Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board

September 1, 2016

Agenda Packet

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 1, 2016, 7 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
231 W. EVERGREEN AVENUE, PALMER
www.cityofpalmer.org

CHAIR	Meggie Aube-Trammell
VICE CHAIR	Jan Newman
BOARD MEMBER	Stephanie Allen
BOARD MEMBER	Jo Ehmann
BOARD MEMBER	Dot Helm
BOARD MEMBER	Fran Seager-Boss
BOARD MEMBER	*VACANT*

AGENDA

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Approval of Agenda

E. Minutes of Previous Meetings
   1. Regular Meeting of August 4, 2016

F. Audience Participation

G. Reports

H. Unfinished Business

I. New Business
   1. Review memo on a City recreational facility reservation process recommendation
   2. Discuss priority for capital projects for Fiscal Year 2017 and Palmer Five Year Capital Improvements Program

J. Board Member Comments

K. Adjournment

Minutes

August 4, 2016

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 2016
7:00 P.M. - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

A. CALL TO ORDER:
The regular meeting of the City of Palmer Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Aube-Trammell at 7:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL:
Present and constituting a quorum were Board Members:
Meggie Aube-Trammell, Chair
Jan Newman, Vice Chair
Stephanie Allen
Dot Helm
Fran Seager-Boss (at 7:10 p.m.)
Excused absence(s):
Jo Ehmann
Also present were:
Sandra Garley, Community Development Director
Nathan Wallace, City Manager
Pam Whitehead, Recording Secretary

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: led by Board Member Newman.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
The agenda was approved as amended to move forward New Business I(1), Presentation by Darrell Lewis, to immediately follow E, Minutes, out of time courtesy to the presenter. There were no objections.

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:
The minutes of the **July 7, 2016** Regular Meeting were approved as presented.

I. NEW BUSINESS: [per Amended Agenda]

1. Presentation by Darrell Lewis on status of National Historic Landmark Application.

   Darrell Lewis of the National Park Service spoke to the Board informing that the application for National Historic Landmark Nomination of the Matanuska Colony Historic District has been submitted to Washington, D.C. He is hopeful that it will be on the National Landmarks Committee agenda for review this fall and informed that former Governor Tony Knowles is the Chair of the Landmarks Committee. He further explained the process and distributed copies of Application submitted. The Committee is expected to review it in October and make a recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior who will then make the formal designation.

Questions and further discussion ensued with regard to maintaining/preserving the landmark district open area quadrant and buildings if the historic designation is granted. The Board thanked Mr. Lewis for his presentation and applauded the hard work put into the application. Mr. Lewis thanked Ms. Seager-Boss for all of her help on the project as well. Ms. Seager-Boss agreed to work with Director Garley to put together a brochure or mailing concerning the designation to the property owners within the district.

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

There were no audience members wishing to speak on a topic not on the agenda.

G. REPORTS:

Director Garley reported on:

- 2016 Annual Work Plan:
  -- Wayfinding – Bid has been received on the Wayfinding Project; BED board members, Dusty Silva and Chris Chappel, have volunteered to work with PRCRAB board members Dot Helm and Jan Newman along with the City Manager and herself on the project.
  -- Bicycle Rack Competition – Ms. Seager-Boss reported she delivered a letter to the bicycle shop who informed they were interested; Ms. Garley will get the solicitation information out to the rest of the board members for further contact of businesses and to report back at the next meeting.
  -- Park Signs with Closing Times – Signs have been installed.
  -- Pet Waste Stations – 4 new pet waste stations have been installed.
- Palmer Historic Society – next phase of Colony Memorial Project will be unveiled on August 20, 2016; a local artist has been commissioned to create an 18" statute of one of the colony families to be placed on top of the current memorial with the names of the colonists.

Questions of staff followed. Board member Allen inquired as to the status of approval by the City Council on the Donation and Memorial Policy, noting it was completed six months ago and presented to the City Council three months ago. Ms. Garley informed the Council has requested that the policy be put into the form of an Ordinance, which she is working on. Further discussion continued about making the process more efficient in an effort to avoid lengthy delays in the future.

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

I. NEW BUSINESS:

2. Report on Bicycle Rack Grant Application.

Chair Aube-Trammell and Board member Newman updated the Board noting they have submitted a letter of interest for a grant in the amount of $3500 to purchase additional bike racks. The grant agency will notify by September 2 on whether to submit an application for the grant. They will update the Board as soon as they receive a response.

3. Discussion on Establishing a City Recreational Facility Reservation Process.

Ms. Garley explained that city residents have become more aware of the City's recreational facilities and there is more interest in reserving or renting theses spaces for private parties or other community events. Although he City has a rental process for the Depot and the MTA Events Center, it does not currently have a formal process for reserving the other recreational facilities, such as the two pavilions, downtown gazebo and the Quad open space, nor is there a fee for the use of these facilities. It is currently a first come, first served basis. A list of the City recreational facilities is included in the packet. She asked the Board for its thoughts and guidance as to whether a reservation process for these facilities should be established and whether a fee should be considered.

Following discussion and debate on the issue, it was the consensus of the Board that that the City should establish a reservation process, especially since demand for use of the park facilities will increase as the city grows.

J. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Chair Aube-Trammell informed that she will have to miss the September 1 meeting as she will be working at the State Fair.

Board Member Newman commented on the Local Foods-Local Places workshop that took place Tuesday/Wednesday of last week. It was well attended, including six people from out of state. There was a broad spectrum of community representatives from the school district to the arts to farmers to city representatives and local community members. The core focus of the discussions was what our community would like to see around our local food system. The workshop ended with actionable items to move forward in five basic goal areas – wayfinding, bikeability/walkability, food hubs and farm stands, preserving farm land, neighborhoods built around community gardens, sustainability and food security, creating regional food policy councils.

Ms. Newman also inquired if there has been a decision on a location for the Mural; also inquired if it were possible to place trash cans at the Edible Rail Trail.

K. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

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Meggie Aube-Trammell, Chair

_____

Sandra Garley, Community Development Director

Reports

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD

2016 Annual Work Plan – September Meeting

2016 Activity/Project	Date Added to Work Plan	Budget Required	Staff Support Required	Project Team	Council Action Required	Status
Adopt-A-Park	01/07/16		SG, Public Works	SA		
Arboretum	01/07/16		SG, Public Works	JN, DH, HA		17 volunteers were at Community clean-up Day for Arboretum is May 14. Waiting for MEA Tree crew to chip and trim dead limbs. New Swiss Stone Pine planted on May 15.
Comprehensive signs (wayfinding, gateways, parks, trails &Interpretive)	01/07/16			DH, JN		On Council Agenda
Complete Donation & Memorial Policy		-	SG	JN & MA-T	Yes	Jan Newman presented at May 24 Council Agenda.
Bicycle rack competition	12/3/15		SG	MA, SA, F-SB solicit interest from community businesses & organizations		Letter delivered to bicycle shop - need to h contact other businesses.
Recreational trails & parks maps	12/3/15		SG	DH, SA		Work with new digital map BED is producing; Should consider being part of MSB walkability project.

SA – Stephanie Allen MA-T Meggie Aube-Trammell JE – Jo Ehmann DH – Dot Helm JN – Jan Newman F-SB Fran Seager-Boss

Find partners for forum on economic impacts of recreational facilities and trails			SG	Palmer Board of Economic Development has agreed to support concept;
Potential new park near to MTA Events Center			SG working with PJMS to find Saturday date for a community mtg	Schedule neighborhood meeting at PJMS this spring
Dedication ceremony for Sgt. Kurtis Arcala-Berberich Soccer fields	9/10/15		SG back on agenda MARCH 2016	50+ members of the family and community were at the dedication on May 14. New flag pole & sign.
Margie L. Gabrielle memorial bench/table along Shane Woods trail	9/10/15			Staci Manier (donor) is waiting for standards & policy criteria
Post new parks signs with closing times	6/02/16	$350	Signs ordered	Signs are installed
Install more pet waste stations along paths	7/07/16	$900	4 new pet waste stations ordered	Installed

Ongoing Responsibilities:

The Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board was created to develop, support and advise the city council on all matters pertaining to city parks, recreation and cultural programs and projects, to provide input and recommendations on issues relating to placement of memorials and plaques on city property and on the annual budget for city parks, recreation and cultural programs and projects.

Other Work Plan ideas considered for current year or future years:

Expand existing skateboard park or create additional skateboard park

SA – Stephanie Allen MA-T Meggie Aube-Trammell JE – Jo Ehmann DH – Dot Helm JN – Jan Newman F-SB Fran Seager-Boss

Chair Presented report on Boards activities to City Council 8/8/16.

Proposed Joint Meeting with Council:

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SA – Stephanie Allen MA-T Meggie Aube-Trammell JE – Jo Ehmann DH – Dot Helm JN – Jan Newman F-SB Fran Seager-Boss

New Business

CITY OF PALMER
PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES
ADVISORY BOARD
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM 16-009

SUBJECT: Communicating recommendation on Reservation of City Recreational Facilities

AGENDA OF: September 1, 2016

Following the discussion of reservations for some city recreational facilities, it was a consensus of the Board to recommend that a reservation system be adopted.

The attached memo to the City Manager was been drafted to convey the Board's recommendation. Please review and bring any suggested changes to the meeting. Once the Board has approved a draft, it will be signed by the Chair and sent forward.

MEMORANDUM

CHAIRMAN	Meggie Aube-Trammell
VICE CHAIR	Jan Newman
BOARD MEMBER	Stephanie Allen
BOARD MEMBER	Jo Ehmann
BOARD MEMBER	Dot Helm
BOARD MEMBER	Fran Seager-Boss
BOARD MEMBER	VACANT

TO: City Manager
FROM: Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board
SUBJECT: Recommendation on Recreational Facility Reservations

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City residents have become more aware of the City's recreational facilities and there is more interest in reserving or renting theses spaces for private parties or other community events. Although the City has a rental process for the Depot and the MTA Events Center, it does not currently have a formal process for reserving the other recreational facilities, such as the two pavilions, downtown gazebo, the Quad open space, and the tennis courts; nor is there a fee for the use of these facilities. These facilities are currently used on a first come, first served basis.

Following discussion and debate on the issue, it was the consensus of the Board to recommend that the City consider establishing a reservation process, especially since demand for use of these facilities will increase as the city grows.

The City's cost of maintaining these facilities is often affected by their use for private parties and events. The Board also recommends that the City explore instituting a small fee to offset any costs generated by the private party or event. Examples of these extra costs could include cost of extra trash cans and garbage removal, cost of additional service calls for portable toilets where they exist, and possible damage to infrastructure.

A list of the City's recreational facilities is included with this memo as are examples of possible reservation applications, and a discussion of the leasing of city parks from the Palmer Parks, Trails and Recreational Facilities Master Plan.

