

ACT VI: JOURNEY





Fig. a. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE:
Site Plan 1955-1959. Self.
 November 2017.

This axonometric drawing illustrates the addition of two rooms to the north of the original structure. Additionally, the quonset huts to the west of the original building are gone. The gap between this site plan and the previous one comes from the nonexistent evidence of the sequence of change between 1950 and 1955, but what is verifiable is that the northern addition was complete in 1955 and the quonset huts were gone by 1959.

After the secession of hostilities between the United States and the Axis powers in 1945, ACS adapted the Wireless Station to a different use, one of storage, which was not altogether new or significant, and hospital. The medical doctor served the Signal Corps men and women. The operators travelled long dusty roads to arrive at the base of Government Hill, and thence climbed the bluffs to the Wireless Station. This journey was physical movement of a body, albeit broken, and a journey of the spirit, also potentially damaged.

Trails reconstruct¹ historic journeys and pathways. To walk down a trail is to revisit memories of experience and history. Bends and hills associate with a memory, and when encountered, recall those past events. Perhaps the memory is of an encounter with an animal, such as a bear or a bird, and is likewise either enriching or triggering. Other features provide markers of time.

Walking the same trail each day for several months allows the observation of the growth of plants, their first leaves in the spring, the budding in the summer, and the final decline to dormancy in the fall. Through this walking, the trail reconstructs a narrative, retold each time with the same characters but different descriptions. The consistency of a trail celebrates provides a balm in a world of debilitating change.

Trails course through a soundscape, as well as the physical environment. They convey the walker from one acoustic zone to another, crossing over thresholds and inhabiting nodes. These sounds add to the aura of the journey, and their progression is regular and familiar. Cross-sense moments occur when a physical object reveals itself and the associate memory is sound-based. These sounds occupy the air while the place spirits haunt the traveler, exhumed from the firmament.

A reconstruction is typically a recreation of history, or some would say contrivance, and is the most involved and controversial method of historic development. However, a trail is not a building because it lacks certain specific material and formal qualities, and a journey is immaterial. In this way, it is easier to argue for the reconstruction of a trail; it can recreate a path without requiring the same construction. Paths change over time, in significance and use, but the trajectory remains consistent.

Throughout history, the methods humankind has used to create paths has changed with style and philosophies, but the process of path-making is much the same today as it was 10 000 years ago. Although surveyors project a transect prior to the clearing of trees or laying of sub-grades, eventually a person armed with equipment for mark-making and tools of measuring translates the planned path into the physical environment. Such pedestrian survey frequently uncovers obstacles not readily apparent to the planners or engineers, and forces a change to the route. This modification is an act of subservience to the Earth, and is the basis of all path making.

ANCHORAGE TRAILMAKING

Trails develop from necessity and convenience, but grow in importance throughout their use. The Dena'ina followed the game trails of the moose and buffalo through the dense forests of Southcentral Alaska. They widened those trails and forged their own, marking them by binding the branches of birch trees. The Dena'ina used dogsled during the winter, and so many trails were wider than walking paths. However, their primary mode of travel was on boats. Although the routes the boats travelled were significant and the knowledge of the channels invaluable, those paths are more difficult to retrace, because of the fluid nature of water.

Once the Europeans arrived, the gold miners, the Russian traders and priests, the settlers and homesteaders, they appropriated these paths, widened them to accommodate wagons, and increased dogsled traffic. Most notably, the railroad took over the Iditarod Trailⁱⁱ and built the railroad



i. Reference: *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. Grimer, ed. 2017. p. 3.
The definition of "restoration" is: "the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location."

ii. Note:
The Iditarod National Historic Trail System snakes and branches from Seward to Iditarod (now a ghost town). This complex system of mostly-overgrown trails once was the only passage into Interior Alaska. The routes were dogsled trails and wagon roads that built on previous Alaska Native trails, or followed gold-carrying creeks. First the Alaska Northern Railroad then the Alaska Rail Road used the prepared wagonroads for many sections of the route, especially along Turnagain Arm. Today, the Bureau of Land Management maintains a GIS map of the system.

Fig. b. THIRD PREVIOUS PAGE:
Station 11. Self. March 2018.
 This watercolor illustrates the eleventh of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the enclosure of all three structures. This figure provides context for the chapter titled "Journey", and represents the anticipatory moment of standing between all the structures and seeing the final station.



Fig. c. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE:
Station 7. Self. March 2018.
 This watercolor shows the seventh of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the arrival at Brown's Point.

Fig. d. PREVIOUS PAGE, ABOVE:
Untitled. Grover, Margan. 2005. Courtesy of 673d CES, JBER.
 This is an example of a bound tree used as a place signifier or trail marker.



Fig. e. PREVIOUS PAGE, BELOW:
Untitled. Grover, Margan. 2005. Courtesy of 673d CES, JBER.
 This is an example of a bound tree used as a place signifier or trail marker.

Fig. f. CURRENT PAGE, ABOVE:
Untitled. Grover, Margan. 2005. Courtesy of 673d CES, JBER.
 This is an example of a bound tree used as a place signifier or trail marker.

along the route. Then, on 30 October 1917, six years before the railroad's completion, the AEC banned dogsleds on the rails, closing that chapter and beginning a new era of transportation.ⁱⁱⁱ Although most roads in Anchorage followed a rational grid, either the Townsite grid or the Jeffersonian grid, some retain the original paths of wagon roads, and before that, footpaths.

More commonly, however, the contemporary recreational and commuter trails of Anchorage follow the same paths as early trails. Most especially are the multi-use trails in Anchorage, the Chester Creek, Campbell Creek, Ship Creek and Coastal Trails, as well as the Homestead, or Tour of Anchorage trail. The three creek trails parallel the streams. These are still paths for game, caribou and bears, and recreate the early trails for the humans that hunted them. The Coastal Trail follows the coast of Anchorage from Downtown to Kincaid Park at Campbell Point. The beaches from Campbell Point to Ship Creek provided easy overland access around the peninsula, especially before Anchorage became such a central town.

The claim that different peoples continue to use the same paths in Anchorage may seem far-fetched. Indeed, data is insufficient to conclude the theory, simply because most of the resources have not survived development and time. The earliest European maps are not very accurate, and more invested in the seagoing navigation, and deep harbors. Notwithstanding any maps are the physical evidences of past travel, the misshapen trees the Dena'ina used as markers, and cabin and fish camp remains along the trails. Birch trees over 100 years old



Fig. g. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE, BELOW:

Untitled. Grover, Margan. 2005. Courtesy of 673d CES, JBER.

This is an example of a bound tree used as a place signifier or trail marker.



Fig. h. PREVIOUS PAGE, ABOVE LEFT:

Ship Creek Trail. Self. March 2018.

The Ship Creek Trail in winter.



Fig. i. PREVIOUS PAGE, ABOVE RIGHT:

Chester Creek and Coastal Trail Intersection. Scher, Robert. June 2018.

The intersection of these two popular trails is at the west end of Westchester Lagoon, just south of Downtown Anchorage. The railroad created the lagoon in 1915, as the tracks pass over the mouth of Chester Creek. Until the 1960s, several Dena'ina families lived on the shores of the Lagoon.



Fig. j. PREVIOUS PAGE, BELOW LEFT:

Chester Creek Trail at Westchester Lagoon. Scher, Robert. June 2018.

Fig. k. PREVIOUS PAGE, BELOW RIGHT:

Chester Creek Trail along Westchester Lagoon. Scher, Robert. June 2018.



still grow in the best preserved wilderness areas of Anchorage, the JBER military reserves. Some still retain the gnarled evidence of tree binding. The Dena'ina would tie a low branch of a sapling or tree in a loop to mark the paths. The groves along the North Fork of Campbell Creek, just north of the JBER boundary, show this manipulation, signifying a centuries-old transect, following the creek, its salmon, and the moose and bears from the mountains to the marshes. A homesteader, Haman Douglas, in the 1950s followed this trail to a bend in the creek below a shelf of the Chugach Range, and filed a claim for the land. He developed the trail into a wide jeep track, cleared his land, and built a home. He ranched cattle for only a couple years before Fort Richardson acquired the lands and evicted all the homesteaders therein. The military used his trail for access to their main road, the Bulldog Trail, which the homesteaders had constructed, and maintained his structures for several decades for their own use. However, in the 1970s they demolished the buildings. Hunters and recreationalists continue to use the trail, accessing it from several major trailheads. Commuters enjoy it because it provides a more direct link between the residential areas of the Hillside in the south and the commercial zones of Northeast, although their use is controversial. Nevertheless, the trail continues to serve as a path for journeys.

Other trails follow the branches of the Iditarod Trail System through Anchorage and Chugach State Park, such as the Ship Creek and Chester Creek Trails, although most of these are recreational hiking trails. Occasional fence and hitching posts, pit cellars, and hewn logs hint at



iii. Reference: *Alaska Railroad Record*. v. I #51. 1917.

the history of the trail. This system of trails changed through the seasons, a winter route being inaccessible during the summer, or vice-versa. The physical line on the Earth was not significant. The methods of retracing, rediscovery, and reconstruction were. Along the Coastal Trail are a number of archaeological sites, their exact locations protected, of fish camps and fire pits. Some of the old-growth trees in Kincaid Park, especially at Campbell Point, just above from the fabled battleground, reveal scars and evidence of manipulation and binding. These changes to the landscape, marks on the Earth, are the necessary data for proving the pervasiveness and continuing significance of these routes. Some grew over, but those that survived the centuries did so because they still had value to the user.

