

DRAFT LETTER

April 21st, 2022

To: Petersburg Assembly
CC: Petersburg Indian Association

Re: Trails Work Session & Public Support for Severson's Connector Trail

To Whom It May Concern,

In October of 2021 the Petersburg Parks and Recreation Board held a public work session to take input on local trail development.

The work session was well attended on a week night with twelve participants from across the community as well as the then director of Petersburg Indian Association. Participants included families, retirees, business owners, cyclists, hikers, dog walkers, and volunteers interested in helping to build more trails.

The Parks and Recreation Board also received two emails from the public prior to the event.

Discussion at the work session included input from attendees as well as a print out of the responses from the February 2021 Parks and Recreation public interest survey summarized and presented by a Parks and Rec Board member.

While the Trails Work Session attendees and survey respondents contributed many helpful suggestions and ideas, a few rose to the surface repeatedly.

When asked about existing trails and trail development, the number one most common comment from the public was to please add more trails and trail connectivity in our community. People noted that many people exercise outdoors in Petersburg and our trails allow people to stay healthy and hike, run, and walk in the beauty of nature.

The number two most common public comment was to move forward with a crosstown trail connection, specifically the proposed trail link between Severson's subdivision and the Fire Station/Post Office area of Haugen Dr. This request appeared in 16 different responses in our February 2021 community survey, more than any other trail-related suggestion by a factor of 8. It was also the proposal most discussed by attendees of the October 2021 trails work session.

Emails to the Parks and Rec Board from business owner David Berg and Severson Subdivision homeowner Casey Knight were also in support of the Severson connector trail. Mr. Berg noted such a trail would add activities for travelers including those from the harbor or drive down dock and suggested there may be visitor businesses who would partner with the community to construct the trail. Mr. Knight summarized via email and in person at the work session the

existing proposal, work done on its behalf by Susan Harai at Petersburg Indian Association, and road blocks its boosters have encountered, namely from the Alaska Department of Transportation. Mr. Knight has collected resident signatures in support of the project and suggested the Parks and Recreation Board and Petersburg Assembly continue to advocate for the Severson's trail.

While road blocks to the Severson's trail proposal have been encountered in the past, it's clear that public support for the proposal is still broad and enthusiastic enough to warrant further work toward solutions amenable to all stakeholders.

The Petersburg Parks and Recreation Board therefore asks the Petersburg Assembly and Borough staff to increase or re-establish efforts to support the development of the Severson's trail through resolution, direction to staff, or in any way the Assembly finds prudent and effective.

Sincerely,
Petersburg Parks and Recreation Board