Palmer Parks & Recreation Facilities

A-Moosement Park
420 W. Fern Avenue
- 3.53 acres
- Playground
- Pavilion with picnic area

Bugge Park
220 S. Cobb Street
- 0.26 acres
- Playground
- Picnic table & benches

Fairfield Park
340 E. Dolphin Avenue
- 0.37 acres
- Basketball half court

Hagen Park
201 E. Dolphin Avenue
0.37 acres
- Playground
- Picnic table

McKechnie Park
643 E. Daron Drive
0.60 acres
- Playground
- Picnic tables

Meier Park
325 S. Silver Tip Drive
0.32 acres
- Playground
- Picnic table

Sherrod Park
561 N. Gulkana Street
41.0 acres
- 4 ball fields
- 4 soccer fields
- 1 pavilion
- 1 playground

Wilson Park
1115 S. Felicia Street
0.68 acres
- Bicycle pump track

Busby/Soule Ball Fields
532 E. Dahlia Avenue
3.325 acres

- 1 softball field
- 2 baseball fields

Palmer Skate Park
231 E. Arctic Avenue
0.29 acres

- Skateboard surfaces (metal)

Babb Arboretum & Open Space
925 S. Eklutna Street
8.75 acres

- 0.3 acres of woods planted with
  - 109 shrubs including lilac, rose, and honeysuckle
  - 47 trees including white spruce, blue spruce, maple, mountain ash, paper birch and larch

MTA Events Center
1317 Kerry Weiland Way
14.0 acres

- 34,000 sq. ft. arena housing National Hockey League size ice rink
- Indoor walking track
- Sgt. Kurtis Arcala-Berberich Memorial Soccer Fields – 4 fields

Ben Hermon Tennis Courts
720 S. Gulkana Street

- 3 tennis courts

Downtown Plaza

- Gazebo
- Pavilion

Quad

- 3.2 acres of open space

Golf Course
1000 E. Lepak Avenue
144.75 acres

- 18 hole course
- Clubhouse

City of Palmer
Department of Community Development
645 E. Cope Industrial Way, Palmer, AK 99645
Phone: 907-745-3709 • Fax: 907-745-5443
www.cityofpalmer.org

Pavilion (Downtown) Reservation Request

Name of Group:_____

Contact Person:_____

Mailing Address:_____

City:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____

Phone:_____ Fax:_____

Email:_____

Date and hours requested (Please note the Pavilion closes at 10 pm)

Date:_____ Hours:_____ Estimated # in group:_____

Please be aware of the following rules involving your rental:

1. All refuse/garbage must be placed in the trash containers supplied by the City.
2. The following items are not permitted:
   a. Burning (excluding grills, barbecues and similar appliances)
   b. Alcoholic beverages
   c. Smoking
   d. Fireworks
   e. Animals
3. Portable radios/amplified music must be turned low at all times so as not to be heard from a distance beyond 25 feet from the pavilion property.

Grills, Barbecues & Similar Appliances require a minimum of one 10 lb. ABC extinguisher be provided for every two appliances on site. These appliances shall not be operated within 25 feet of a structure or combustible materials. Grills, barbecues and similar appliances must be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished.

☐ _____ Check if using on site and initial to indicate compliance with rules listed above.

This request is for the use of the Downtown Pavilion only - it is not a request for use of the adjoining Quad or South Valley Way.

Bye requesting this pavilion reservation, I and all persons in my party agree to abide by all park rules, regulations and stipulations.

_____ _____
Signature Date

Staff Use

Issued by:_____ Date:_____

City of Palmer
Department of Community Development
645 E. Cope Industrial Way, Palmer, AK 99645
Phone: 907-745-3709 • Fax: 907-745-5443
www.cityofpalmer.org

Matanuska Colony Quadrangle Site Reservation Request

Name of Group:_____

Contact Person:_____

Mailing Address:_____

City:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____

Phone:_____ Fax:_____

Email:_____

Date and hours requested (Please note the Quad area closes at 10 pm)

Date:_____ Hours:_____ Estimated # in group:_____

Please be aware of the following rules involving your use of the area:

1. All refuse/garbage must be placed in the trash containers supplied by the City.
2. The following items are not permitted:
   a. Burning (excluding grills, barbecues and similar appliances)
   b. Alcoholic beverages
   c. Smoking
   d. Fireworks
   e. Animals
3. Portable radios/amplified music must be turned low at all times so as not to be heard from a distance beyond 25 feet from the pavilion property.

Grills, Barbecues & Similar Appliances require a minimum of one 10 lb. ABC extinguisher be provided for every two appliances on site. These appliances shall not be operated within 25 feet of a structure or combustible materials. Grills, barbecues and similar appliances must be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished.

☐ _____ Check if using on site and initial to indicate compliance with rules listed above.

This request is for the use of the Quad area only - it is not a request for use of the adjoining Downtown Pavilion or South Valley Way.

By requesting this quad reservation, I and all persons in my party agree to abide by all park rules, regulations and stipulations.

_____ _____
Signature Date

Staff Use

Issued by:_____ Date:_____

- A person who dies while performing a public service should receive priority for memorialization.
- Persons who have contributed exceptional services to their community can be memorialized.
- It is not recommended to change the name of an established park.

Trees or benches, accompanied by a small plaque, are ways to memorialize a person within a park. They should be placed in parks that are well-maintained.

9. LEASING CITY PARKS

While City parks are generally available for public use at no charge, there are certain situations when leases for special uses are necessary. This can occur when one individual or group will receive much greater benefits from park usage than would the general public, and the general public has no immediate interest in the land.

TYPES OF LEASES

The following policies will better guide City staff, future Park Board, or City Council in granting leases for City parks. The policies differ depending upon if the proposed purpose of lease is for an optimal recreational use, non-optimal recreational use, or non-recreational use.

Recreational Uses

It should first be determined if the proposed lease or special permit for recreational use would provide for the optimal use of the park. The determination can be guided by this plan, public comment, and staff assistance. If, after this guidance, uncertainty exists, then the use should be considered non-optimal. Different policies exist for optimal and non-optimal recreational uses.

Optimal uses

- The City will consider incentives to the lessee to develop and maintain the land as proposed.
- The City will consider a lease or permit for a length of time most desirable to the lessee.
- The land will be leased for a minimal fee to non-profit organizations. A fair rental amount will be charged to for-profit organizations
- The lessee must have insurance that removes all liability from the City.
- A public hearing must be held before any lease or permit is granted, and comments taken regarding the above issues and any other relevant concerns.
- After the lease or permit expires, and is not renewed by decision of either party, the land must be reclaimed to its previous condition.