Fig. l. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE,
ABOVE LEFT:

Douglas Homestead Trail.

Scher, Robert. June 2018.

As the trail crosses from public to JBER land, a sign reminds users of the need for a recreational permit on the Reserve. The trail is the width of a jeeptrack.

Fig. m. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE,
ABOVE RIGHT:

Douglas Homestead Trail.

Scher, Robert. June 2018.

Fig. n. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE,
BELOW LEFT:

Douglas Homestead Trail.

Scher, Robert. June 2018.

The trail narrows as it nears Bulldog Trail, but the former roadcuts are visible through the grass.

Fig. o. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE,
BELOW RIGHT:

Bulldog Trail Campbell Creek

Footbridge. Scher, Robert.

June 2018.

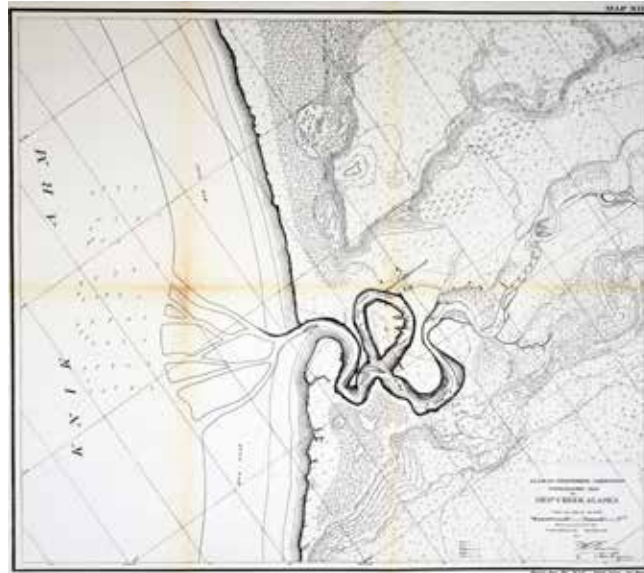
Recently the Military replaced a rotting timber bridge that crossed the creek. This trail is a popular commuter route between the residential areas in South Anchorage and the mixed-use areas of North-east. However, this trail and bridge are on JBER land.

Fig. p. PREVIOUS PAGE:

Douglas Homestead Location

Map. Self. 2017.

This image overlays a 1959 and 2017 aerial image showing the location of the Douglas Homestead.



What is also important is that although the trails often do not follow the precise paths of the past, they still recreate the experiences of the predecessor. Most factors that change a trail are natural, especially those along creeks, which constantly erode at their banks or flood. Others are more developmental, the channelization of urban waterways or the interruption of a traditional trail with gridded streets. This last method occurred on the Hillside, and on Government Hill. The tracing map I made of the urban core illustrates how the street grid and subdivision of the land destroyed the paths and supplanted the original road to the West End.

HISTORIC JOURNEY TO GOVERNMENT HILL

A 1914 survey shows a footpath crossing Ship Creek on a north-south trajectory.^x Its location is inconsistent on several maps, so its exact location is unknown, but the surveyors paid more attention to the topography, soil types, and water depths in the harbor than the location of overland trails. The trail northwards followed a natural furrow in the bluff to climb over the hill easily. It would have been from this road a trail branched to Tak'at. Some early regional maps show a branch of the Iditarod Trail System following Ship Creek from the mountains, at the estuary it turns to climb over Government Hill towards Eklutna. The Bureau of Land Management confirms this route (although the location is not specifically accurate—the creek channel has changed as well) with their online GIS map of the Iditarod National Historic Trail System. Portions of this have become area roads and trails, including Whitney Road. All these trails converged at Ship Creek. Likely, there was an early footbridge or the wider channel was easier to cross at low tide. By 1915, engineers widened and improved the trail up Government Hill, as well as that along Ship Creek to accommodate horse-drawn carts. Now it is the only vehicular access to the neighborhood, East Loop Road.

The road up to the westernmost promontory of Government Hill, later called Brown's Point, began as informal trails between workers' tents set up along the bluff. As the AEC was clearing wood from the two bluffs for their structures, this trail quickly became wider out of necessity. Footpaths branched from it, and some remain in use for recreation. At the top of the hill, the road split,

and the northwards branch continued to a fur farm while the eastward branch followed the curve of the bluff. The AEC built eight identical cottages along this latter branch that housed officers. Four more joined the cluster at the West End in the subsequent decades, these built along the other branch of the road. The cottages had large lots with ample, and apparently productive, vegetable gardens. A narrow alley behind the houses was a popular pedestrian route, as it served the more intimate back yards and private back entrances. This culture of separating public and private, formal and intimate entrances continues to this day in Anchorage. The alley ended at the easternmost house, but a trail continued onward, probably linking to the main road to the east, and the water tower.

It was along this trail the AEC built the Wireless Station. They cleared the area for the aerial, and through the summer and fall of 1917 constructed the “shack”.^{iv} The building originally had only one door that faced the west, where the houses were and whence the trail came. However, the development of the areas to the east, including a firing range, led to the renovation of the east façade to include a second door. This likely did not occur until the WAMCATS had taken over the building. By this time, the road along the bluff extended to the station, and more trails began radiating from it. These were likely from both residents and operators walking around. The views from the northern bluff would have been picturesque, and would have provided clear views of the harbor and ships for semaphore messages. Other trails extended eastward to the main road, and northward along the bluff, probably to Tak’at.



iv. Reference: *Conquering the Unconquerable*. McClain. N.D.



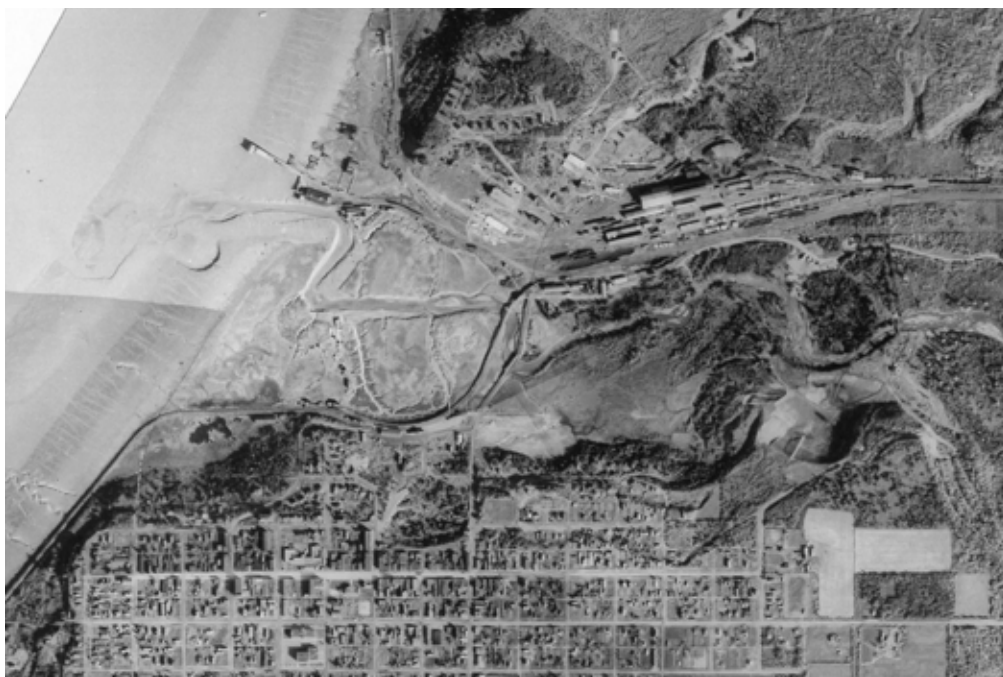


Fig. q. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE:
Map of Ship Creek. AEC. 1914.
Courtesy of Scher, Robert.
 This is the first known map of Anchorage, and as the most detailed at its drafting.

Fig. r. PREVIOUS PAGE, ABOVE:
Map of the Iditarod National Trail System in Anchorage. BLM. N.D. Courtesy of BLM.
 This map traces segments of the Iditarod Trail System through Anchorage, showing how it followed the creeks.

Fig. s. PREVIOUS PAGE, BELOW:
1939 Tracing Map. Self. March 2018.
 This is a detail of the drawing showing the location of the Wireless Station and the trails radiating from it.



Trails eastward connect to a network of trails on the east side of Government Hill, and continued to Whitney Road.

Even still, until 1939, the Wireless Station was the end of a long journey for the residents of Anchorage.^v Walking was the primary means of travel, even after the arrival of cars.^{vi} The residents would walk the wooden sidewalk along C Street, cross Ship Creek on the bridge, and then continue along the dirt road, through the rail yards. The road would fork, and the residents would climb the rutted, often muddy or icy road to Brown's Point, and turn down first the alley, and later the road, to arrive at the Wireless Station. This journey was long and probably tiresome. It was dangerous as well, as trains frequently struck people crossing the tracks.^{vii} Whereas a gambling hall would provide local gossip, the Wireless Station provided Outside news, in real time; therefore, the Station had an eminence.

