

MANAGERS REPORT
September 26, 2011

TO: MAYOR HORNADAY / HOMER CITY COUNCIL

FROM: WALT WREDE

W. Wrede

UPDATES / FOLLOW-UP

1. Lobbyist Contract: Linda Anderson, the City lobbyist will be at the October 10 Council meeting. She will be in town that week because she is also helping to give a presentation on the proposed changes to the fish tax at the State Harbormasters Conference at Lands End October 10 through 13. Her presence at the October 10 meeting provides several opportunities. First, this is the meeting that the Council approves the CIP List and the Resolution outlining the Top 15 priorities. Linda will be available to take part in that conversation and associated legislative strategy discussions. Second, Council members expressed an interest in talking to Linda and to each other about her contract. The timing on this is good since Council is about to leap into budget discussions. Linda has expressed an interest in entering into another contract for next year at the same rate of compensation. She also said that she would prefer to talk about the contract in executive session so that everyone can speak freely. This would be conducted similar to what occurred with Tom Klinkner (performance review and contract discussions). A Special Meeting/Executive Session has been scheduled for 4 PM that day for this purpose.
2. CIP List: Speaking of the CIP List, Anne Marie reports that so far, only two Council members have filled out their CIP priority forms. Please be sure to do so as soon as you can. Anne Marie will need them well in advance of the October 10 packet deadline (October 5) in order to compile everything and provide the Council with a complete work product that it can review and take action on.
3. More CIP Stuff: Representative Seaton had discussions with Governor Parnell regarding the gasline project. The emphasis was on getting the pipeline in the Governor's budget next year. While the Governor has made no commitments, one thing seems pretty clear. If this project makes it into the Governor's budget, the City should not expect to see any other large CIP projects approved this year. Smaller projects would still have a chance and our Legislators will receive some of their own discretionary funding for projects in their districts. This is important to keep in mind as the Council approves its CIP List and legislative strategy for next year.
4. Gas Pipeline: The City staff is working to implement the Pipeline Action Plan the Council adopted several meetings ago. The project website has been updated and the CM will be talking about the project at Upcoming Rotary and Board of Realtors meetings. A letter has been drafted asking the Governor to include the project in his capital budget next year. On the Tuesday the 26th, I will be traveling to Soldotna to meet with Senator Wagoner, Representative Olson, and Enstar. Later meetings with Speaker Chenault, Commissioner Bell, and the AEA Director are scheduled or being scheduled.

5. STIP: The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT/PF) has circulated a new Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) document for public review. DOT/PF representatives were here last week to talk about the new STIP. City reps at the meeting included Carey Meyer, Bryan Hawkins, Rick Abboud and myself. Rick drafted comments on the STIP on behalf of the City and the letter is attached for your information. Also attached is a description of all projects included that are of local interest. We emphasized that the Homer Intersections Project and the Main St. Intersection and upgrade was omitted and needed to be added. We will be working to get those projects a higher score in the next few months.
6. Emergency Management Training: The Homer Volunteer Fire Department and the Homer Airport DOT/PF staff will be conducting an airport mass casualty drill this Friday. Also, the State is proposing to conduct a tsunami preparedness and response workshop for communities on the Kenai Peninsula and Prince William Sound in late October or early November. Homer and Seward have both offered to host the workshop. The workshop is intended to be for staff and emergency responders. We have suggested that an evening session be added for the community with an emphasis on preparedness and response. This suggestion has been received favorably. More on this topic later. The City and Borough continue to work on local activation of the tsunami warning sirens.
7. The Draft Budget: As this report was being written, we were right in the middle of finalizing the draft budget for FY 2012. The budget schedule adopted by the Council called for the draft budget to be delivered to the Council on September 26th but not introduced by Ordinance until October 24. We had some preliminary discussions (no motions were made or adopted) about moving up the budget ordinance introduction to September 26th to give Council more time to work on it and to avoid the prospect of having a special meeting right before Christmas. For a variety of reasons, the budget preparation process is not moving quickly enough to get an ordinance on the agenda for this meeting (September 26th). However, we do still intend to have the draft budget in your boxes on the 26th or 27th. I will be prepared to discuss it in detail during the Manager's Report. The budget ordinance and associated resolutions will be ready for introduction on October 10th, which is still sooner than scheduled, and should help.
8. FEMA Maps: The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has circulated new flood insurance hazard maps for public review. The maps make some significant changes to the status of some parcels on the Spit, including parcels owned by the City. These changes could have impacts on construction standards and the ability to get flood insurance for business people leasing City land. Some existing infrastructure along Fish Dock road is affected. The Planning Commission is scheduled to discuss this at its meeting on September 21. We do not believe that FEMA has done a good enough job explaining the changes and the implications for development on the Spit. Much of the language is very difficult to understand and interpret, even for folks who have some background in the flood insurance program. Rick has requested an extension of the comment period and that FEMA conduct a public meeting here. At some point the City will have to submit official comments and the Council will be asked to adopt an ordinance amending the code and accepting these maps. Rick will be available for questions and answers. Please let us know if you would like a fuller