Non-optimal uses

- The proposed use must not substantially alter the landscape, nor may it harm the natural environment.
- The lease or permit must be proposed for renewal every year. If an optimal use of the land is proposed at a later date, then the lease for the non-optimal use will not be renewed.
- After the lease or permit expires, and is not renewed by decision of either party, the land must be reclaimed to its previous condition.
- The land will be leased for a minimal fee to non-profit organizations. A fair rental amount will be charged to for-profit organizations
- The lessee must have insurance that removes all liability from the City.

- A public hearing must be held before any lease or permit is granted, and comments taken regarding the above issues and any other relevant concerns.

Non-Recreational Uses

For all non-recreational uses, the following criteria should be met before granting a lease or special use permit:

- The proposed use must not interfere with a public interest in the land.
- The proposed use must not substantially alter the landscape or harm the natural environment.
- The lease or permit must be proposed for renewal every year. If an optimal use of the land is proposed at a later date, then the lease for the non-optimal use will not be renewed.
- After the lease or permit expires, and is not renewed by decision of either party, the land must be reclaimed to its previous condition.
- The City will charge fair-market value for the lease or permit. Revenue will be used for park development, maintenance, or acquisition in the planning region where the funds are generated.
- The lessee must have insurance that removes all liability from the City
- A public hearing must be held before any lease or permit is granted, and comments taken regarding the above issues and any other relevant concerns.

10. FEASIBILITY STUDIES AND FUTURE SITE OPERATIONS PLANS

The City should perform a feasibility study and preliminary operations plan on any future development of park sites or recreational facilities where capital expenses are estimated to exceed $1,000,000.

PROCEDURAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The procedural recommendations address issues that do not require policy or policy action, but are exercised through practices of the City of Palmer Parks and Recreation Program.

1. PARTNERSHIP STANDARDS

The success of the Palmer Parks and Recreation Program is largely due to the diversity of working partnerships with non-profit organizations and user groups for utilization and support with maintenance of park sites. It is recommended to develop partnership standards for current and future leaseholders and other partners. The following partnership standards are recommended for all current and future leaseholder and partnership agreements:

- All partnerships should require a written working agreement with measurable outcomes that hold each partner accountable to the desired outcomes and will be evaluated by the Program on an annual basis.
- Depending on the level of investment made by the partner, the partnership agreement can be limited to months, a year, or multiple years.
- All partnerships should track direct and indirect costs associated with the partnership investment to demonstrate the level of equity each partner is investing.
- Each partnership should exhibit collaborative planning r on a yearly basis; regular communication; and annually reporting to each other's board or owners on how well the partnership is working and the results of their efforts to the taxpayers of Palmer.

CITY OF PALMER
PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES
ADVISORY BOARD
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM 16-010

SUBJECT: Capital Improvement Plan projects

AGENDA OF: September 1, 2016

Attached is a good discussion of the Capital Improvement planning process out of the City's Parks, Trails and Recreational Facilities Master Plan and pedestrian/trails recommendations made in the Palmer Safe Routes to School Plan, the Parks, Trails and Recreational Facilities Master Plan, and the 2006 Comprehensive Plan.

At the September meeting, the Board should discuss these recommendations and be prepared to make a recommendation on which project(s) should be included in the City Manager's draft FY 2017 Budget presentation to City Council.

As a longer term project, the Board should come up with a list of projects from these three documents for the City's Five Year Capital Improvement Program (2018 -2022).

The complete versions of the Palmer Safe Routes to School Plan, the Parks, Trails and Recreational Facilities Master Plan, and the 2006 Comprehensive Plan are available on line on the city website under the Government⇨Department⇨Community Development drop down menu.

Chapter 7: Capital Improvement Plan

This *Capital Improvement Plan* section of the master plan is the culmination of facility and asset recommendations derived as priorities over the next 10 years. These recommended capital projects are aligned within the vision, mission, and core values of the Program, and have been preliminarily scoped based upon the findings of the assessments and needs analysis reports.

7.1 Capital Project Identification

This master plan update includes detailed and multi-faceted analyses into the current conditions of the City of Palmer park and recreation facilities and infrastructure, the demographics and trends relevant to the residents of the area, substantial public input and meetings, and additional need analyses. This process has yielded defensible recommendations for capital projects that can maintain and enhance the current quality of facilities available to residents of Palmer, as well as work to better meet the needs of visitors to the community.

Overall, this *Capital Improvement Plan* can be utilized as a guideline for future improvements and development with flexibility to be altered and updated as needed.

Capital Project Priority Assignment

Recommending priorities for capital projects over the next 10 years is a challenge due to all the factors that influence how a project can go from a recommendation to a reality. The suggested prioritization of these capital projects was developed based upon a number of dynamic factors including, but not limited to:

1. Potential capital costs of the project
2. Potential operating costs of the facility or asset once completed
3. Current financial capacity of the City of Palmer, as well as potential financial capacity available through grants, partnerships, and regional coordination
4. Public need and interests
5. Current political and economic conditions of the local area

Previous sections of this master plan address specific funding and finance alternatives that should be explored as a means to support these projects during both the development and operational phases. The final section of this master plan will organize these projects by their recommended priority status as a suggested action plan over the next decade.

Capital Improvement Principles

Development principles for parks include those that support the programming, planning, and design of facilities and assets to meet the needs of residents of the service area(s) and classifications within the overall parks system. The design of sites and facilities should be driven to create an enriched visitor experience including ease and diversity of use. This pertains to the ingress and egress as well as the circulation once the destination has been reached and pArcticipation has commenced. Three principles associated with the visitor experience can be summarized as follows:

- Sense of Arrival
  - Highway / street signage
  - Entrance(s)
  - Landscaping
  - View and aesthetics
- Aesthetic and Functional Signage
  - Directional
  - Safety and management

- Architecture and Use
    - Design with natural surroundings
    - Site circulation
    - Mixed use
    - Visitor satisfaction
    - Supports revenue generation where appropriate

Most activities associated with parks is designed around a desired length of experience. A blend of passive and active recreational opportunities extends the length of experience and increases the frequency of pArcticipation by users.

