

## **Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Work Session** **April 15, 2021**

### **Introduction:**

At the April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, the Committee reviewed the draft actions through action number 97. For this meeting, the Committee will continue working through the draft table with the goal of completing the review.

As a reminder, this table is still very much a draft. All of the recommendations from each of the chapters have been incorporated. When a recommendation appears in multiple chapters, it should appear in the table only once. If any multiples were missed, please make note and share them with me via email. Even more challenging is reviewing similar recommendations and consolidating them into one succinct recommendation. I have filled out the “Chapters” column for a few of the recommendations to provide an idea of how that will look.

### **Actions:**

The focus of this meeting is the actions. As you review the table, consider the following:

- Are there recommendations you expected to see but don't?
- Are there recommendations you see that you didn't expect? If so do you agree, disagree, or want to discuss?
- Are there opportunities to further consolidate actions?
- Are some of the recommendations too “dense,” and do they need to be broken up into smaller, more concise recommendations?

A few actions clearly need work; currently, the work from the last Steering Committee meeting has not yet been incorporated. Additionally, the recommendations surrounding the Rock Dump reflect past Steering Committee work and will be amended as needed following the next Committee discussion on the topic.

If time allows, the Committee will discuss the Rock Dump.

### **Organization:**

The organization of the table will be a topic of a future meeting. Please keep this topic in mind as you work through the recommended actions. When the Committee discussed this table previously, it was suggested that it be organized thematically. We discussed using the nine focus areas from the Visioning Report as one theme. This may be challenging, however, because many of the recommendations touch on multiple focus areas. The table could be organized by time frame, removing the “Time Frame” column. The recommendations would be grouped as ongoing/short term/mid-term/long term.

### **Rock Dump:**

The Visioning report includes the following actions related to the future of the Rock Dump:

- Explore options, such as a West Douglas deep water port and a second crossing, to reduce industrial truck traffic crossing through Downtown.
- In the long term, relocate AML and industrial truck traffic to an area outside of the Downtown Franklin Street bottleneck.
- Relocate/Rezone Rock Dump industrial area to reduce through-traffic

This topic has been discussed multiple times by the Steering Committee. Initially, the Committee recommended rezoning the Rock Dump and moving the industrial uses when an alternative deep water port is available. During the initial discussion, one of the reasons raised for this recommendation was maintaining a working waterfront; currently, there is no alternative location for some of the industrial uses, such as AML. In later discussions, it was suggested that one way to initiate change in the area is to rezone it now. There are pros and cons to this approach. There are several things to keep in mind as the Committee discusses this topic. The Comprehensive Plan speaks strongly to the need to maintain industrial land and to minimize conflicts between land uses. If the area was rezoned in the near future, before an alternative deep water port is available, land uses that might not be harmonious with some of the existing uses may be introduced to the area. Residential developments in Douglas have historically complained about AML activities, primarily noise and lights. Large truck traffic is associated with the barge and waste water treatment plant; this may be a safety concern to passenger vehicles and pedestrians, both of which may increase with changes in land use. Alternatively, introducing these conflicts could spur evaluation of a second crossing and deep water port. The draft plan discusses the Rock Dump in the Land Use chapter (attachment A).

### **Next Steps:**

The actions will be revised following the Committee's review, and the actions in the individual chapters will be updated to be consistent. The master implementation table will be organized, and the columns for chapter(s), page(s), proposed implementing partner, and cost will be filled out. The priority projects will be determined. Whether or not to include metrics, and if so which, will be decided.

### Attachment A

#### ROCK DUMP

The area known as the “Rock Dump” is located at the southern end of the Blueprint Downtown planning area and is Juneau’s industrial deep water port. Most goods arriving in Juneau are offloaded at the Rock Dump and trucked to businesses throughout the Borough. In addition to marine industrial assets, the area also includes a private cruise ship dock, a diversity of businesses, warehouse space, boat condominiums, and several fitness facilities. The area known as the “Little Rock Dump,” located just south of the Rock Dump, is outside the Blueprint Downtown study area.

**History** – The area is built on mine tailings from the Alaska Juneau Gold Mining, which was at one point the largest gold mine in the world. After the mine shut down in 1945 the area was vacant for many years. At one time it was the site of an ad-hoc golf course and an impromptu ATV track. In the early 1980s the mounds of tailings were graded to accommodate the current development.

**Housing** – The Rock Dump is zoned Industrial (I) and Waterfront Industrial (WI). These zoning districts do not allow residential uses. A single caretaker unit may be allowed as an accessory use to an industrial use. In general, residential uses are not compatible with industrial uses. Areas held for industrial use are intended to accommodate land uses that generate noise, odors, and dust, and have other impacts to the surrounding area. The Comprehensive Plan has many policies in place about the need to retain industrially zoned land throughout the borough. At such time as an alternate industrial area and deep water port is developed, it may be reasonable to revise the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Maps and rezone the area to allow housing and other mixed uses. Until then industrial uses should continue to have priority.

**Land Use** –The primary difference between the two zoning districts for the Rock Dump is that WI focuses on and prioritizes land uses that are “water dependent” or “water related.” The LRWP envisions this area continuing as an economic engine and logistics point for Juneau by preserving and continuing waterfront dependent and industrial uses. This plan also recommends removing tourism-related retail as a permissible use in this area, although the plan supports tourism-related retail as an accessory use to the existing cruise ship dock (AJ Dock/UNOCAL). The plan also calls for continued operation of the CBJ wastewater treatment facility with buffering and screening. The end of the Seawalk is planned for the area of the AJ Dock. The plan recommends a transition to a recreation corridor that would run along seaward of the uplands, connecting to the Little Rock Dump.

**Placemaking** – In general placemaking isn’t encouraged in Industrial Areas to maintain safety of the general public and those working in the area. There are placemaking opportunities where passengers disembark at the AJ Dock, along the Seawalk, along the envisioned recreation corridor along the southern edge of the Rock Dump. This area is one of the first views of Juneau that millions of visitors see.