

# **H.A.R.T. POLICY MANUAL**

(HOMER ACCELERATED ROADS AND TRAILS PROGRAM)

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- I. Purpose**
- II. Definitions**
- III. Road Qualifying and Project Criteria**
- IV. Trails Qualifying and Project Criteria**
- V. Financing and Assessments**
- VI. Utilities**
- VII. Special Provisions**
- VIII. History**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the HART program is to pay for reconstructing substandard city roads, upgrading existing roads, and constructing new streets and non-motorized trails. The intent of the program is to reduce maintenance costs, improve access, increase property values and improve the quality of life. State maintained roads are not part of this program. The program is funded by a voter approved dedicated sales tax, and assessments levied on adjacent benefited properties

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Sidewalk- the term “sidewalk” means a pedestrian facility associated with a road and generally within a street right of way
- B. Trail – a pedestrian facility detached from a road, or not within a street right of way
- C. Fund Balance - is the unreserved fund balance that is not allocated to pay the city portion of a project
- D. HAPC – Homer Advisory Planning Commission
- E. Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan (HNMTTP) – a document that is an adopted part of the City of Homer Comprehensive Plan
- F. 2005 Homer Area Transportation Plan (Transportation Plan) – a document that is an adopted part of the City of Homer Comprehensive Plan

### **III. ROAD QUALIFYING AND PROJECT CRITERIA**

To be eligible for HART funds, roads and projects must meet the qualifying criteria below.

- A. Qualifying Criteria for Existing Roads. HART fund may be used on existing roads that meet one or more of the following criteria:
  - 1. Road has been accepted for city maintenance.

2. Right of way was dedicated prior to March 14, 1987 (Ord. 87-6(s)).
  3. Right of way was dedicated prior to being annexed into the City.
- B. Qualifying Criteria for New Roads. HART funds may be used for new roads when one or both of the following criteria are met:
1. The City owns the property wherein the road is to be constructed.
  2. The construction project benefits the entire City.
- C. Project Criteria. The following criteria may be considered for using HART funds:
1. Project is listed in the 2005 Homer Transportation Plan or furthers a stated goal of that plan.
  2. HART funds may be used in accordance with Title 11.04.05, to pay to the developer the cost difference between the required street and the proposed street.
  3. Improves life, safety and traffic flow
  4. Corrects deficiencies of existing systems
  5. Completes traffic circulation pattern
  6. Encourages economic development
  7. Corrects drainage problems
  8. Reduces maintenance costs
  9. Other factors deemed appropriate by the City Council
- D. Use of HART funding for major repairs. HART funds may be used for major eligible road and drainage repairs that are beyond the scope of routine maintenance. The use of the SAD process and property owner participation is preferred. However there may be situations in which a section of road may be repaired to a reasonable level of service without the expense of a complete rebuild.
- E. Sidewalks. To use HART funds, projects must be mapped as either sidewalks, paved shoulders or separated pathways, or directly serve the special populations discussed in sections 3.1 and 3.2 of the HNMTTP. Effort will be made to find grants or non-city funding sources to match city construction funds, whenever possible.

#### **IV. TRAILS QUALIFYING AND PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA**

To be eligible for funding, trails must be located within trail easements or within the boundaries of municipal lands that will be held in perpetuity for public use. The goal is to avoid building trails across lands that could become privatized and result in the loss of public access. An exception to this is the use of trail funds to construct short term trails within platted rights of way. Trails within rights of way should benefit the community circulation system and be low cost, since trails will likely become part of the road when the right of way is developed.

- A. New local non-motorized trails shall be prioritized according to the following:
  - 1. Project is listed in the HNMTTP or furthers a stated goal of that plan
  - 2. Solves a safety concern
  - 3. Creates connectivity to existing trail(s), completes pattern or provides access to a point of interest
  - 4. Protects an established trail
  - 5. Creates or improves a trailhead
  - 6. Has significant scenic or aesthetic value
  - 7. Existence or potential for contributing funds or volunteer efforts
  - 8. Property owner participation
  
- B. Trail Project Selection Criteria. The Homer Advisory Planning Commission and Parks Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission will review the trail priority list during the bi-annual review of the HART. The list will be presented in a memorandum from staff, and will contain a mix of large and small projects. Generally it will include up to five trail projects that staff has reviewed and found ready for preliminary work. Trails on this list are planned for construction in the near term (one to three year timeframe). Staff will actively work to prepare those projects for construction.
  