7.2 Capital Project Implementation Plan

The pages that follow detail a recommended sequencing of capital projects for Palmer parks, trails and recreation facilities over the next 10 years. The sequencing of these projects was determined by community input and factors that reflect best practices in the parks and recreation industry. These factors are (not in priority order):

1. Creates or improved connectivity with trail enhancement or development
2. Optimizes use of a key facility or valued asset in the community
3. Optimizes usage of other key facilities in the community
4. Distributes City parks more equitably
5. Improves balance in facility/park types
6. Demand is high or increasing per trend and community research
7. Protects/manages open space
8. Improves park connectivity to communities
9. Partner and/or land is available
10. Targets underserved population
11. Improves current operations
12. Consistent with community survey and public input findings
13. Repairs or improves existing facility

Capital projects have been bundled into priorities for efficiency in this implementation plan. Projects should be unbundled from these priorities for practical purposes throughout the implementation phase. **Estimated capital costs are based upon the experience of the consultant team and are provided as a broad range to account for options for amenities that could be included in the scope, different means and methods for construction, industry inflation, and other variable costs that could be associated with each priority bundle.**

Potential capital costs only apply to the specific amenity, facility, or feature described in the recommended capital priority, and do not include grants, other outside funding sources, or cost sharing that could otherwise reduce the total costs to the City.

Estimated capital cost ranges are:

$	= $0 - $50,000
$$	= $50,000 - $250,000
$$$	= $250,000 - $500,000
$$$$	=$500,000 - $1,000,000
$$$$$	=$1,000,000 - $5,000,000
$$$$$$	=$5,000,000+

Short Term Capital Priorities

The following capital priorities are identified to be the first tier of focus for facility enhancement and development over the next 10 years.

Capital Priority 1:	City of Palmer park signage program		
Recommended Scope:	Develop a consistent park signage program to (1) identify City parks more prominently, (2) provide safety and usage guidelines and regulations, and (3) provide limited, but high quality interpretation of the natural and cultural significance of select sites.		
Estimated Capital Cost:	$	Timeline:	1 to 3 years

Capital Priority 2:	Develop "Priority 1" trail(s) in Palmer		
Recommended Scope:	Develop trail(s) identified previously as Priority 1 (State Fairgrounds connections with central city; Arctic Avenue pathway) assisting to connect major focal points, parks, and other areas of interest.		
Estimated Capital Cost:	$	Timeline:	1 to 3 years

Capital Priority 3:	Complete development of Wilson and Fairfield Parks		
Recommended Scope:	Complete development of Wilson Community Park and Fairfield Neighborhood Park as recommended in this master plan. This may require coordination with the subdivision developer and neighbors to the park properties. A separate public process regarding the proposed site plans is recommended.		
Estimated Capital Cost:	$	Timeline:	1 to 3 years

Capital Priority 4:	Upgrade existing park and recreation amenities – Phase 1		
Recommended Scope:	Upgrade existing amenities at parks as identified in this master plan. The recommended first phase of this process includes projects detailed for Bugge Park (Cobb Avenue), Bill Hermann Tennis Courts, and Sherrod Park.		
Estimated Capital Cost:	$	Timeline:	1 to 3 years

Capital Priority 5:	Develop a pump track / BMX park		
Recommended Scope:	Develop a pump track / BMX park as recommended in this master plan at either the site adjacent or nearby the existing skateboard park, or at another site that meets the recommended criteria.		
Estimated Capital Cost:	$	Timeline:	1 to 3 years

Capital Priority 6:	Develop amenities at Dr. Myron F. Babb Arboretum to enhance usage		
Recommended Scope:	Develop amenities as identified in this master plan, as well as a separate public process addressing a specific site plan, in order to enhance usage of the site.		
Estimated Capital Cost:	$	Timeline:	1 to 3 years

SHORT TERM CAPITAL PRIORITY IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations for organizing short term capital priorities:

2012 – 2013

- Develop and install City park signage for 50-100% of City park sites
- Organize funding plans and initiatives to support City of Palmer costs to complete identified short term capital projects for trail development
- Organize funding plans and initiative to support City of Palmer costs to complete development of Wilson and Fairfield Parks per the adopted site plans
- Organize funding plans and initiatives to support City of Palmer costs to complete remaining identified short term capital projects

2013 – 2015

- Develop and install City park signage for remaining 50% of City park sites
- Complete development of Wilson and Fairfield Parks per the adopted site plans
- Complete development of identified trail development projects
- Complete selected park and recreation amenity upgrades and enhancements
- Complete development of a pump track / BMX park
- Complete enhancements to Dr. Myron F. Babb Arboretum
- Reorganize projects not completed due to funding or resource limitations and establish a revised timeline for these projects to be addressed

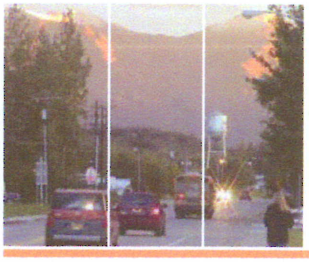
Play equipment at Bugge Park (Cobb Avenue)

Section II

Projects and Potential Funding Sources

Upcoming Projects within the City Limits of Palmer

1. Construct pathway along Glenn Highway from tunnel to Cedar Hills.
2. Multi-use trail behind PJMS along Gulkana Street from Fireweed to Industrial Way.
3. Improve pathway on Cope Industrial Way along PJMS parking lot and add signage for pathway crossing near Nutrition Services Facility.
4. Construct 200-foot trail and railroad track crossing at Caribou Street and Auklet Avenue streets.
5. Extend Industrial Way to Alaska State Fairgrounds from Commercial Way to Inner Springer Loop and add a pathway.
6. Add pathway on Inner Springer and Outer Springer Loop from Pope's Road to Chugach Street.
7. Add pathway thru Cranberry Meadows to the Old Glenn Highway to add access for Academy Charter and School Administration Building.
8. Pedestrian bridge crossing over roadway near Glacier View Avenue.
9. Add sidewalk access along North Eklutna Street and pathway access along East Beaver Avenue, West Auklet Avenue, and East Auklet Avenue as part of the Sherrod Area Water & Street Improvement projects.
10. Improve sidewalk conditions, crosswalks, and ADA access along Cobb Street in coordination with Cobb Street Rehabilitation project.