briefing on this. The City could contest these findings but it would be expensive and highly technical. It might be a good use of the City's resources to use dredge spoils to raise the elevation of some lots.

9. Sign Code Revisions: The Planning Commission is working on amendments to the sign code. The primary focus of the amendments has to do with sandwich boards, banners, and the signage allowable on lots that contain multiple businesses. A staff presentation and public hearing has taken place on the draft ordinance and the Commission will be discussing it further at its meeting on September 21. The tentative plan is to consider further amendments and then have another public hearing. Attached is a copy of a press release describing the changes for your information. Extensive comments were received at the first hearing. The minutes of the hearing and the draft ordinance as it stands at the moment can be provided for you easily if you want to track this issue.
10. Boys and Girls Club: Last week, Mike Navarre came to visit. He is on the Board of the Kenai Peninsula Boys and Girls Club. Mike wanted an update on where we are with the Club occupying this building and what the prospects might be for allowing the Club to stay beyond December 30. I relayed the Council's support for the Club but that it needed to find tenant who could pay rent. We discussed a host of hypothetical possibilities but mostly just exchanged information. But, Boys and Girls Club has a strong interest in staying in that building and you can expect some sort of request or proposal from the Board in the not too distant future.
11. HERC Building: Some of you may not be aware of this but when the City accepted title to the old intermediate school, it was named the Homer Education and Recreation Complex (HERC). City employees and most internal documents still refer to it as the HERC Building. I bring this up because Council has indicated that it would be willing to discuss education and recreational uses if a suitable paying tenant cannot be found. Prior Council may have had this in mind given the name. Our current contract with the School District for the Community Schools Program expires in June and that may lend some urgency to having this discussion. The staff is working on a proposal to place the Community Recreation and Parks functions in this building with the idea that they would manage the building and lease parts of it out for educational or recreational functions. Even now, we get requests to rent portions of the building. We were recently approached about renting the GYM for a large exhibit. So, this is a topic we should likely get on the agenda, maybe this winter after we get past the budget.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Letter to Governor re: Gas Pipeline Project
2. Letter to DOT/PF re: STIP
3. Press Release / Proposed Sign Code Amendments
4. Homer Area STIP Projects



City of Homer

City Manager

491 East Pioneer Avenue

Homer, Alaska 99603

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email: wwrede@ci.homer.ak.us

September 21, 2011

Governor Sean Parnell
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Parnell:

It is the autumn equinox and a time when Homer residents had hoped to see significant progress on the construction of a natural gas line from Anchor Point, less than 20 miles north of here, through Homer and on to Kachemak City. Many believed they would see relief from high heating costs before the winter was over. Construction of the Homer Area Natural Gas Pipeline would have benefited the lower Kenai Peninsula by lowering energy costs, reducing carbon emissions, creating jobs and stimulating economic development. It could save the taxpayers \$1.5 million dollars per year in heating costs for federal, state, borough, and city buildings and facilities. The local business community expressed its strong support. I believe it is fair to say that your veto of the \$10.05 million legislative appropriation for this project has been the source of extreme disappointment in this area.

The Mayor and the Homer City Council have been hearing from disappointed and angry business owners and residents all summer. Providing support for energy projects in rural areas of the state when the private sector cannot do so is something the State has done routinely. The Homer City Council has determined that this project remains a top community priority and it recently approved an action plan to keep this project moving forward.

Thousands of community members, business owners, and taxpayers would benefit from having natural gas available in the greater Homer area. The City is working hard to prepare itself for the financing and construction of the gas distribution system within municipal boundaries once gas can be transported into the area. You can help us take a great step forward in making this decades-long dream a reality by including the project in your FY 2013 Budget.

