

Introduced by: Pete A. Williams, City Manager
Date: June 13, 2023
Action: Passed
Vote: 6-0

CITY OF BETHEL

Resolution # 23-14

SUPPORT UPDATE FOR CITY OF BETHEL APPLICATION TO TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM TO FUND ADA-COMPLIANT PINKY'S PARK BOARDWALK CONVERSION PROJECT

WHEREAS, with a population of 6,154, Bethel is the largest rural community in Alaska off the central Statewide road network and is 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 #23-09 approved on May 9, 2023 to be updated for its trail project and the city commitments contained therein;

WHEREAS, the City of Bethel designated 26 acres in Pinky's Park as an outdoor recreation site in perpetuity;

WHEREAS, there is a 1.2 mile boardwalk that winds around in Pinky's Park with a section leading to Owl Park, another section leading to Akakeek Street in the Bethel Heights Subdivision, and a third section leading to Akiachak Avenue in City Subdivision;

WHEREAS, the Bethel Public Works Department's Property Maintenance Division is responsible for repairing and maintaining the boardwalk;

WHEREAS, despite the City's best efforts, individuals on four-wheelers, motorcycles routinely get on the pedestrian-only boardwalk and cause damage and consternation to pedestrians;

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- WHEREAS,** the boardwalk has been extremely difficult to maintain over the years partly due to the continually shifting ground that has jacked it up in some places and sunk it lower in other places, causing left- or right-sloping surfaces;
- WHEREAS,** vandals regularly attack the boardwalk by tearing out wooden planks, burning holes in the planks, and spray painting graffiti on the walking surfaces, gazebos, and benches;
- WHEREAS,** the materials used to construct the boardwalk have contributed to the decay that is evident, including the negative impact of the chemical reaction that has occurred between the nails used on the treated lumber;
- WHEREAS,** the use of treated lumber to construct the boardwalk does not last forever; it breaks down and rots eventually and may be degrading faster in Bethel's wet environment exacerbated by snow, ice, and summer rain;
- WHEREAS,** whole 200-foot sections of the boardwalk have been removed by the Property Maintenance crew because they were in poor condition and presented a hazard for the general public;
- WHEREAS,** the inflationary environment in recent years coupled with the transportation costs to ship lumber to Bethel have made boardwalk repairs, replacement, and maintenance cost prohibitive;
- WHEREAS,** the City wants to remove the boardwalk from Pinky's Park and replace it with an eight-foot wide gravel trail that is ADA-compliant;
- WHEREAS,** the Pinky's Park Gravel Trail would be located on City land, minimizing the need for easements and rights-of-way, thus speeding up trail development;
- WHEREAS,** the proposed trail would be 6,336 feet long and 8 feet wide with a 3:1 slope on the sides and will contain culverts;
- 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,** Philana Miles, Former Acting DOT&PF YK-Delta Area Planner, supported the Pinky's Park Gravel Trail project;

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- 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;
- WHEREAS,** the proposed Pinky's Park Gravel 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 gravel trail to replace the boardwalk in Pinky's Park to be \$5,350,000, which includes: design and right of ways (\$1,350,000), and construction (\$4,000,000);
- WHEREAS,** the City's required minimum match for zero points is 9.03% of the total or \$483,105, but the City is confident that it can afford a cash match of just over 10.03% (536,606) in order to get 2 score points;
- WHEREAS,** if the Pinky's Park Gravel 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 and right of way cost (\$675,000), if needed to meet the bid price, and 15% more of the construction cost (\$600,000), if needed to meet the bid price;
- WHEREAS,** the City of Bethel has the right to decline the grant agreement when offered, but agrees to pledge a cash match of \$536,606 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;

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WHEREAS, the Pinky's Park Gravel Trail project application passed the first of two DOT&PF screens and will be evaluated and scored by the Project Evaluation Board at their meeting to be held on July 10, 2023;

WHEREAS, the City commits to operate and maintain the Pinky's Park Gravel Trail for the next twenty years, barring any unforeseen events that would preclude such maintenance and operation;


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 an ADA-compliant gravel trail expected to cost \$5,350,000 that winds around in Pinky's Park with exit points at Owl Park, Akakeek Street. and Akiachak Avenue or similar;


NOW, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the project is funded and approved by City Council, the City commits provide \$536,606 in cash match for the project and to operate and maintain the Pinky's Park Gravel 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 13th DAY OF JUNE 2023 BY A VOTE OF 6 IN FAVOR AND 0 OPPOSED.

ATTEST:


Lor Strickler, City Clerk


Rose Henderson, Mayor


MAYOR HENDERSON
BETHEL, ALASKA