



Executive Summary

March 20, 2024



For more information,
visit the project website:
<https://downtownfbx2040.com/>

Vision

Downtown Fairbanks is a prosperous, welcoming, and safe destination for everyone.

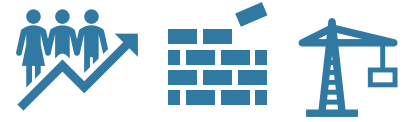
Fairbanks values a Downtown that...



Is a vibrant year-round destination for culture and entertainment



Provides a safe, welcoming, and accessible environment



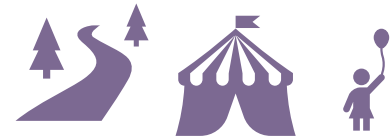
Attracts economic growth and investment



Embraces our long history and diverse cultures



Provides a variety of housing options



Celebrates the Chena Riverfront and Golden Heart Plaza as community focal points

Our Goals

1. **Revitalize Downtown** with a thriving mix of businesses, housing choices, public amenities, and activities that bring people to Downtown.
2. **Redevelop Downtown** by encouraging new construction and reuse of vacant properties, filling in gaps and updating aging buildings.
3. **Reconnect Downtown** as a central destination in the region, with roads, trails, and clear wayfinding to guide people to and within the district.
4. **Refresh Downtown** with improved lighting, public art, visual improvements, and design strategies to make the district feel safe, welcoming, and vibrant.
5. **Rediscover Downtown** by attracting residents, visitors, and families to events that showcase the best of Fairbanks throughout the year.

Plan Purpose

The Downtown Fairbanks 2040 Plan ...

...will serve as a community resource and guide.

...offers recommendations to protect what residents value about the area while enhancing quality of life for current and future residents.

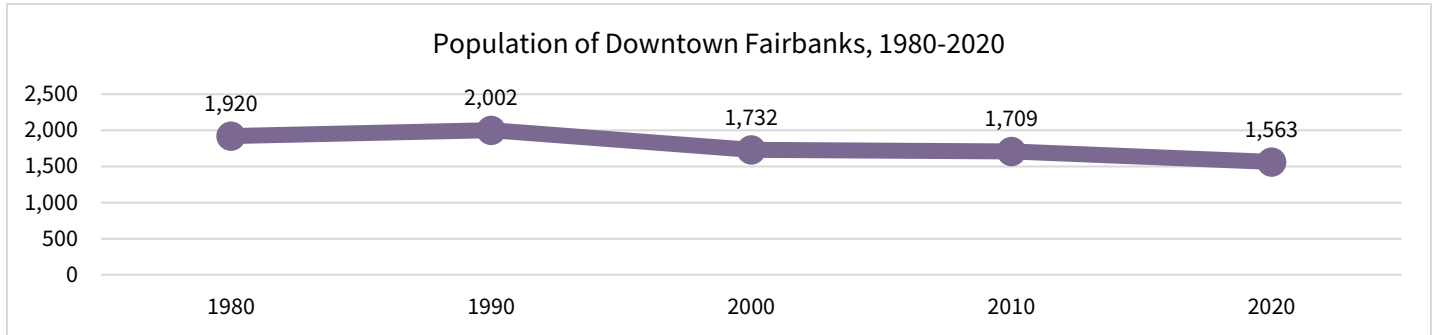
...is a community-driven tool that will provide direction to community leaders, residents, funders, and other partners.

About Downtown Fairbanks

Downtown Fairbanks is an economic, cultural, and historic center of the City, which itself is the hub of Interior Alaska and the nation’s gateway to the Arctic. It is also the seat of local and regional government.



Downtown has been losing population continuously since the 1990s.



Source: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census of Census Tract 100

Focus Areas and Strategies



Economic Development

1. Establish Downtown as a center of economic activity in the FNSB and Interior region.
2. Encourage development of vacant/underutilized parcels and buildings.
3. Support local entrepreneurs and small business creation.
4. Increase the availability of downtown workforce opportunities and services that support Downtown residents and workers, such as child care and retail.
5. Reimagine the Polaris Building site as an economic anchor site in Downtown.
6. Create a clear, recognizable brand identity for Downtown.
7. Increase festivals, special events, and activities to draw people to Downtown throughout the year.



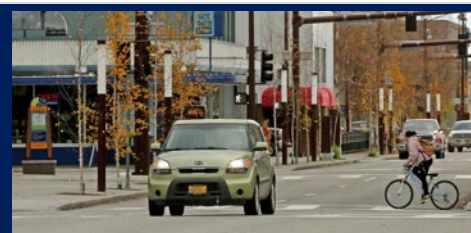
Land Use

1. Create a walkable, accessible, navigable Downtown year-round.
2. Guide location and intensity of land use through implementation of the Downtown Future Land Use Map.
3. Promote enjoyment of parks, trails, public facilities, and other amenities in Downtown.
4. Support implementation of plans to improve human and environmental health Downtown.
5. Maintain the unique character of Downtown and established neighborhoods.



