By EDDIE HUNSINGER and ERIC SANDBERG

Anchorage Neighborhoods

Great diversity within Alaska's largest city

Though almost all of Anchorage's population still lives within a fairly small area, its growth since 1980 has spread out from the more densely populated areas around downtown and midtown.

To the north alongside the booming communities of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Eagle River and Chugiak have nearly tripled in size since 1980.

To the south, the contiguous areas around Ted Stevens International Airport and Jewell Lake, down to Campbell Lake and Oceanview, over to Abbott Loop and Girdwood/Turnagain Arm, and the communities that make up Hillside have each more than doubled in population.

Between 2010 and 2012 there has also been significant population growth just north and east of downtown, with Mountain View, Northeast Anchorage, and Muldoon/Baxter each gaining more than 500 residents and the Merrill Field area growing by just under 500. (See Exhibit 1.)

Fewer young people near downtown and midtown

Young families have been responsible for much of

the growth since 1980 in outer areas such as Hillside and Eagle River, creating a higher share of kids in those areas.

Aside from Mountain View and Merrill Field just north and east of downtown, all of the areas with over 25 percent children are well beyond the greater downtown and midtown areas. The only area with less than a quarter of its population under 18 that isn't near downtown or midtown is Girdwood/Turnagain Arm, which has many nonfamily households.

Two areas with a high proportion of residents under 18 cover Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, which is mainly young military families with children and has virtually no seniors. (See Exhibit 2.)

Larger shares of seniors west of downtown

As of 2010, areas with older housing and higher home values had the highest concentrations of people age 65 or older. These include places just west of the downtown core, near Bootleggers Cove/Westchester and around Turnagain, and southeast of downtown near Rogers Park and Tudor Road.

Through the 1980s and into the 1990s, Anchorage's

How we defined these areas

The areas in this article are based on statistical areas called census tracts, which are relatively permanent areas of several thousand people that are not affiliated with any local government. A census area's population is typically subdivided when it grows beyond 8,000 people.

The Municipality of Anchorage has had 55 census tracts since the 1990 Census, and last year the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development began estimating annual total population for each. For this article, the department condensed

Anchorage's 55 census tracts into the 29 that existed in 1980 and gave them informal names, which are not part of U.S. Census Bureau data. These 29 areas follow the municipality's historical population density, with more tracts located around downtown and midtown and fewer tracts in the South Anchorage and Eagle River regions.

In some cases, the names this article uses are the same as those of Anchorage Community Councils, which are the 38 areas that make up Anchorage's Federation of Community Councils, but it's important to note that there may be substantial differences between the two.

Elmendorf

Fort Richardson

Government Hill

Mountain View

Glenn Hwy

Downtown
Anchorage
Core

3rd Ave

Northeast
Anchorage

DeBarr Rd

9th Ave

West
Fairview

Merrill Field Vicinity

Russian
Jack

Bootleggers Cove/
Westchester

Chester Creek

Fireweed

Turnagain

Northern Lights Blvd

Rogers
Park/
Tudor Area

University/
Airport Heights

Muldoon/
Baxter

East
Turnagain/
Fish
Creek

Fish Creek

Spenard

Woodland
Park/
Spenard

Midtown

Tudor Rd

Northwood

Arctic Blvd

International Airport Rd

Campbell Park Area

Airport/Jewel Lake

Minnesota Dr

Arctic

Dowling Rd

Abbott Loop
Area

Abbott Rd

Dimond Blvd

Campbell Lake/Oceanview

New Seward Hwy

Hillside

Chugiak

Eagle
River

Girdwood/Turnagain Arm

Notes: These areas are based on census tracts and groups of census tracts that make up the Municipality of Anchorage. The names are not official, and are not part of U.S. Census Bureau data. The areas should not be confused with Anchorage Community Councils.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

