



Homer City Hall

491 E. Pioneer Avenue

Homer, Alaska 99603

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

City of Homer Agenda

Planning Commission Worksession

Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 5:30 PM

Cowles Council Chambers and via Zoom Webinar

Webinar ID: 93628153389 Password: 865591

Dial (669)900-6833 or (253)215-8782 or Toll Free (877) 853-5247 or (888) 788-0099

CALL TO ORDER, 5:30 P.M.

AGENDA APPROVAL

PRESENTATION

- A. Matt Steffy, City of Homer Parks Superintendent to present *Draft City of Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trails 2022 Implementation* **page 2**

DISCUSSION OF ITEMS ON THE REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minute time limit)

ADJOURNMENT, 6:20 P.M.

Next Regular Meeting is Wednesday, May 4, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. A worksession is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.



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Planning

491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603

Planning@ci.homer.ak.us

(p) 907-235-3106

(f) 907-235-3118

Staff Report PL 22-30

TO: HOMER PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: RICK ABBOUD, AICP, CITY PLANNER
DATE: APRIL 20, 2022
SUBJECT: NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION (NMTTP)

Introduction

Matt Steffy is presenting at the work session and this gives the Commission an opportunity for more formal comment on the implementation plan

Analysis

Public Works is presenting an Implementation Plan for the NMTTP. I have determined that the document is detailing projects that are recommended in the current plan and would not constitute an amendment.

Feedback may be given on priority of the items and/or a general statement of support.

Staff Recommendation

Provide feedback on the proposed Implementation plan

Attachments

NMTTP Implementation Plan

City of Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trails Plan 2022 Supplement



City of Homer
Non-Motorized Transportation and Trails Plan
2022 Supplement

I. Overview

The City of Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trails Plan (“NMTTP”) was created by DOWL Engineers in 2004 as a planning document to guide the development of trails, paths, and sidewalks in the City of Homer. This 2022 Supplement does not necessarily replace the 2004 NMTTP. Rather, it addresses some immediate issues related to new/pending development, changing priorities, resources, and standards to facilitate sensible near-term planning and implementation of non-motorized transportation. A more comprehensive replacement NMTTP will be developed later.

This Supplement was developed by a team consisting of:

- Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
- Rick Aboud, Planning Director
- Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner
- Matt Steffy, Parks Superintendent
- Aaron Yeaton, GIS Technician
- Janette Keiser, PE, Public Works Director



II. Approach

This Supplement considered possible non-motorized transportation routes from two perspectives:

- Perspective #1 – Which areas of the City, affected by recent or proposed development as well as important destinations, would benefit from new non-motorized transportation routes?
- Perspective #2 – Where were new routes needed to improve the function of existing non-motorized routes by providing connectivity or accessibility?

Perspective #1 – Which areas of the City, affected by recent or proposed development as well as important destinations, would benefit from non-motorized transportation routes?

The team identified four primary Areas of Interest, shown in Figure A. These areas were selected because of the extent to which recent development has affected, or the potential for future development could affect, the way people flow from the developments to important destinations. Further the four areas were identified as high priority due to their lack of non-motorized infrastructure as well as their proximity to schools, new residential construction, and recreational opportunities.

Area of Interest #1 – West Homer *(See Figure B)*

This area is currently undergoing rapid development. The City is attempting to address pedestrian access through this area by coordinating with developers involved with on-going design/construction as well as adjacent land owners. For example, West Fairview Avenue will be connected to Eric Lane, as part of a pending development. This connection should have a sidewalk/path at least on one side. Further,

discussions are underway with a landowner at the current terminus of West Fairview to develop trails across their property that would connect Fairview Avenue south to Soundview Avenue by accessing a City culvert easement.



Fairview Ave looking east

The Reber Trail currently connects to the terminus of West Fairview Avenue, providing a popular scenic hike and transportation route to Reber Road off of West Hill Road. Trails counters have measured up to 500 people per week using this trail. The northern-most 300 feet is steep, making it very difficult for most users to climb year round, and particularly dangerous in the winter. This section needs an additional switchback to improve the accessibility of this trail.

Fairview Avenue should allow non-motorized use from Bartlett Street to West Hill Road, through a combination of widened shoulders, sidewalks and trails. Connectivity to West Hill could be through Seascape Drive.

