

**CITY OF UNALASKA  
PLANNING COMMISSION & PLATTING BOARD  
2023 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 2023:

**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, City Manager,  
Acting Planning Director (November, 2022 to September 2023)  
**Cameron Dean**, Planning Director (Started September, 2023)  
**Thomas Roufos**, Associate Planner (Since April 2016)  
**Teri Salazar-Lascano**, Administrative Assistant (Moved to Public Works January, 2023)  
**Elaine Blankenship**, Administrative Assistant (Hired October, 2023)

**PLANNING COMMISSION AND PLATTING BOARD**  
**RESOLUTION 2024-01**

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

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cameron Dean  
Secretary of the Commission

DATE OF ADOPTION: 1/18/24

## **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 2023

### I. General Statistics (January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023)

Application Type	Considered or Reviewed/ Granted, Approved or Formally Recommended		
	2021	2022	2023
Variance	2/0	1/1	-
Conditional Use	4/4	3/3	6/5
Zone Amendment	-	4/3	-
Property Acquisitions	-	-	-
Code Revisions	-	-	-
Plats	2/2	1/1	5/4
Planning Documents	-	1/1	2/2
<b>TOTAL MEETINGS</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>

### II. Planning Commission Recommendations to Council

The Planning Commission recommended zero Zoning Amendments, zero Code Revisions, one Right Of Way Vacation, and one Planning Document to the City Council for action in 2023.	
<i>February 16, 2023: Approved Resolution 2023-01 Annual Report (Planning Document) and filed with City Council</i>	The Planning Commission through <b>Resolution 2023-01</b> approved the <i>Planning Commission and Platting Board 2022 Annual Report</i> , which reviewed the year in Planning in Unalaska.
<i>August 18, 2023: Approved a right of way vacation recommendation</i>	<b>Resolution 2023-06</b> approved a recommendation to City Council to vacate the Lavelle Court Right of Way from Plat 92-12, Reservoir Hill Subdivision and Plat 97-14, Unalaska Pedestrian Pathway

### III. Planning Commission Actions and Activities

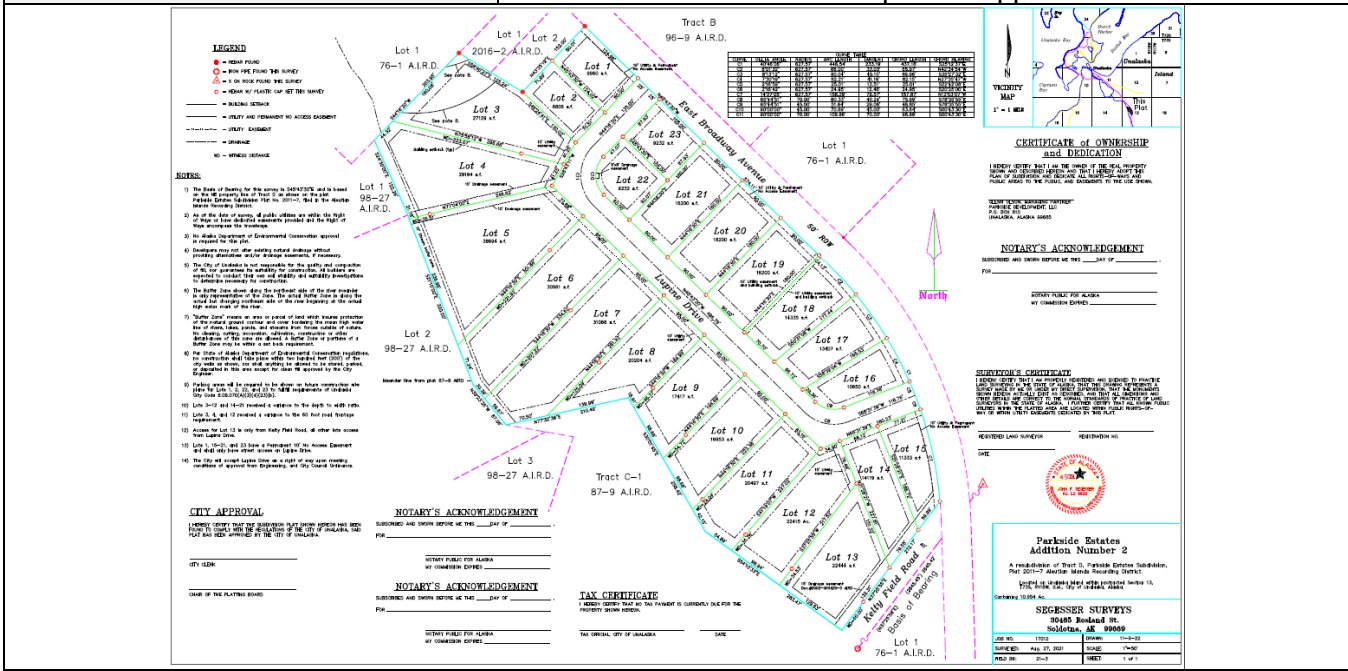
The Planning Commission & Platting Board approved zero Variances and four Conditional Use Permits in 2023.	
<i>April 27, 2023: <b>Special Meeting</b> Referred Resolution 2023-03, a conditional use permit back to the applicant for re-application</i>	<b>Resolution 2023-03</b> for a 40-foot cell tower on a lot zoned High Density Residential on a leased portion of Tract A, Block 6, Ilulaq Subdivision, Plat 89-19 was referred back to the applicant to seek a re-positioning on the same lot so as to limit the impact on neighboring parcels.
<i>May 18, 2023: No Quorum for Resolution 2023-03, a conditional use permit</i>	<b>Resolution 2023-03 postponed</b> for a 40-foot cell tower on a lot zoned High Density Residential on a leased portion of Tract A, Block 6, Ilulaq Subdivision, Plat 89-19 was approved at a secondary location on the same lot. 2 commissioners recused themselves from the item, citing conflicts.

