

ATTACHMENT A



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DATE: July 15, 2024

TO: Chair Bryson and the CBJ Public Works and Facilities Committee

THROUGH: Denise Koch, Engineering & Public Works Director

FROM: Ashley Heimbigner, Grants Manager

SUBJECT: Lemon Creek Multimodal Path Background and Update

This memo provides an update on the project status, grant funding, timeline, and potential next steps for a multimodal pathway in Lemon Creek. At this point, the federal funding we have secured is for planning only.

Project Summary:

CBJ is in the preliminary planning stages of the development of the Lemon Creek Multimodal Pathway. The proposed pathway would include a 1.2-mile pedestrian- and cycle-friendly, ADA-accessible path in Juneau's Lemon Creek neighborhood. The pathway would extend from the Vanderbilt / Glacier Highway intersection near Twin Lakes to the Egan Drive access road adjacent to Switzer Creek and U-Haul property (formerly Walmart) with a bridge crossing at Lemon Creek. Depending on regulatory determinations and final alignment, the pathway will be a combination of paved pathway constructed on gravel fill, and elevated boardwalk constructed on helical piers. The pathway will connect to the sidewalk on Alaway Avenue providing access from the local neighborhood, as well as an improved crossing to the Twin Lakes bike trail at Vanderbilt Hill Road/Glacier Highway. (See map on page 3.)

This project has been identified as a priority by the Juneau Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (2009), the Lemon Creek Area Plan (2017) and was adopted into the Comprehensive Plan. It was designated as the number one CBJ Legislative Capital Priority in 2021 and 2022, and the 8th priority in 2023 and 2024 with strong support from both the Planning Commission and the Systemic Racism Review Committee. [Recent \(FY23\) road construction projects](#) by the State of Alaska Department of Transportation (AKDOT) on Glacier Highway in Lemon Creek, were designed to improve the safety of multimodal users within in the Lemon Creek area, however, the transit area remains a congested industrial traffic area contributing to air and noise pollution in the area and residents and non-motorized commuters/users continue to express concerns regarding safety and overall experience. The pathway will also expand pedestrian access to Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge, which is immediately adjacent to Lemon Creek, but virtually inaccessible without a vehicle due to the barrier presented by Egan Drive.

To better understand the current barriers and opportunities for pedestrians in Lemon Creek and to provide a starting point for planned community engagement efforts, CBJ conducted an informal and voluntary online survey of Lemon Creek area residents in fall 2023. Over 60% of respondents stated that they would be more likely to walk or bike within the area of Lemon Creek if the proposed pathway were available. Similarly, 40% of resident respondents stated

that they would be more likely to commute on foot or bike to destinations outside of Lemon Creek via the proposed path, with 57% of respondents stating that they would use the path once per week or more.

Project Funding:

Current Funding: CBJ currently has allocated \$1.15 million in General Funds for preliminary project investigation and planning. CBJ has also been awarded \$739,520 in federal planning grant funding. Local matching funds for the two planning grants noted below will be provided from existing funds already appropriated to the Lemon Creek Multimodal Path CIP.

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Supplemental Planning Grant: In December 2023, CBJ was awarded \$86,000 (\$21,500 local match) in FY23 [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\)](#) funding from the USDOT FHWA to conduct a non-motorized transportation study and community engagement in Lemon Creek. Project work will begin once the FHWA provides the final signed award agreement.

Reconnecting Communities Program (RCP) Planning Grant: Most recently, the CBJ was awarded a \$653,520 (\$163,380 local match) Planning Grant via the FY2023 [Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods \(RCN\)](#) funding program from the USDOT Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The scope of the RCN grant will build on the FY2023 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) supplemental planning grant. Project work will begin once the FHWA provides the final signed award agreement (likely late fall 2024). More information on the RCN funding program can be found [here](#)¹.

Future Anticipated Funding:

CBJ is applying for \$800,000 in final planning and design funding through the FY23 FHWA Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program² for the Lemon Creek Multimodal path due July 17, 2024. The EPW team will evaluate and pursue relevant grant funding opportunities for project construction as the design and planning process progresses.

CBJ Voters approved \$1.5 million of Sales Tax funding as part of the (Proposition 3- October 2022) for this project. The funding is scheduled for allocation in Fiscal Year 2027.

Timeline:

CBJ anticipates that the work proposed in the aforementioned grant-funded work (planning, NEPA and design) will be completed in summer 2028, ideally setting the stage to begin construction in early FY29.

The multi-year planning timeline is due to the complex land ownership and funding landscape. Federally funded projects trigger the requirement to follow the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA ensures agencies consider the significant environmental consequences of their proposed actions and informs the public about the decision making. NEPA is far more complex and time consuming than the detailed planning, permitting and public involvement that the CBJ follows for locally funded projects using sales tax, bonds, Marine Passenger Fees, General Fund etc. The additional NEPA complexities can include detailed evaluation and public vetting of multiple alternatives and requires federal approval of the evaluations, agency and public involvement, documentation of the process and desired (preferred) alternative.

