

1 **CITY OF HOMER**
2 **HOMER, ALASKA**

3 Aderhold

4 **RESOLUTION 23-083(A)**

5
6 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA
7 PROVIDING COMMENTS ON THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF
8 TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES 2024-2027
9 STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

10
11 WHEREAS, The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
12 issued its 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in summer 2023
13 for public review and requests comments by September 3, 2023; and

14
15 WHEREAS, The City of Homer has held numerous meetings with DOT&PF
16 representatives about transportation projects in the Homer area; and

17
18 WHEREAS, The State of Alaska has contributed funding towards the City of Homer's
19 harbor expansion general investigation study with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
20 that was initiated in spring 2023; and

21
22 WHEREAS, The City of Homer includes critical state transportation infrastructure,
23 including an Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) ferry terminal and dock, the Sterling
24 Highway (which ends at the ferry terminal), Kachemak Drive, Pioneer Avenue and East End
25 Road, Main Street, and East Hill and West Hill roads; and

26
27 WHEREAS, The City of Homer's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) contains
28 recommendations for several state transportation projects; and

29
30 WHEREAS, The City of Homer has embarked on several projects to make the city more
31 accessible to non-motorized transportation and has applied for state and federal grant funds
32 for these important local transportation projects; and

33
34 WHEREAS, The City of Homer has provided comments on numerous projects listed in
35 the 2024-2027 STIP and has requested the addition of numerous projects into the STIP.

36
37 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Homer, Alaska, requests
38 DOT&PF add the following projects to the 2024-2027 STIP:

- 39
40 • Homer Harbor Expansion
41 ○ This project is the City of Homer's top CIP priority.

- 42 ○ Homer’s harbor is filled beyond capacity, with a long waiting list for mooring
43 and many vessels that moor in the harbor do not have adequate space for their
44 size.
- 45 ○ As a hub for many types of marine transportation vessels, including a fishing
46 fleet, pilot and escort vessels, and vessels that deliver goods to western Alaska,
47 the harbor is critical infrastructure of regional and statewide importance.
- 48 ○ The State of Alaska and the City of Homer each contributed \$750,000 to match
49 Federal funding for the \$3,000,000 General Investigation study now underway
50 by USACE, which is subsequently expected to move into the project engineering
51 and design phase. With local, state and **federal** funding secured, the project
52 should be added to the STIP, not the "Illustrative Projects and Discretionary
53 Grants” section.
- 54 ● Homer Spit Coastal Erosion Mitigation
 - 55 ○ The Sterling Highway, a state-maintained road that is part of the federal
56 highway system, extends through Homer and to the end of the Homer Spit,
57 providing a critical road surface freight and public traveler connection to
58 Homer’s harbor, to the AMHS ferry terminal, and to recreational and tourist
59 amenities.
 - 60 ○ The Homer Spit is a 4.5-mile-long glacial feature composed of sands and gravel
61 and is subject to erosion.
 - 62 ○ The City of Homer is working cooperatively with DOT&PF and USACE to design,
63 permit, and implement a long-term erosion mitigation and maintenance plan to
64 mitigate and stabilize erosion conditions.
 - 65 ○ Current work includes beach renourishment using harbor dredge materials, but
66 this is not a long-term solution.
 - 67 ○ DOT&PF partnered with the City of Homer to submit a FY23-24 Federal PROTECT
68 grant for \$1.8M in planning funds to develop a long-term erosion mitigation and
69 climate resilient design solution.
 - 70 ○ This project is of critical surface transportation importance and should be
71 added to the STIP, not to the "Illustrative Projects and Discretionary Grants”
72 section where it is currently listed.
- 73 ● MP 172 Drainage Improvements.
 - 74 ○ The Baycrest Subdivision neighborhood, downslope of a beehive collector
75 installed at milepost 172 of the Sterling Highway by DOT&PF, is built on sloping
76 terrain of unconsolidated soils containing blue clay with a high water table and
77 incidental springs. Properties in this subdivision experience unusually high
78 levels of flooding, runoff, and erosion. Water flow volume measurements from
79 the beehive collector over time indicate that the outfall is directing a
80 concentrated discharge of water onto the Baycrest neighborhood slope, adding
81 to an already precarious water saturated soil condition.
 - 82 ○ The city requests that DOT&PF divert the beehive collector outfall off the slope
83 and into a natural drainage similar to the one that exists below the Sterling

