Associate Planner  
**Cameron Dean**, Former GIS Administrator (Resigned August, 2022)  
**Jasmine Gonzalez**, Former Administrative Assistant (Resigned January, 2022)  
**Teri Salazar-Lascano**, Current Administrative Assistant (Started June, 2022)

**PLANNING COMMISSION AND PLATTING BOARD**  
**RESOLUTION 2023-01**

In accordance with § 2.60.090 of the Unalaska Code of Ordinances, the City of Unalaska's Planning Commission officially adopts the following annual report, filing the same with the Unalaska City Council.

CITY OF UNALASKA  
PLANNING COMMISSION

BY:   
Travis Swangel  
Commission Chair

  
William Homka, AICP  
Secretary of the Commission

DATE OF ADOPTION: FEBRUARY 16, 2023

## **INTRODUCTION**

Alaska State law gives incorporated municipalities the authority and responsibility for planning, platting, and land use regulation. In addition to providing for the orderly and efficient use of land and other resources, planning can establish ground rules for development for the whole community and provide the means by which residents participate in important decisions about their community's future. With effective planning, a community can define its character and realize tangible benefits.

The Unalaska Code of Ordinances establishes the Planning Commission and Platting Board to help assure orderly growth of Unalaska and offers additional guidance regarding their functions, power and duties, which include:

- To recognize and utilize such basic information necessary to understand past trends, present conditions, and forces affecting community growth and development;
- To prepare and keep current a Comprehensive Plan for meeting present requirements and future needs for community growth and development as may be foreseen by the Commission/Board;
- To establish principles and policies for guiding actions affecting growth in the city;
- To prepare and to recommend to the City Council ordinances, regulations, or other proposals promoting orderly development indicated as desirable by the Comprehensive Plan;
- To exercise jurisdiction over platting as provided in Chapter 8.08, and to act upon requests for variances, conditional uses, and zone amendments as provided in Chapter 8.12;
- To keep the City Council and general public informed and advised as to matters before the Commission/Board;
- To conduct such meetings, as required, to gather information necessary for the drafting, establishment, and maintenance of the Comprehensive Plan and the ordinances and regulations relating to it; and
- To perform other duties lawfully assigned to the Commission/Board or which have a bearing on the preparation or accomplishment of the Comprehensive Plan.

§ 2.60.090 of the Unalaska Code of Ordinances requires each board and committee to submit an annual report which summarizes the activities which have occurred during the previous year. The Annual Report is a mechanism for monitoring those activities and for presenting to the City Council the goals and objectives for Planning in the coming year.

## SUMMARY OF PLANNING ACTIONS FOR 2022

### I. General Statistics (January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022)

Application Type	Considered or Reviewed/ Granted, Approved or Formally Recommended		
	2020	2021	2022
Variance	2/2	2/0	1/1
Conditional Use	1/1	4/4	3/3
Zone Amendment	1/1	-	4/3
Property Acquisitions	-	-	-
Code Revisions	-	-	-
Plats	3	2/2	1/1
Planning Documents	3/3	-	1/1
<b>TOTAL MEETINGS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>

### II. Planning Commission Recommendations to Council

The Planning Commission recommended Three Zoning Amendments, No Code Revisions, and One Planning Document to the City Council for action in 2022.	
<i>January 20, 2022: Approved Resolution 2022-01 Annual Report (Planning Document) and filed with City Council</i>	The Planning Commission through <b>Resolution 2022-01</b> approved the <i>Planning Commission and Platting Board 2021 Annual Report</i> , which reviewed the year in Planning in Unalaska.
<i>April 21, 2022: Denied Resolution 2022-03 Rezoning Action</i>	The Planning Commission denied <b>Resolution 2021-03</b> rezoning the downtown Arctic Chiropractic lot from General Commercial to High Density Residential after the business was no-longer operating on that property. Denied due to HDR being too high of a use in favor of Moderate Density.
<i>April 21, 2022: Approved Resolution 2022-04 Rezoning Action</i>	The Planning Commission approved <b>Resolution 2021-04</b> rezoning the downtown Arctic Chiropractic lot from General Commercial to Moderate Density Residential.
<i>June 16, 2022: Approved Resolution 2022-05 Rezoning Action</i>	The Planning Commission approved <b>Resolution 2022-05</b> rezoning the Native Allotment previously owned by Billy Shaishnikoff that automatically became a Holding Zone when sold. The Holding Zone was rezoned as Marine Dependent Industrial.
<i>June 16, 2022: Approved Resolution 2022-07 Zoning Action</i>	The Planning Commission approved <b>Resolution 2022-07</b> applying Developable Tideland zoning to a 1.156-acre area outside of the Robert Storrs Harbor to facilitate tideland acquisition from the state for future expansion of the marina.

