



APPENDIX D

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD RESPONSE TABLE



The public comment period was open June 7 to July 22, 2023. Comments were received through the project website or via email to the consultant team.

| Comment | Response |
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| <p>I agree with the immediate and ongoing priorities for limited resource extraction at the three potential hard-rock sites identified, the high degree of importance for cultural preservation and facilitation, wildlife preservation and support, and recreation. I agree with the importance of linking human recreation trails to a cohesive, well-planned system between USFS and local segments.</p> <p>There should never be any commercial development in Unit 395.</p> <p>I do not think Unit 395 is appropriate for residential development now or at any point in the future due to obvious conflicts with wildlife passage through the area and sensitive cultural sites on at least 50% of the area. This area will already be impacted by the realignment of the Sterling Highway. We should not add to the problem by placing housing with all of the potential human/wildlife conflicts, especially for bears and people, in the tight spaces created by geology and the new highway.</p> <p>If housing is developed, I believe it would be best to put it south of the new Sterling Highway alignment which means, likely in the eastern portion of the unit. The State and Federal governments spend a lot of money to support wildlife in the area. The Borough should not be thwarting those efforts through ill-placed or ill-designed housing developments.</p> <p>Placing housing in Unit 395 has the potential to further stretch the community apart. We already have had our eastern neighbors cut off from town by the re-alignment of the Sterling Highway. Instead of a bypass where drivers must exit the Sterling Highway and then re-enter it once they have completed the bypass, the AKDOT&PF designed a realignment of the Sterling Highway that now requires local residents on the eastern end of our community to enter the re-alignment and exit it to access town from the east, creating a "Cooper Landing East" section to our community. We do not want "Cooper Landing West" to develop on Unit 395. If housing development is finally decided upon by KPB Assembly insistence, then housing below the highway with access only from the town road would be the only acceptable alternative to help maintain community cohesion. Road access must accommodate emergency vehicle access for any housing development to be reasonable at all. All development should be done while sustaining sensitive habitat, wetlands, and wildlife linkages.</p> <p>Unit 395 does not truly offer affordable housing options due to the expenses of building in that area. Affordable housing for Cooper Landing should be considered in other areas of development, including KPB lands, more central to the community.</p> <p>Cooper Landing is already a recreation destination. Local trail development for biking/skiing/hiking/berry picking or other multi-purpose, non-motorized activities, etc. could further support the desired lifestyles of residents and assist the businesses within our community without creating competition. World class ski trails could help local businesses extend beyond the usual 3-season limits. Connectivity to a roadside bike/ped pathway on the town road and to USFS trails and any future USFWS trails could further enhance the value of the recreation development without creating obstacles to wildlife movement through the area or impacting cultural assets. Cultural preservation and facilitation may even be possible with careful planning and consultation.</p> <p>No access from the new alignment of the Sterling Highway should exist beyond basic emergency that is absolutely necessary. Emergency access should not be seen as an</p> | <p>Limited resource extraction, cultural preservation and facilitation, recreation, and wildlife management remain as priorities in this plan.</p> <p>Unit 395 is not recommended for commercial classification in this plan.</p> <p>The public comment period summary in Section 3 reflects the opposition to development on Unit 395 expressed in this and other comments.</p> <p>The location and design of any future housing development would require additional public engagement and planning.</p> <p>Affordable housing concepts would be integrated into housing on Unit 395 as feasible. Affordable housing options may be explored elsewhere in Cooper Landing. The Affordable Housing Report should be used as a reference in this process.</p> <p>Emergency access from the Sterling Highway bypass is noted in this plan to reflect DOT&PF designs. No additional access from the bypass is recommended in this plan.</p> |

