To: City of Homer Parks, Art, Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission  
RE: CIP project list prioritization  

August 18, 2022  

Dear Commissioners,

I submit the following comments for your consideration in prioritizing the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) State Projects, with your interest at hand. I understand you must select three projects to forward. These three projects are the ones I encourage you all to prioritize on the City’s list:

1. Main Street sidewalk, between Pioneer and Ohlson Lane –
   It only makes sense to continue the pedestrian sidewalk project the full length of Main Street. Old Town, Bunnell Ave, and the Bishop’s Beach area are all highly used by the community, as well as seasonal visitors, and the safety of a sidewalk allowing people to walk down the hill into Old Town and the beach without risk or danger is logical. Please take advantage of the current opportunity to work with State DOT to do so.

2. Kachemak Drive non-motorized pathway –
   The community has been working towards the reality of this pathway along Kachemak Drive for many years. Meanwhile, the inherent risks of walking or biking along the road have increased. Considering the road is a major artery in the city, and the heavy use the road gets from the pedestrian and biking public, it’s high time to move the project into active development mode. Please make the effort to push this project forward now.

3. East and West Hill bike lanes -
   With the increased residential development on both lower West and East Hill areas, and the opportunity with road work being conducted on both these major roads, it seems highly prudent to prioritize including bike lanes along those primary corridors to facilitate people walking, biking and skiing to school and town. Creating these bike lanes aligns with the City Comprehensive Plan, the Non-motorized Transportation Plan, and the strong community interest in actively increasing walkability in and around the City.

Lastly, the one project I request you backburner is the Beluga Slough Trail Extension. 
   An ad-hoc group of friends and colleagues of Carmen Field have worked on this idea over the years since her passing, with a current hiatus due, at least in part, to Covid. The trail, as proposed here, does not reflect the full discussion and this route was strongly downplayed by the group for several reasons. An alternative was explored that would produce significantly less impact, but it is not reflected in this proposal.
   In addition, Kachemak Bay Birders monitors bird activity in the Slough, including nearly 15 years of shorebird surveys, and has not had the opportunity to substantially weigh-in as a group with local site expertise.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I kept them brief, as I only learned of this pending action last night.

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