Planning Powers for Alaska Communities

EXERCISING PLANNING POWERS

While there is a wide range of planning powers available, the City Council or Borough Assembly shall have the following powers in planning:

1. Certificates of planning commission shall be issued to developers when appropriate. The certificate is necessary to ensure that the requirements of the planning commission and other applicable regulations have been met.
2. The planning commission shall have the authority to adopt a comprehensive plan and to approve developments within the plan.
3. The planning commission shall have the authority to modify or amend the comprehensive plan.
4. The planning commission shall have the authority to approve or reject any development proposal.

EXERCISING PLANNING POWERS

The planning commission shall have the authority to:

1. Certify that the planning commission and the applicant have considered the recommendations of the planning commission.
2. Approve or reject any development proposal.
3. Approve or reject any variance request.
4. Approve or reject any platting proposal.
5. Approve or reject any plan commission report.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The planning commission is responsible for preparing the comprehensive plan and recommending it to the assembly or council. In order for the planning commission to perform its duties, the council shall establish a planning commission by ordinance. The planning commission shall:

1. Prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan to the council.
2. Review, recommend, and approve the comprehensive plan and the platting authority.
3. Periodically review and update the comprehensive plan.
4. Approve or reject any development proposal.
5. Approve or reject any platting proposal.
6. Periodically review and update the platting authority.

PLANNING AUTHORITY

The planning authority is responsible for preparing the platting plan and recommending it to the assembly or council. In order for the planning authority to perform its duties, the council shall establish a planning authority by ordinance. The planning authority shall:

1. Prepare and recommend a platting plan to the council or assembly.
2. Approve or reject any platting proposal.
3. Periodically review and update the platting plan.
4. Approve or reject any platting proposal.
5. Approve or reject any platting plan.
6. Periodically review and update the platting plan.

LAND USE REGULATIONS

Land use regulations are necessary and are implemented in the comprehensive plan. The planning commission may consider the following:

1. Make a finding as to the need for development and the necessity for physical improvements.
2. Make a finding as to the need for development and the necessity for physical improvements.
3. Make a finding as to the need for development and the necessity for physical improvements.

PLATTING AUTHORITY

The platting authority is responsible for preparing the platting plan and recommending it to the assembly or council. In order for the platting authority to perform its duties, the council shall establish a platting authority by ordinance. The platting authority shall:

1. Prepare and recommend a platting plan to the council or assembly.
2. Approve or reject any platting proposal.
3. Periodically review and update the platting plan.
4. Approve or reject any platting plan.
5. Periodically review and update the platting plan.
6. Approve or reject any platting plan.

Glossary of Planning Terminology

Aerial survey: An aerial view of an area or property, often used to identify features such as boundaries, roads, and other physical features.

Platting authority: A governmental body that is responsible for approving and recording plats of land. The platting authority may be a planning commission, a planning board, or a similar entity.

Subdivision: A land development project that subdivides a parcel of land into smaller lots for residential or commercial use.

Replat: The process of reorganizing a plat to correct errors or changes in an existing plat.

Rezoning: The process of changing the zoning of a property from one land use to another.

Zoning: The process of regulating land use in a community through the adoption of a zoning ordinance.

Supplemental Regulations:

1. A zoning ordinance.
2. A planning commission.
3. A planning board.

Reviewing Authority:

1. The planning commission.
2. The planning authority.
3. The planning board.

Decision:

1. A final decision.
2. An initial decision.
3. A tentative decision.

Appeals:

1. An appeal.
2. A review.
3. A rehearing.

The Planning Commission will make a final decision on all appeals.

The Planning Authority will make a final decision on all appeals.

The Planning Board will make a final decision on all appeals.

The Planning Commission will make a final decision on all appeals.

The Planning Authority will make a final decision on all appeals.

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Planning, platting, and land use regulation. The responsibility for planning power may be mandatory or voluntary, depending on the classification of the municipality.

This poster provides an overview of the types of planning powers held by incorporated municipalities in Alaska with references to relevant sections of the Alaska Statutes. The poster covers issues such as:

- which Alaska municipalities have the authority to plan and control land use;
- the roles of the city council or borough assembly in the local planning process; and
- the relationship between State agency activities and local planning authority.

There are many reasons why planning is important at the local level. A community can realize tangible benefits from good planning decisions. For example, community infrastructure can be more efficiently constructed when planned in advance. Planning can identify and allocate land for specific uses such as housing, gravel extraction or future roads, while permitting the most cost-effective use of a community’s limited resources. In addition to providing for the orderly and efficient use of land and other resources, community planning can:

- establish ground rules for development for the whole community;
- promote safety by ensuring that structures are set apart from one another;
- reduce personal property and environmental damage through the identification of areas where development may be inadvisable because of flood, erosion, landslide or other hazards;
- protect property and property values by separating potentially harmful or disagreeable land uses from surrounding residential and commercial uses; and
- provide the means by which residents participate in important decisions about their community’s future.

This publication is not and should not be construed to be an official or complete statement of State law governing exercise of municipal planning powers. For an official statement of law governing exercise of planning powers by municipalities, please consult the official published version of the Alaska Statutes.

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