



Anchorage, Alaska



The Anchorage, Alaska, area was first explored by the English explorer Captain James Cook. Later, Anchorage was established as a railroad construction port for the Alaska Railroad. The area had been known by various names until the U.S. Post Office Department formalized the use of the name “Anchorage.”

Anchorage has many museums, including the Anchorage Museum, with exhibits and programs on the art, history, and cultures of Alaska; Alaska Museum of Natural History; Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum; Alaska Native Heritage Center, which shares the heritage of Alaska's 11 cultural groups of native people; Alaska Heritage Museum at Wells Fargo, which celebrates the heritage of the many indigenous peoples of Alaska; Alaska Trooper Museum, which tells the story of a dedicated team of police officers who serve in Alaska; Oscar Anderson House Museum, which shows early Anchorage history; and Wolf Song of Alaska, which is committed to an understanding of the wolf, its natural history, and its relationship to humans.

Theater and music venues include Cyrano's Off-Center Playhouse, Snow Goose Theatre, Anchorage Convention Centers, Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, Wild Berry Theater, and Sullivan Arena.

NEIGHBORHOODS

The Municipality of Anchorage's inhabited area comprises 10% of the total land area and covers three distinct parts, most of which are in the Anchorage Bowl. The Chugiak/Eagle River Area, which is north of the city, includes the unincorporated towns of Birchwood, Chugiak, Eagle River, Eklutna, and Peters Creek. The Turnagain Arm, which is south of the city, includes the unincorporated areas of Bird; Indian; Rainbow; and Girdwood, which is a year-round resort community at the base of Mount Alyeska. The remaining areas, which are mostly undevelopable, are the Chugach National Forest, Chugach State Park, Fort Richardson, and Elmendorf Air Force Base.

The median age of housing in Anchorage is 30 years old. A residential construction boom was created by the development of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System in the 1970s. The downtown, built in the 1960s, is not a residential area. North of the downtown area, the Government Hill neighborhood has a historic district with homes that have beautiful views of the mountains. A new townhouse development is under construction in the area. South of the downtown is an area known as South Addition, which also has historic homes. This neighborhood is near many parks and the Chester Creek Trail. Bootleggers Cove is located west of downtown along the Tony Knowles Coastal Bicycle Trails and features new modern-style houses, condominiums, and apartments. The University Medical (UMED) district, which is near the universities and hospitals, is characterized by split-level and ranch-style homes, townhouses, and apartments. Hillside, located near the Chugach State Park, has many large modern-style houses on large lots.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Anchorage has 223 parks, 250 miles of trails and greenbelts, 110 athletic fields, 5 pools, 11 recreation facilities, 5 off-leash dog parks, and 82 playgrounds. In addition, Anchorage has many sledding hills, outdoor and indoor skating rinks, hockey rinks, and cross-country ski trails. Chugach State Park, the third-largest state park in America, features hiking, skiing, camping, wildlife viewing, snow machining, rafting, and climbing; the Eagle River Nature Center also is located within Chugach State Park. Amenities at Goose Lake include basketball courts and a softball field, playground, swimming area, beach, bike trail access, and nonmotorized small-craft area. Jewel Lake has a softball field, volleyball

sandlot, playground, swimming area, beach, bike trail access, and nonmotorized small-craft area; fishing is permitted. Mirror Lake and Beach Lake offer canoeing and fishing.

Alaska Botanical Garden showcases northern horticulture and native plants.

The Alaska Zoo features a wide variety of Arctic and sub-Arctic animals in a natural, wooded setting.

The Alaska Aces (hockey) is Anchorage's professional sport team.

Anchorage is the starting line for the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, the 1,150-mile, 10- to 17-day race run by dog teams and mushers that culminates in Nome.

Eagle River and Chugiak maintain 16 developed and 13 undeveloped park properties, including ski trails, 10 playgrounds, and 14 athletic fields and courts.

EDUCATION

The Anchorage School District serves approximately 50,000 students in Anchorage, Eagle River, Chugiak, and Girdwood. The district operates 60 elementary schools, 1 combined elementary and middle school, 10 middle schools, 1 combined middle and high school, 8 high schools, 1 kindergarten-through-grade-12 school, 1 vocational school, 10 specialized programs and schools, and 8 charter schools. Special programs include ABC Back to Basics; a math and science emphasis; Montessori schools; an online option; multi-sensory instruction; and world languages immersion in Spanish, Russian, or Japanese.

Anchorage offers several options for higher education. The University of Alaska Anchorage is the state's largest postsecondary institution and features associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees. Alaska Pacific University offers bachelor's and master's degree programs. Charter College Anchorage offers associate's and bachelor's degrees. Central Texas College-Fort Richardson/Elmendorf AFB focuses on providing military personnel with options for associate's degrees and certificate programs in academic, professional, and vocational/technical fields. Wayland Baptist University-Anchorage also focuses on military bases and offers bachelor's and master's degree programs. AVTEC, Alaska's Institute of Technology, provides technical training.

HEALTH CARE

Anchorage is served by 3 acute-care hospitals with more than 700 beds. In addition, the city has a state psychiatric hospital, a behavioral health facility for youth, and a long-term acute-care hospital.

CITY STATS

2008

City Population	280,471
Metropolitan Statistical Area Population	365,790
Per Capita Personal Income, Anchorage, AK, MSA	\$47,205