Section II

Upcoming Projects within the City Limits of Palmer with graphic representation of cost comparison

1.	Construct pathway along Glenn Highway from tunnel to Cedar Hills.	🚲🚲🚲🚲
2.	Multi-use trail behind PJMS along Gulkana Street from Fireweed to Industrial Way.	🚲🚲
3.	Improve pathway on Cope Industrial Way along PJMS parking lot and add signage for pathway crossing near Nutrition Services Facility.	🚲
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10.	Improve sidewalk conditions, crosswalks, and ADA access along Cobb Street in coordination with Cobb Street Rehabilitation project.	🚲🚲🚲

🚲	Project less than $100,000
🚲🚲	$100,000 - $200,000
🚲🚲🚲	$200,000 - $400,000
🚲🚲🚲🚲	Project more than $400,000

building, but the fields would need to be relocated somewhere in the City.

7. **Dr. Myron F. Babb Arboretum**
   Expanding the uses of the Dr. Myron F. Babb Arboretum is recommended to improve the value of this open space in the City. This can include limited development of appropriate amenities such as a small pavilion, benches, parking, and interpretive signage. This can enable the park to become a popular site for weddings and small outdoor events, as well as quiet reflection and relaxation.

8. **Additional park in the southwestern portion of the City**
   Another area of residential growth in Palmer is in the southwestern portions of the City. It is recommended to develop long-range plans to acquire property and develop a larger community or regional park in this area as residential growth continues. This park should feature a sports complex of two or three diamond ball fields, two or three multi-purpose rectangular fields, playground, small skateboarding amenity, basketball court, large group pavilion, and loop trail.

TRAILS

1. **Improve connectivity**
   Improve the connectivity within the City of Palmer by completing links within the existing trails and walkways. This should be a phased approach with the following recommendations:

   a. **Priority 1** – connect the State Fairgrounds with the central portion of the City with a paved rec path / commuter trail extending to the existing trail (Shane Woods Memorial Trail) in the rail corridor north of the Palmer Depot. Additionally, improve the connection of the existing pathway along Arctic Avenue from the Matanuska River to the Glenn Highway intersection. This may include addressing a more formalized crossing near North Gulkana Street intersection, or redeveloping the pathway on the north side of Arctic Avenue.

   b. **Priority 2** – connect the high density residential areas in the Brittany Estates vicinity to the trail from the Fairgrounds to the central area of the City, and to the Palmer-Wasilla Highway with a paved rec path / commuter trail. This priority includes a crossing (over or under pass) of the Glenn Highway near Moore Road, and could include a pedestrian crossing light on the Palmer-Wasilla Highway.

   c. **Priority 3** – Connect high residential areas in the north portion of the City with a paved rec path / commuter trail extending southwards from the Cedar Hills area to the existing trail ending at the underpass near Beaver Avenue. This should include a pedestrian crossing (pedestrian-activated light, underpass or overpass) in the Eagle Avenue vicinity.

   d. **Priority 4** – connect the State Fairgrounds to the Palmer Golf Course with a paved rec path / commuter trail along rail corridor north of Outer Springer Loop. This trail should connect on the west to the trail extending from the Fairgrounds to the central portion of the City, and to potential natural surface trails along the Matanuska River and edge of the golf course on the east.

   e. **Priority 5** – Extend either a paved rec path / commuter trail or natural surface trail west from the trail along Moore Road / E. Helen Road connecting the State Fairgrounds to the Brittany Estates area, for purposes of future connections with the Crevasse Moraine area to the west.

Cope Industrial Way Bike Path

2. **Improve trail diversity**
   Improve the diversity of trails in the City of Palmer with the addition of designated natural surface trails for hiking and/or light mountain biking.

   a. Consider developing natural surface hiking and mountain biking trails on the western side of Palmer, potentially on the city-managed land originally planned for a landfill site or on an acquired site in the vicinity.

   b. Consider developing natural surface trails along the Matanuska River, from the Palmer Golf Course northwards to the Matanuska River Park, or within some segments therein.

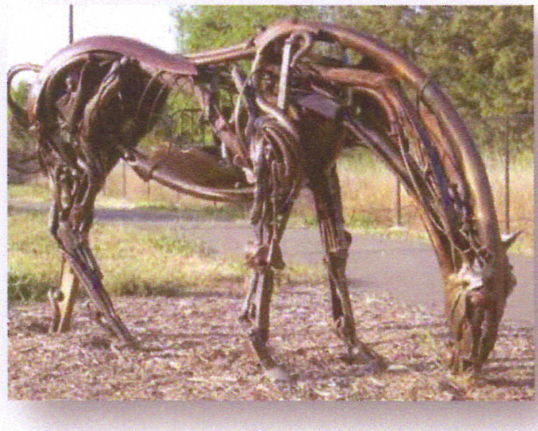
3. **Develop a Fitness Trail**
   Improve the fitness opportunities and impacts provided by trails in the City of Palmer by the following methods:

   a. Grade / rate the trails within Palmer, as well as consistent distance markers that inform users of the health benefit and impacts of each trail.

   b. Establish an official fitness trail in Palmer with multiple fitness and exercise stations.

Photos: Fitness trail signage and stations

4. **Develop an Art and Cultural Trail**
   Diversify the trails and trail experiences in Palmer by developing an art and cultural trail along a section of paved trail near the center of the City. It is recommended that portions or all of the existing Shane Woods Memorial Trails, and the future extension to the State Fairgrounds. This trail can feature trail art and sculptures that celebrate local artists and local history and culture.



