



## A Community Guide to Dedicated Parkland

This guide helps guide members of community councils understand the legal implications of parkland in the Municipality of Anchorage. Because historical records vary with inconsistent boundaries or old park names, knowing the current status of your park is the first step.

### Why Park Dedication is important?

The Anchorage Charter provides an opportunity for the public to weigh in if the municipality is looking to sell the land. While the city can change the use of the land (e.g., from a park to a utility), the Alaska Supreme Court ruled in *Norene v. MOA* that they cannot use this as a shortcut to sell the land without a vote.

### Are there any downfalls to dedicating parkland?

It can slow down development of a parcel for park purposes. For example, if the park requires a community garden with electrical and water utility hookups, the development process now includes assembly approval and can create delays from several months up to a year.

### How many Parks are dedicated?

If the process has been done correctly, its *parcels* within the parks, not the parks themselves that often receive dedicated status. Anchorage Parks and Recreation is currently undergoing an administrative process to determine what is dedicated and what is not. For this reason, our numbers are approximated.

- Checking by parcel number (~1200 parcels)
- Checking ~37 Assembly Ordinances dating back to 1965.
- Historical dedications vary by boundary and ID, requiring a detailed case-by-case review.
- We have approximated that ~700 parcels are dedicated and are researching approximately ~600 parcels which are recorded as “check” in our park files.
- We estimate that ~200 parcels have no history of dedication.
- Rudimentary “status” can be found on the Park Land layer in our Maps and Apps Gallery.

### How do I advocate for my parks in my community to become dedicated?

If you want to dedicate parcels within a park, follow this pathway:

1. **Recommendation and Evaluation:** Ask someone in the Parks and Recreation if the park is dedicated or not. If it is not and it is eligible to be dedicated, request that the department provide a summary on its suitability for dedication.
2. **Public Process:**
  - a. Pass a resolution in your Community Council supporting formal dedication. It is recommended that you also involve your assembly representatives in this step of the process.
  - b. Testify at the Parks & Recreation Commission and Planning & Zoning Commission hearings.
3. **Assembly Action:** Support an Ordinance specifically dedicating the land by its legal description.



## Park Status - Cheat Sheet

Feature	Dedicated Parkland	Designated Parkland	LWCF Protected
<b>Legal Authority</b>	Anchorage Charter § 10.02(8) & AMC 25.10.080B	AMC 25.10.080A	Section 6(f)(3) of the LWCF Act (54 U.S.C. § 200305) & 36 CFR Part 59
<b>How it's Created</b>	Requires an ordinance by the Assembly specifically describing the property for permanent use.	Created by an administrative action or agency decision to manage land for parks.	The MOA receives a matching funds grant to make improvements to land for recreational purposes.
<b>Duration/Intent</b>	Intended for permanent or long-term park and recreational use.	Often used as an interim or temporary use until the land is needed for another purpose.	Mandated for public outdoor recreation use in perpetuity (forever).
<b>Change in Use</b>	If only un-dedicating, but not conveying the land, can be done by assembly action. If conveying the land, voter approval needed.	Administrative action or agency decision	Mandated for public outdoor recreation use in perpetuity (forever).
<b>Voter Approval</b>	Required for any sale or "conveyance" of the land to a third party.	Not Required for sale or disposal.	Not Required by federal law, but requires land-for-land replacement; a vote may still be required if the land is also Dedicated.
<b>Easements or Short-term Uses</b>	Utility Easements, temporary or short-term uses are allowable through Assembly approval and without a public vote; long-term or high-value interests may still require voter approval.	Typically, no impact, but would need coordination with original landowner or manager.	Strictly regulated; any permanent non-recreational use or temporary use over 6 months may trigger a conversion requiring replacement land.
<b>Skip To The Good Stuff</b>	Dedication increases transparency, provides long-term park protection, and a public voice in decisions.	Can influence the level of investment or the types of money used for improvements because the land may not be parkland forever.	Provides the strongest "forever" protection; it guarantees no net loss of park acreage even if land is taken for state or federal projects.