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| <p>option for further development at a later date. If that's the idea then no access is preferred. Emergency access can and should be developed from the town road.</p> <p>Thank you for allowing me to voice my personal ideas about Unit 395.</p> | |
| <p>The thought of a housing development going into this beautiful area, affordable or not, just makes me sick. This report states that we all agree that affordable housing is needed, but I disagree. It is only needed seasonally and can be addressed better in so many different ways without paving over paradise. Please stop this madness before more wilderness is permanently destroyed. This is being foisted on Cooper Landing by outside interests. The affordable housing model has been shown to keep those with a lower income locked out of the American dream by not allowing equity to grow in their house value. Please leave this area alone.</p> | <p>The public comment period summary in Section 3 reflects the opposition to development on Unit 395 expressed in this and other comments.</p> <p>Affordable housing options may be explored elsewhere in Cooper Landing. The Affordable Housing Report should be used as a reference in this process.</p> |
| <p>There still needs to be AFFORDABLE land for locals who for years have been renters, to be able become land owners! \$200,000 for 1 acre is not affordable!</p> | <p>Affordable housing options may be explored elsewhere in Cooper Landing. The Affordable Housing Report should be used as a reference in this process.</p> |
| <p>It looks like a good balance between recreational and residential with no commercial use.</p> | <p>The comment is noted in the public comment period summary in Section 3 of the plan.</p> |
| <p>Unit 395 Project Planners and Kenai Peninsula Borough,</p> <p>The assessments and planning conducted by RESPEC and the KPB have helped to bring awareness of some of the incredible opportunities that Unit 395 presents to Cooper Landing and the KPB. It has also helped to identify some of the challenges and tradeoffs that these opportunities bring.</p> <p>Any development of Unit 395 will and should take time, thoughtful consideration, and continued public involvement - especially development that classifies or disposes these lands away from KPB ownership or limits the casual use of these KPB lands as this area has supported for generations.</p> <p>We recommend the lands in Unit 395 be classified as recreation and preservation, and to a very limited extent, as resource development such as at the material sites identified in the existing planning process that support the Sterling Highway MP 45-60 Project and other projects of regional importance. Any such resource development classification must include restoration or mitigation measures that minimize the disturbance or degradation of cultural resources or natural systems and must integrate planning and reclassification for the long-term use of the site for continued public benefit such as recreation or casual use.</p> <p>We recommend against residential or commercial classification. We believe disposal of Unit 395 lands as residential or commercial development will bring a short term revenue benefit to the KPB and may bring some mid to longer term commercial revenues to a few interests but ultimately will be less valuable to the residents of Cooper Landing, the KPB and the state of Alaska than managing it for recreation and preservation purposes.</p> <p>The need for specific types of residential development in Cooper Landing is acute. We believe this need is best addressed by the thoughtful development of existing KPB lands and subdivisions in the Cooper Landing area which are already classified as residential.</p> | <p>The location and design of any future development of Unit 395 would require additional public engagement and planning.</p> <p>The discussion of material sites in Section 5 of this plan indicates that long-term goals should be considered in reclamation plans for the material sites. This language was expanded slightly to further highlight this recommendation.</p> <p>Unit 395 is not recommended for commercial classification in this plan.</p> <p>Affordable housing options may be explored elsewhere in Cooper Landing. The Affordable Housing Report should be used as a reference in this process.</p> |



Especially when this development is done through mechanisms of administration similar to the those outlined in the Affordable Housing Report that use partnerships, organizations, and community input to improve the feasibility of housing options and promote community stability rather than following the existing patterns of highest bidder disposal that have contributed to the challenges of affordable housing in smaller communities such as Cooper Landing.

We also believe that while some other development may be compatible with the management of Unit 395 lands for commercial, government, institutional, resource management, rural, utility/transportation purposes; those uses should bear considerable scrutiny through the public process before lands are classified as such.

We do not believe the Unit 395 lands are compatible with and we recommend against classification as agriculture, heavy industrial, or waste handling.

Thank you for your work to assess the opportunities this land presents and for your continued public engagement.

The draft plan is very conceptual, however, the recommendation for classification for recreation and resource management, with considerations for wildlife management and cultural preservation and facilitation is spot on. Future residential development in Unit 395 is not consistent with the stated views of the current residents of Cooper Landing, nothing in the draft plan even suggests such housing could be financially viable, and there are far better near term options to address housing issues in Cooper Landing.

