Auke Bay Area Plan

DRAFT
Recreation Chapter

Existing Conditions
A wealth of water dependent and land dependent recreational opportunities exist in and around Auke Bay. Providing for public open space and habitat protection as called for in Chapter 9 of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan supports the recreational uses enjoyed by many Juneau residents. At the center, Statter Harbor offers water access for sport fishing, whale watching and kayaking. Trails surrounding the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) connect students and residents to the surrounding area. The Auk Nu and Spaulding Meadows trails offer hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing opportunities. The surrounding area includes Auke Lake for motorized and non-motorized recreational uses. Beach access and camping facilities are provided at the Auke Recreation Area a short distance from the village center.

The City and Borough of Juneau Parks & Recreation Department manages nine sites in the Auke Bay area, including Spaulding Meadows trail. Most of CBJ’s managed acreage surrounds Auke Lake. In 2004 CBJ Parks & Recreation, UAS, and Trail Mix identified the improvement and expansion of the Auke Lake trail with connections to the University as a priority. While not included in the Auke Bay Area Plan, the proximity of Auke Lake to UAS and Auke Village warrant an acknowledgment of the lake’s presence as a recreational hub for many residents. According to the (unadopted) Auke Lake Management Plan, the completion of the Auke Lake trail has increased area usage by as much as 68 people per day. With the Auke Lake Management Plan, CBJ Parks & Recreation would like to actively manage motorized watercraft on Auke Lake to reduce the user conflicts associated with this increase in use.

Vision
Chapter 8 of the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan places Auke Bay in planning subarea 2. Five goals were identified for the Auke Bay area; development of an Auke Lake Master Plan, trail connections between Auke Lake and the Mendenhall Green belt, partner with UAS to connect the trail around Auke Lake to the campus, and develop a trail from the Auke Bay Elementary School to Spaulding Meadows trail. The final goal was to establish safe access to the park parcel and shelter along the bay. However, this area will be removed with the expansion of Statter Harbor. While not considered part of planning subarea 2, the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan calls for a cultural park at Indian Point that would include trails and shelters. As is discussed in more detail in the Cultural Significance and Resources chapter of this plan, development of park infrastructure such as trails and shelters would be considered disrespectful by the Aak’w Kwáan (Small Lake Tribe) and other Tlingit peoples whom the park is intended to honor. Accordingly, this project should be removed from the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan and from the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, or modified to specify that
the area should remain in its natural state and not be developed with “campgrounds, picnic areas, trails or other improvements”.¹

The Juneau Trails Plan calls for increased access and trail improvements for cross-country skiing. No new access points are proposed at this time, but the Forest Service continues to make improvements to the Auk Nu trail by replacing bridges and installing graveled turnpikes.

**Recommended Tools**
Continue to coordinate with nonprofits such as Trail Mix to develop the Auke Bay Elementary to Spaulding Meadows trail.

Remove reference to development of a “cultural park” at Indian Point from the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan and the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, or amend the reference to clarify that the area should remain in its natural state and not be developed with park infrastructure that damages this sacred site in the eyes of the Aak'w Kwáan or other Tlingit peoples.

¹ Greater Juneau Borough Ordinance Serial No. 69-3