1 Populations of Anchorage Areas
1980 to 2012

Area	Census April 1980	Census April 1990	Census April 2000	Census April 2010	Estimate July 2011	Estimate July 2012
Chugiak	5,330	8,387	9,307	10,995	11,267	11,233
Eagle River	7,528	16,937	20,610	23,987	24,361	24,254
Fort Richardson	8,157	7,979	5,470	8,000	7,552	7,935
Elmendorf AFB	9,189	7,118	6,626	5,937	5,461	5,789
Government Hill	1,707	1,732	1,948	1,988	2,117	2,125
Mountain View	5,505	5,566	6,727	7,747	8,050	8,317
Northeast Anchorage	9,428	11,600	13,710	16,762	17,186	17,344
Russian Jack	7,649	8,780	10,488	11,730	11,755	11,775
Merrill Field Vicinity	5,195	6,355	7,157	8,047	8,509	8,539
West Fairview	2,972	3,153	3,404	4,131	4,304	4,400
Downtown Anchorage Core	1,131	818	1,458	940	950	1,049
Bootleggers Cove/Westchester	3,766	3,736	3,907	3,718	3,632	3,627
Turnagain	3,363	3,278	3,255	3,059	3,108	3,103
Fireweed	4,682	4,878	5,083	5,224	4,908	5,020
Rogers Park/Tudor Area	5,581	5,264	5,275	5,104	5,067	5,035
University/Airport Heights	7,691	7,649	8,334	8,316	8,567	8,554
Muldoon/Baxter	16,616	20,783	23,251	24,103	24,622	24,869
Campbell Park Area	5,260	6,828	8,243	10,444	10,511	10,722
Midtown	3,115	3,895	4,181	4,194	4,396	4,420
Spenard	3,201	3,238	3,423	3,748	3,883	3,873
Woodland Park/Spenard	3,703	3,498	3,761	3,787	3,934	4,042
East Turnagain/Fish Creek	4,008	6,990	7,923	8,013	8,005	7,982
Airport/Jewell Lake	11,113	15,612	18,626	21,152	21,846	21,972
Northwood	3,339	2,922	2,917	3,299	3,326	3,351
Arctic	4,951	7,722	9,245	10,229	10,448	10,499
Abbott Loop Area	3,501	10,271	13,872	16,930	17,114	17,482
Campbell Lake/Oceanview	12,654	17,234	21,309	25,327	25,804	25,762
Hillside	13,220	22,755	28,682	32,345	32,744	33,085
Girdwood/Turnagain Arm	876	1,360	2,091	2,570	2,657	2,684
Anchorage	174,431	226,338	260,283	291,826	296,084	298,842
Alaska	401,851	550,043	626,932	710,231	723,136	732,298

Notes: These areas are based on census tracts and groups of census tracts that make up the Municipality of Anchorage. The names are not official, and are not part of U.S. Census Bureau data. The areas should not be confused with Anchorage Community Councils.
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

senior population was clearly centered in the downtown core, and people aged 65-plus made up a tiny part of the population far beyond it.

Anchorage's senior population is spreading out, though, as residents beyond downtown age. Although the areas with the largest shares of seniors are still near downtown, senior populations are increasing in South Anchorage areas in particular.

Increasing racial diversity

Anchorage has become more racially diverse over the past few decades. In 1980, just 15 percent of the municipality's population was non-white, but as of 2010 that number was up to 34

percent. (See Exhibit 2.)

Though the white population is the largest single race group in each of the areas, five of the areas are less than 50 percent white: Mountain View, Merrill Field Vicinity, Russian Jack, Midtown, and Spenard. The Mountain View area in particular stands out — a University of Alaska professor recently noted it was the most racially diverse census tract in the entire United States, based on a technical diversity index.

Asians and Pacific Islanders especially have gained population in Anchorage in recent years. They were just 2 percent of the city in 1980, and by 2010 they had grown to over 10 percent. The two largest single Asian ancestries in Anchorage are Filipino and Ko-

