

DRAFT  
Cultural and Historical Significance and Resources

Auke Bay Area Plan

Existing Conditions

The Auke Bay area has been the home of the Áak'w Kwáan for hundreds of years. Archaeological records indicate that the Auke Bay area has been inhabited for as long as 750-900 years. Traditional sources suggest use and habitation of this area for much longer. The Áak'w Kwáan takes its name from Auke Lake (Áak'w, “Little Lake”), and its original settlement was located at *X'unáxi* (Indian Point).

Although this plan is not the place to reiterate the detailed history of the Auke Bay area in Tlingit culture, it's important to note that the area contains many sacred sites and features which should be protected from interference, including intentional and unintentional destruction as well as culturally-insensitive “improvements.”

Many sites of cultural significance have been documented in the Auke Bay area, but due to the threat of vandalism, the location of most of these sites must remain confidential. The CBJ recognizes that the unintentional destruction of significant cultural features and artifacts, which can result from a simple lack of information, would threaten the sustainability of traditional values and relationships to the land in this area.

Vision

The Vision Statement for the Auke Bay Area Plan speaks directly to the importance of the Auke Bay area to the original inhabitants of the area, the Aak'w Kwáan:

***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 historical and cultural significance for the Aak'w Kwáan who have made Auke Bay their home for millennia.***

The vision of this plan regarding the cultural significance of the Auke Bay Area to not only the Áak'w Kwáan, but to all Tlingit and Alaska Native people, must be to protect the sacred sites in the Auke Bay area and surrounding environs.

An example of a culturally sensitive area to protect is Indian Point. The Juneau native community has engaged in a decades-long fight to protect this sacred site from both government and private development.

Native concerns are compounded by conflicting policy stances like that of Comprehensive Plan Guideline and Consideration 13 for Subarea 3. It states:

*The Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 8, recommends a number of parks, trail, community garden and stream corridor improvements for this subarea. Those recommendations include: (a) develop a cultural park at Auke Cape/Indian Point that would include trails, interpretative panels and other low-impact structures; ...*

This conflicts with Ordinance Serial Number 69-3 which rezoned the Auke Cape properties from R012 Residential to P-Public Use, with Section 4 of that ordinance classifying and restricting the use and development of the subject lots:

*Lots 3 and 4 of U.S. Survey 3811 are hereby classified as recreation land to be used in its natural state. This land shall be kept open and clear for unrestricted public access and enjoyment. Recreation development including campgrounds, picnic areas, trails and other improvements shall not be permitted on said land except as expressly authorized by the Assembly by ordinance.*

Following the adoption of the 1984 Comprehensive Plan, the entire Land Use Code, CBJ 49, was re-written using an entirely new set of zoning designations. In this borough-wide rezoning, the Public Use zone district was eliminated with the thought that public uses should be located in areas where their impacts were appropriate for the surrounding zone. In this process, the Indian Point area was rezoned to D3(T)D5, single-family/duplex residential zoning districts with respective densities of three and five dwelling units per acre.

While the rezoning ordinance appears to have only changed the zoning designation it did not clearly carry forward the restrictions on development codified in ordinance 69-3. This raises concerns that the area has been left vulnerable to damage by residential development and park improvements.

### Recommended Tools

Indian Point has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places based on its associations with: 1) the original habitation site of the Áak'w Kwáan; 2) the location of events important in Áak'w history; 3) as a spiritual landscape important to the Tlingit community; 4) historical herring fishing and other subsistence activities; 5) efforts by the Indian community to preserve the site's integrity since 1959; 6) the lives of persons significant in Áak'w Kwáan history; and 7) information important in prehistory or history of the Tlingit people. The Sealaska Heritage Institute, with support from the Áak'w community, the Douglas Indian Association, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Alaska Native Brotherhood, Alaska Native Sisterhood, Sealaska Corporation, Goldbelt, Inc., City and Borough of Juneau, and the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office, has nominated Indian Point (Auke Cape) to the National Register of Historic Places, an important step in protecting this area. Designation of this area, and any other important sites, as locally-recognized historic resources would also provide a level of protection from encroaching development, such as fill on private tidelands that destroys herring rearing areas or canoe runs which are located throughout Auke Bay.

Guideline and Consideration 13 for Subarea 3 in the 2013 *Comprehensive Plan* seems inconsistent with Alaska Native concerns, as the development of this area as a cultural park would be culturally insensitive, and opposed by the people it was intended to honor.

It should also be deemed beneficial that the Auke Cape/Indian Point properties subject to ordinance 69-3 be re-zoned from D3(T)D5 to RR (or an equivalent restrictive zoning district) and should be protected through recording of development restrictions such as a no-disturbance public access easement.

An amendment to Title 49, the City and Borough of Juneau's Land Use Code, could be amended to include a review for historic sites and structures during the permitting process. Currently, such a review process does not exist.

The City and Borough of Juneau has a draft Preservation Plan. If this plan was formally adopted, it would give it official status and thus help provide a clear direction for historic preservation borough-wide. Identified goals in this plan include the following:

*Goal 1: Identify, evaluate, and protect the historic and archaeological resources within the City and Borough of Juneau.*

*Goal 2: Increase public awareness of the value and importance of Juneau's history and historic resources.*

*Goal 3: Preserve and protect the unique culture of Juneau's Native people including buildings, sites, traditions, lifestyles, language, and history.*

*Goal 4: Promote heritage tourism which enhances and accurately represents Juneau's unique history and Native culture.*

Interested agencies such as the Sealaska Heritage Institute and Douglas Indian Association should be invited to provide the CBJ Community Development Department with a listing of sites which should be protected, or at least which should require notification to those agencies when development proposals are made for those properties. Such information would have to be maintained in confidentiality by the CBJ. This would help ensure that important sites would not be negatively impacted or destroyed through carelessness and a lack of information.

The proposed goals and policies seek to address the historical and cultural issues and opportunities that have been identified in the Auke Bay area.

## **Cultural and Historical Significance and Resources Goals & Policies**

**Goal 1:** Identify Auke Bay’s historical sites and structures.

**Policies**

- 1.1 Conduct a detailed historic survey of the Auke Bay plan area to identify cultural and historic sites and structures.

**Goal 2:** Preserve and protect Auke Bay’s history.

**Policies**

- 2.1 Preserve Indian Point by rezoning the property to its original designation to limit activities allowed on the site, and amend the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan to further limit activity at Indian Point.
- 2.2 Seek National Register recognition for significant sites.

**Goal 3:** Promote Auke Bay’s rich culture and history.

**Policies**

- 3.1 Include culturally compatible elements into Auke Bay’s gateway design.
- 3.2 Consider bilingual signage in the Auke Bay plan area.
- 3.3 Include interpretive signage along the seawalk that details Auke Bay’s history and sites.
- 3.4 If an Auke Bay neighborhood committee is formed, include a cultural representative on the committee.