¹ <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/reconnecting-communities/reconnecting-communities-fy23-awards>

² https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/atiip/

	FY25				FY26				FY27				FY28				FY29				FY30			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
SS4A Grant - Community outreach, equity analysis and road safety audit																								
Reconnecting Communities Grant - Planning, Mapping, Preliminary Engineering/Design, Public Process, Geotech																								
Final Planning, Design & NEPA (Applying for grant funding)																								
Future Construction																					<i>Estimated*</i> →			
<i>*Pending availability of construction funding.</i>																								

Next Steps:

EPW will provide updates to the Committee regarding the upcoming community engagement and planning activities, as well as CBJ’s efforts to secure grant funding for final design and construction of the pathway.

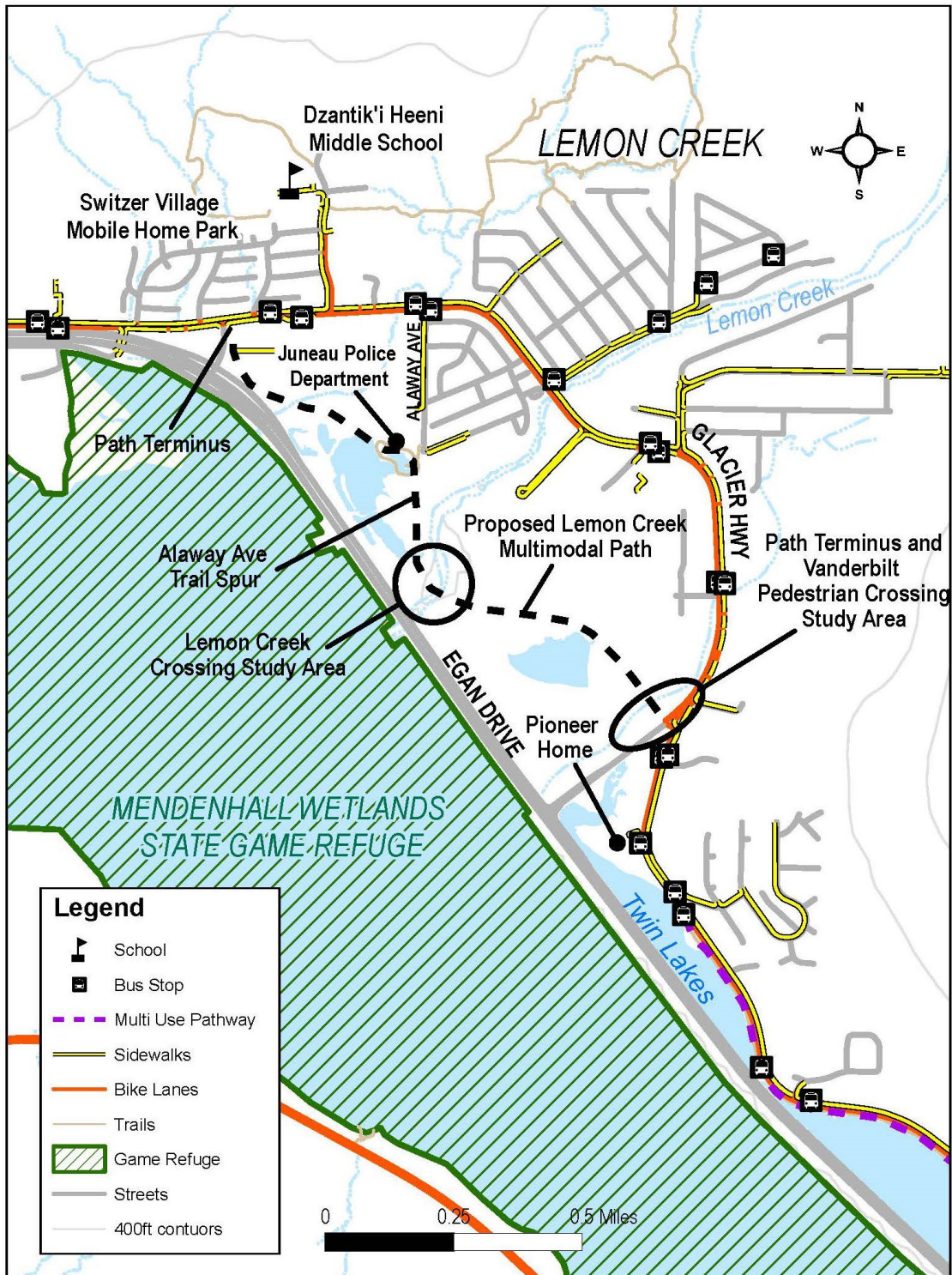


Figure 1. Preliminary alignment of a multimodal pathway in Lemon Creek. Final pathway alignment subject to change pending public process and engineering/design requirements.