2 Demographic Characteristics of Anchorage Areas
2010 Census

	Age			Race							Ethnicity
	18 to 64	Under 18	65+	White	Alaska Native/ Amer. Indian	Asian	Hawaiian/ Pac. Islander	Black	Other	2+ Races	Hispanic (any race)
Chugiak	67%	26%	7%	85%	5%	2%	0%	1%	1%	6%	4%
Eagle River	67%	28%	5%	84%	4%	3%	0%	2%	1%	6%	6%
Fort Richardson	67%	33%	0%	74%	2%	2%	1%	12%	3%	6%	13%
Elmendorf AFB	60%	40%	0%	79%	1%	2%	0%	10%	2%	7%	11%
Government Hill	68%	22%	9%	52%	8%	16%	3%	7%	6%	8%	12%
Mountain View	61%	34%	5%	27%	17%	18%	9%	14%	5%	11%	12%
Northeast Anchorage	64%	29%	7%	50%	11%	11%	3%	12%	2%	11%	9%
Russian Jack	66%	28%	6%	43%	11%	14%	6%	11%	4%	11%	11%
Merrill Field Vicinity	64%	27%	9%	39%	16%	10%	6%	14%	4%	11%	10%
West Fairview	80%	14%	6%	57%	16%	6%	3%	7%	2%	8%	8%
Downtown Anchorage Core	84%	5%	11%	66%	16%	4%	1%	7%	1%	5%	7%
Bootleggers Cove/Westchester	69%	12%	19%	88%	3%	3%	1%	1%	1%	4%	4%
Turnagain	63%	22%	15%	87%	3%	3%	1%	1%	1%	4%	4%
Fireweed	74%	18%	8%	56%	12%	9%	3%	6%	4%	10%	10%
Rogers Park/Tudor Area	64%	20%	16%	74%	6%	6%	2%	5%	1%	6%	5%
University/Airport Heights	66%	24%	10%	62%	10%	7%	3%	6%	3%	9%	7%
Muldoon/Baxter	65%	26%	9%	64%	8%	6%	2%	8%	2%	10%	7%
Campbell Park Area	71%	22%	7%	57%	11%	11%	1%	5%	4%	10%	10%
Midtown	71%	20%	9%	44%	13%	17%	4%	7%	5%	10%	12%
Spenard	69%	24%	7%	47%	14%	15%	4%	4%	6%	10%	13%
Woodland Park/Spenard	73%	19%	7%	63%	11%	9%	4%	3%	2%	9%	7%
East Turnagain/Fish Creek	70%	22%	8%	62%	8%	14%	2%	4%	2%	8%	7%
Airport/Jewell Lake	66%	27%	7%	67%	8%	10%	2%	3%	2%	9%	7%
Northwood	69%	21%	10%	65%	10%	8%	3%	3%	2%	8%	7%
Arctic	69%	23%	8%	65%	8%	8%	2%	5%	3%	9%	8%
Abbott Loop Area	67%	28%	5%	62%	9%	12%	2%	4%	3%	10%	8%
Campbell Lake/Oceanview	66%	27%	8%	70%	7%	9%	1%	3%	2%	8%	7%
Hillside	66%	26%	8%	81%	5%	5%	0%	2%	1%	5%	5%
Girdwood/Turnagain Arm	77%	18%	5%	91%	2%	3%	0%	0%	1%	3%	4%
Anchorage	67%	26%	7%	66%	8%	8%	2%	6%	2%	8%	8%
Alaska	66%	26%	8%	67%	15%	5%	1%	3%	2%	7%	6%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

rean. People of Samoan descent make up well over half of Anchorage's Pacific Islander population.

Alaska Natives are also a growing share of Anchorage, and in 2010 about 8 percent of Anchorage residents were Alaska Native alone. Adding those who reported they were Alaska Native in combination with another race puts the 2010 share at over 12 percent. In 1980, Alaska Natives were less than 5 percent of the municipality.

As the state's major population center, Anchorage has significant populations of all the major Alaska Native groups — Athabascan, Aleut, Inupiat, Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, and Yupik — and it is home to more Alaska Natives than any other city in the nation.

Incomes lower in younger areas

As with any large city, Anchorage neighborhoods show significant differences in income. The city's overall median household income was approximately $75,000 at the release of the 2007-2011 American Community Survey, meaning half of households' incomes were above $75,000 and half were below.

Looking at median household incomes by the householder's age reveals pronounced variation. For householders under age 25, median income was around $45,000. Between ages 25 and 44 it was around $75,000, and it was approximately $90,000 for those between 45 and 64. For residents 65 and older, median income was roughly $50,000.