<p>June 1, 2023: Special Meeting approved Resolution 2023-03, an amended conditional use permit</p>	<p><b>Resolution 2023-03</b> Approved a 40-foot cell tower on a lot zoned High Density Residential on a leased portion of Tract A, Block 6, Iluluaq Subdivision, Plat 89-19 was amended and approved at a secondary location on the same lot. One commissioner reviewed their conflict with the city attorney and decided it was non-existent, the other commissioner chose to abstain from voting citing a conflict despite the city attorney ruling otherwise.</p>
<p>July 20, 2023: Approved Resolution 2023-05, a conditional use permit</p>	<p><b>Resolution 2023-05</b> approved a conditional use permit for low earth orbit satellite internet domes (Starlink style dishes in enclosures) on a parcel zoned Single Family/Duplex on Lear Road at the previous site of the OptimERA dish.</p>
<p>October 19, 2023: Approved Resolution 2023-07, a conditional use permit</p>	<p><b>Resolution 2023-07</b> approved a for a 40-foot cell tower on a lot zoned High Density Residential on a leased portion of Tract A, Block 6, Iluluaq Subdivision, Plat 89-19. This was for the initial site that had been requested in April of 2023.</p>
<p>December 21, 2023: Approved Resolution 2023-10, an after-the-fact conditional use permit</p>	<p><b>Resolution 2023-10:</b> Approved a retroactive application for an existing lumber and building material sales with storage yard on Lot 6b, Margaret Bay Subdivision, Plat 2010-16 at Alaska Ship Supply.</p>

**IV. Platting Board Actions**

The Planning Commission & Platting Board referred one (1) final plat, and approved two (2) preliminary and two (2) final plats in 2023.

<p>February 16, 2023: Postponed Resolution 2023-02, a final plat application</p>	<p><b>Resolution 2023-02</b> Postponed final plat of Parkside Estates Part 2 – This draft of the plat had deficiencies compared to the conditions of the approved preliminary plat. Applicant directed to return with amended final plat for approval.</p>
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**May 18, 2023: Approved Resolution 2023-04, a Preliminary Plat application**

**Resolution 2023-04 approved preliminary plat of Purevsuren Subdivision for final.**

**LEGEND**  
 ● - ROAD RIGHT  
 ○ - ROAD OF RIGHT (NOT THE ROAD)  
 ■ - ROAD RIGHT OF THE ROAD  
 □ - ROAD RIGHT  
 --- - EASE WAY  
 --- - EASE WAY  
 --- - EASE WAY  
 --- - EASE WAY  
 --- - EASE WAY

**NOTES**  
 1. The plat is subject to the provisions of the Uniform Plat Act and the provisions of the Uniform Plat Act as amended.  
 2. The plat is subject to the provisions of the Uniform Plat Act as amended.  
 3. The plat is subject to the provisions of the Uniform Plat Act as amended.  
 4. The plat is subject to the provisions of the Uniform Plat Act as amended.  
 5. The plat is subject to the provisions of the Uniform Plat Act as amended.

