



155 S. SEWARD STREET ▪ JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
PHONE: 907-586-5278 ▪ FAX: 907-586-4552

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pederson Hill Subdivision to go before Planning Commission Tuesday *City proposes to develop 86 residential lots to help ease Juneau's housing shortage*

The City and Borough of Juneau's proposed Pederson Hill Subdivision will go before the Juneau Planning Commission on Tuesday, Feb. 28 for a preliminary plat approval and a city project review. This is a regulatory step toward CBJ developing the subdivision, which would result in 86 residential lots.

"There's a shortage of vacant, buildable lots in Juneau right now," Land & Resources Manager Greg Chaney said. "The goal for Pederson Hill is to provide affordable, entry-level housing for young families, as well as retirees wanting to live close to family. The city wants to develop the land in order for the private sector to build the houses."

In 2006, CBJ identified Pederson Hill for future housing development. The subdivision will encompass 26-acres of city-owned land located at the base of a hill between Auke Lake and Mendenhall River near Glacier highway. An access road across from Sherwood Lane would lead to the subdivision.



Currently, the land is forested. Working with a private contractor through a bid process, CBJ hopes to implement streets, sidewalks, water, sewer and electrical services, resulting in bare lots with minimal site prep. The lots would be sold to the private sector to build houses; the city will not be building housing. A typical lot would be around 4,500 and 5,000 square feet, though some lots would be larger and some smaller.

“The idea of the small lot size is to reduce the lot cost and to provide an incentive for smaller house construction, which would tend to lead to lower house prices,” Chaney said.

The proposed Pederson Hill Subdivision would help address Juneau’s longstanding housing shortage, said Chief Housing Officer Scott Ciambor.

“The demand for single-family homes has remained stable, if not increased, in the last 10 years,” Ciambor said.

The 2012 Juneau Housing Needs Assessment indicated that Juneau needed about 515 single-family homes. In the four years since the study, only 228 homes were built. Ciambor said the community still needs more single-family homes despite recent economic concerns, job losses and out-migration.

Juneau currently has about 6,595 single-family homes. The Pederson Hill Subdivision would provide up to 86 more single-family homes, or close to 1.4 percent of the current single-family home housing stock.

“The community would quickly absorb 86 single-family homes,” Ciambor said.

CBJ staff members have been working on the Pederson Hill Subdivision proposal for several years and the public has participated at various stages. In 2014, the Juneau Assembly passed an ordinance to rezone Pederson Hill for an increased density of residential lots. The Assembly passed another ordinance in 2015 for a land trade with the Christ Lutheran Church to provide for the primary access road. And, in 2016, the Land Management Plan was adopted, which includes the Pederson Hill Subdivision concept. Juneau’s Affordable Housing Commission passed a motion to support the proposal at its meeting earlier this month.

Members of the public can weigh in again during Tuesday’s Planning Commission meeting, which starts at 7 p.m. in Assembly Chambers.

If the Planning Commission approves the preliminary plat, the Pederson Hill Subdivision proposal goes to the Assembly. The Assembly is scheduled to discuss it during a Committee of the Whole meeting March 13.

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CONTACT INFO:

Greg Chaney, Land & Resources Manager, 586-0205 or greg.chaney@juneau.org

Scott Ciambor, Chief Housing Officer, 586-0220 or scott.ciambor@juneau.org

Eric Feldt, Community Development Planner, 586-0764 or eric.feldt@juneau.org