

**Notes: May 26, 2023**

**Rivers Trails Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Info Sharing Session with Cooper Landing Trails (CLT) Committee**

**Present:**

David Story, Chair, CLT/Walkable Community, Cooper Landing  
Janette Cadieux, Secretary, CLT/Walkable Community, Cooper Landing  
Kristin Pace, Outdoor Rec Planner, RTCA, NPS, based Palmer  
Zachary Babb, Manager RTCA for AK Region, based ANC  
Leigh Ann Belloli, Landscape Architect, based ANC

**Purpose:**

Share information about the CLT project and share what kinds of assistance RTCA may provide

JC:

- History of the Walkable Community Project see also <https://www.walkcooperlanding.org/>

DS:

- Widespread community support
- We are an unincorporated town, KPB is our municipality
- Our attempts at funding have been praised but we are not selected because neither KPB or DOT have applied for us.
- Records of support wide-based
- Prioritized at multiple points by the community by vote and general desire
- The “town road” will remain highly utilized for asset access but is highly deficient for both vehicular and active transport users.
- Need help for translating our efforts to funding
- Looking forward toward SS4A that KPB Planner has indicated CLTRPP will be included.
- Our goal is bike/ped facilities
- Need help tracking grant cycles and leveraging other resources
- How do we better prepare ourselves for funding?

ZB:

- Has come to CL since childhood
- How does RTCA fit-in, how can they help?
- CLT has the best TAP and FLAP applications he has ever seen

DS:

Obstacles:

- DOT does not want to maintain the town road and certainly any active infrastructure.
- KPB is not likely to accept the responsibility for a road that is so inferior and troublesome.

JC:

Obstacles:

- The proximity to the Kenai River
- The difficulty of the project within that proximity are critical

DS:

- Road last resurfaced in 2013. They were given waivers to ignore some of the active transportation deficiencies and other deficiencies related to Interstate Hwy status. Soon it will be a secondary artery.
- What will the functional classification be for this road once the new alignment takes over designation as “Sterling Highway”?
- Budget from DNR for FLAP app appears relevant with an update for the TAP app.
- We need a detailed plan for how to have a bike/ped path within the transportation corridor of this section of roadway.

ZB:

- Surprised FLAP didn’t fund. They do tend to like to fund objects, e.g. a bridge.
- For a planning project, you likely don’t need to include DOT
- Land owner and applicant for FLAP could be KPB, Kenaitze Tribe, NWR, or USFS, doesn’t have to be DOT.

JC:

- We need to get to the “shovel ready” point.

ZB:

- RTCA can help with how to navigate systems of these funding applications
- There is an employee at RTCA who has expertise and connections in transportation projects that he can connect us to.
- RTCA can provide us with someone who does grant apps and can look over our apps to point out how to make them stronger.
- Our budget may be too low.

DS:

- AK Trails has been active supporters
- KMTA has also been super supportive and helpful
- Having others who are in the orbit of these apps will be useful to us to help us see our deficiencies or overcome prejudices or obstacles.
- All that ZB proposed would be welcome to us.
- As we look forward over the next five years, all that ZB described will be helpful.

JC:

- Can someone in RTCA try to learn what the obstacle is or why we haven’t been funded by FLAP? By TAP?

ZB:

- Yes, they may be able to learn that.
- Next FLAP cycle is 2025.

LB:

- Public Support blank in the TAP?
- Is there a private land owner that has leverage and is blocking?

DS:

- The public support is there and demonstrated including KPB and USFS land managers. LB may have been given the wrong version of the draft app. Will re-send.

JC:

- Budget deficiencies?

ZB:

- Yes, we can help identify budget deficiencies.
- You have enough of a project for us to look at it but they are busy at present so would be more helpful in the next FLAP cycle.
- Hold on further grant or proposal submissions until they can help us. The 2024-2025 cycle is the target.