84 Highway concrete encased cross drain east of the Mt. Augustine Drive
85 intersection with the Sterling Highway.

86 • Sterling Highway Milepost 169-175 Pavement Preservation Project and Pedestrian
87 Safety Upgrades:

88 ○ The City of Homer was asked to provide comments on this project in 2022 during
89 early planning. This is a much-needed project and the City requests that the
90 project be included in the STIP. Below are comments the City provided on the
91 project.

92 ○ Extend the Sterling Highway sidewalk on the north side of the Sterling Highway
93 to and around Rogers Loop to the Diamond Creek Recreation Site. This would
94 connect the sidewalk to the extensive existing trail system bounded by the
95 Sterling Highway on the south and Diamond Ridge Road on the north of Rogers
96 Loop. Hundreds of hikers and cross-country skiers use these trails year-round.

97 ○ Extend the school safety zone on the Sterling Highway at Homer Middle School.
98 The school parking lot and entrance will be upgraded by the Kenai Peninsula
99 Borough. The DOT&PF-installed flashing lights and school zone no longer
100 extend the length of the school property or include the exit of the parking lot.

101 ○ Install Highly Visible Crosswalks. Due to traffic levels and speed, improving sight
102 lines and crosswalk delineation with safety flashing lights at the following
103 Sterling Highway intersections would benefit pedestrian safety: Pioneer
104 Avenue, Heath Street, Poopdeck Street, and Kachemak Drive.

105 ○ Repair the Beluga Slough Bike Path. The asphalt surface has developed
106 longitudinal cracks as well as raveling. This deteriorated condition poses a
107 danger to bicyclists and pedestrians experiencing disabilities.

108 ○ Install Ocean Drive Bicycle Lanes and/or a pedestrian pathway with clearly
109 defined business access points on Ocean Drive that connects to the pathway on
110 Lake Street and the Homer Spit Path. During the last paving project, DOT&PF
111 moved the centerline of Ocean Drive so that instead of a bike lane on one side
112 of the road, there was a wide shoulder on both sides. This has helped quite a bit,
113 but is insufficient given the growth of traffic and non-motorized use during the
114 summer months. Further, many business driveways intersect the shoulders
115 making pedestrian and bicycle travel very hazardous.

116 ○ Design and Install Ocean Drive Turn Lane. Turning left on Ocean Drive during the
117 summer is challenging and dangerous because of the traffic volumes. This is
118 exacerbated by the fact that ingress and egress to the private properties
119 adjacent to Ocean Drive are uncontrolled. Ocean Drive is basically one big
120 driveway onto private parking lots. A left-hand turn lane will greatly improve
121 road and pedestrian safety.

122 ○ Partner with the City in the Green Infrastructure Storm Water Management
123 project for creative solutions to remove sediment and pollutants from
124 stormwater discharge into Beluga Slough and Kachemak Bay and mitigate
125 erosion.

126 ○ **Include City of Homer Wayfinding recommendations in signage**
127 **replacement. The City adopted a Wayfinding plan in 2022. This plan**
128 **includes several changes to DOT signage to better assist the traveling public**
129 **in finding their way around the community. The City requests DOT**
130 **assistance in installing vehicle signage in accordance with the attached**
131 **plan.**