We are aware that you and your staff are working on the budget now. Please consider the Homer Area Natural Gas Pipeline as you make budgetary decisions for the next year. We can think of very few projects that would provide the same payoff and "bang for the buck" as this one. It would be a wise investment. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need additional information. The City of Homer looks forward to your response.

Sincerely,

CITY OF HOMER

Walt Wrede
City Manager



City of Homer Administration

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September 16, 2011

Marc A. Luiken
Commissioner
AKDOT&PF
PO Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

RE: Draft 2012 – 2015 STIP

Dear Mr. Luiken,

The City of Homer wishes to express support for several projects found on the 2012 – 2015 STIP Public Review Draft and suggests additional consideration for projects that were submitted and not selected.

Within the City of Homer boundaries, the city wishes to express support for the **Lake Street Rehabilitation** and **Pioneer Avenue Rehabilitation**.

Lake Street provides a link for commercial traffic from the Sterling Highway to East End Road, which serves Kachemak City, Homer's East End Commercial area, and all development on East End Road toward the head of Kachemak Bay. Without Lake Street, all the commercial traffic would have to be routed through a much more pedestrian oriented Pioneer Avenue. A rehabilitated Lake Street helps to keep commercial and vehicle conflicts to a minimum.

Pioneer Avenue is a year round destination for locals and tourists alike. Pioneer Avenue is a major corridor that leads to many private and commercial institutions such as the Pratt Museum, Homer High School, City Hall, the Police and Fire Stations, South Peninsula Hospital and so on. Business owners have taken pride in landscaping and improving their property. Improvements will enhance the safety of pedestrian, cyclists, and motorists alike. This project should require minimal or no additional right-of-way be obtained and will greatly enhance commercial opportunities and traffic. A rehabilitated street will alleviate need for the inevitable temporary resurfacing that will be necessary. Currently, the Pioneer Avenue project is supported in our 2011-2016 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and has been on the list for many years.



Where the Land Ends and the Sea Begins

Outside of the City of Homer boundaries, the City of Homer wishes to express support for several **Sterling Highway** projects: the **MP 157 to 169 Rehabilitation – Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill**; the **Erosion Response MP 150 – 157**; the **East End Road MP 3.57 to 12.18 – Rehabilitation**; and the **Sterling Highway Visioning Effort**. These routes are critical to our community and provide the only land link from Homer to the rest of Alaska. They are vital for our commerce and well being.

The **Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill** project is supported in our current CIP list. Many major side road intersections, gravel hauling operations, and school bus stops contribute to dangerous conditions on the 12-mile section of highway, which has been the scene of several serious accidents, many with fatalities, over the past several years. Continued population growth has led to more subdivisions with intersecting roads and more traffic on the highway, exacerbating the problem. School buses must stop in some locations with blind corners and hills. Rehabilitation will lower ongoing maintenance cost associated with the poor condition of the surface.

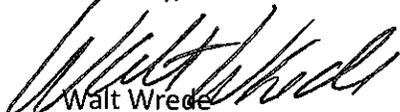
The **Erosion response MP 150 – 157** is supported on the current CIP list. The impending possibility that erosion may sever the only land route into Homer and greater Kachemak Bay area is of the highest concern to all businesses and residents.

The **East End Road MP 3.57 to 12.18** project will greatly enhance the safety of all those who travel past Homer, many of which have a daily commute for jobs and business in Homer and beyond. A separated pathway will provide an additional measure of safety for pedestrians and cyclists alike who have to share a higher speed road with little or no shoulder.

The **Sterling Highway Visioning Effort** should give direction to proactively identify projects and concerns regarding the vital transpiration link to all those in the Western Kenai Peninsula.

The City of Homer also wishes to express concern for two projects in particular that did not make the draft and request further consideration for their addition to the final document. The city finds that both Homer's **Main Street Reconstruction** and the **Traffic Control Intersection Improvements** deserve to be inserted into the 2012 – 2015 STIP. The intersections improvements have been identified recommended by the ADOT&PF 2005 Homer Intersections Planning Study. Both of these projects address critical safety issues that will only become more exacerbated with the passage of time. They have wide community support and have been recognized as crucial to pedestrian safety and the improved facilitation of vehicular traffic as both projects have been identified on Homer's CIP list for several years now. The City of Homer has expressed interest in assuming ownership of the portion of Main Street that is currently the responsibility of the state. The City of Homer is willing to contribute funds to both projects and requests that they be included in the 2012 – 2015 STIP.

