Existing Conditions

The village center of Auke Bay, which is roughly defined as the area from Harbor Drive to Fisherman’s Bend, on both sides of Glacier Highway, has been developed with a wide variety of uses. Restaurants, a bar, a United States Post Office, fire station, RV park, multiple churches, private and public schools, offices, single- and multi-family residences, marine services, and outdoor storage reflect a relatively lackadaisical approach to land use regulation and lack of a cohesive vision for the area. Current zoning for this area continues to promote, and even require, a wide variety of sometimes incompatible uses, as a patchwork of zoning districts ensures that each property is treated differently than its neighbors.

Just beyond the village core, the University of Alaska Southeast, additional single- and multi-family residences, federal offices and laboratories, seafood processing, private and public ferry/shuttle facilities, large-scale tourism operations, a rock quarry, and a wide variety of recreational opportunities add to the vitality of the area – and to the potential for conflict between proximate uses.

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan describes the Auke Bay village area and university as “Urban” in form, “characterized by low- to mid-rise residential and commercial structures, often with the uses mixed within the same structure or with commercial uses lining the edges of residential neighborhoods. Typical mass and scale of these urban neighborhoods are 2 to 3-story structures separated by parking lots, roads, sidewalks and landscaping or small yards.”¹ The plan calls for in-fill development within the Urban Service Area in order to take advantage of existing urban services and utilities, and for areas along transit routes to be developed as Transit Oriented Development, with a mixture of housing types, sizes, and prices in proximity to commercial uses and employment. The plan makes a clear connection between land use and transportation, with an emphasis on improving the relationship between buildings and the street, providing a safe and comfortable environment in which to walk or bicycle for shorter

¹ Chapter 3, Existing Character. See page ___ of Appendix ___.
trips and to use transit for longer distance travel. The plan’s “Typical Elements of a Transit Oriented Development” and “Principles for Creating Livable Mixed Use Communities” provide guidance on how the “urban” core of the Auke Bay village should be developed to take advantage of its vacant and underutilized properties, its existing cultural and civic amenities, its public infrastructure, and its natural assets.

The State Land Management Plan for Juneau and Auke Bay specifically is intended to meet specific goals that the State of Alaska has established. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has set goals as general conditions and is attempting to achieve them through management actions. DNR wants to provide opportunities for economic development through managing state land and resources; minimize fiscal costs by locating development near sustainable economic bases with provided services; maintain public health and safety; enhance the public use of state lands; maintain and enhance quality of life in the state; and provide opportunities for private ownership and leasing of state owned land.

One of the unique parts of Auke Bay is the surrounding fourteen islands in the Lynn Canal that make up the Channel Islands State Marine Park. The islands, which include Aaron, Battleship, Benjamin, Bird, Coghlan, Cohen, Gull, Indian, Lincoln, North, Portland, Ralston, Suedla, and a portion of Shelter are located approximately 25 miles northwest of downtown Juneau. The Channel Island State Marine Park Management Plan is specific to the Channel Islands and provides for general information, goals and policies for park management and identifies potential areas for new recreation facilities and identifies actions to promote the importance of the natural recreation area and good stewardship.

The current Statter Harbor Master Plan was first approved in 2005. The plan includes three phases of harbor redevelopment. The first phase, regarding moorage changes and relocation of the fuel float, has been completed. The second phase, construction of a new two-lane boat launch facility, is expected to begin in late 2014 and will be completed in late 2015. The final phase includes construction of a new kayak and boat haul-out ramp with improvements to the boat yard. This phase does not have funding and is not scheduled for permitting or construction.

The University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) has its largest campus in Auke Bay, with administration, housing, and classrooms spread through the main campus between Glacier Highway and Auke Lake, the dormitories and Joint Use Facility on the north side of Mendenhall Loop Road, and other facilities in the heart of the Auke Bay village. At the time that this plan was drafted, 120 new freshman beds were under construction within the main campus. UAS’s 2012 Campus Master Plan directs that future capital investment in facilities be focused on the main campus; the recent disposal of the Bill Ray Center in downtown Juneau reflects this contraction of services to the main campus in Auke Bay. Although a significant portion of the growth in student enrollment at UAS is based on distance or e-learning students (3.8% increase by 2021), the number of
existing traditional or face-to-face learners is far larger than the number of e-learners, so the 2.8% growth rate projected for traditional students, from 850 to 1200, constitutes a significant number of new visitors to or residents of the Auke Bay area. The UAS Master Plan identifies both residential and support facilities for those new students and current enrollment as high priorities for the plan horizon, but identifies the biggest spatial/facility deficits as those in the recreational athletic/physical education and assembly categories. Campus housing and dining are also identified as high priority improvements, although their relative size is dwarfed by the size of athletic or assembly spaces needed to serve the campus.

**Wireless Master Plan**
The recent draft of the new *Wireless Telecommunications Master Plan* contains two estimated existing coverage maps that show acceptable service (data + cell) in the Auke Bay area. These two maps show an example 800 MHz frequency coverage and 1900 MHz frequency coverage (smaller than 800 MHz). See maps below. However, some ‘No Signal’ areas do exists and future towers or antenna attachments can be expected.

