

Introduced by: Pete A. Williams, City Manager  
Date: May 9, 2023  
Action: Passed  
Vote: 5-0

# CITY OF BETHEL

## Resolution # 23-08

### **SUPPORT UPDATE FOR CITY OF BETHEL APPLICATION TO TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM TO FUND ADA-COMPLIANT CITY SUB-YK TRAIL PROJECT**

- WHEREAS,** with a population of 6,154, Bethel is the largest rural community in Alaska off the central Statewide road network and located 400 miles west of Anchorage in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region;
- WHEREAS,** the State of Alaska, Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Division of Program Development & Statewide Planning, is currently soliciting trail project nominations through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP);
- WHEREAS,** the TAP application requires Resolution #23-03 approved on February 14, 2023 to be updated for its trail project and the city commitments contained therein;
- WHEREAS,** the community of Bethel has numerous winter trails crisscrossing neighborhoods and commercial locations that are heavily used by snowmachines, four-wheelers, and less by cross-country skiers;
- WHEREAS,** there are very few summer trails conducive to walking, jogging, bicycling, or using a baby stroller in which community members can enjoy for recreation, as a healthy, family, fun activity, or as transportation from one place to another;
- WHEREAS,** use of a boardwalk trail between the Kuskokwim Campus of the University of Alaska-Fairbanks and YKHC was closed by the City during the summer of 2016 because it was rendered unsafe due to rotten, broken planks and swaying and tippy boardwalk conditions 30 feet above the ground;
- WHEREAS,** various community spokespeople have been advocating for the City to secure funds to construct a trail between City Subdivision and the YKHC campus to replace the old boardwalk trail;

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- WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel will apply for funding to construct the City-Sub-YK Trail, an ADA-compliant half-mile gravel trail from Akiak Drive in City Subdivision to the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation campus parking lot;
- WHEREAS,** the City Sub-YK trail would be located almost entirely on City land, minimizing the need for easements and rights-of-way, thus speeding up trail development;
- WHEREAS,** the proposed trail would be 2,800 feet long and 8 feet wide with a 3:1 slope on the sides and contain boardwalk sections to go up and over water and sewer pipes;
- WHEREAS,** the general design for nearly the whole length of trail requires the placement of geotextile fabric over the ground/tundra, placement of fill (sand) on top of it, and then placement of crushed gravel and fines on top of the fill;
- WHEREAS,** the contractor that builds the trail might have to install pilings and boardwalk to cover a 150-foot section of trail that skirts the edge of a pond and goes over wetlands, but the elevation off the ground will be minimal so that a gradual slope can be accomplished to meet ADA requirements;
- WHEREAS,** use of the trail will reduce the number of people walking or rolling in wheelchairs on Chief Eddie Hoffman Highway between the hospital and City Subdivision area, thereby making it safer for pedestrians and motor vehicle operators along that stretch of highway;
- WHEREAS,** Philana Miles, Acting DOT&PF Central Regional Planner, supports the project;
- WHEREAS,** this resolution is made public by issuance of the council meeting agenda and packet on the City's website, posting on the City's facebook page, paper notices on bulletin boards in Bethel, KYUK Radio Station advertisements, and the Civic Clerk subscription service for packet dissemination;
- WHEREAS,** Bethel community member involvement is encouraged during the council meeting via emails in advance of the meeting that will be read out loud by the City Clerk or speaking on zoom during the meeting or speaking in-person at City Hall;
- WHEREAS,** the new trail will be designated as a pedestrian/bicycle trail only with signs posted to keep four-wheelers off the trail during summer time;

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**WHEREAS,** the City Sub-YK Trail is described in the City's new Comprehensive Plan being developed by DOWL and is listed as a high priority project;

**WHEREAS,** intrinsic qualities that pedestrians on the trail can enjoy include viewing a scenic tundra landscape and tundra pond often containing visiting wild fowl, berry-picking in late summer/fall, and bird-watching;

**WHEREAS,** the State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities estimated the cost to construct the City Sub-YK Trail to be \$4,920,000 (\$820,000 for design and \$4,100,000 for construction);

**WHEREAS,** the City's minimum required match for zero points is 9.03% or \$444,276;

**WHEREAS,** if the City Sub-YK Trail project scores high enough to be funded, DOT&PF will offer the City a grant agreement that will require the City to agree to pay up to 50% more of the design cost (\$410,000), if needed to meet the bid price, and 15% more of the construction cost (\$2,050,000), if needed to meet the bid price;

**WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel has the right to decline the grant agreement when offered, but must pledge cash match against the total (\$444,276) in this resolution to keep its grant application alive;

**WHEREAS,** the bid price for design and/or the bid price for construction could be higher or lower than the expected project cost;

**WHEREAS,** the City Sub-YK Trail project application passed the first two DOT&PF screens and will be evaluated and scored by the Project Evaluation Board at the end of May 2023;

**WHEREAS,** the City commits to operate and maintain the City Sub-YK Trail for the next twenty years, barring any unforeseen events that would preclude such maintenance and operation;

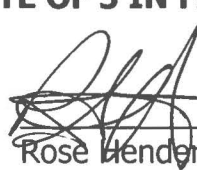
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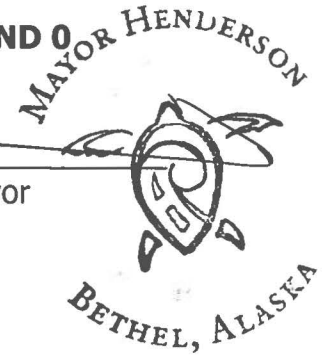
**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** the City of Bethel supports the development and submittal of a TAP application to request funding for design and construction of a gravel trail estimated to cost \$4,920,000 that starts on Akiak Street in City Subdivision and proceeds on City property to the YKHC parking lot;

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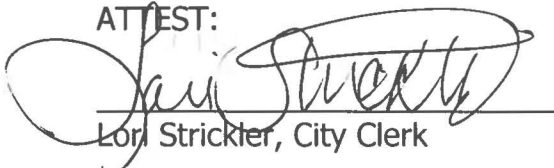
**NOW, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that if the project is funded and approved by City Council, the City commits to provide \$444,276 in cash match for the project and to operate and maintain the City Sub-YK Trail with all of the personnel, equipment, and materials it deems necessary so that the public may enjoy the use of the trail for the foreseeable future;

**ENACTED THIS 9th DAY OF MAY 2023 BY A VOTE OF 5 IN FAVOR AND 0 OPPOSED.**

  
Rose Henderson, Mayor



ATTEST:

  
Lori Strickler, City Clerk