Sincerely,



Walt Wrede
City Manager
City Of Homer



Proposed Amendments to the Homer Sign Code

Due to citizen concerns, the City's Planning Department has been working with the Planning Commission to make changes to sign regulations. The changes center on a few subjects, the proliferation of sandwich boards throughout the community the last few years and the inability to equally enforce provisions of the sign code on the spit. The Department has been fielding many concerns that sandwich boards displayed on the spit and around town were encroaching into the rights-of-way and sidewalks creating hazards for pedestrians and vehicles and being displayed permanently. Also, Signage on the spit has been expanding beyond what is allowed and sign permits cannot be obtained for new boardwalk businesses.

The Homer Advisory Planning Commission has proposed a new way to allocate signage among multiple structures on a single lot. Each building would have a sign allowance, as opposed to the current maximum sign allowance of 150 square feet per lot shared between the multiple businesses. Buildings are proposed to be regulated according to amount of wall frontage; large buildings would be allowed more signage, small buildings less signage.

Safety is one concern for the proposed elimination of commercial sandwich boards. The proliferation of sandwich boards on sidewalks, bike lanes and roadways causes bikes and pedestrians to walk or bike around the sandwich boards, and into traffic. There is some allowance left for temporary signs such as civic event signs, political signs, and For Sale/Rent signs. In the end, businesses would need to permanently mount their signs.

The Homer Advisory Planning Commission also looked at ways to avoid flappin' banners. In the future, banners would need to be mounted on a rigid surface.

The City's Planning Office invites business owners to contact them at 235-3106 for specifics on how the proposed changes might affect the signage on their buildings. A presentation regarding the proposed amendments will be given at the 6:30pm Planning Commission Meeting on September 7th and an opportunity for public comment to the Commission will follow. If you are unable to attend the meeting, written comments may be submitted through the Planning Department.

More information: <http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/>

2012-2015 Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Need ID: 2344 **Region:** Central

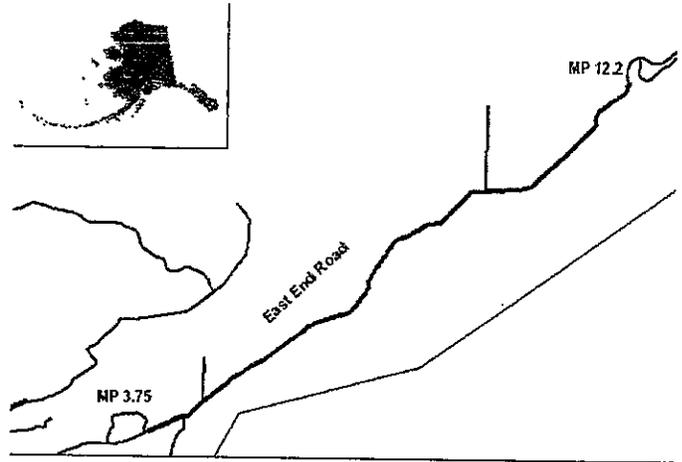
Place Name: Homer

Title:

East End Road mile point 3.7 to 12.2 - Rehabilitation

Project Description:

Rehabilitate East End Road from the end of Phase 1 improvement, near Kachemak Drive, to approximately Waterman Road (mile point 3.7 to 5.5). Rehabilitate the roadway; provide pedestrian facilities; and address safety concerns as warranted. Future phases, beyond mile point 5.5, may be advanced pending funding availability.



PHASE	FUNDING	FFY12	FFY13	FFY14	FFY15	After FFY15
All amounts x1,000 dollars						
Construction	SM	587.0	0	0	0	
Construction	STP	5,913.1	0	0	0	
Utilities	SM	144.5	0	0	0	
Utilities	STP	1,455.5	0	0	0	
Totals:		8,100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

<p>Program Type: CTP Primary Work: System Preservation Secondary Work:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Project Status</td> <td style="width: 30%;">Year</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project Start:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1996</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environmental Clearance:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Construction Funded:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Right of Way Authorized:</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Project Status	Year	Project Start:	1996	Environmental Clearance:		Construction Funded:		Right of Way Authorized:		<p>Election District: 35</p> <p>PEB Score: Criteria: 199 Urban and Rural</p> <p>Borough/Census Area: Kenai Peninsula Borough</p> <p>Municipal Planning Organization (MPO): non-MPO</p>
Project Status	Year										
Project Start:	1996										
Environmental Clearance:											
Construction Funded:											
Right of Way Authorized:											