Figure 1: Estimated Coverage using existing towers with 800 MHz frequency level.

Figure 2: Estimated Coverage using existing towers with 1900 MHz frequency level.
The CBJ is planning to adopt the new draft *Wireless Telecommunications Master Plan* and a new associated draft *Wireless Communication Facilities* ordinance by the end of 2014. These two documents will help the CBJ and policymakers better understand, regulate, and increase the efficiency of the permitting processes for towers and antenna array. Updates to the coverage maps will occur over time with new development. The following policies will help guide

**Goal:** New WCFs should not be easily visible looking from the bay.

**Policies**

1.1 New WCF towers shall be located and screened by tall trees.
1.2 New WCF towers and antenna array shall be painted similar color of buildings thereto attached.
1.3 New WCF towers should not be located in large open areas.
1.4 Ground accessory equipment shall be fully screened or placed inside buildings.
1.5 Utilizing existing towers and buildings to elevate antenna array shall be preferred.

**Vision**

*Auke Bay is a community that offers: gateways to many outdoor activities, including fishing, kayaking, boating, hiking, and bicycling; study and programs at the University of Alaska Southeast; and history and cultural significance for the Aak’w Kwaan who have made Auke Bay their home for millennia*
Although the form and functional parts of the built environment are not explicitly addressed in the Vision Statement for the Auke Bay Area Plan, at least not at first glance, the Vision does inform land use and facility development in the area. Although many other terms were suggested as part of the visioning process, “community” stood out as being more inclusive and more descriptive than an amalgam of terms such as “business-friendly”, “resident”, “children”, “seniors”, “walkable”, “neighborhood”, and a listing of services and facilities. The theme that Auke Bay is both a destination and a gateway, a small urbanized center as well as being on the edge of wilderness and ocean, is critical to its identity as a unique place. The harbor and bay are as much the heart of Auke Bay as is UAS, and the historic structure and use of the DeHart’s store is as much an informal civic center as is the Post Office, or the Squire’s Rest building with its restaurants, shops, and Laundromat. These facilities and uses form both the context and the scale of the community’s vision of itself in twenty years.

During a design charrette held on June 14, 2014, attendees were asked to rate 68 images of various “street scenes” on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being an image that shows development that would be inappropriate in Auke Bay, and 5 being an image that shows development that would be appropriate in Auke Bay. The images ranged from artistic renderings and photos of highly urbanized development in Europe and the United States; historic Main Streets from throughout the Pacific Northwest; community events including totem pole raisings and street markets; waterfront parks; multifamily and mixed-use development of varying scales; industrial and heavy commercial developments; and a number of distinctive facilities/forms, including skate parks, murals, community gardens, and more. Interestingly, the image with both the highest cumulative score and the highest average score (3.9) is of a sidewalk and outdoor café in downtown Chicago, IL:
The comments submitted on this image indicate that the variety of visual textures, wide sidewalk, vegetation, mixture of uses along the road, the road’s accommodation of multiple transportation modes (there is a bus stop right behind the pedestrian), and outdoor seating (which allows for interaction and additional visual stimulation between the sidewalk and seating area) all contributed to the high score for this image.³

The second-highest scoring image, an artists’ rendering of the proposed Schooner Cove development near Nanoose Bay, British Columbia, is a closer fit to Auke Bay, with a mixed-use and higher-density community center adjacent to the harbor, and a mixture of housing types and recreational facilities surrounding the harbor and mixed use heart of the community.

³ The score of this image may have been lowered inappropriately, as one of the few respondents who ranked it poorly commented “Note that the pedestrian is walking in the street”, which indicates that this respondent did not notice the curb separating the sidewalk from the roadway.
The lowest average (0.6) and cumulative scoring image in the survey showed a big-box store surrounded by a parking lot. This feedback reaffirms comments received throughout the planning process that the scale and design of development in Auke Bay concerns residents and visitors the most about the future. This sentiment is further strengthened by comments on the second-lowest average (0.8) scoring image, which was of an industrial transfer site on a railroad siding. The comments on that image, which were primarily negative (“No”), also included statements such as “I think our commercial activity can integrate better” and “Industrial activity in moderation is exciting”.

The design charrette exercise helps to confirm and to inform the Vision Statement: the public desires to see and experience a diverse, vibrant community with a mixture of uses which are of appropriate scales for the area and which are designed thoughtfully. The recommended tools described below will help direct future development to realize that vision for the Auke Bay area.

**Recommended Tools**

[Based on sketches by volunteer design team, make recommendations for implementation. Include sketches and other images as appropriate. Be sure to explicitly mention and thank volunteer design team and their companies:

Gerald Gotschall, NorthWind Architects
Chris Mertl, Corvus Design
Joann Lott, Jensen Yorba Lott Inc.
Corey Wall, MRV Architects
Gary Gillette, CBJ Docks & Harbors]