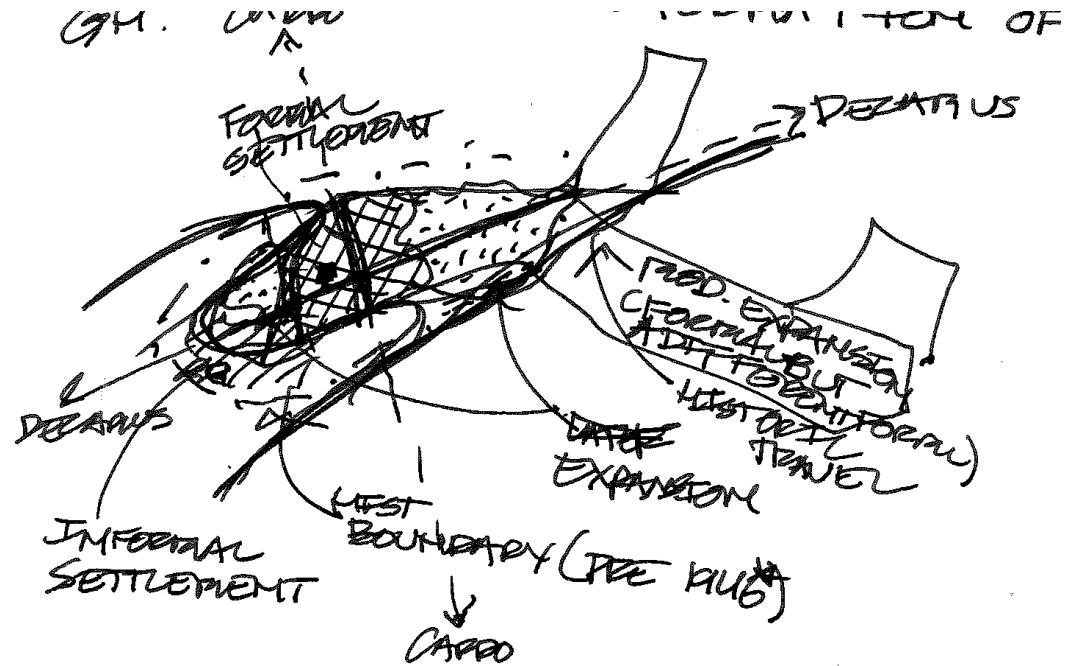
What is so stirring about the 1939 aerial photographs is that it shows the town on the cusp of Modernity. These preserve the last moments of a frontier town, and within two years, the build-up of Fort Richardson and the declaration of war with Japan completely altered Anchorage. Nineteen-hundred thirty was the last potlatch held at Tak'at, but families still lived on the bluffs above, as well as along the beach. By 1941, however, the army forced the natives out, and because of the existing access road, they began dumping soil and garbage at the site. By 1942, the railroad engineers had constructed the streets on Government Hill and platted the regular blocks with 7000

sf lots. The build-up of the port and railyards closed the old access road to the West End, and prohibited pedestrian crossing of the area. Modernity subsumed the Wireless Station, and Tak'at, once places of prominence for their respective communities.^{viii}

The journeys to Tak'at and the Wireless Station were significant to those that went there. The original residents of Anchorage anticipated the celebration and community of the potlatches at Tak'at and reunions with family and friends who lived along the coast. The 20th century settlers and engineers of Anchorage valued the similar anticipation for visiting the Wireless Station, and meeting neighbors and friends along the route, or in the cozy structure. The paths that took those residents were significant, not for the specific road material or markers, but because of the journey, the choreography of departing, seeking, seeing, and inhabiting that defines passage and arrival at a place of cultural significance, a sanctuary for community, and the preservation of stories.

RESTORING THE JOURNEY

In order to propose a reuse of the Wireless Station, I identified the means for arrival was necessary. Visitors could not rely on the existing infrastructure to arrive at such a place of significant. Not only did the building deserve a return to prominence, the power of the journey should be equally important, especially the sense of arrival.



This decision set me on a line of inquiry into the concept of the Roman Forum. The fora in ancient Roman towns occurred just off the intersection of two central streets that established the grid of the settlement. The forum was often an existing intersection, widened to accommodate markets or other sales, and the formal arrangement of a town used this as its center. The main roads met the grid at its extremity, and the two roads, the Cardo and Decamus, would connect these to the forum. In a way, development on Government Hill had occurred similarly, but that exploration and fictional narrative was nonconstructive. Nevertheless, the Wireless Station was once a focus for the community, a central node, and in a way was a forum for the young town. Additionally, the Station site is adjacent to an intersection of two central roads, Manor Avenue and Boyd Street, whose extremities connect with significant places, much

- v. Reference: *Government Hill Oral Histories*. MOA. 2012.
- vi. Reference: *Four Neighborhoods Historic Plan*. MOA. 2013.
- vii. Reference: *Alaska Railroad Record*.
- viii. Reference Act I.

Fig. t. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE, ABOVE:
1939 Aerial Photograph (portion). Ukn. 1939. Courtesy of Scher, Robert.

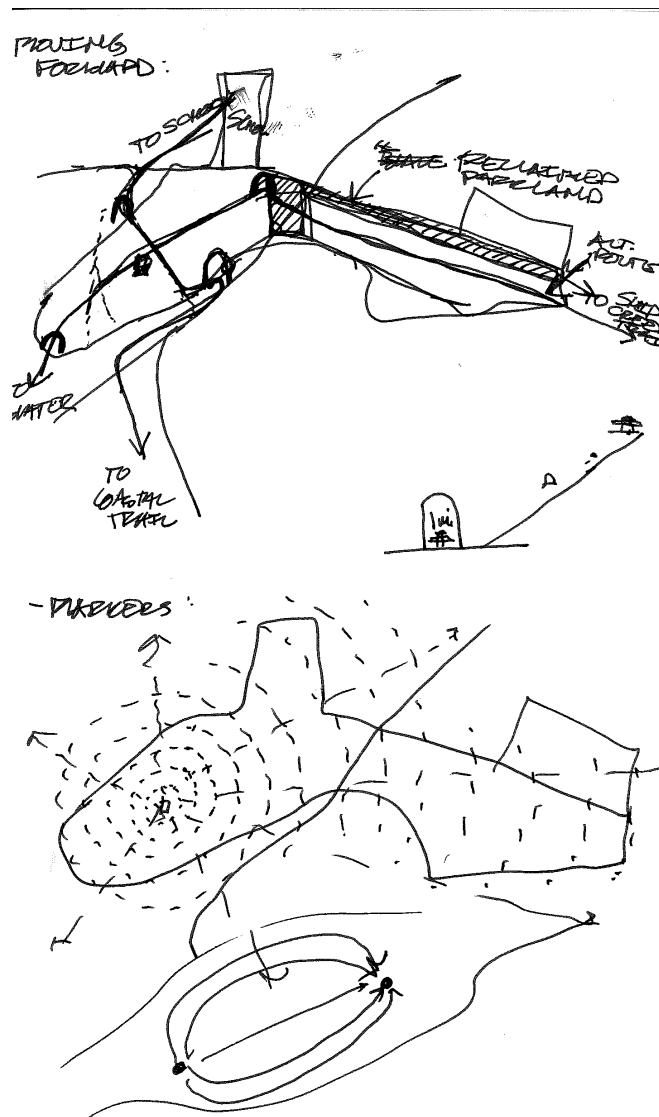
Fig. u. PREVIOUS FACING PAGE, BELOW:
1939 Oblique Photograph. Ukn. 1939. Courtesy of Scher, Robert.

Fig. v. PREVIOUS PAGE:
Origin and Formation Diagram. Self. December 2018.
The sketch indicates a fictional narrative of development on Government Hill, threatening the neighborhood like an Etruscan hill town. I identify the Cardo and Decamus as well.

Fig. w. CURRENT PAGE:
Trail Sketch and Nodal Sketch. Self. December 2017.
The top sketch illustrates early locations for the trail and its ends. The bottom sketch illustrates the radiation of influence over the neighborhood of the Wireless Station.

Fig. x. FACING PAGE, ABOVE:
Government Hill Water Tower. Self. December 2017.

Fig. y. FACING PAGE, BELOW:
Susan Nightengale Memorial Park. Self. December 2017.



as the ancient Cardos and Decamus did. I wanted to make these gateways to the West Side, Susan Nightingale Memorial Park to the north, the Government Hill Commons to the east, the Water Tower and South Bluff Park to the south, and Browns Point to the west, could be the entrances to the neighborhood, with the Wireless Station at its core.

The solution to the questions of access and journey were the recreation of the trails that arrived at the Wireless Station. I chose a route south from the Water Tower to follow the original road-bed to the first Ship Creek railroad bridge, reconstructing the journey of the railroad workers and frontier townspeople. A trail would extend through the East Side of the neighborhood to connect with the Ship Creek Trail at its beginning, near the intersection of Whitney Road and Post Avenue, reestablishing the connection to the Iditarod Trail system.