3 Income and Poverty Levels by Anchorage Area
2007 to 2011

	Households with Income Above $50,000	Households with Income Above $75,000	Households with Income Above $100,000	Population Below Poverty Level
Chugiak	77% (+/-10)	60% (+/-8)	45% (+/-7)	2% (+/-1)
Eagle River	82% (+/-6)	68% (+/-6)	49% (+/-5)	3% (+/-2)
Fort Richardson	57% (+/-11)	24% (+/-7)	11% (+/-5)	5% (+/-3)
Elmendorf AFB	58% (+/-14)	28% (+/-10)	15% (+/-8)	7% (+/-4)
Government Hill	39% (+/-16)	13% (+/-13)	10% (+/-13)	8% (+/-5)
Mountain View	31% (+/-9)	11% (+/-7)	3% (+/-5)	26% (+/-8)
Northeast Anchorage	58% (+/-7)	40% (+/-6)	20% (+/-4)	14% (+/-4)
Russian Jack	49% (+/-7)	29% (+/-5)	16% (+/-4)	20% (+/-5)
Merrill Field Vicinity	44% (+/-8)	25% (+/-7)	12% (+/-6)	18% (+/-5)
West Fairview	40% (+/-11)	21% (+/-8)	10% (+/-5)	20% (+/-9)
Downtown Anchorage Core	55% (+/-22)	25% (+/-14)	20% (+/-13)	20% (+/-18)
Bootleggers Cove/Westchester	74% (+/-13)	62% (+/-12)	43% (+/-9)	2% (+/-1)
Turnagain	83% (+/-15)	66% (+/-13)	53% (+/-12)	5% (+/-3)
Fireweed	40% (+/-10)	25% (+/-8)	14% (+/-5)	11% (+/-6)
Rogers Park/Tudor Area	75% (+/-13)	59% (+/-11)	41% (+/-9)	8% (+/-8)
University/Airport Heights	76% (+/-10)	49% (+/-8)	28% (+/-6)	7% (+/-3)
Muldoon/Baxter	73% (+/-6)	53% (+/-5)	36% (+/-4)	9% (+/-2)
Campbell Park Area	63% (+/-8)	43% (+/-6)	25% (+/-5)	8% (+/-3)
Midtown	42% (+/-10)	21% (+/-8)	12% (+/-5)	21% (+/-7)
Spenard	45% (+/-13)	23% (+/-10)	10% (+/-7)	12% (+/-6)
Woodland Park/Spenard	53% (+/-11)	26% (+/-7)	12% (+/-5)	12% (+/-6)
East Turnagain/Fish Creek	72% (+/-9)	48% (+/-7)	33% (+/-6)	5% (+/-2)
Airport/Jewell Lake	69% (+/-7)	53% (+/-6)	39% (+/-5)	7% (+/-3)
Northwood	75% (+/-14)	52% (+/-12)	31% (+/-9)	9% (+/-4)
Arctic	77% (+/-9)	56% (+/-8)	39% (+/-7)	7% (+/-3)
Abbott Loop Area	81% (+/-7)	61% (+/-6)	40% (+/-5)	4% (+/-2)
Campbell Lake/Oceanview	78% (+/-7)	59% (+/-6)	41% (+/-5)	4% (+/-1)
Hillside	84% (+/-5)	75% (+/-5)	61% (+/-4)	3% (+/-1)
Girdwood/Turnagain Arm	63% (+/-18)	44% (+/-15)	29% (+/-12)	8% (+/-5)
Anchorage	69% (+/-2)	50% (+/-1)	34% (+/-1)	8% (+/-1)
Alaska	65% (+/-1)	46% (+/-1)	31% (+/-1)	10% (+/-0)

Notes: Incomes are in 2011 inflation-adjusted dollars.
Poverty thresholds are set by the U.S. Census Bureau and vary by family size and composition.
Margins of error are given in parentheses.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

In eight of the 29 areas, more than half of households brought in less than $50,000 per year. Most of these areas are north and east of the downtown core, and just south in areas including Midtown and Spenard. (See Exhibit 3.)

More than one in five people in the areas covering Mountain View, Russian Jack, Downtown and West Fairview, and Midtown were living below the poverty level. Factors linked to lower incomes and even higher poverty in certain areas include the relative affordability of housing, educational attainment, and age distribution.

High income in Hillside, Turnagain

Two far-apart areas with distinct histories stand out for high incomes, with more than half of households bringing in $100,000 or more per year. These two areas are Turnagain, the older neighborhood west of downtown, and Hillside, the large South Anchorage area that covers many smaller communities.

