

TRANSPORTATION

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Highway Development Near the Tract

No "through" road should be constructed in the interior sections of the Tract. "Through" in this case does not exclude the potential extension of an east-west road from Boniface Parkway to Bragaw Street, within the right-of-way adjacent to Tudor Road, nor the extension of Bragaw Street along the western edge of the Tract if that improvement is shown to be needed following Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) analysis. Both of these corridors are being evaluated during 1985-86 as part of the "Central Anchorage Transportation Study."

The concept of an East City Bypass, running in the interior of the tract and linking the Glenn Highway with the New Seward Highway is antithetical to the Tract's park purposes and would provide no benefit to the park itself. Notwithstanding any attempt to build a "parkway" setting for such a bypass, it would serve as a high-volume, limited access alternative to Tudor Road. It would not provide any access to the park which is not already available elsewhere, and would detract both aesthetically and functionally from the park as an undeveloped, essentially natural, unified tract of land. The primary asset of the Campbell Tract as a regional park lies in its integrity as a single unit of land, to be managed exclusively for park and park-related purposes. These features would be lost forever if an East City Bypass were constructed on a new corridor alignment through the Tract.

The expansion of the Tudor Road right-of-way 150 feet to the south, within the northern border of the Campbell Tract, was contemplated and approved in the Far North Bicentennial Park Master Development Plan of September 1974. This provision was in turn incorporated into federal Public Law 94-204, which required the transfer of the Campbell Tract from the United States to the State for park purposes. Some relocation of existing public facilities would be required by this alternative; however, the long-term benefit of preserving the park would not be threatened by this Tudor Road expansion and is vastly preferable to the interior road concept.

There are potential legal constraints to the construction of an East City Bypass, which would run through the interior of the Park, and to the extension of Bragaw Street. First, PL 94-204, the federal legislation which transferred the Campbell Tract to the State for park purposes, does not permit the use of the tract for non-park purposes. The legislation makes specific mention of only one corridor for transportation purposes, namely the expanded Tudor Road

right-of-way south of, and immediately adjacent to, the existing Tudor Road right-of-way. Any attempt to change this fundamental requirement of the Campbell Tract would require administrative or legislative action at the federal level, and would be subject to strong local opposition, delay, and inevitable litigation.

Second, the requirements of Section 4(f) of the Federal Aid to Highways Act requires that the proposed construction be the "only feasible alternative," if the use of parklands for highway purposes is contemplated. The recent AMATS study demonstrates that there are other feasible alternatives which are less destructive of the Campbell Tract than new transportation corridors through the Tract. The Section 4(f) requirements may impose a similar burden upon the proposed Bragaw Street extension from Dowling Road to Tudor Road. Further, the character of the land involved in both the suggested East City Bypass alignment and the Bragaw Street extension (preservation wetlands under the adopted Municipal Wetlands Plan) imposes an additional burden of mitigation improvements which would increase the cost of roads.

Access to the Park

Existing entrances to the park should be maintained and improved. Campbell Airstrip Road² provides major access from Tudor Road and should serve as the primary park road through which citizens gain access to the park. Standards for its upgrading should be developed as part of an engineering studies. It should be maintained for year-round park use as well as access for Stuckagain Heights residents. A bikeway should be incorporated along the shoulder of this park road when it is upgraded. Parking for trail heads should be designed for the trails system. Particular attention should be given to trail heads which would lead to Chugach State Park via the North and South Forks of Campbell Creek. While Campbell Airstrip Road would serve as a major access to the internal portion of the park, no through roads should be permitted. Given potential intersection problems, it may be necessary to relocate Campbell Airstrip Road to the west where it would be opposite Baxter Road. A signal at that location may be warranted.

²Campbell Field Road is the original name for this road. It is presently referred to as Campbell Airstrip Road. The Task Force suggests that the original name be adopted in updating maps and signs regarding the Tract.

Provisions for the safety of park users must be made along the park road. At a minimum, grade-separated trails should be provided for significant trail corridors, particularly dog mushing trails. This is particularly needed in the case of dog sled trails because dog teams cannot reasonably be expected to stop when approaching the road. In upgrading Campbell Airstrip Road as the primary park road, it is expected that the road will be designed to complement park and recreational experiences. The road should be upgraded with respect to topography. Excessive sideslopes should be avoided, and a speed limit should be set in respect to its park access purpose (for example, 25 m.p.h. overall and 15 m.p.h. near trail crossings).

Other access points to the park would be possible within the institutional area along Tudor Road. As noted elsewhere in this report, the institutional area should be developed through a master plan in which road improvements, parking, and trail improvements would be designed as a complement to overall park development. Access to the institutional land along Tudor Road should be limited, using the rights-of-way of Boniface Parkway and Bragaw Street as entrance points. From these entrances, an internal road system should be developed as part of an institutional master plan. Institutional facilities should be sited in conjunction with this road and the surrounding landscape. Such a system would limit access/egress conflicts onto Tudor Road, and provide a natural buffer along the north side of the park. In turn, this transportation system would avoid the kind of clear cutting which has marked past institutional land development along Tudor Road.

Access to other portions of the park would be made at the western and southern edges. It is recommended that the revetment road system of BLM be redesigned in such a manner as to prohibit access to the BLM land, yet function to bring park users into the western end of the park. The revetment road at the north side of the runway could provide excellent access to active recreational facilities in that portion of the park. This area was designated for active recreation in the "Generalized Land Use Plan." In redesigning the BLM access and revetment roads, traffic should be separated whereby the present road leading to BLM and its headquarters would be maintained for BLM operation, while the old road leading to the revetment road system could be redeveloped for park access.

At the south end of the park there are three potential access points. First, parking facilities at Service High School should be utilized. In doing so, Hillside Park and its trails would be joined to the trail system which is to be planned for Far North Bicentennial Park. In essence, Hillside Park and Far North Bicentennial Park become, for all practical purposes, a single park unit. Second, at the southeastern edge of the park a roadway has been cleared for the Hilltop ski area. This roadway can serve a number of park functions, including parking for downhill skiing, trail head use, and potential summertime activities. Third, a community park located in the Active Recreation Area off Abbott Loop Road will provide recreational facilities and access to the park.

Program accessibility to the handicapped should be a planning feature of any future development in the Tract. Architectural and site planning for most facilities should include access provisions for the handicapped.