It became increasingly apparent that there was a level of heritage these trails occluded, yet there was still an opportunity to engage the history of the Dena'ina. While the other routes of the trail would reconnect the residents of Anchorage to the Wireless Station and their Euro-American heritage, the remaining routes should engage the pre-contact history of the indigenous people. Two branches of my trail system would connect Tak'at with the Ship Creek, the journey between them taken for centuries. These would empower contemporary Dena'ina, and offer an opportunity for current non-native residents to appreciate the history of the place. The trail to Tak'at would be most controversial,

because of its proximity to Elmendorf Airforce Base and the Port of Anchorage, and would cross through JBER land. However, such access could erode the suppression of the Dena'ina people, their practices, and their culture. This branch started at an abandoned bridge abutment at the mouth of Ship Creek, and then climbed to Brown's Point. The northern portion would begin at the end of Boyd St and follow an old road through Susan Nightingale Memorial Park, before entering JBER.

INITIAL DESIGN

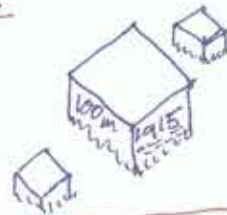
The design of these trails would be similar to those existing in Anchorage. They would expand the multi-use trail system to connect Government Hill at Tak'at with the rest of Anchorage, the former of which the neighborhood has desired for decades. The trails would be for use in all seasons, and accommodate all abilities and types of users. The trail would be a 2.4 m asphalt path on a prepared bed of base course rock, totaling 4 m in width, or in the sections where the trail followed a road, separated from the road with a curb. Through wooded areas, a cleared swath 7.2 m wide would accommodate the trail and improve visibility. No grade would be steeper than 8%. This would allow skiing or biking in the winter, biking, walking and running in all seasons, and access to all individuals.

These trails provide much-needed routes through the neighborhood of Government Hill as well. I used the figure-ground map showing contested space to find the areas for the trail. I took advantage of existing infrastructure, such as the pedestrian bridge over East Loop Road, and the sidewalk

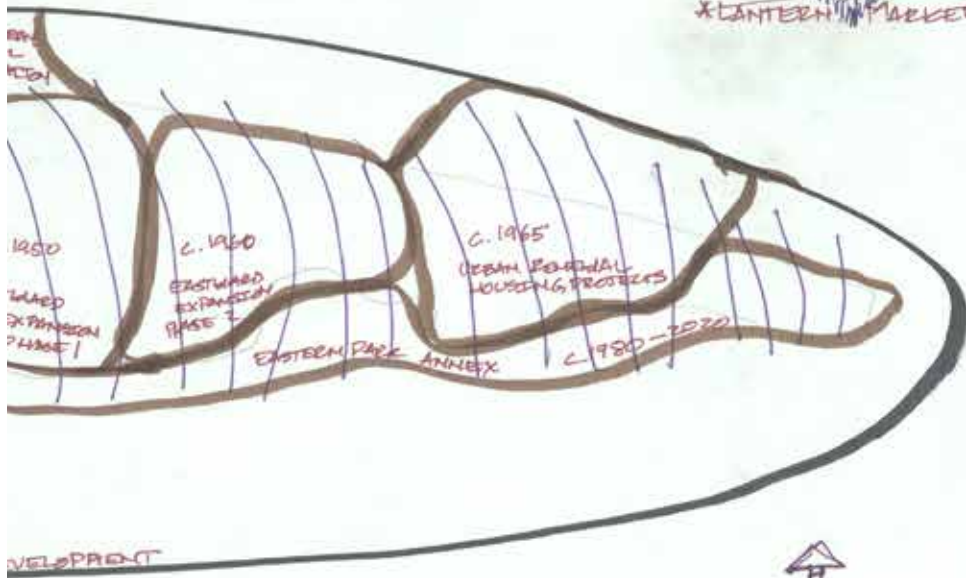




* LANTERN MARKER GIVES DISTANCE AND LIGHT ALONG THE PATH TO THE WIRELESS STATION. ADDITIONALLY IT PROVIDES HISTORICAL INTEGRATION.



*TABLE MARKER IS UNOBTUSIVE, SMALL, AND PERMANENT. IT EXISTS IN THE CONTESTED PRIVATE/PUBLIC SPACE AND SO IS OPEN TO BOTH USERS. IT IS A PERMANENT UTILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE.



*POLE MARKER GIVES DISTANCE TO STATION AND PROVIDES LIGHT.

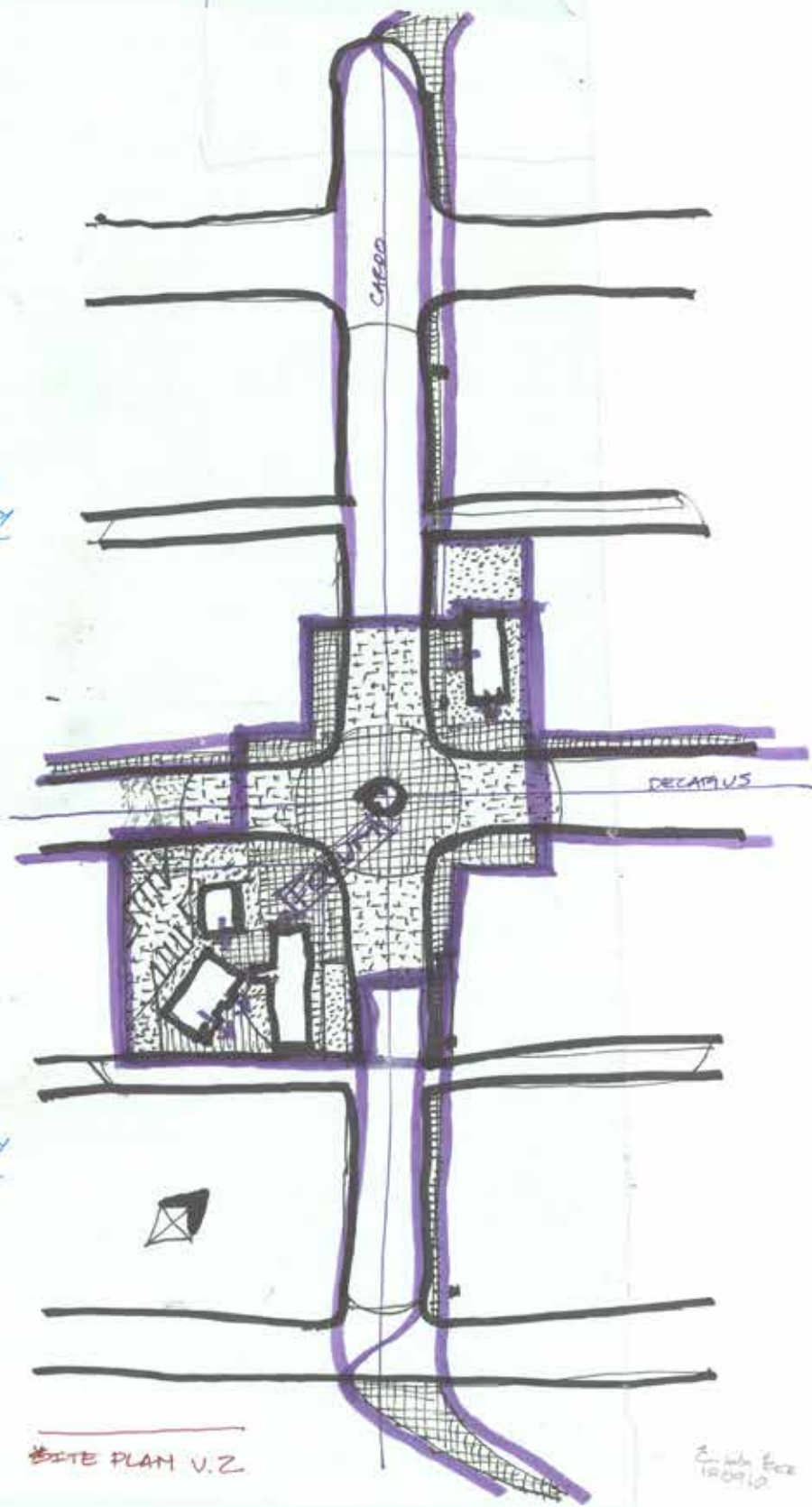


Fig. z. PREVIOUS SPREAD:
**Forum and Trail Design. Self.
January 2018.**

The first complete sketch of the trails and forum design includes the trails and roads in 1917 (believed to be existing at the time). The trail follows these routes in order to justify its path.

Fig. aa. CURRENT PAGE, ABOVE:
**786 DeLaney St (Brown's Point
Cottage). Bunnell, Kristine.
2012. Courtesy of MOA.**



786 DELANEY ST - BUNNELL

Fig. ab. CURRENT PAGE, BELOW:
**Government Hill Commons.
Self. December 2017.**

Although the winter photograph does not make the space look particularly welcoming, the Commons is a popular place for the community to meet, watch movies in the park, and carry out a Farmer's Market. They are planning to have an orchard and ciderie as well.

Fig. ac. FACING PAGE:
**Sketch of Intersection Plaza
(Hall of the Descendants).
February 2018.**

The sketch shows the development of cascading ramps and steps to form a bowl of terraced levels.



along East Bluff Drive. The contested space was the logical site for the pathway, which would be separate from the roads it paralleled. The concept that this land was public, but privately maintained would build a sense of collective control and pride over the trail. From the Government Hill Commons, the trail climbed on a new embankment, passed over the road on the existing overpass, and then descended on a new embankment on the south side of E Bluff Dr. This wide strip of open land provides ample space for the Trail. I thought about placing the rail along Hollywood Drive, which is more central on the East Side, but it is a far busier road and the contested land along it is too narrow. The distance to E Bluff Dr. is not greater than two blocks, so I felt the new trail location was sufficient.