Commutes are fairly short

The average commute to work for Anchorage resi-

4 Housing and Occupancy
Anchorage areas, 2007 to 2011

	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units
Chugiak	3,961 (+/-150)	91% (+/-3)
Eagle River	8,576 (+/-167)	97% (+/-2)
Fort Richardson	1,919 (+/-117)	94% (+/-2)
Elmendorf AFB	1,475 (+/-106)	91% (+/-5)
Government Hill	1,019 (+/-62)	98% (+/-4)
Mountain View	2,464 (+/-146)	90% (+/-5)
Northeast Anchorage	6,384 (+/-186)	92% (+/-3)
Russian Jack	4,582 (+/-151)	92% (+/-3)
Merrill Field Vicinity	3,288 (+/-111)	94% (+/-3)
West Fairview	2,248 (+/-86)	85% (+/-7)
Downtown Anchorage Core	494 (+/-17)	81% (+/-13)
Bootleggers Cove/Westchester	2,116 (+/-99)	88% (+/-6)
Turnagain	1,331 (+/-36)	97% (+/-3)
Fireweed	2,629 (+/-121)	89% (+/-3)
Rogers Park/Tudor Area	2,162 (+/-51)	96% (+/-5)
University/Airport Heights	3,066 (+/-92)	93% (+/-3)
Muldoon/Baxter	9,197 (+/-194)	96% (+/-2)
Campbell Park Area	4,394 (+/-118)	95% (+/-2)
Midtown	1,710 (+/-108)	93% (+/-4)
Spenard	1,592 (+/-71)	89% (+/-6)
Woodland Park/Spenard	1,960 (+/-58)	86% (+/-7)
East Turnagain/Fish Creek	3,470 (+/-80)	93% (+/-3)
Airport/Jewell Lake	7,663 (+/-155)	96% (+/-2)
Northwood	1,333 (+/-37)	85% (+/-7)
Arctic	4,430 (+/-130)	95% (+/-2)
Abbott Loop Area	5,830 (+/-112)	97% (+/-2)
Campbell Lake/Oceanview	9,684 (+/-143)	94% (+/-2)
Hillside	12,252 (+/-123)	94% (+/-2)
Girdwood/Turnagain Arm	1,575 (+/-79)	62% (+/-8)
Anchorage	112,804 (+/-338)	92% (+/-1)
Alaska	304,373 (+/-160)	83% (+/-0)

Note: Margins of error are given in parentheses.
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

5 Owner Occupancy by Area
Anchorage, 2007 to 2011
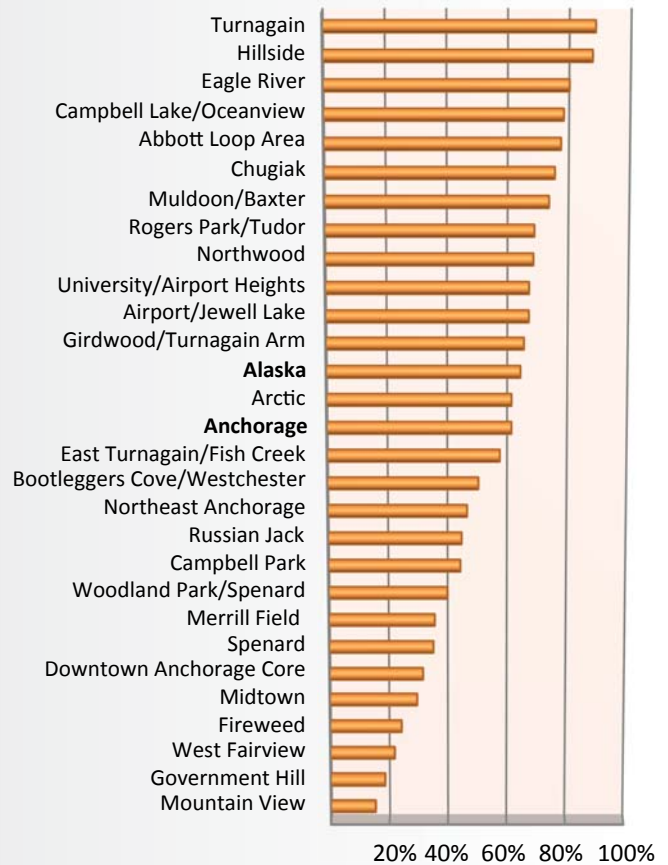
Note: Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson has no privately owned land, so its owner occupancy is fixed at zero.
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2007-2011; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