Public Safety

1. Create a safe, welcoming environment through community-focused activities and consistent maintenance.
2. Incorporate safety and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles throughout Downtown.



Transportation

1. Continue building a road system that provides the needed level of mobility and enhances the built environment of Downtown Fairbanks.
2. Develop a seasonal bicycle network throughout Downtown to incorporate cycling with other transportation options.
3. Increase walkability and pedestrian comfort in Downtown Fairbanks.
4. Integrate Transit into downtown land use planning and improve mobility.
5. Improve transportation safety and access in Downtown.
6. Define Downtown as a central transportation destination for the region, connected by multiple modes, in all transportation plans.
7. Integrate aesthetic features and make it easier for everyone to find their way within Downtown.



Parking

1. Redevelop existing underutilized surface level parking lots into active spaces.
2. Encourage new development by lessening or eliminating the requirement for new surface level parking Downtown.
3. Manage on-street parking to benefit nearby businesses.
4. Design surface level parking Downtown to increase efficiency and encourage pedestrian activity.
5. Promote existing parking.
6. Increase downtown parking garage usage.
7. Reduce demand for vehicle parking where feasible.



Housing

1. Preserve the residential character of existing neighborhoods and promote investment in existing housing stock.
2. Increase the number of people living Downtown and reduce vacancies.
3. Promote diverse new housing options that serve a variety of lifestyles.
4. Help existing residents age in place and remain living Downtown.
5. Coordinate with organizations to connect people experiencing homelessness with available housing in Downtown.