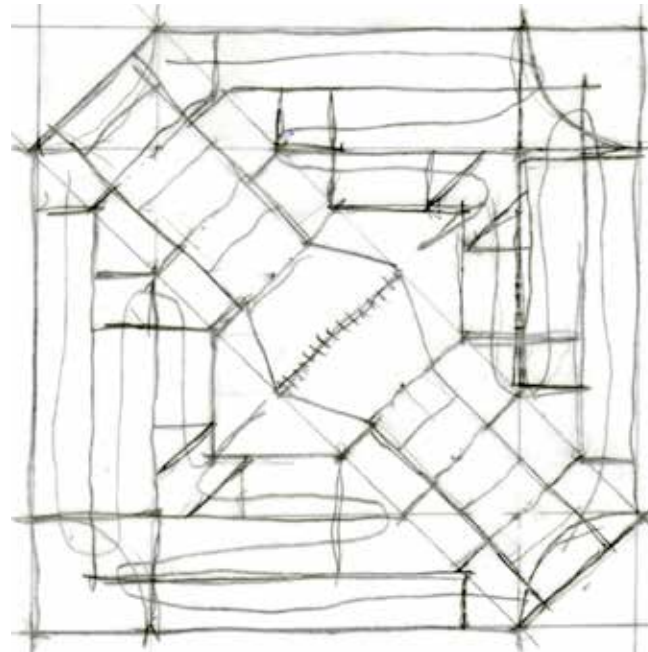
At the pedestrian overpass, the trail would split with a branch descending a new embankment along the JBER fence to Government Hill Elementary School. The current purpose of the overpass is to provide students a safe route to the school from the East Side. Interestingly, before the Good Friday Earthquake, a pedestrian overpass crossed E Loop Rd from the West Side to provide access to the school. The new trail would loop around the school grounds and follow the edge of the AT&T property to join the trail to Tak'at.

To arrive at the Wireless Station, the trail from the Government Hill Commons would pass along the strip of contested land parallel to Manor Ave, as does the trail from Susan Nightingale Memorial Park, along Boyd St. These would meet at the north corner of the intersection at the Girdwood Section

House, and cross diagonally to the other sides of the streets, to continue to the Water Tower and Brown's Point.

FINAL DESIGN

The four trails extending from the Wireless Station became increasingly problematic, however. They seemed too arbitrary in placement and too contrived in reason. My research into forums had forced this narrative of the Cardo and the Decamus, the four cardinal directions and journeys, which did not fit the history of Government Hill. I simplified the south and west branches by eliminating the connection to the mouth of Ship Creek. The one trail from the former railroad bridge accomplished both reasons for the separate trails. One trail was much easier to fit on the bluff of Government Hill than two were, and forcing the trail eastward to the Water Tower only to double back to Boyd St was inefficient. At this point in the design process, I received the 1939 aerial, which confirmed my early theories, and provided the solution. I could reconstruct the original road up Government Hill and the alley between Manor Ave and Harvard Ave. This route would be more sensitive to the historic and current use of the alley as pedestrian conveyance. Additionally, it provided a less-expensive and safer trail than along the roads. The alley terminates at the Government Hill Commons, so that connexion remained. Having only three trails simplified the articulation of the intersection at the Wireless Station, which could now occur in the natural courtyard between the T-Shaped Building and the Original structure.



This move switched the placement of the “forum”. At first, the Wireless Station was the forum adjacent to the intersection of Manor and Boyd. Now, this intersection was the forum and the Wireless Station framed the trail intersection. This freed the structures to be participants and frames in the journey, not the culmination of the journey. I turned to designing the intersection as a plaza. Because neither street is particularly busy, I closed-off the intersection to cars, and created stepped seating with ramps that cascaded down from the north and south corners of the intersection. A series of steps led directly to the lowered core. This bowl became the Hall of the Descendants.

Fig. ad. FACING PAGE:

Trail Map. Self. April 2018.

The image shows the trail system in its entirety. The dark line illustrates the path of the trail as it follows history and topography.

The Section House and the Wireless Station are the frames of this space, and enhance the sense of progression and arrival. They act complementary to each other. Visitors coming from the south must pass by the Wireless Station to enter the plaza, and the view they see is that of the Section House, which forms an edge, a threshold. Conversely, visitors coming from the north pass the Section House and enter the plaza looking at the Wireless Station. These two constructs embrace this new area for community conversation, and the entire site embodies the process of arrival.

JOURNEY TO TAK'AT

The trail north from the Hall of the Descendants passes by the Section House, a station on the journey to Tak'at. Paralleling Boyd St to Susan Nightingale Memorial Park, it follows an old road northwestward to cross West Bluff Dr and follows the edge of the bluff as it curves east. Views of Knik Arm and Cook Inlet, as well as Mount Susitna would be highly visible. The trail turns north, following a former jeep track, and meets the trail to the school just below the AT&T parking lot, at the current JBER border fence. Thence heading northward, it crosses a drainage with a small bridge and follows the curves of the bluff, generally at a constant elevation. Through the base, the trail winds between two fences defining a 50 m public use corridor. Trees would be cleared making a path 8 m wide, but the remainder would be left forested. From the spur to the school, the main trail splits the narrow gap between some Base housing units and the Port before making an S turn to avoid some access roads and steep grades. This brings the trail onto the path of an existing jeep track that passes through a clearing,

providing views to the west. Although the runway is immediately east of here, the slight elevation change would block it from view. The trail follows this old track to an intersection with two other tracks, and there turns left to parallel the bluff. Views would be minimal through this section of dense trees. This would enhance the arrival the small clearing at Cairn Point, from which views of the water would be common, as well as the Talkeetna and Alaska mountain Ranges. A smaller footpath would lead to the beach. Just before the clearing, the fences would turn perpendicular to their northerly lines, one going west to the beach, and the other heading east 175 m before heading due north to the coast. This could be a preserve for the entire Point, and its resources. Mitigation would occur to protect the surviving resources, but informational placards would educate visitors on the history of the site. Dena'ina could use the site for ceremonies, if groups so desired, and public access controlled. The trail would reconnect the Dena'ina with an important site in their history, would allow residents to appreciate the early traditions, and visitors to learn about the early people of the area. Most importantly, it would expose people to the place spirits at Tak'at, the stories of the past, and the memories of the elders.

JOURNEY FROM THE EAST

The trail eastward from the Wireless Station would serve more of a commuter purpose than that to Tak'at, but could also provide recreational opportunities for residents. Connecting with the Ship Creek Trail at its easternmost end, it would provide a direct connexion between the neighborhoods of Mountain View and Government Hill,