- C. Volunteer Projects. Citizens may work with the City Administration to use HART funds to construct public trails.
  
- D. Developer Cost Sharing. When a developer builds a trail as part of a new subdivision, HART funds may be used to reimburse up to 25% of trail construction costs.

#### **V. FINANCING and ASSESSMENTS**

This program is funded by a dedicated sales tax of up to three quarters of one percent (¾%), and the collection of assessment payments due from completed projects. The tax will be collected for up to twenty years expiring December 31, 2027, as approved by voters. Roads are allocated 90% of the annual revenue, and trails are allocated 10%. Expenditures under the HART program are subject to the availability of funds.

1. Sidewalks shall be paid for out of road funds, and trails shall be paid for out of trail funds.
2. HART funds may be used to leverage outside funds for New Local Roads and Trails.
3. New local trails may be constructed using 100% program funds.
4. When additional right-of-way is required, acquisition costs will be paid by this program, at no additional cost to abutting property owners.
5. Interest, if any, generated from the program will remain with the program funds.
6. This program includes paving driveway aprons on contracts funded by HART.
7. Abutting property owners will share the cost of upgrading a street by paying the cost sharing specified in the fee schedule as adopted in the year the project or special assessment district was initiated.
8. Lots having a frontage on two parallel streets, or flag lots having a frontage on two perpendicular streets, are exempt from a double front footage assessment unless actually accessing the lot from both streets either prior to or after reconstruction and/or paving Deferred Assessment Agreement Required pursuant to HCC 17.04.180.
9. The City will pay all costs for any additional improvements required when deemed necessary by the City.
10. Other improvements requested by the benefited property owners will be paid by those same property owners.
11. City share can apply to related utilities, sidewalks, street lighting, drainage, paving and/or reconstruction of roads identified on the road maintenance map.

## **VI. UTILITIES**

1. Prior to street reconstruction, necessary related non-existing water and sewer improvements shall be encouraged whenever possible.
2. Water and Sewer utility extensions necessary to extend the utilities short distances beyond a construction area will be paid for by the program.
3. Water and sewer utility relocations directly caused by reconstruction will be paid for by HART funds.
4. Water and sewer utility upgrades necessary for future capacity that are done concurrently with reconstruction and/or paving will be paid for by the utility fund.
5. The City shall recover from the property owner the cost of construction of City-provided sewer and water service connections by including the cost of construction of such connections in the service connection fee established under HCC Chapter 14.13. Costs will be recouped from benefiting property owners through deferred assessments. The Finance Department will maintain a listing of these deferred sewer and/or water service connection fees.
7. Whenever practical streetlights shall be included in the construction of new local roads and shall be paid by HART funds. Property owners participating in a road reconstruction and/or paving Special Assessment District may request streetlights. If the project is deemed feasible, the property owners shall be

assessed for the installation of the streetlights on an equal share per parcel methodology. Property owner approval of the street light assessment shall follow the process in HCC 17.04. Once constructed, the City will absorb the utility billing for the street light(s).

## **VII. SPECIAL PROVISIONS**

1. The Homer Advisory Planning Commission shall review the criteria for the H.A.R.T. program bi-annually, with recommendations reported to the Homer City Council.
2. The City Council shall review the HART fund on an annual basis during the third quarter.
3. Pedestrian amenities shall be included in all new road projects unless exempted by the City Council.
4. Funds may be used to finance projects where property owners pay 100% of the costs. Subject to City Council approval.
5. The City Council may exempt lands from assessment if the land will not be developed due to a conservation easement, or if the land is owned by a conservation organization that holds the land for public purpose or for habitat protection.

## **VIII. HISTORY**

Ordinance 85-14 07/01/85, Ordinance 94-16(A), Ordinance 02-08(A), 04/08/03,  
Ordinance 02-23(A), 06/10/02, Ordinance 06-42(S), Ordinance 12-15

Resolution 87-61(S), Resolution 88-47, Resolution 88-77(A), Resolution 91-48, Resolution 91-68,  
Resolution 94-50, Resolution 95-97, Resolution 96-73, Resolution 03-116, 08/25/03),  
Resolution 04-41(A), Resolution 05-50(A), Resolution 05-70, 06/13/05,  
Resolution 07-82, Resolution 16-041(S-2)(A), May 9, 2016, Resolution 17-038, April 24, 2017