**CITY APPROVAL**  
 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE SUBDIVISION PLAT IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CITY PLAT ACT AND THE CITY PLAT ACT AS AMENDED.  
 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY CLERK

**NOTARY'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT**  
 I, \_\_\_\_\_, Notary Public for the State of Idaho, do hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

**NOTARY'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT**  
 I, \_\_\_\_\_, Notary Public for the State of Idaho, do hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

**NOTARY'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT**  
 I, \_\_\_\_\_, Notary Public for the State of Idaho, do hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

**TAX CERTIFICATE**  
 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE TAXES DUE ON THIS PLAT ARE PAID TO THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE.  
 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLAT INFORMATION**  
 Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Surveyor: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**June 15, 2023: Approved Resolution 2023-02, a Final Plat application**

**Resolution 2023-02 Approved final plat of Parkside Estates Part 2 now that the developer met all final requirements from preliminary approval.**

**LEGEND**  
 ● - ROAD RIGHT  
 ○ - ROAD OF RIGHT (NOT THE ROAD)  
 ■ - ROAD RIGHT OF THE ROAD  
 □ - ROAD RIGHT  
 --- - EASE WAY  
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**NOTES**  
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**CITY APPROVAL**  
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 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY CLERK

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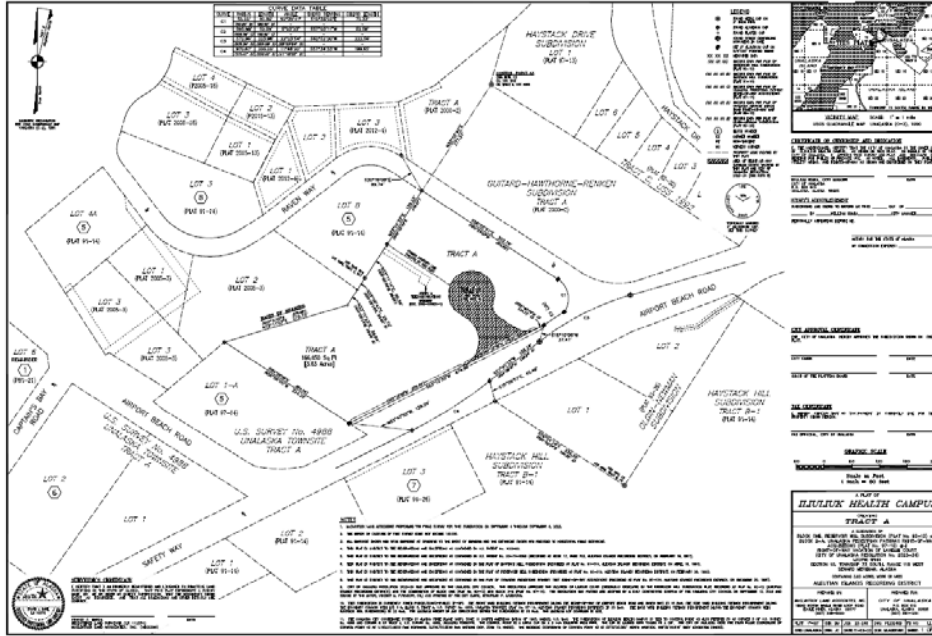
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 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE TAXES DUE ON THIS PLAT ARE PAID TO THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE.  
 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLAT INFORMATION**  
 Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Surveyor: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

