



# City of Homer

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## Memorandum 22-093

TO: Mayor Castner and the Homer City Council  
FROM: Rick Abboud, AICP, City Planner  
DATE: May 18, 2022  
SUBJECT: Trails & Sidewalks in Code and Plans

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### Introduction

Today's presentation is meant to provide Council with information on code, plans, programs, and current efforts under way to enhance sidewalks and other forms of non-motorized transportation. First, I will discuss the function of various documents and codes that provide the regulatory environment for the creation of non-motorized facilities. Next, Julie Engebretsen, our Economic Development Manager will review our past efforts to fund and develop non-motorized facilities. Finally, Jan Kaiser, our Public Works Director will discuss our current and proposed efforts to fund and construct public improvements.

I have been putting together some information on the regulatory environment related to non-motorized facilities for the Planning Commission. Below are codes citing the plans that deal with non-motorized transportation including elements of the Homer Comprehensive Plan. Newly proposed streets are subject to the criteria in the various documents.

### **HCC 22.10 Subdivision Improvements**

- Intent of code is to supplement the Kenai Peninsula Borough subdivision ordinance
- Requires rights-of way to be built to standards of *Design Criterial Manual*, HCC 22.10.050
- Requires utility easements and other easements such as, sidewalks, bike paths, and other non-motorized transportation facilities as identified in the *Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan*. Other non-required easements (such as trails and path not identified on the plan) may be accepted by the City Council, HCC 22.10.051.

### **Title 11 Streets, Sidewalks and Driveway Construction**

- This Chapter deals with construction
- Adopts classification system of the *Master Roads and Street Plan* map and building standards associated with the classification, HCC 11.04.050.
- Requires streets to be built to minimum requirements of the plan, "however, that the City may, upon direction of the City Council, elect to require construction to the full standards and pay to the developer the cost difference between the required street and the proposed street." (HCC 11.04.050(c))
- "The City Council shall be empowered to designate additional routes as arterials and collectors beyond those adopted on the Master Plan map." (HCC 11.04.050(d))

- Adopts by reference the “Design Criteria Manual for Streets and Storm Drainage,” dated April 1985 and revised February 1987 (HCC 11.04.058).
- Technical specs and references for construction and reconstruction including:
  - HCC 11.04.120 Sidewalks and non-motorized transportation corridors.*
  - a. New streets to be accepted by the City and identified as public access corridors in the adopted Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan shall have easements for sidewalks, bicycle paths or other non-motorized transportation facilities to ensure convenient mobility and convenient access to parks, recreation areas, trails, playgrounds, schools and places of public assembly.*
  - b. New streets to be accepted by the City and not identified as public access corridors in the Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan may, at the developer’s option, have sidewalks, bicycle paths or other non-motorized transportation facilities.*
  - c. Sidewalks, bicycle paths and other non-motorized transportation facilities shall be designed in accordance with the design criteria of the City of Homer Design Criteria Manual.*

**Design Criteria Manual for Streets and Storm Drainage, April 1985 Revised February, 1987**

- The document is the technical design criteria and includes specifications for construction of Sidewalks (Article 5.11) and Bikeways (Article 5.12). This is basically approved technical specifications including materials and dimensions necessary for a ROW to be accepted by the city.
- Adopted in Title 11 (construction), required by Title 22 (Subdivisions)
- Specifies how to construct, not when to construct.
- Not an element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Original thoughts on adoption.
  - Reduce road construction costs (whereas)
  - Provide minimum standards for design and construction and minimize public liability (intent)

**Trail Manual, 2009**

- Technical specifications for trail design
- Article of the Design Criteria Manual
- Supplemental to NMTTP

**Master Roads & Streets Plan, 1986**

- The document was created by contractors working with an appointed Road Standards Committee. It includes an inventory, classification, status and recommendations of all roads (in 1986). It documented the many issues associated with existing local physical conditions and the built environment. Not surprisingly, we are still addressing many today. It proposed revision to the classification system and corrective actions to take on existing streets (including constructing a sidewalk on Main Street north of Pioneer Avenue!).
- Recommends projects, a functional classification system, as well as policy and implementation recommendations.
- Missing chapter on future streets/project recommendations.

- Obviously this document could use an update, but also a review for lessons learned.

#### **Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan, 2004 (NMTTP)**

- This plan was created with a grant and was created with a contractor driven public engagement process.
- With an exclusive focus on non-motorized transportation an inventory of all existing features were documented along with mapped recommendations for future paths including sidewalks, trails and bike paths.
- Included are strategies for forwarding policies including recommended actions and funding opportunities.

#### **2005 Homer Area Transportation Plan**

- Completed after an effort to update the transportation plan had stall for some years.
- Based off 1999 traffic data and used 2000 census for population, meant to be a 20 year plan.
- Updates much of the information found in the Master Roads and Streets Plan. Not including a detailed street-by-street structural assessment, but does identify future routes and evaluates the Level of Service (LOS) for existing routes.

#### **So how could we get more non-motorized facilities?**

Right now:

- Support our Public Works Director's plan to utilize HART funds for projects currently identified.
- Continue to lobby the state for federal funds, especially for those associated with state roads and other projects that qualify for funding.
- Find champion to future investigate funding opportunities identified in the NMTTP.

For future infrastructure:

- Update plans and codes that prescribe non-motorized transportation requirements for future subdivision, including consideration of cost share options for routes with the greatest community benefits.
- Plan for use of HART funds.
- Consider Special Assessment District (SAD) policy to better encourage participation in local district for and/or to include sidewalks.

#### **Attachments**

Hart Policy Manual

Documents from this century can be found on the Planning Page under Comprehensive Plan and Trail Design Criteria Manual

<https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/planning/comprehensive-plan>

<https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/planning/trail-design-criteria-manual>