dents is fairly brief, at around 18 minutes according to 2007-2011 American Community Survey data. The Fairbanks North Star Borough and the state as a whole both have average commutes of around 18 minutes as well. For comparison, Seattle commute times average 25 minutes, and Los Angeles averages 29 minutes.
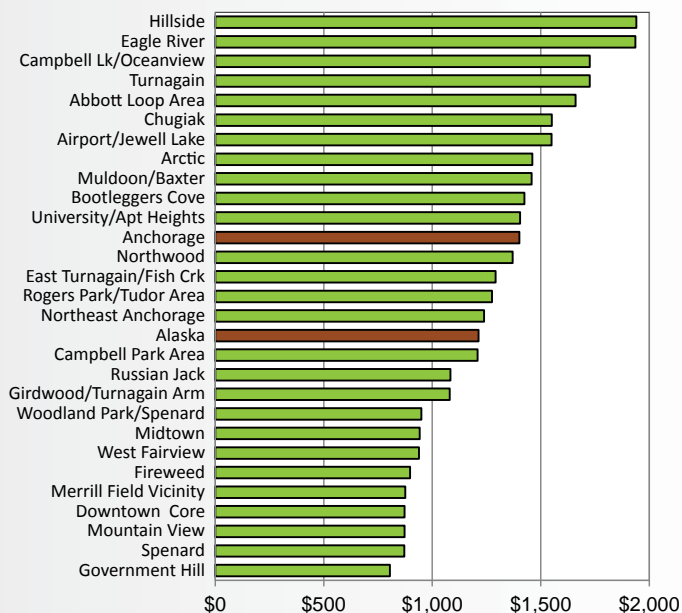
Across the tracts that make up Anchorage, average commute times don't differ much, with a range of roughly 10 to 20 minutes. The exception is the northern part of the municipality covering Eagle River and Chugiak, where the average drive time — often to work in the Anchorage bowl — is around 30 minutes, comparable to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's average. The longer commute is reflected in the time people leave for work, which is by 7:30 a.m. for most Eagle River and Chugiak workers and by 8:00 a.m. for the majority of Anchorage as a whole.

Mostly high occupancy rates

Housing occupancy is generally high across Anchorage, with only the Girdwood/Turnagain Arm area having a low occupancy rate by Census Bureau definitions. It's important to note that Girdwood/Turnagain Arm includes many seasonal and vacation homes, which the Census Bureau counts as vacant.

6 Median Monthly Housing Costs
By Anchorage area, 2007 to 2011

Hillside
Eagle River
Campbell Lk/Oceanview
Turnagain
Abbott Loop Area
Chugiak
Airport/Jewell Lake
Arctic
Muldoon/Baxter
Bootleggers Cove
University/Apt Heights
Anchorage
Northwood
East Turnagain/Fish Crk
Rogers Park/Tudor Area
Northeast Anchorage
Alaska
Campbell Park Area
Russian Jack
Girdwood/Turnagain Arm
Woodland Park/Spenard
Midtown
West Fairview
Fireweed
Merrill Field Vicinity
Downtown Core
Mountain View
Spenard
Government Hill