A non-motorized route on West Hill Road should be installed to direct pedestrians and bicyclists from the Sterling Highway to the Reber Trail. This would protect non-motorized traffic from the most dangerous switchback on West Hill Road. It would also connect with the City's non-motorized network, at Eric Lane and further north, at the Reber Trail.

The Karen Hornaday Park should be connected with a wilderness trail to a City-owned parcel on the ridge above the Park. This would provide access to, and use of, this parcel.

Area of Interest #2 – East Homer (See Figure C)

There has been, and continues to be, a lot of development in this area, which is home to multiple important destinations including the Quiet Creek residential subdivision, Homer High School and Glacier View Baptist Church. There are dedicated trail easements in the Quiet Creek subdivision that should connect to the existing trail system on the High School property.

There is a small connector that comes down South Slope Drive to (New) Nelson Avenue that should be developed and maintained.

There is also a dedicated easement that connects Old Nelson Avenue to the High School and the Glacier View Baptist Church and ultimately, to the existing sidewalk along East End Road. A path should be developed in this easement.



South Slope Connector Path

Area of Interest #3 – Town Center (See Figure D)



ADA ramp on Poopdeck Extension Trail

The Town Center consists of a mixture of land ownership, including Cook Inlet Regional Incorporated, Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, City of Homer, and various private parcels. Access is needed from east to west branching off of the existing Poopdeck Trail system. The Poopdeck Trail system is one of Homer's most popular trails. Trail counters have measured up to 160 users/week.

Area of Interest #4 – Beluga Slough (See Figure E)

The Beluga Slough area, rich natural resources, is owned/maintained by the USFWS and the City of Homer. There is an existing boardwalk and trail that connects the Islands and Oceans Visitor Center with Bishop's Beach Park. Numerous local natural resource agencies have expressed a high level of interest in extending the boardwalk to prevent pedestrians from straying into the slough, and its surrounding wetlands. This is because this straying adversely impacts the slough's ecological function as well as breeding migratory birds. Also, the slough is listed as salmon habitat in Alaska's anadromous inventory.

The goal is to ultimately connect the boardwalk from its existing location to the intersection of Lake Street and the Sterling Highway. There are two possible ways of accomplishing this. The first possible route crosses private land owned by the Aspen Hotel and sticks to the edge of the green, upland-ish areas of the slough. The second possible route is situated entirely on City property, coming off the end of East Bunnell Avenue. Multiple natural resource agencies would be interested in this route and possibly, willing and able to partner with the City in its development, including: Islands & Oceans, Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and Center for AK Coastal Studies.



Perspective #2 – Where were routes needed to improve the function of existing non-motorized routes by providing connectivity or accessibility? This perspective addressed the function of trails, etc., as elements of transportation infrastructure to get to and from destinations, not just as recreational assets.

From this perspective, the following projects that would improve connectivity and/or accessibility, were identified. These projects are listed in order of priority and are shown on Figure B. Most of these routes fall within the Areas of Interest and are listed in the City of Homer Public Works Department 5-year Capital Improvement Program.

A. Sidewalks	Area of Interest
1. Main Street – North of Pioneer	General
2. West Fairview Avenue	West Homer
3. Ben Walters Way	General
4. Svedlund/Herndon to Senior Center	General
5. Main Street – South of Pioneer to Sterling Highway	Town Center
6. Main Street – Sterling Highway to Bishop’s Beach	General
B. Trails	
1. Karen Hornaday Park – ADA Pedestrian Access Trail	West Homer
2. Upper Reber Trail grade improvements	West Homer
3. Old Nelson Trail	East Homer
4. Bishop Beach Sculpture Trail	Beluga Slough
5. Bishop Beach Wetland Trail	Beluga Slough
6. Beluga Slough Boardwalk Extension	Beluga Slough
C. Paths	
1. East Fairview Avenue	East Homer

