



Fairbanks North Star Borough

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July 23, 2012

Ms. Sarah Schacher, Project Manager
AK Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
2301 Peger Rd
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Dear Ms. Schacher:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with the Chena Riverfront Commission on the subject of the Wendell Street Bridge project. The Commission has passed the enclosed resolution and asked me to forward it to you for DOT&PF's further consideration as this project moves forward.

I support the Commission's recommendations on this project.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Luke Hopkins, Mayor
Fairbanks North Star Borough

LH/bm

Enclosure

c: Anna Plager, Chair, Chena Riverfront Commission
692 Dalton Trl
Fairbanks, AK 99709-6530



MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Luke Hopkins, Mayor
Fairbanks North Star Borough

Honorable Jerry Cleworth, Mayor
City of Fairbanks

FROM: Anna Plager, Chair 
Chena Riverfront Commission

DATE: July 23, 2012

SUBJ: Chena Riverfront Commission Resolution No. 2012 - 003

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) solicited feedback from the Joint City/Borough Chena Riverfront Commission (CRFC) on the subject of the Wendell Bridge project. After much deliberation, the CRFC unanimously passed the enclosed resolution for your consideration. This resolution expresses the CRFC's preference that the critical issues of safety, connectivity, and ease of river access be incorporated into the Wendell Bridge project design.

If this resolution meets with your approval, please forward as soon as possible to Sarah Schacher, ADOT Project Manager, for further consideration during the concept phase of this project. A draft letter and mailing envelope are included for your convenience. The CRFC respectfully requests copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly and the Fairbanks City Council members.

If I can answer any questions or provide additional information about the commission's input regarding this project, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

AP/b

Enclosures: Letter to Sarah Schacher, ADOT Project Manager (w/envelope)
CRFC Resolution #2012-003



Resolution No. 2012 - 003

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CHENA RIVERFRONT COMMISSION
RELATING TO THE WENDELL BRIDGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Chena Riverfront Commission is a joint commission of the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough whose mission is to guide responsible development along the Chena River corridor; and

WHEREAS, policies within the Chena Riverfront Plan adopted unanimously by the Fairbanks North Star Borough and the Fairbanks City Council include the following:

- Construct new paths along, above, and as close as possible to the riverbank in order to take full advantage of river views,
- Create a safe environment for public riverfront use through additional lighting, appropriate landscaping and maintenance,
- Develop year-round transportation and design linkages that will serve and connect riverfront attractions to other nearby attractions with an emphasis on the downtown core area,
- Maintain and enhance year-round public access to the river at Griffin Park, the park at the FNSB administrative center, Golden Heart Plaza and *additional access points* in order to enhance their contributions to the Yukon Quest, the Open North American, cross-country ski races, Golden Days and other river-related activities,
- Encourage riverfront development that gives aesthetic consideration to all new and existing facilities within the riverfront corridor, including transportation projects; and

WHEREAS, the Wendell Bridge improvement project will provide for safe access for bicyclists and pedestrians from downtown to local businesses & residences in northeast Fairbanks (Graehl, Hamilton Acres, Island Homes, etc.); and

WHEREAS, the Wendell Bridge improvement project will connect Graehl Park users to nearby parks and attractions, particularly the downtown core area, Morris Thompson Center and Griffin Park; and

WHEREAS, the Graehl Park riverfront trail that provides a pedestrian pathway separated from Front Street currently lacks safe connectivity to the Wendell Bridge, involving a set of stairs at the end of the Front Street parking lot, an unsafe location for pedestrians and bicyclists; and

WHEREAS, a near-term bicycle-pedestrian improvement project is planned at the far end of Graehl Park for better connectivity from the park to the Steese Highway bridge, providing better linkage with the neighborhoods and parks to the east of the Steese along the north side of the Chena River; and

WHEREAS, the Wendell Bridge project is an important link to enhance opportunities for viewing and participating in community-sponsored riverfront activities, such as the Yukon Quest, the Open North American Championship Sled Dog Race, the Red-Green Regatta, the Sonot-Kkaazoot ski race, and others; and

WHEREAS, the public safety issue of vagrants and trash collecting underneath the Wendell Bridge can be best addressed similar to other under-bridge passages, such as the newly designed Barnette and Cushman streets bike path; and

WHEREAS, the 30 to 50-year life-expectancy of this new bridge warrants sufficient funding for pedestrian and bicycle safety, connectivity and river access for our long-term community benefits, including health & safety, alternative transportation modes, riverfront tourism, and community activities.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chena Riverfront Commission asks that these critical issues of safety, connectivity, and ease of river access be incorporated into the Department of Transportation & Public Facility's design for the Wendell Bridge at both ends of the bridge.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly and the Fairbanks City Council members.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 11th DAY OF JULY, 2012.



Anna Plager
Chair, Chena Riverfront Commission