- 132 ● Kachemak Drive Restoration and Non-Motorized Pathway
 - 133 ○ Kachemak Drive is a state road that connects East End Road to the base of the
 - 134 Homer Spit. The Homer Boatyard is accessed from the east end of Kachemak
 - 135 Drive and general aviation businesses associated with the state-owned airport
 - 136 are located at the west end of the Kachemak Drive.
 - 137 ○ DOT&PF began scoping a “1R” project to resurface Kachemak Drive in 2021 and
 - 138 the city is surprised that this project is not included in the STIP, as the road
 - 139 surface is highly deteriorated.
 - 140 ○ As part of the project, the city requests constructing a separated non-motorized
 - 141 pathway along the length of Kachemak Drive because of the safety issues that
 - 142 exist along this narrow, winding roadway. The city proposes to partner with
 - 143 DOT&PF to accomplish this goal.
- 144 ● Main Street Rehabilitation and Sidewalk
 - 145 ○ Main Street from Pioneer Avenue south to its end near Ohlson Lane is a state
 - 146 road. The road is a primary north-south collector in Homer. The road condition
 - 147 has deteriorated in recent years. The pavement is raveling and the drainage
 - 148 system is inadequate, allowing water to infiltrate the road bed.
 - 149 ○ The road is narrow and has no shoulders, making it unsafe for pedestrians and
 - 150 bicyclists, though it is frequently used by pedestrians and cyclists because of its
 - 151 importance as a collector.
 - 152 ○ The City of Homer submitted a funding request for DOT&PF fiscal year 2022-2025
 - 153 Community Transportation Program grant funding to make these much-needed
 - 154 improvements to Main Street.
- 155 ● East Hill Road and West Hill Road Bike Lanes
 - 156 ○ East Hill and West Hill roads are state-maintained arterial roads that connect
 - 157 Diamond Ridge and Skyline Drive areas of Homer to the main parts of town. Both
 - 158 roads are steep and winding with no shoulders, leaving no safe alternative for
 - 159 non-motorized traffic.
 - 160 ○ The Homer City Council requests DOT&PF to include non-motorized amenities
 - 161 during future upgrades to East and West Hill roads.

163 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Homer, Alaska, requests DOT&PF add
164 the following projects to the "Illustrative Projects and Discretionary Grants" section of the
165 2024-2027 STIP. These are projects for which the City has applied or intends to apply for
166 Federal discretionary grant funds:

167

- 168 ● Homer Harbor Critical Float System Replacement – FREIGHT Project
- 169 ○ The Homer City Council is pleased to see this project listed in the "Illustrative
- 170 Projects and Discretionary Grants" section of the STIP.
- 171 ○ The Homer Harbor contains floats that were constructed in 1964 for the original
- 172 harbor and are 30 years beyond their engineered life expectancy. Other floats
- 173 date to 1986 and in critical to serious need of replacement.
- 174 ○ As a regional transportation hub serving the marine transportation needs for
- 175 over 47 non-road connected communities in Southcentral and Western Alaska,
- 176 as well as the commercial fishing, sport fishing, mariculture and ecotourism
- 177 industries, the harbor is critical infrastructure of regional and statewide
- 178 importance.
- 179 ○ The City of Homer submitted a federal grant application in 2023 for \$47 million
- 180 in Port Infrastructure Development Program funds to assist with design,
- 181 engineering, and construction.
- 182 ● Realizing Equitable, Accessible Connectivity in Homer (REACH)
- 183 ○ REACH plans and designs a comprehensive network of sidewalks, trails,
- 184 bikeways, and mobility hubs to enable residents and visitors to make non-
- 185 motorized trips within Homer. The proposed network will connect existing trails
- 186 and sidewalks in Homer’s downtown core and waterfront, complete previous
- 187 nonmotorized transportation planning efforts, and design new facilities. The
- 188 non-motorized system will provide significant safety benefits as well as an
- 189 economic boost by better integrating local businesses, health care facilities, and
- 190 tourist destinations.
- 191 ○ The City has submitted a federal grant application for \$1.4M in RAISE Planning
- 192 funds.
- 193 ● Homer All Ages and Abilities Pedestrian Path
- 194 ○ The City of Homer submitted this project to DOT&PF for consideration as part of
- 195 its fiscal years 2022-2025 Transportation Alternatives Program grant funding
- 196 estimated at \$3.9M.
- 197 ○ The project would construct sidewalks on Svedlund, Herndon, and Lee streets
- 198 to connect to Pioneer Avenue (a state road); construct a sidewalk on the state-
- 199 owned portion of Main Street from Pioneer Avenue south to Ohlson Lane; and
- 200 improve crosswalks at intersections.

201 The project would greatly improve walkability in Homer, connecting the Senior Center, Coast
202 Guard Housing, and residential areas to Homer’s downtown and Old Town areas.