Future Land Use Map Categories

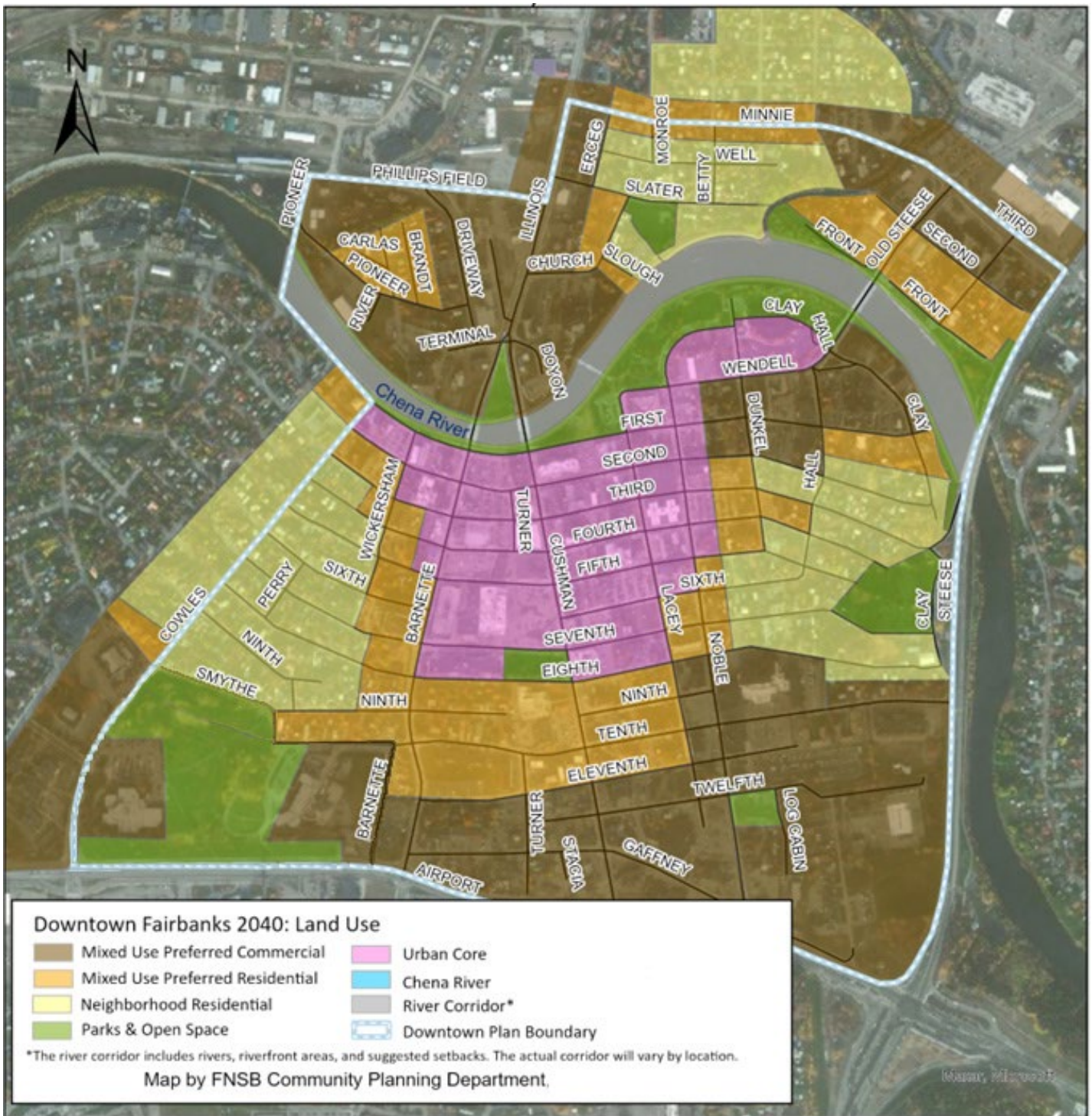
Category	Intended Land Uses	Application Area
Urban Core	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended to be the employment and activity center for the region, attractive to residents and visitors, creating a live, work and play environment. • Walkable, with buildings closer to property lines, continuous building facades with multiple building entries, active streetscape with pedestrian amenities (wide sidewalks). • Pedestrian-oriented commercial uses such as food carts or walk-up concessions. • Concentration of civic, cultural, entertainment, office, and retail uses. • High-density residential, recommended residential density – no less than 13 dwelling units per acre (DU/ac) and no maximum density limit. • Minimal off-street parking, reliance on on-street parking and parking garage in business areas. • Parks, plazas, and open spaces intended for public use. • Discourage new industrial uses and surface parking. • Encourage specialty and locally owned retail on ground floors. • Design streets in the Urban Core to emphasize “accessibility” over “mobility.” 	<p>Chena Riverfront and 1st Avenue to commercial corridors along Cushman and Noble Streets, south to 8th Avenue.</p>
Mixed Use Preferred Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended to act as transition areas between the intense commercial uses and downtown residential areas. Providing opportunities for high-density residential growth with compatible small-scale commercial uses. • Predominately high-density residential, recommended residential density – between 13 DU/ac to 29 DU/ac. • Small scale neighborhood-oriented commercial uses with a local market area that are compatible with downtown residential uses. • Encourage specialty and locally owned retail on ground floors. • Large commercial uses with a regional market area only along high-volume roads and buffered from residential areas. • A mixed reliance on on-street parking and off-street parking. • Parks, plazas, and open spaces intended for public use. • Discourage new industrial uses and surface parking. 	<p>The blocks between the Urban Core and existing residential neighborhoods to the east and west, and commercial uses along Airport Way and north of the Chena River.</p>
Mixed Use Preferred Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended to provide commercial uses with a regional focus. • Predominately mid-scale higher intensity commercial uses with a regional market area. • High-density residential, land use impacts such as noise, activity, light, and traffic are expected on residential uses, recommended residential density, at least 13 DU/ac with no maximum density (dwelling units per acre). • Reliance on off-street parking. • Parks, plazas, and open spaces intended for public use. • Discourage new industrial uses. 	<p>Existing large-format commercial uses along Airport Way, the Steese Highway and along the north bank of the Chena River, as well as the Tanana Chiefs Conference site directly east of the Urban Core.</p>

Category	Intended Land Uses	Application Area
Downtown Neighborhood Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended to protect established downtown residential neighborhoods. • Single-family, duplexes and accessory dwelling units, recommended residential density between 5 DU/ac and 13 DU/ac (dwelling units per acre). • Other residentially compatible uses. • Parks, plazas, and open spaces intended for neighborhood focus. 	West of the Urban Core, between Wickersham and Cowles Streets; east of the Urban Core, between Clay and Dunkel Streets; and north of Chena River along Noyes Slough.
Parks and Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended to protect and provide for parks, plazas, green space, open space corridors. 	Griffin Park, Golden Heart Plaza, Wien Park, and new parks or open spaces developed over time.
River Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key rivers, wetlands, and riverfront areas. Includes suggested setbacks to protect riparian habitat (actual regulations will vary by location). 	Applies to the banks of the Chena River.

Future Land Use Map

The future land use map identifies broad future intentions for the location and intensity of land use within Downtown Fairbanks. Boundaries. The map aligns with existing or desired future use and is intended to support the community’s vision.

Figure 1. Downtown Fairbanks Land Use Map



Boundary lines in the future land use map are approximate and may out of necessity be changed. It is not the intent to divide lots or specific uses by these boundary lines.

As depicted in the map above, some of the proposed land use classifications extend outside the project boundaries; these changes will be incorporated into the updated FNSB Comprehensive Plan future land use map. These areas are included because they have adjacent connections/relevant ties to the downtown area.