



Planning Department

Charlie Pierce
Borough Mayor

Cooper Landing Trails Committee
David Story, Chair
PO Box 863
Cooper Landing, AK 99572

March 23, 2021

RE: Cooper Landing Town Road Planning Project

The Cooper Landing Trails Committee has demonstrated an initiative to safely connect people and places in the Cooper Landing area of the Kenai River valley. The community features of Cooper Landing are a hub to the federal lands of the USFS Chugach National Forest. Private, state and borough lands composing the Cooper Landing Community came largely from National Forest Community Grant Lands as a function of the Alaska Statehood Act. This center of activity is entirely surrounded by the Chugach National Forest, with the USFWS Kenai National Wildlife Refuge sharing a border just to the west. Cooper Landing is a gateway to important fisheries including the famous Resurrection River and Upper Kenai River as well as eastern Kenai Lake. The Sterling Highway is the transportation pipeline navigating through National Forest and Refuge lands from Anchorage to Homer with Cooper Landing as an idyllic mountain valley community node capable of servicing and outfitting the popular recreational features managed on the adjacent federal lands. Safely connecting people and places in the Cooper Landing area has broad reach in achieving quality and reliability in the access to federal lands in this region.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough provides this letter of support to the Cooper Landing Trails Committee's Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) grant proposal for its Town Road Pathway Planning Project. The Cooper Landing Walkable Community Plan has been adopted as an element of the Kenai Peninsula Borough's Comprehensive Plan. Recent changes with the Western Federal Highways funded Sterling Highway MP45-60 construction project, often referred to as the Cooper Landing Bypass, warrants new actions to address constraints on multimodal local travel. This FLAP proposal is a worthy and needed planning project to continue the work of safely connecting people and places in this vital and vibrant Forest community, and therefore full consideration by the Alaska Programming Decisions Committee is recommended.

Sincerely,

Charlie Pierce, Borough Mayor