203
204 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Homer, Alaska, provides the following
205 comments on specific projects currently listed in the STIP:


- 206
- 207 ● Project 2670, Sterling Highway Milepost 157-169 Reconstruction Anchor Point to
- 208 Baycrest Hill
- 209 ○ The Homer City Council fully supports the completion of this project.

- 210 ○ The Homer City Council requests the addition of several features associated
211 with this project, as follows:
- 212 ▪ We request improvements to the Baycrest Overlook to enhance visitor
213 and resident experiences: paving the parking lot near the “Welcome to
214 Homer” sign, demarcating the Van Accessible parking space in
215 compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and
216 upgrading the restroom facility for ADA compliance.
 - 217 ▪ We request the inclusion of an enlarged culvert at the Diamond Creek
218 crossing to allow for a future grade-separated non-motorized path
219 adjacent to the creek connecting local trail systems north of the highway
220 to a state recreation area trail system south of the highway.
 - 221 ▪ **Both the Alaska State Park’s Diamond Creek Recreation site west of**
222 **the Sterling Highway, and the City of Homer’s Diamond Creek**
223 **Recreation Area east of the highway, are heavily used by visitors and**
224 **residents alike.**
 - 225 ▪ **With work scheduled to commence soon on a project to widen the**
226 **highway to accommodate a northbound left-turn lane, the**
227 **construction of a safe pedestrian crossing between the two areas is**
228 **more critical and timely than ever, and the City of Homer joins many**
229 **other individuals and organizations in urging DOT&PF to update its**
230 **plans to incorporate this improvement.**
- 231 ● Project 30189, M/V Tustumena Replacement Vessel, and Project 24211, M/V Kennicott
232 Emissions and Exhaust
 - 233 ○ The Homer City Council fully supports replacing the M/V Tustumena and
234 upgrading the M/V Kennicott’s emissions and exhaust systems. Both vessels
235 dock in Homer.
 - 236 ○ Homer is the launch point for the AMHS from the state road system to Seldovia,
237 Kodiak and surrounding villages, and the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands.
 - 238 ○ Homer City Council sees the AMHS as critical infrastructure for coastal Alaska.
 - 239 ○ Modernizing and reducing emissions from the AMHS fleet is important to
240 address operating costs and climate change.
 - 241 ● Project 34223, Community Transportation Program (CTP): Alaska-wide
 - 242 ○ Homer has recently submitted grant applications under this program and
243 considers State CTP funding critical for road surface safety and efficiency
244 improvements statewide.
 - 245 ○ The Homer City Council fully supports continuing this program into the future.
 - 246 ● Project 33864, Transportation Alternatives Program: non-AMATS MPOs
 - 247 ○ Homer has recently submitted grant applications under this program and hopes
248 to use the funds to enhance non-motorized transportation within the city.
 - 249 ○ The Homer City Council fully supports continuing this program into the future.
 - 250 ● Project 33865, National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program

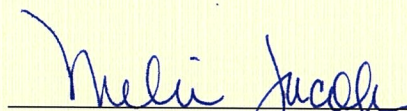
- 251 ○ More and more Homer residents and visitors use electric vehicles every day.
- 252 Installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure between Homer and
- 253 Anchorage is important to establish an interconnected network.
- 254 ● Project 32478, ADA implementation and Compliance
- 255 ○ The Homer City Council applauds DOT&PF's efforts to implement and improve
- 256 compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- 257 ○ The City of Homer has created an ADA Advisory Board which has prepared a
- 258 transition plan for its buildings, is in the process of finalizing a transition plan for
- 259 parks and campgrounds, and is initiating a transition plan for trails and
- 260 pathways.
- 261 ○ The City is actively working to improve ADA access throughout the city, including
- 262 adding and upgrading sidewalks.
- 263 ○ The City submitted several grant proposals related to adding sidewalks for
- 264 improved ADA access, including the Homer All Ages and Abilities Pedestrian
- 265 Path and Main Street Rehabilitation and Sidewalk projects listed above.
- 266

267 PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA, THIS 28th day of
268 August, 2023.

270 CITY OF HOMER

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272 _____
273 KEN CASTNER, MAYOR

275 ATTEST:

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278 MELISSA JACOBSEN, MMC, CITY CLERK

280
281 Fiscal note: N/A