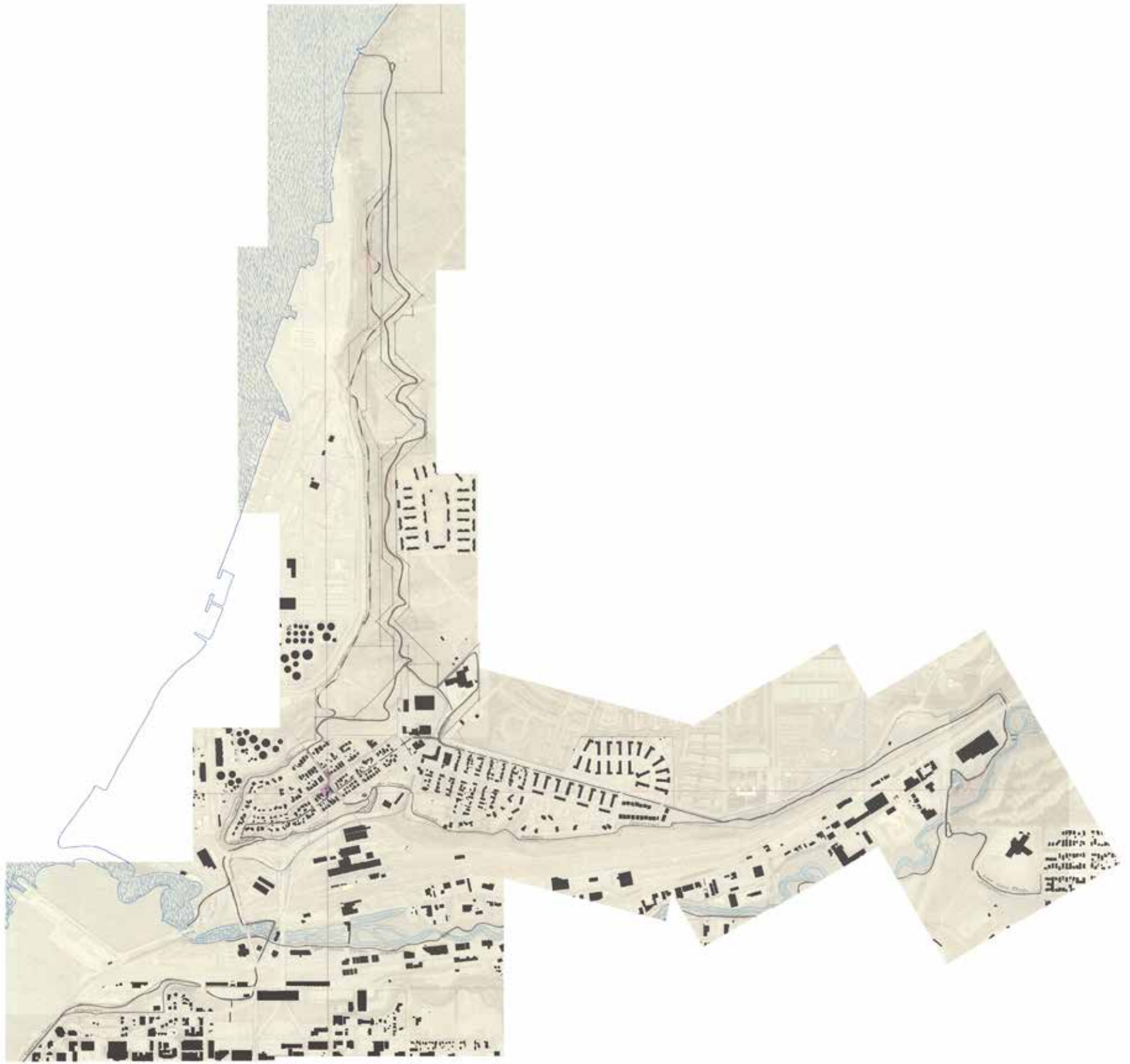
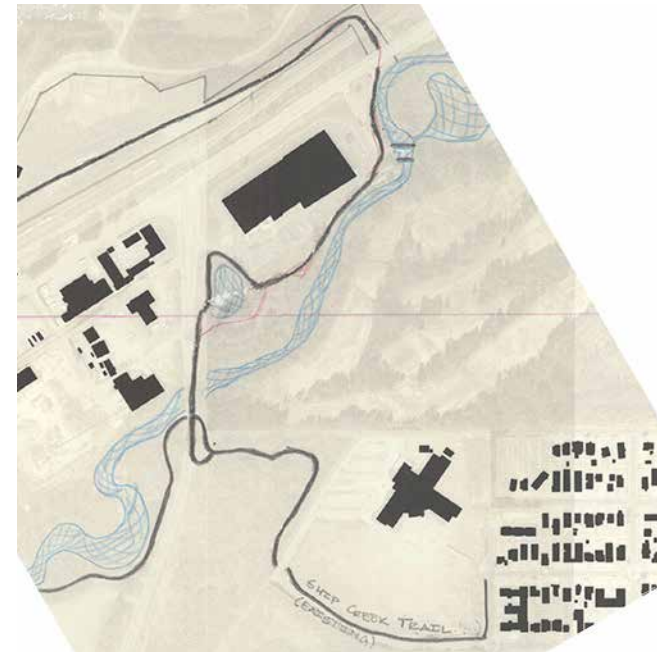
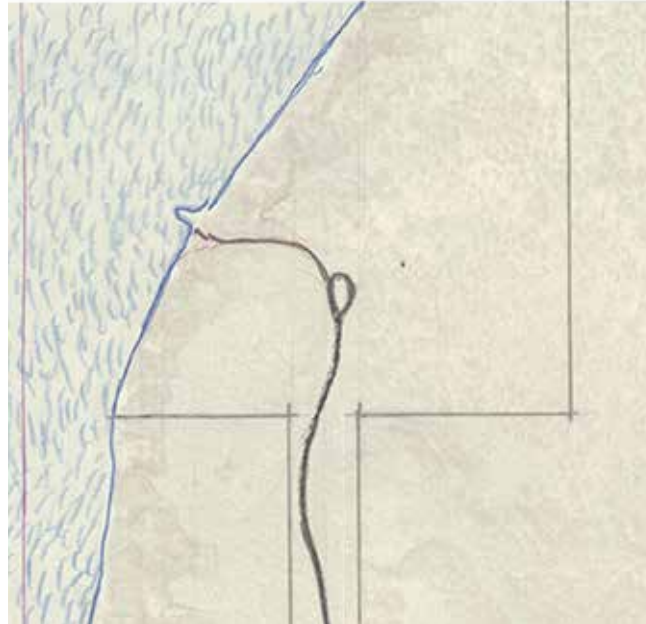


Fig. ae. CURRENT PAGE:
**Trail Map Snapshots. Self.
April 2018.**
These show significant parts
of the trail system. From
left to right, top to bottom,
the trail arrival at Tak'at,
the eastern trail branching
from the Ship Creek Trail,
the southern beginning of
the trail at Ship Creek, the
trails circling the center of
Government Hill and the ele-
mentary school.

Fig. af. FACING PAGE, ABOVE:
**Bluff Extension Trail West.
Self. December 2018.**

Fig. ag. FACING PAGE, BELOW:
**E Bluff Dr West. Self. Decem-
ber 2018.**



traditionally neighborhoods with high percentages of immigrants and Base workers. Ship Creek separates Government Hill from the rest of the city, and a major highway does the same for Mountain View, so the neighborhoods feel isolated and undesired. The Ship Creek Trail, completed only in the last decade, has successfully woven Mountain View into the city's renowned non-motorized transportation system. The next phase of is the inclusion of Government Hill in this network.

The Ship Creek Trail begins at Tyson Elementary School, which sits below Mountain View. An existing spur connects the trail to the first road it encounters, Reeve Blvd. The new trail would start at this spur, and use Reeve Blvd for the trail, which here would be an outrigger sidewalk on the bridge, crossing the creek northward. After the bridge, the trail splits from the road and goes through the right-of-way between the road and a small pond. Before a driveway to the hatchery, the trail would turn to follow the curve of the pond, and then the bank of Ship Creek, following a widened walking path to the truck pullout at Pease Ave. There would be an at-surface road crossing of the street and the two parallel railroad tracks just beyond. From this point, the trail would turn immediately west and pass between two security fences, preventing access to the rails and the Base. These fences would begin at Pease Ave, and offer security to both the railroad land and JBER from civilian commuter and recreation traffic. The trail would incorporate a service road on the north side of the tracks and cross a short bridge or culvert across a stream. The trail parallels the tracks in a southwest direction, separated with a fence, and at the base of the bluff for



Fig. ah. CURRENT PAGE, ABOVE:
E Bluff Dr and Elm St West.
Self. December 2018.

Fig. ai. CURRENT PAGE, BELOW:
E Bluff Dr and Cedar St West.
Self. December 2018.

Fig. aj. FACING PAGE, ABOVE:
E Bluff Dr and Birch St West.
Self. December 2018.

Fig. ak. FACING PAGE, BELOW:
E Bluff Dr and E Loop Rd West.
Self. December 2018.



added security to the base, and visibility from the rails. At the curve of the bluff at the East End of Government Hill, trail would climb the bluff, cutting at a gradual slope diagonally to the tableland. Here are two parcels, one undeveloped and the other once containing apartment buildings. The railroad leases its parcel, the easternmost, as a park, and the Municipality owns the second parcel, but encloses it with a fence. A narrow gap between this fence and the JBER fence is wide enough for the new trail to pass through, following E Bluff Dr as it enters Government Hill, and continuing to parallel it until Birch Street, one block before the overpass. This portion of the trail would pass through the contested strip of land south of the road, and would have at-grade crossings at each intersection. However, immediately after Birch St, the trail rises on a new embankment to the level of the existing overpass. A tunnel would allow the use of the alley between Birch and Alder Streets. Once over the overpass, and turning left, away from the spur to the school, the trail descends in front of the AT&T building along the current sidewalk. There are no doors or windows below the level of the overpass on this portion of the building, so there would be no affects to its access or daylight. At the base of this embankment would be a street crossing in line with the alley between Manor and Harvard Avenues. This portion would cross the Government Hill Commons, providing the cross-axis to the park's central path. Once across Erickson Street, the trail would follow the alley to Boyd St. In the alley, the trail would be a 3 m wide paved surface with 1.2 m of packed dirt on either side. This would accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians, in the same space. The alley right-of-way is 6 m (20 feet), and currently the width of the drivable dirt surface varies from 3 m to 5 m. This

alley improvement is consistent with other areas of Anchorage with traditional street patterns that include alleys, but remains rare. The neighborhood does not desire too much of such improvement, but the safety, accessibility, and ease of maintenance pavement provides would be necessary only on this alley. Crossing Boyd Street, and arriving at the Wireless Station, the trail juts due-west, immediately next to the existing concrete path to the Station, avoiding the sunken garden. At this intersection with the other two branches of the trail would be a place for community gathering. Looking right from this point, the buildings of the Wireless Station frame the image of the Hall of the Descendants, with the Section House as the backdrop.

JOURNEY TO THE HALL OF THE DESCENDANTS

The Journey to the Wireless Station, the Hall of the Descendants, and beyond, is one of history and memory. It passes through layers of sounds, stories, and spirits, and exposes the Traveler to physical experiences of place, and metaphysical experiences of the timelessness of human heritage in the North. Journeying itself is a ritual, and often metaphoric. Through these lenses, the Journey becomes an extension of the design experience of the Wireless Station. The Traveler has an awareness of the end at the beginning, and appreciates the ritual. Like other rituals of journey, this Journey has twelve stations with significant points of arrival, culminating in the arrival at the Hall of the Descendants.



Fig. a1. CURRENT PAGE:

Station 1. Self. March 2018.