Trail art and sculptures

GOAL 3: Maintain and improve community sidewalks and trails.

Developing a quality trail system and integrating of the system with the existing trails and sidewalks serves transportation, economic, recreation and quality of life goals. The public identified improvements to trails and sidewalks as a high priority during the preparation of the plan. For walking, biking and other non-motorized uses to offer a realistic option to driving, Palmer must retain and improve its network of paths and trails. This goal clearly applies in downtown, where a pedestrian-friendly environment is a key attraction, but extends to providing trail connections throughout the community, linking residential neighborhoods, with shopping, transit facilities and schools, parks, open space and other public facilities.

Existing Trails and Sidewalks

A number of pedestrian facilities, trails and separated paths exist or are under development in the Palmer area. Please see **Proposed Trail Improvements and Proposed Sidewalk Improvements** maps on the following pages.

Sidewalks have been constructed on most of the streets in the downtown area defined as generally west of Gulkana Street, east of the Glenn Highway, south of Arctic Avenue and north of Fireweed Avenue. More isolated sidewalks extend beyond this core area.

Existing paved separated paths located along roads include the trail on the north side of the Palmer-Wasilla Highway from Felton Street west, the trail near Palmer High School connecting West Arctic Avenue with Hemmer Road, the trail along the west side of the Glenn Highway from the Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Arctic Avenue, and the section of trail along E. Cope Industrial Way that connects E. Outer Springer Loop with the Palmer Middle School. Improvements to sidewalks and trails should improve pedestrian connections community wide, including links between residential neighborhoods, and between residential areas and schools, parks and open space, and downtown and other shopping areas. Specific recommendations are presented below.

Improved Sidewalks

Responsibility for constructing new sidewalks will be split between the City and subdividers, depending on the setting. In general, the City shall be responsible for sidewalks connecting different areas of the community, with individual subdividers responsible for sidewalks and trails within subdivisions.

Palmer Comprehensive Plan
Figure 3
Proposed Sidewalk Improvements

Existing Sidewalk

Proposed Sidewalk

Proposed Sidewalk when Street Unpaved

0 630 1,260 1,890 2,520 Feet

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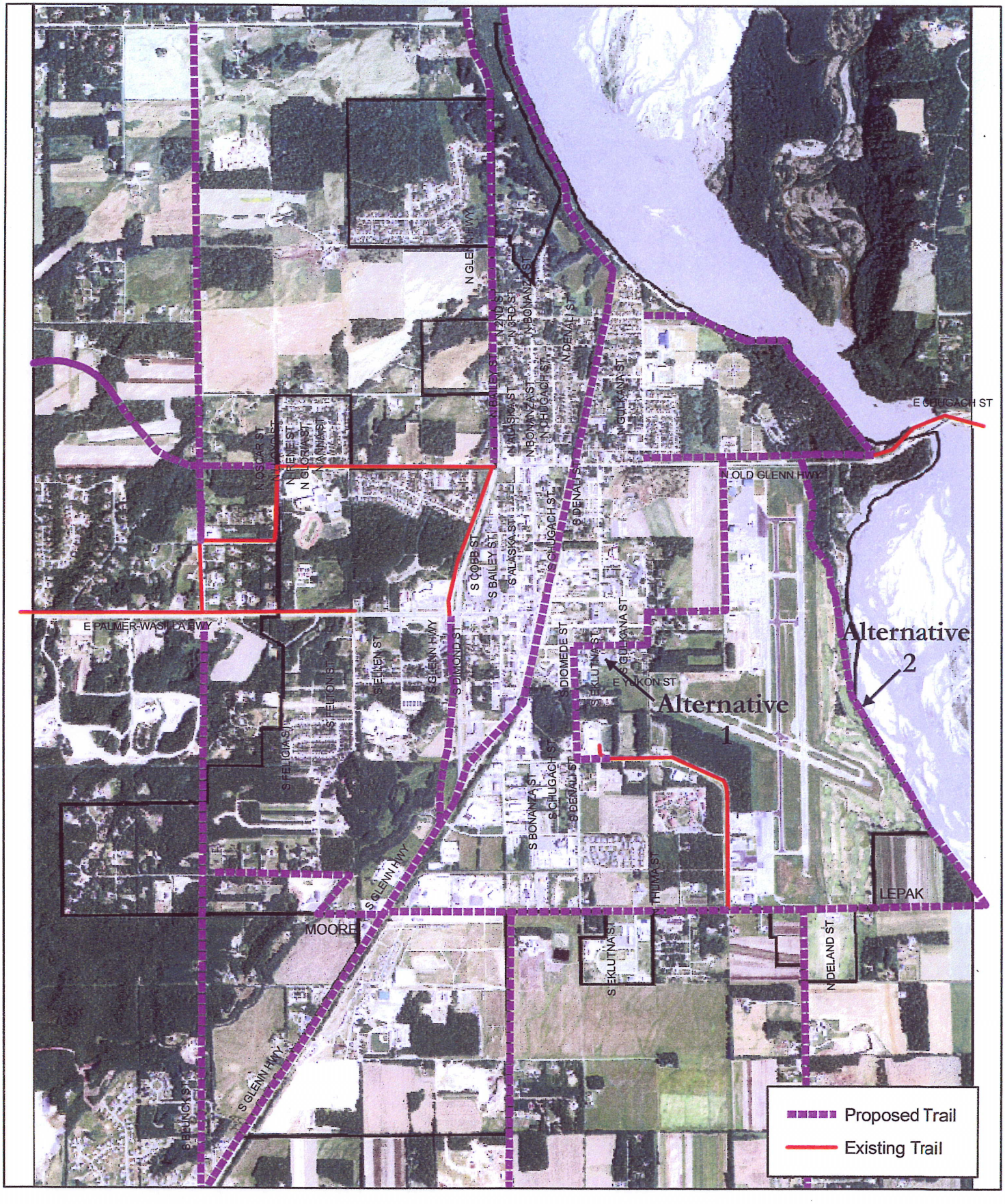

Proposed Trail Improvements

City of Palmer
Comprehensive Plan

AGNEW ::BECK

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

N

Map Modified February 1, 2006

As Palmer grows, sidewalks should be extended or added to all streets within the area bounded by the Glenn Highway to the west, Eagle Avenue to the north, South Airport to the east and E. Commercial Drive to the south. New sidewalks are also needed to link downtown and the airport, to provide several safe, convenient places to cross the Glenn Highway, and to connect subdivisions to trails along the Glenn Highway and the Palmer Wasilla Highway. As discussed in the Downtown section of the Land Use Chapter, there is a particular need for improved sidewalks running east to west across the railroad tracks and through the Depot area.