Average AADT: 1849

Sponsor:

DOT&PF

Pavement Rating: Fair

Predominant Functional Class: Rural Major Collector



2012-2015 Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Need ID: 2670 Region: Central

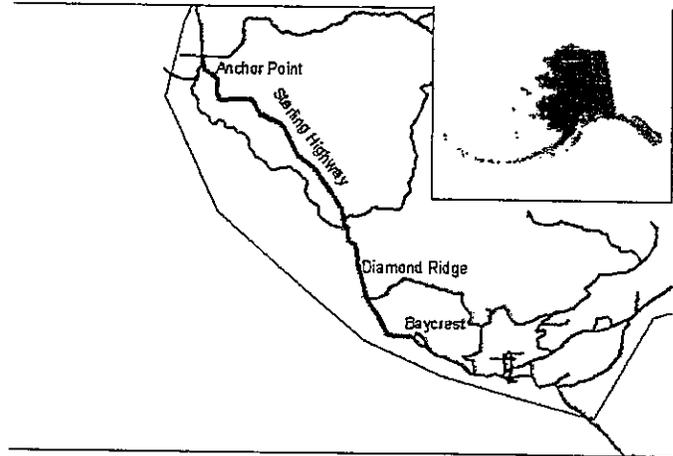
Place Name:

Title:

Sterling Highway MP 157 to 169 Rehabilitation - Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill

Project Description:

Provide passing lanes, widening and realignment as needed to address safety and capacity concerns, and resurface pavement between Anchor Point (MP 157) and the top of Homer Hill (MP 169)



PHASE	FUNDING	FFY12	FFY13	FFY14	FFY15	After FFY15
All amounts x1,000 dollars						
Design	BR	1,251.4	0	0	0	
Design	NHS	568.0	0	0	0	
Design	SM	180.6	0	0	0	
Right of Way	NHS	0	2,302.5	0	0	
Right of Way	SM	0	228.5	0	0	
Construction	ILLU	0	0	0	20,923.1	
Construction	SM	0	0	0	2,076.9	
Utilities	BR	0	0	0	1,819.4	
Utilities	SM	0	0	0	180.6	
Totals:		2,000.0	2,531.0	0.0	25,000.0	11,371.0

Program Type:	NHS
Primary Work:	Reconstruction
Secondary Work:	
Project Status	Year
Project Start:	2005
Environmental Clearance:	
Construction Funded:	
Right of Way Authorized:	

Election District:	
35	
PEB Score:	Criteria:
N/A	Urban and Rural
Borough/Census Area:	
Kenai Peninsula Borough	
Municipal Planning Organization (MPO):	
non-MPO	

Average AADT: 3530
Pavement Rating: Fair

Sponsor: DOT&PF
Predominant Functional Class: Rural Other Principal Arterial



2012-2015 Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Need ID: 23178 Region: Central

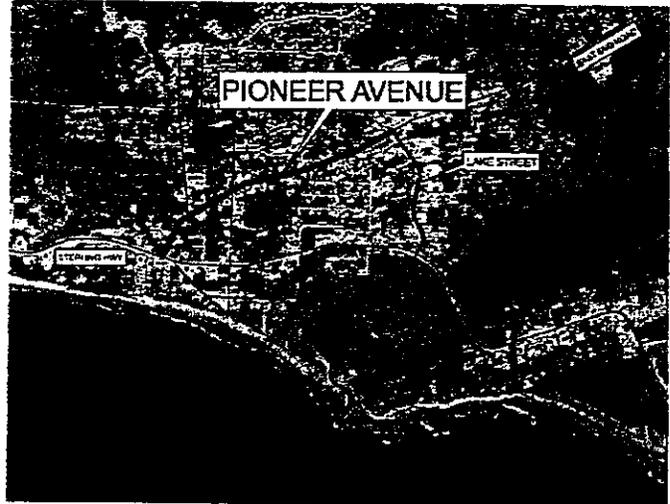
Place Name: Homer

Title:

Pioneer Avenue Rehabilitation

Project Description:

Resurface approximately 1 mile of Pioneer Avenue from the Sterling Highway to the intersection of Lake Street and East End Road. Project may include bike lanes, drainage, lighting, curb and gutter and sidewalk construction and landscaping. All work to occur within existing ROW.