This watercolor shows the first of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station from Ship Creek, the original railroad bridge across the creek.

Fig. am. FACING PAGE:

Station 2. Self. March 2018.

This watercolor shows the second of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station from Ship Creek, the path along Whitney Road.



STATION 1

The journey begins at the end of the Ship Creek Trail. Here is a small public plaza with public toilets and parking. The creek banks are steep and muddy, but the water courses over gravel, creating percussive music. The tide frequently fills to this point, carrying the spawning salmon upstream. The sounds of the rail yards are loud and omnipresent, as is the traffic noise from the viaduct overhead.

The first station of the journey is the original railroad bridge across Ship Creek. Converted into a pedestrian bridge in the 1980s, it is wide and curved. Its timber supports have stood for a hundred years, and the bridge has survived floods, ice dams, and earthquakes. The bridge remembers the century of conveying people over the river.



STATION 2

Once across the bridge, the Traveler turns to follow the trail along the bank of Ship Creek. This is the second station of the journey, and the flow of the water and the steep bank recount the century of human modification to the waterway. The view is towards the ocean, and the sea-breeze carries smells of the mudflats and the water, sweet and pungent at the same time. The sounds of the rail

yards are now behind the Traveler, but the tracks and bridge in the distance reiterate the presence of the railroad. The sounds of the cars and trucks crossing the C Street bridge are not disruptive, but a voice in the chorus of industrial sounds from the port and rail yards. The colors of the bushes along the trail soften the view.

Fig. an. CURRENT PAGE:

Station 3. Self. March 2018.

This watercolor shows the third of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, Ocean Dock Road.

Fig. ao. FACING PAGE:

Station 4. Self. March 2018.

This watercolor shows the fourth of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the beginning of the ascent to Government Hill.



STATION 3

A quick crossing of C St delivers the Traveler to the west side of the road, and the trail turns to follow northwards. This is the beginning of Ocean Dock Road, which parallels the 1915 rail line to the first permanent dock, where all the rail-road construction supplies came ashore. The trail crosses several railroad tracks, leading between the rail yards and the port, as well as the main

line to the south. The road is busy with trucks and cars, and the sounds of the port are straight ahead. The loud horns and bells of the trains punctuate the air. Nevertheless, the verdant bluffs of Government Hill are fully in view, and glimpses of the trail to come guide the Traveler towards the tree-lined slope.



STATION 4

Taking care to cross West Loop Road, the trail courses between a metal retaining wall and the roadway, with a strip of grass and wildflowers separating the Traveler from the traffic. Ahead, the trail parallels the road, but the bends it makes to climb up the bluff are visible through the birches and cottonwoods. Trucks past by, but the bluff blocks the sounds of the port, and the road

embankment muffles those of the rail yards. The fourth station is a moment of pause before beginning the ascent. This section is the last to feel industrial and urban, and the quick right turn forces views of the city and mountains beyond. The light voices of the birds and the creaks of the trees in the wind mix with the rumble of the city.

Fig. ap. CURRENT PAGE:

Station 5. Self. March 2018.

This watercolor shows the fifth of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the steep climb to the original road bed.

Fig. aq. FACING PAGE:

Station 6. Self. March 2018.

This watercolor shows the sixth of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the rehabilitation of the original roadbed up to the West End.



STATION 5

As the trail turns abruptly from the road, the fifth station marks a transition from the gritty industry of Ship Creek to the tranquil forest of South Bluff Park. The ever-present ding ding ding of the rail crossings behind remind the traveler of the urban milieu this park inhabits. The sounds of the city mix with the echoes of the past as the trail passes several rectangular depressions

in the soil, the sites of old cabins and tents from the first railroad workers. This bluff remembers the sounds of residents enjoying a late-night baseball game in the never-ending sunlight of July. The spirits of the place move between the trees with the wind that rustles their leaves. This portion is the steepest, and most reflective.



STATION 6

At the sixth station the Traveler arrives at the roadbed of the original path to the West End. The trail continues up the gradual slope, the signs of the original road still visible through the underbrush. The rim of the tableland is just apparent through the trees. Glancing to the right, however, the traveler can view the panoramic view of Downtown Anchorage with Ship Creek and the rail yards

in the foreground. The wind carries the mechanical sounds of the industry below, as well as the bird-song and gull calls from the coast. This moment of pause occurs at an intersection of several foot-paths through South Park Bluff, and place spirits offer rich impressions of the past. The trees contain myriad sounds of centuries of Travelers.

Fig. ar. CURRENT PAGE:

Station 7. Self. March 2018.
This watercolor shows the seventh of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the arrival at Brown's Point.

Fig. as. FACING PAGE:

Station 8. Self. April 2018.
This watercolor shows the eighth of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the turn onto the alley between Manor and Harvard Avenues.



STATION 7

The Traveler arrives at Brown's Point Park at the West End of Government Hill after climbing through the dense trees of South Bluff Park. These same trees block views of the city to the south, and muffle the sounds of the port and industry seventy-odd feet below. The quiet neighborhood is the only view, with the narrow roads following the bluffs. The alley ahead shows the trail turn

between the houses. The two houses immediately to the right were original AEC cottages, portions of which are visible through an hundred years of alteration. At this station the path becomes the road, and the Traveler must briefly recreate the experience of the early settlers, walking to their homes on the narrow lane.



STATION 8

Passing along Delaney Street, the Travler turns right at a quiet alley, the trail apparent with its paved surface. Having passed by the cottage on the corner, now a house, the Traveler sees the alley coursing behind the former Officer's Row of cottages. This alley has witnessed human passage for over a hundred years, and stepping into its tree-lined realm revives the spirits of the place.

The domestic sounds of the houses and neighborhood mix with those of the former residents to compose an entire symphony of sonic waves, each bend and driveway a new acoustic node. The alley curves away to the left, urging the Traveler onward. The metaphysical journey becomes readily apparent as the Traveler ambulates onward.

Fig. at. CURRENT PAGE:

Station 9. Self. April 2018.

This watercolor shows the ninth of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, when it first comes in view.

Fig. au. FACING PAGE:

Station 10. Self. April 2018.

This watercolor shows the tenth of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the arrival at the station.



STATION 9

The Traveler crosses Anderson Street and sees the block ahead. A sunken garden, askew from the alley, interrupts the trail, although the trail continues beyond. This garden, full of wildflowers signifies the former location of Building #2 of the Wireless Station. This momentary interruption of the flow of the path causes the Traveler to see, for the first time, the cupola and mast of

the Wireless Station rising above the garages and bushes that line the alley. At the far end of the alley, the Traveller can see the radio tower of the AT&T station. These three elements of telecommunications, the ghost, the corpse, and the offspring, signify that the Traveler to listen to the sounds and spirits the Hill retains.



STATION 10

The ghost of Building #2 redirects the Traveler into the courtyard formed between the original building and the T-Shaped Building. The stem of this latter building encloses the space, yet the trail continues northward, turning between the buildings. This station marks the arrival at the Wireless Station, the anticipated climax of this journey. However, the trail leading onward dispels

the notion of conclusion. This interruption of the path reinforces the importance of the Wireless Station as an historic destination. The building façades show age and the original building seems especially tired. The buildings resonate with the stories of the past, and the place spirits hover in the still air.

Fig. av. CURRENT PAGE:
Station 11. Self. April 2018.
This watercolor shows the eleventh of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the moment of anticipation wherein the three buildings of the station embrace the Traveller.

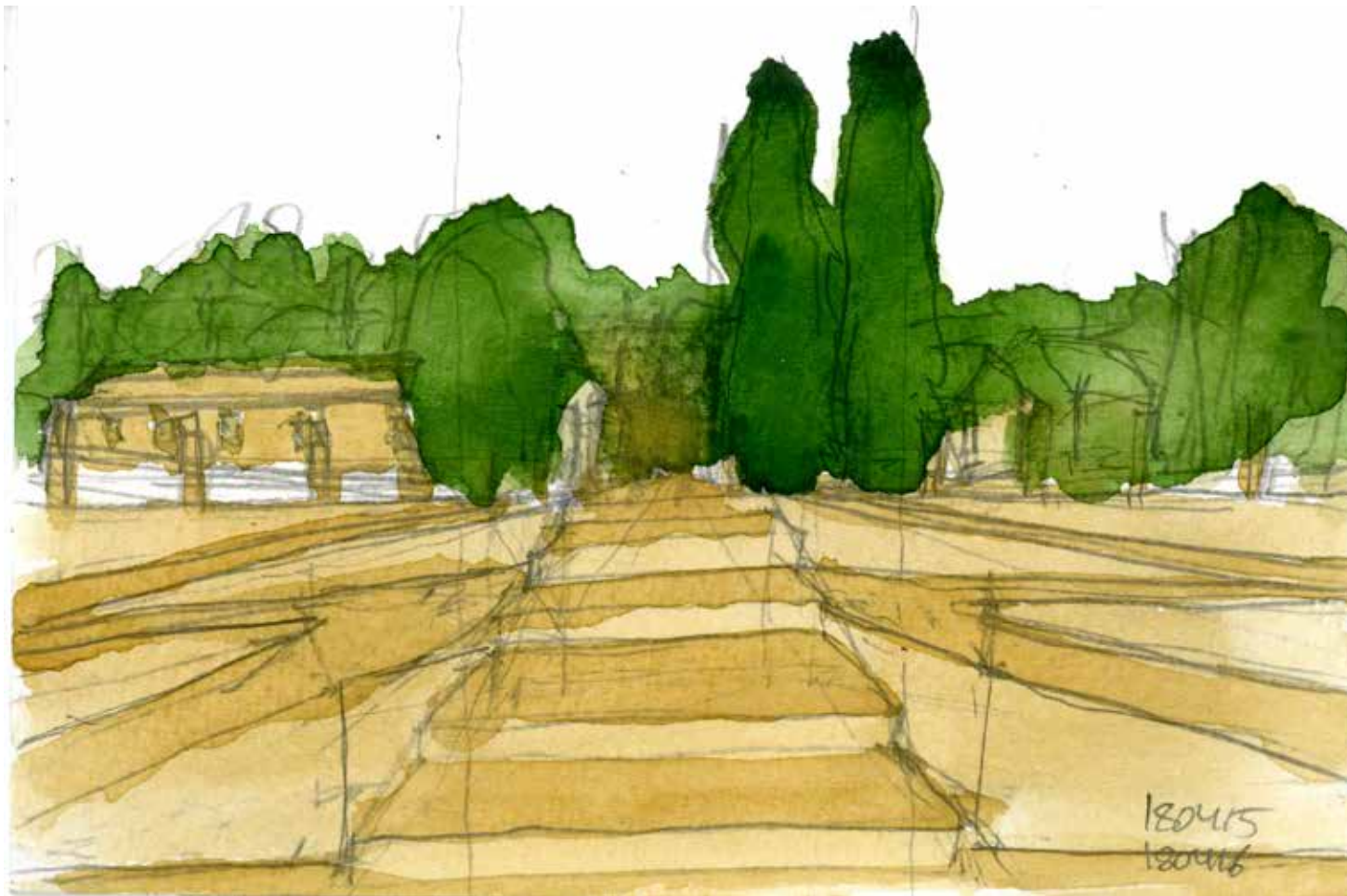
Fig. aw. FACING PAGE:
Station 12. Self. April 2018.
This watercolor shows the final of twelve stations on the journey to the Wireless Station, the Hall of the Descendants.



STATION 11

Passing in front of the original building, noting its rotting siding and broken windows, the Traveler approaches the stem of the T-Shaped Building. The path has crossed over an historic sidewalk extending from one of the doors, and slowly Building #2 comes into view. The extension of Building #3 creates a threshold that narrows the trail, but beyond, the view widens. The Traveler occupies

the small space between all three of the Wireless Station buildings, where the resonance is loudest. From here, the view out reveals the sunken plaza at the intersection of Manor and Boyd. The T-Shaped Building and Building #2 neatly frame the Section House, and trees indicate the thresholds to the Hall of the Descendants.



STATION 12

The final station of the journey is the Hall of the Descendants. The Section House reinforces the sense of arrival, and above the low roofs of the Wireless Station, the cupola rises. Trees frame these structures, forming thresholds to the plaza. The sounds of the neighborhood combine with the stories emanating from the buildings, and resonate above the Traveler. In the plaza, the concrete

ramps and steps form places for sitting and sharing stories. Other Travelers following the trail to Tak'at or back to Downtown either pass around the plaza on the ramps, or descend to its core to meet. Through their journeys to and conversations around the Wireless Station, the Travelers reconstruct the historic core and community node.

Fig. ax. FACING PAGE:
Government Hill Wireless Station. Self. December 2017.

These stations punctuate the primary path to the Wireless Station. Whereas the trail to the east is recreational and commuter-oriented, this section is one of ritual and ceremony. The trail to Tak'at is as much an extension of this experience, as it too was a site of reverence. In March, I asked for permission to make the journey to Tak'at, but climatic and political factors prevented it. As a result, that portion remains speculative, even though it is equally as important. With this in mind, the Wireless Station should be less of a destination and more of a waypoint. However, the political reality of the present time prevents public access to Cairn Point. Therefore, for the purpose of this Thesis, the Wireless Station is the destination. The trail beyond the Wireless Station projects a more accommodating future, but the journey to Tak'at is not the subject of this Thesis. This project acknowledges the need for greater acceptance and access to Dena'ina heritage, but must remain devoted to its primary subject, the Government Hill Wireless Station.

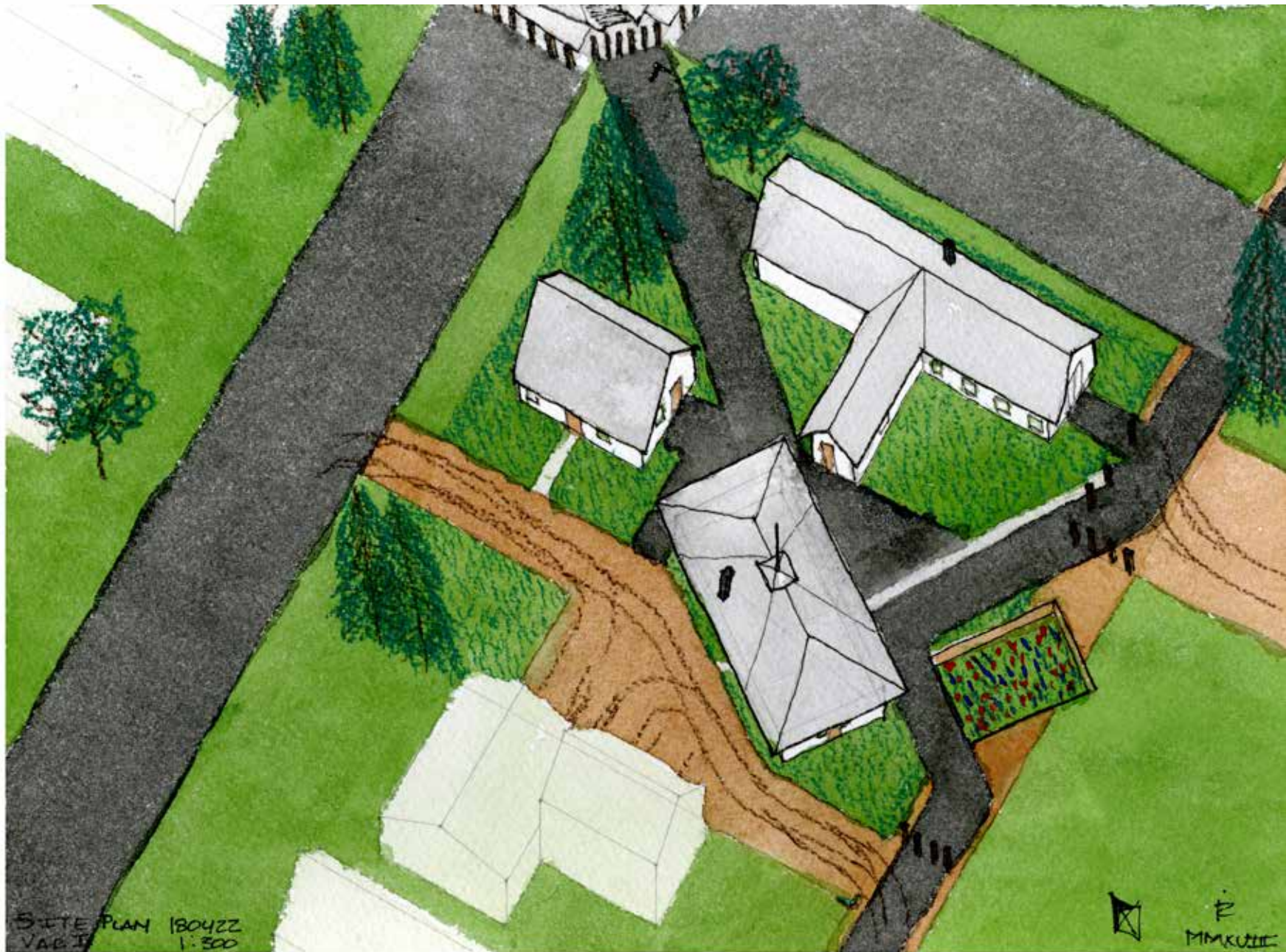
Although this northward journey of the trail uses much of the original pathway, the most significance comes from the spirit of the journey, not the line of the journey itself. This journey links Downtown with Government Hill, the Wireless Station and beyond, and repairs the separation the expanded railyards caused. The adaptation of the original roads and trails was a way of reducing the arbitrariness of the trail location, and providing a disciplined approach that belongs to the heritage of trail making through the reconstruction of pre-existing routes.

CONCLUSION

These trails did not arise without precedents. Where they can, they follow the same roadbeds and routes. Where these do not survive, the trails follow the same logic as the original. This is all in order to reconstruct the journey, if not the physical path. Like the channel of a stream, the actual route may change, but the beginning and end remain the same. The journey of the individual following the path, still is a reconstructive experience of memory and recollection. The sounds and spirits encountered along the paths create a specific experience that changes in relation to the individual. The traveler is the datum against which to measure the changes in the world.

The journey is the physical ambulation that parallels the spiritual ambulation. While the body moves through one realm of firmament and material, the spirit travels through a parallel, yet timeless realm of immaterial, of energy; this is the space of radio waves and sounds, of place spirits and intangible feelings. These paths are the sites of journeys, of the ritual of ambulation, and the empathetic experience of history.





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