All subdivisions shall make adequate provisions for safe, functional pedestrian circulation. This includes:

- Safe, effective and enjoyable pedestrian circulation within the subdivision – including on-street sidewalk and off street trails. In some locations, pathways should be reserved between lots to provide "short cuts" linking streets.
- Connections within the subdivision that lead to pedestrian routes linking to community destinations, including schools, parks and commercial areas.

The specific form of pedestrian improvements will vary depending on housing density and current and expected traffic levels. Where traffic is light, such as on a short cul-de- sac, sidewalks may not be required; where traffic is heavier, sidewalks typically will be required. In some instances, off street trails may be substituted for sidewalks.

Rehabilitate Sidewalks and Improve Sidewalk Maintenance

Many Palmer sidewalks, particularly in downtown, need rehabilitation. Numerous stretches of sidewalks are overgrown with vegetation, and/or cracked. Sections of these sidewalks have obstacles that make them difficult to use by people in wheelchairs. In addition to improving these sidewalks, and ensuring they meet handicapped access standards, there is a need for better regular maintenance including snow removal. This action may best be done in partnership with the planned Business Improvement District.

Proposed Trails[1]

With the addition of key links to the existing trail network, Palmer would enjoy a well-connected network allowing reasonably comprehensive travel through town by foot or bicycle. Many of these trails are not in the City, requiring coordination with the Mat-Su Borough and Alaska DOT&PF. The Borough's adopted Trail Plan provides a valuable description of Mat-Su Borough plans for

[1] The distinction between trails and sidewalks is not black and white. As used here, "sidewalks" refers to street-side, paved pedestrian routes, primarily serving the needs of immediately adjoining properties. "Trails" refer to a range of pedestrian routes, paved and unpaved, single-use and multi-use trails. In general trails serve community-wide transportation and recreation needs. Trails can run along or separated from roads.

trails in the Core Area and the southcentral Borough generally. Please see **Proposed Trail Improvements** map. Recommended trails are listed below:

- Along the Alaska Railroad right-of-way from the Glenn Highway north past the Palmer depot to Moose Creek (initial phase), south to the Alaska State Fairgrounds and on to Sutton (second phase). This project was formally endorsed as part of the Palmer Urban Revitalization Plan.
- Along the Glenn Highway from E. Sienna Street to the Palmer-Wasilla Highway, constructed as part of the Glenn Highway upgrade.
- Connecting the Old Matanuska River Bridge trail to existing sidewalks along Arctic Ave.
- From the Old Matanuska River Bridge trail to an upgraded trail along the Matanuska River Park connecting to Swanson and Sherrod Elementary schools, and then to E. Eagle Avenue.
- South from the Old Matanuska River Bridge along or near the Matanuska River, past the golf course to E. Lepak Avenue (extended). More work is needed to determine if this trail is possible. A trail along the river in this area was proposed as part of the golf course development in 1989. Two options are currently being considered:
- Select one of two alternatives for a connection from the Old Matanuska River Bridge to the southern end of the golf course.
    - Option A would depart the Old Glenn Highway at the northeastern edge of the airport and then turn east at the north edge of the Palmer Golf Course and run along the river bluff of the golf course. A similar trail was proposed as part of the golf course development in 1989. Reconfiguration of several holes of the golf course would be necessary.
    - Option B would depart the Old Glenn Highway and head south on S. Airport Road to East Evergreen, to E. Fireweed, to S. Chugach, to E. Cope Industrial to E. Outer Springer.
- Along E. Lepak Avenue, E. Outer Springer Loop, N. Inner Springer Loop, and E. Moore Road to Hemmer Road extended. This separated path would include a grade-separated crossing of the Glenn Highway.
- From the end of the existing trail along Cope Industrial Way west to the Alaska Railroad right-of-way.
- Along the extension of Bogard Road from W. Arctic Avenue to Trunk Road or beyond.
- Along the full length of the proposed extension of Hemmer Road.
- Along the Inner and Outer Springer Road system.
- Trail connections and an associated trailhead linking the Palmer-Wasilla Highway area and Downtown Palmer with the trail system in the Kepler Bradley Lakes and Crevasse Moraine area. Trail connections into this large open space park will add greatly to the value of remaining city trails, and provide an important amenity to the community. One possible route is along N. France Road beginning at a grade-separated crossing of the Palmer-Wasilla Highway and extending past the alternative school into the Crevasse-Moraine trail system.

In order to better define these routes, determine appropriate trail types and trail users, set priorities among different projects, and develop funding and maintenance strategies, the City should develop a comprehensive trails plan, for use by a variety of user groups. The City should work with ATV users to serve appropriate areas for ATV use. The Borough will need to be an active participant in this process.

2016 Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Type	Meeting Time	Notes
October 6, 2016	Regular	7:00 PM	
November 3, 2016	Regular	7:00 PM	
December 1, 2016	Regular	7:00 PM	

2017 Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Type	Meeting Time	Notes
January 5, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
February 2, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
March 2, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
April 6, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
May 4, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
June 1, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
July 6, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
August 3, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
September 7, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
October 5, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
November 2, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	
December 7, 2017	Regular	7:00 PM	