### III. Planning Commission Actions and Activities

The Planning Commission & Platting Board approved one (1) Variance and three (3) Conditional Use Permits in 2022.	
<i>January 20, 2022: Approved Resolution 2022-02, a conditional use permit</i>	<b>Resolution 2022-02</b> approved a short cell tower on a lot zoned Single-Family/Duplex on Driftwood Way.
<i>July 21, 2022: Approved Resolution 2022-08, a conditional use permit</i>	<b>Resolution 2022-08</b> approved storage for a commercial diving and welding business in a residential garage on Choate Lane. The lot is zoned Single-Family/Duplex.
<i>August 11, 2022: <b>Special Meeting</b> Deferred and Amended Resolution 2022-09, a conditional use permit</i>	<b>Resolution 2022-09</b> was deferred to a Special Meeting on August 28 <sup>th</sup> because the meeting materials were deficient. The request sought approval for mixed-use commercial/ residential. The parcel on West Broadway is zoned General Commercial. The proposal included a warehouse and eight efficiency residential units for employee housing.
<i>August 28, 2022: <b>Special Meeting</b> Approved Amended Resolution 2022-09, a conditional use permit</i>	<b>Resolution 2022-09</b> approved a mixed-use commercial/ residential development on West Broadway. The lot is zoned General Commercial. The proposal was decreased from eight residential units to four. The project required Planning Commission approval because City Code prohibits resolution residential and commercial uses combined on the same parcel.
<i>December 21, 2022: Approved Resolution 2022-10, a variance permit</i>	<b>Resolution 2022-10</b> approved a 5-foot variance for a shed on a Single-Family/Duplex lot on Loop Road. The parcel's topography created a hardship.

### IV. Platting Board Actions

The Planning Commission & Platting Board approved one (1) subdivision extension in 2022.	
<i>June 16, 2022: Approved Resolution 2022-06, a preliminary plat extension</i>	<b>Resolution 2022-06</b> approved a one year extension for a preliminary plat for Parkside Estates. The plat will expire on June 16, 2023. The developer is working with the city's utilities, public works and planning departments to resolve issues. The developer must submit corrected drawings and other requirements by April 17, 2023 or the project will cease.

### V. Summary of Appeals Cases and Actions:

The Planning Commission did not hear any appeals of administrative decisions.

## VI. Department of Planning Activities:

The Department of Planning's primary responsibility is coordinating community planning and development, land use, and capital growth within the City of Unalaska. Services include assisting the public, Mayor and City Council, Planning Commission, and other City departments by providing information, guidance, and direction on land use issues and regulations. Under the guidance of the department, the City's annual five-year capital improvement, replacement, and maintenance program is developed. The department also initiates and directs studies and reports relating to long and short-term planning needed for both community growth and development, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to the involvement in the items described in previous sections, Departmental activities and accomplishments for 2022 include the following:

- **Negotiated Agreements:** Coordinated the negotiation and approval of:
  1. Tideland leases and easements which will allow for businesses to expand operations in our community and help to diversify Unalaska's economic base, as well as provide access for public works projects.
  2. Continued to assist Public Works with the Generals Hill Booster Pump project.
  3. Continued working with joint trenching agreement with GCI to install conduit for a City fiber network. The department also coordinated with Engineering to review plans and permits for the GCI fiber project.
  4. Continued to serve on the geothermal City team negotiating the implementation of the PPA with OCCP.
- **GIS Improvements.** Staff have improved accuracy and availability of GIS resources internally and to the public.
- **Community Support Grants:** The Planning Department administers the community support grant program. The Planning Department received 9 Community Grant Applications from different non-profit organizations around the City of Unalaska. These applications were reviewed, critiqued, and sent back for corrections before discussing financial matters to the City Council. Once applications had come back through, evaluations were conducted. Planning designed a means for the City Council to establish the sums for the Community Support Grants.
- **Code Enforcement:** The Planning Department led an effort by Fire, Public Safety, Public Works and Clerks to respond to a nuisance complaint and numerous zoning violations on 14 properties on Choate Lane. A long-running enforcement issue at 176-180 Chernofski involving Planning, Public Works, Fire, Public Safety and the City Attorney has been settled in favor of the City. Choate Lane continues to undergo clean-up activities, hampered by the lack of accessible scrap collection for residential customers.
- **Grants:** The Planning Department was successful in acquiring a highly competitive FY22 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant. Staff attended the Brownfields 2022 conference in Oklahoma.
- **Surveys:** The Planning Department conducted numerous surveys on COVID, community health needs on behalf of the IFHS Clinic and the National Community Survey.
- **Other:**
  1. Staff participate in the Airport Masterplan Update Stakeholder Advisory Committee, Amaknak Formerly Used Defense Site Restoration Advisory Board, City CARES Grant Committee and the Alaska chapter of the American Planning Association.
  2. Staff serve on the IFHS Clinic board and PCR Advisory Committee, as well as volunteer with the Fire Department and high school athletics.
  3. The department assisted with the planning and City presentation for the legislative visit and tour.

- **CMMP Process:**

1. The newly implemented 10-year plan successfully spread projects across more years, allowing for better planning of needs.
2. The FY24 CMMP process is ongoing.

**VII. Departmental goals for 2023 include the following:**

- Continue improving process of zoning and public nuisance code enforcement as minor offenses.
- Improve accuracy and completeness of staff reports and packets.
- Expand online GIS access, improve mapping on mobile devices and train staff in new programs.
- Update the Comprehensive Plan as the current plan is nearing the end of its lifespan and a new plan is required in order to provide guidance for community facility and infrastructure investments.
- Work with Engineering / Permitting to improve the permitting and review process.