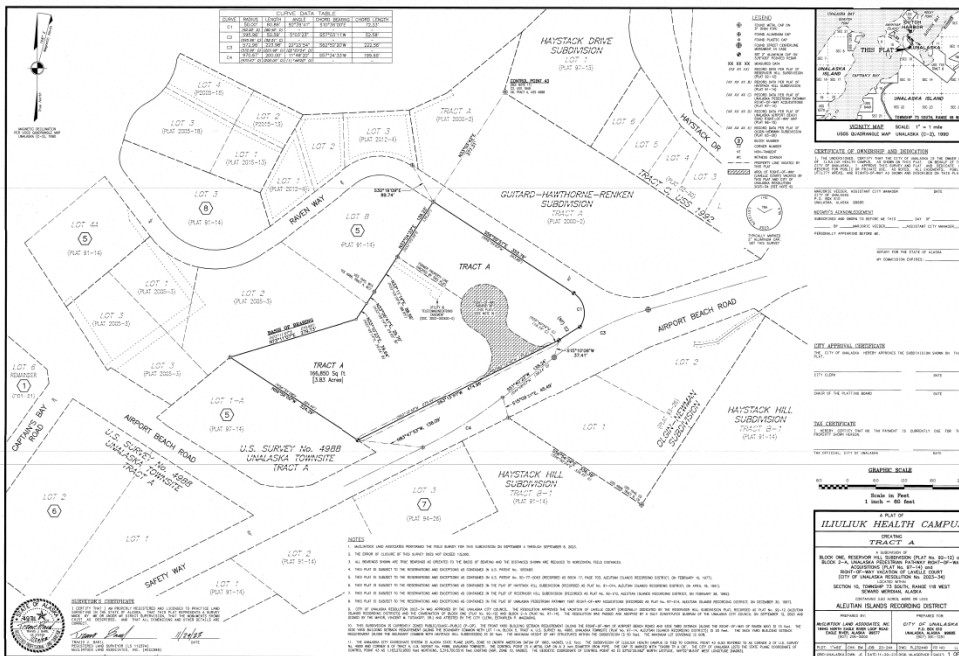
November 16, 2023: Approved Resolution 2023-08, a preliminary plat

**Resolution 2023-08** Approved the preliminary plat of Iliuliuk Health Campus, Combining Block 1, Reservoir Hill Subdivision Plat 92-12 And Block 2-A, Unalaska Pedestrian Pathway Right Of Way Acquisitions Plat 97-14. No conditions.



December 21, 2023: Approved Resolution 2023-09, a final plat

**Resolution 2023-09** Approved the final plat of Iliuliuk Health Campus, Combining Block 1, Reservoir Hill Subdivision Plat 92-12 And Block 2-A, Unalaska Pedestrian Pathway Right Of Way Acquisitions Plat 97-14.



## V. Summary of Appeals Cases and Actions:

The Planning Commission & Platting Board did not hear any appeals of administrative decisions. The Planning Commission referred one appeal of Planning Commission Decision to the City Council.	
<i>August 17, 2023: Worksession regarding Ounalashka Corporation letter addressing Resolution 2023-03</i>	Letter from Ounalashka corporation dated July 25th regarding Planning Commission decision on <b>Resolution 2023-03</b> , a resolution approving a conditional use permit for a cellular tower on a lot zoned high density residential on a leased portion of Tract A, Block 6, Ilulaq Subdivision, Plat 89-19, AIRD – Discussion determined a re-review of the initial site was warranted based on the desires of the property owner.
<i>November 14, 2023: The City Council upheld Resolution 2023-07</i>	The City Council heard an appeal of neighboring property owners against the 40-foot cell tower. There City Council found no facts that would overturn the Planning Commission decision on <b>Resolution 2023-07</b> .
<i>November 28, 2023: The City Council amended approval of Resolution 2023-07 to specify a new site</i>	While writing the City Council's findings of fact, the City Attorney discovered that the site of the cell tower did not allow enough potential fall distance for the tower into a Biorka Drive. The City Council amended their decision to a secondary site on the same lot preserving the fall radius outside of the street.

## 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 2023 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. An antenna lease for a GPS ground station to maintain accurate GPS and GIS data has been secured for another 25 years.
- **Community Support Grants:** The Planning Department administers the community support grant program. The Planning Department received 8 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:** 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. Some



forward movement on abatement has been made, however the fines have not been collected and the issue continues to be assessed by the courts.

- **Grants:** The Planning Department was successful in acquiring a highly competitive FY22 EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant. The grant cycle continues with Phase One investigations ongoing in Pyramid Valley and Strawberry Hill. Plans for bilateral investigation of Unalaska and Iluluaq Lakes with the Qawalangin Tribe are being finalized.
- **Other:**
  1. Staff participate in the Alaska chapter of the American Planning Association (APA), this year's conference hosted the Western Planners chapter of the APA.
  2. Staff served on the IFHS Clinic board, Alaska State Firefighters Association Unalaska Chapter board, and PCR Advisory Committee, spun records as a DJ on KUCB radio, as well as volunteer with the Fire Department.
  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 FY25 CMMP process is ongoing.

#### **VII. Departmental goals for 2024 include the following:**

- 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 has reached 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.
- Staff continues to work toward improved accuracy and availability of GIS resources internally and to the public.