No further KPB taxpayer funds should be used to further pursue residential housing development in Unit 395. The Assembly should listen to voices of the residents of Cooper Landing.

Hi there! I am a local here in Cooper landing and I am grateful for the opportunity to call this place my home for the last 9 years.

As you know, housing is obviously an issue for year round, low income families, and although I feel I can flourish in this town, I do also fall into the "low income" bracket in comparison to the home owners here. Some of these home owners of which don't even stay in their coopy land dwelling for more than a few months a year. This is an issue for our town, as we have the ability to host a year round economy with the help of year round residents.

I'm grateful that we're opening up more land for folks to enjoy this fantastic country. One issue I see arising with this alleged subdivision is some human coming in from out of state with pockets full of cash buying up a majority of the lots. Or several people doing the same and never utilizing the land for our community. So I've come up with a concept which I am calling "buyer credentials". These buyer credentials can be for half, or even a third, of the lots that are going to be for sale. That way the borough can still make their gross funds from the other half, but still set aside a portion of these soon to be homes for our locals.

The "buyer credentials" are as follows:

- buyer lives within 100 mile radius of Cooper Landing
- buyer has paystubs from local business proving employment
- PO box or local address proving residence
- Alaskan ID
- letter(s) of recommendation from Cooper Landing resident(s) proving they're desired in the community
- High Credit score to ensure the land will be payed off in a timely matter

Language was added to emphasize the prioritization of development on parcels nearer to existing infrastructure within Cooper Landing.

The public comment period summary in Section 3 reflects the opposition to development on Unit 395 expressed in this and other comments.

The contents of this comment are not within the scope of the Unit 395 Land Use Plan.

A similar comment was received when the project team solicited feedback on the affordable housing report. The comment was shared at that time with the team that was developing the affordable housing report.

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| <p>We can come up with more to the list in the future, as this is just a simplified concept. We can also determine which of these on the list are more important than others if someone doesn't check all the boxes but is still a good fit. We would also need to find a way to determine which of the lots we would set aside for these credentials (i.e.: the most southern half of the lots, every other lot, only the interior (less desirable/less costly) lots, acreage size.)</p> <p>I enjoy sharing this town with folks who transplant themselves here, but I am concerned for the community members, such as myself, who are here year round and unable to afford to call one spot their "home" because they can't get a grab on an affordable piece of land. Ownership. We are a tourist based town but we need local people to run these businesses. Unit 395 could be very beneficial to our community as long as we utilize the land with our best interests in mind.</p> <p>I want our locals to have a fair chance to grab a plot that isn't based entirely on financial competition against some rich dude from Texas with cash flowing out of his pockets. I want people like myself to have the opportunity to become a homeowner. Thanks for your consideration.</p> | |
| <p>Not sure if we have met. I have been a resident of Cooper Landing for 22 years. Recently sold my to large for me home and currently living at the Senior housing waiting for my what next to pop up. I have seen a bit of info but with the horrible cell and internet service I find I am limited to learn more.</p> <p>How can I get on the interested list and where can I learn more about this plan.</p> | <p>Comment received via email – responded with the link to the project website and a PDF of the draft plan. Commenter indicated they were able to download the plan.</p> |
| <p>See Appendix E for the full comment letter from USFS</p> | <p>Several changes were made to the plan to reflect the concerns listed in the USFS letter. All conceptual infrastructure that was shown on USFS land on the maps in Section 5 was removed or moved from USFS land, with the exception of 1) infrastructure shown in the Sterling Highway MP 45-60 EIS and 2) a looped trail that would require a Special Use Permit. The trail that was shown within Unit 395 in the northwest corner was also removed due to its intersection with a wildlife corridor.</p> <p>Additional language was added throughout Section 5 of the plan to emphasize the need for coordination and consultation with USFS to mitigate harmful impacts to wildlife and wildlife movement.</p> |