$0 $500 $1,000 $1,500 $2,000

Note: This analysis excludes areas covering Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section
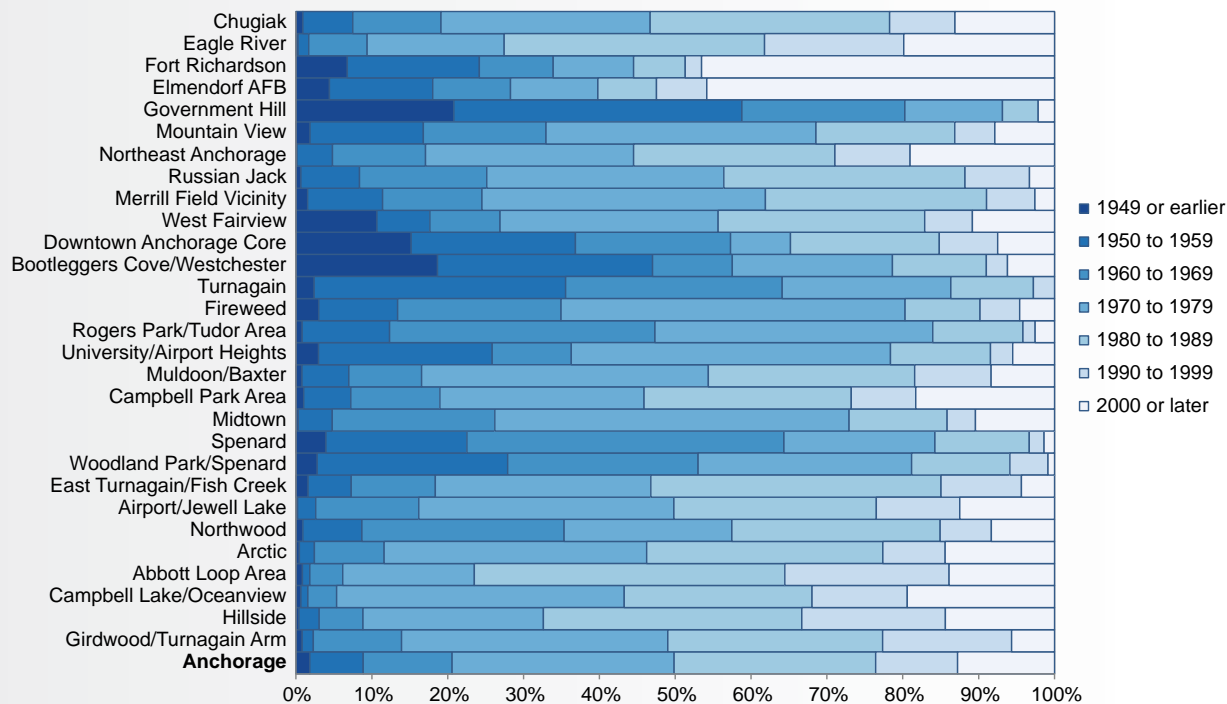
Also, though the downtown core stands out as having relatively low occupancy, the uncertainty for that estimate is very large, as shown by its margin of error. (See Exhibit 4.)

Owner occupancy varies greatly across Anchorage, from more 80 percent in Turnagain, Hillside, and Eagle River to less than 20 percent in Mountain View and Government Hill, where most homes are rented. (See Exhibit 5.) Land covered by Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson has no privately owned residences, so its owner occupancy is fixed at zero.

Housing costs highest in Hillside and Eagle River

The median monthly cost of housing varies by about $1,000 across all Anchorage areas, with the highest costs in Hillside and Eagle River at more than $1,900 per month and the lowest in Spenard and Government Hill at $800 to $900.

7 Decades Homes Were Built
By Anchorage area

Chugiak
Eagle River
Fort Richardson
Elmendorf AFB
Government Hill
Mountain View
Northeast Anchorage
Russian Jack
Merrill Field Vicinity
West Fairview
Downtown Anchorage Core
Bootleggers Cove/Westchester
Turnagain
Fireweed
Rogers Park/Tudor Area
University/Airport Heights
Muldoon/Baxter
Campbell Park Area
Midtown
Spenard
Woodland Park/Spenard
East Turnagain/Fish Creek
Airport/Jewell Lake
Northwood
Arctic
Abbott Loop Area
Campbell Lake/Oceanview
Hillside
Girdwood/Turnagain Arm
Anchorage

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%   60%   70%   80%   90%   100%

■ 1949 or earlier
■ 1950 to 1959
■ 1960 to 1969
■ 1970 to 1979
■ 1980 to 1989
□ 1990 to 1999
□ 2000 or later

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Though Hillside already tops the list, within that area are smaller tracts with median monthly housing costs as high as $2,500. (See Exhibit 6.)

Age of homes reflects history

Looking at the years homes were built reflects the history of the Anchorage bowl's development. Almost all of the existing housing built before 1950 is around downtown, particularly in Government Hill, Bootleggers Cove/Westchester, and the downtown core. The areas covering Spenard, Woodland Park, and Turnagain each grew the most in the 1950s and 1960s. (See Exhibit 7.)

In the 1970s, building peaked in East Anchorage, including Mountain View and the Merrill Field vicinity, and picked up in places farther out including Hillside and Eagle River. Eagle River/Chugiak and Hillside construction finally hit their zenith in the 1980s.

The neighboring Mat-Su Borough has seen a housing boom since 1990, but there have been no sweeping changes in Anchorage housing since then, aside from construction on the base. There's no doubt that Anchorage's population and socioeconomic conditions will continue to change, and that those changes will be reflected in the makeup of the city's neighborhoods.