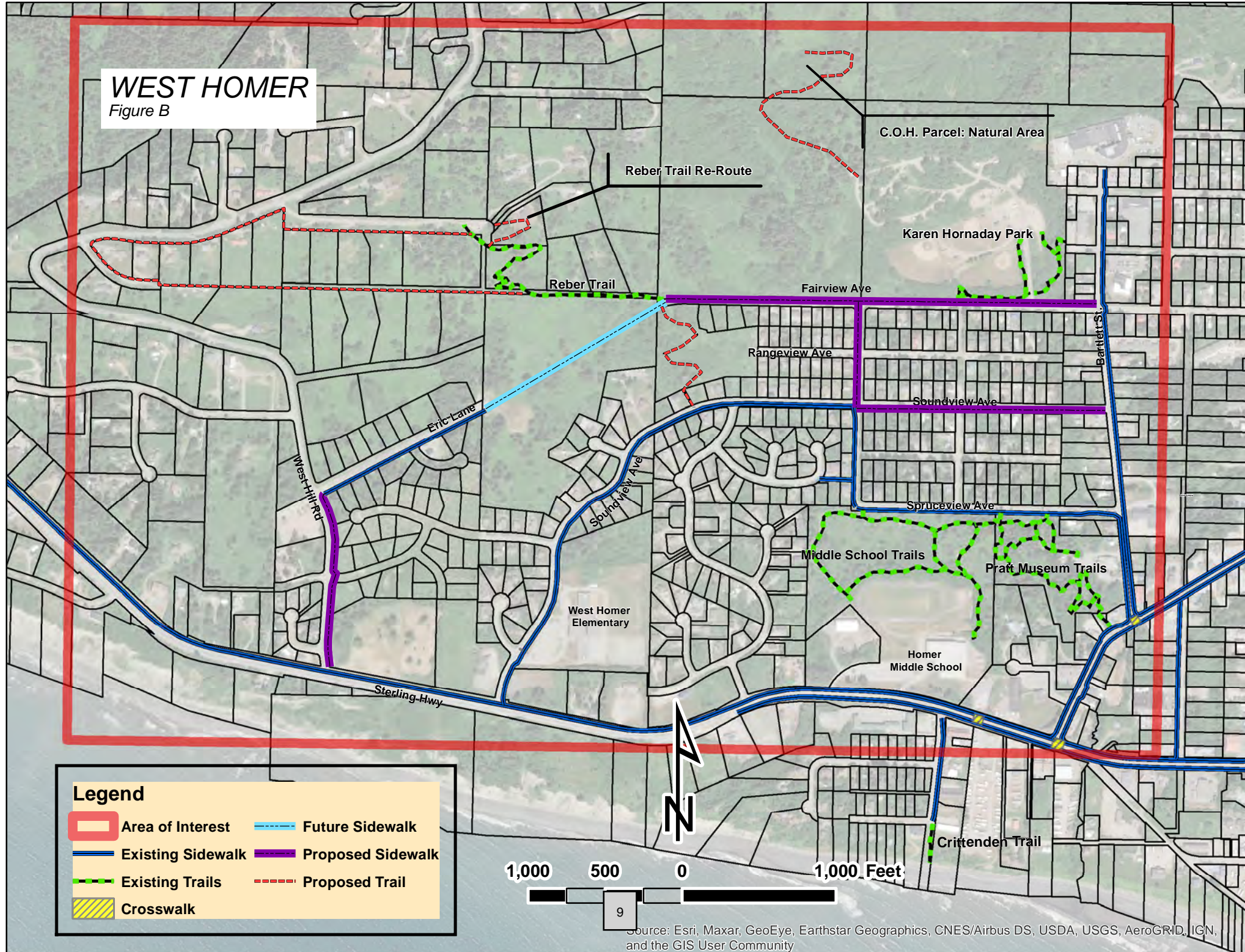
City of Homer: Pedestrian Features and Connectivity Gaps

Figure A



WEST HOMER

Figure B



EAST HOMER

Figure C



South Slope Connector

East Hill Rd.





Nelson Ave

Sanjay Court Route

Old Nelson Easement Route

Homer H.S. Complex

Legend

-  Area of Interest
-  Existing Sidewalk
-  Existing Trails
-  Proposed Trail

300 150 0 300 Feet



10

Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



Pioneer Ave

Klondike Ave

Bonanza Ave

Grubstake Ave

Hazel Ave

Sterling Hwy

Poopdeck Trails

Islands & Oceans/
Alpine Hotel Trails

TOWN CENTER

Figure D

Main St

Legend

- Area of Interest
- Existing Sidewalk
- Existing Trails
- Crosswalk
- Future Sidewalk
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Proposed Trail

500 250 0 500 Feet

BELUGA SLOUGH

Figure E