PHASE	FUNDING	FFY12	FFY13	FFY14	FFY15	After FFY15
All amounts x1,000 dollars						
Design	SM	0	0	21.5	0	
Design	STP	0	0	216.5	0	
Right of Way	SM	0	0	0	39.8	
Right of Way	STP	0	0	0	401.2	
Totals:		0.0	0.0	238.0	441.0	3,600.0

<p>Program Type: CTP</p> <p>Primary Work:</p> <p>Secondary Work:</p>	<p>Election District: 35</p> <p>PEB Score: Criteria: N/A</p> <p>Borough/Census Area: Kenai Peninsula Borough</p> <p>Municipal Planning Organization (MPO): not identified</p>										
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Project Status	Year										
Project Start:											
Environmental Clearance:											
Construction Funded:											
Right of Way Authorized:											

Average AADT: Sponsor: City of Homer
Pavement Rating: Predominant Functional Class:



2012-2015 Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Need ID: 23197 **Region:** Central

Place Name: Homer

Title:

Lake Street Rehabilitation

Project Description:

Rehabilitate pavement of approx 2500 feet, construct sidewalks on both sides of the road and provide drainage improvements. Lake Street is located in downtown Homer, between the Sterling Highway and Pioneer Avenue.



PHASE	FUNDING	FFY12	FFY13	FFY14	FFY15	After FFY15
All amounts x1,000 dollars						
Right of Way	SM	29.9	0	0	0	
Right of Way	STP	301.1	0	0	0	
Construction	SM	0	0	130.8	0	
Construction	STP	0	0	1,318.2	0	
Utilities	SM	0	0	31.3	0	
Utilities	STP	0	0	315.7	0	
Totals:		331.0	0.0	1,796.0	0.0	0.0

<p>Program Type: CTP</p> <p>Primary Work:</p> <p>Secondary Work:</p>	<p>Election District: 35</p> <p>PEB Score: Criteria: N/A</p> <p>Borough/Census Area: Kenai Peninsula Borough</p> <p>Municipal Planning Organization (MPO): not identified</p>										
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Project Start:	2010										
Environmental Clearance:											
Construction Funded:											
Right of Way Authorized:											

Average AADT:

Sponsor:

City of Homer

Pavement Rating:

Predominant Functional Class:



2012-2015 Alaska Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Need ID: 23935 **Region:** Central

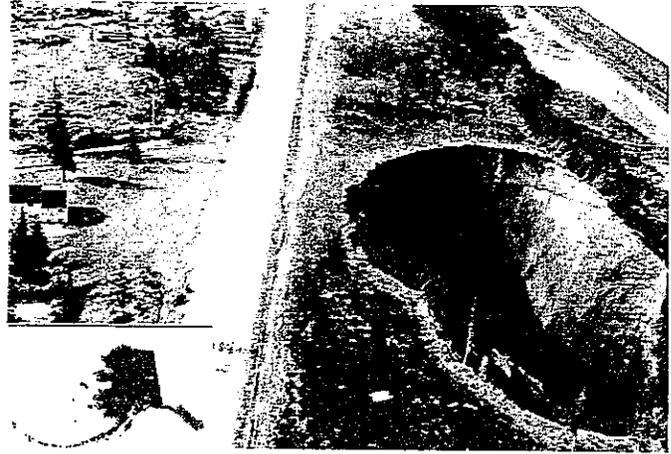
Place Name:

Title:

Sterling Hwy Erosion Response MP 150-157

Project Description:

Project to identify and implement solutions to bluff erosion at MP 153-154. May involve road relocation. First effort is for reconnaissance study to evaluate alternatives and quantify costs.



PHASE	FUNDING	FFY12	FFY13	FFY14	FFY15	After FFY15
All amounts x1,000 dollars						
Design	ILLU	0	1,364.6	0	0	
Design	SM	0	135.5	0	0	
Totals:		0.0	1,500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

<p>Program Type: NHS Primary Work: Secondary Work:</p>	<p>Election District: 34</p> <p>PEB Score: Criteria: N/A</p> <p>Borough/Census Area: Kenai Peninsula Borough</p> <p>Municipal Planning Organization (MPO): not identified</p>										
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Project Status	Year										
Project Start:	2010										
Environmental Clearance:											
Construction Funded:											
Right of Way Authorized:											

Average AADT: Sponsor:
 Pavement Rating: Predominant Functional Class:

