

Municipal Clerk's Office
Amended and Approved
Date: **November 9, 2022**

Submitted by: Assembly Vice Chair Constant and
Assembly Member Volland
Prepared by: Legislative Services
For reading: November 9, 2022

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR No. 2022-348, As Amended

1 **A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING THE**
2 **FAIRVIEW COMMUNITY COUNCIL AND NEIGHBORWORKS ALASKA IN**
3 **THEIR EFFORT TO SECURE A RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PILOT**
4 **PROGRAM GRANT THROUGH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF**
5 **TRANSPORTATION TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO UNIFY A COMMUNITY**
6 **PHYSICALLY FRACTURED BY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE.**

7
8 **WHEREAS**, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was passed with the support
9 of the Alaska delegation and signed into law by the President of the United States
10 on November 15, 2021, and will bring much needed investments to the State of
11 Alaska; and

12
13 **WHEREAS**, the “Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program,” a discretionary grant
14 program funded with \$1 billion over the next 5 years, is the first-ever Federal
15 program dedicated to reconnecting communities that were previously cut off from
16 economic opportunities by transportation infrastructure; and

17
18 **WHEREAS**, funding through this program supports planning grants and capital
19 construction grants, as well as technical assistance, to restore community
20 connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation, or replacement of eligible
21 transportation infrastructure facilities; and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, eligible facilities for this program include highways, roads, streets,
24 parkways, or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community
25 connectivity, including barriers to mobility, access, or economic development, due
26 to high speeds, grade separations, or other design factors; and

27
28 **WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage is physically bisected by the New Seward
29 Highway, and the Fairview Community is divided by the Gambell and Ingra Couplet
30 corridor; and

31
32 **WHEREAS**, high speeds through this corridor, combined with precariously narrow
33 sidewalks that are frequently interrupted by utility poles or piled high with snow,
34 present ongoing dangers for pedestrians, cyclists, and wheelchair users in a
35 neighborhood where nearly half of the population is low income and where some
36 cannot afford to travel by vehicle; and

37
38 **WHEREAS**, this couplet brought over 28,000 vehicles daily in pre-pandemic years
39 through largely residential areas, with an estimated 5% being freight traffic including
40 tractor-trailer doubles and hazardous materials; and

41

1 **WHEREAS, the Federal Title 23 Highway bisecting the Fairview community is**
2 **a textbook study in structural inequality that can be traced back to the original**
3 **construction of the couplet in the 1950's – it served to divide the town and a**
4 **place “that would never amount to anything” – a stance taken by some in a**
5 **position to affect the project. What was once de jure segregation continued**
6 **as de facto segregation now affecting multiple minority populations across**
7 **several generations. Urban renewal and its use of a low-income, minority**
8 **neighborhood to assist in siting a high-speed, 8-lane couplet, a federal**
9 **highway cutting through an urban neighborhood, was a clear act of**
10 **discrimination in the implementation of transportation policy and planning;**
11 **and**
12

13 **WHEREAS,** the highway corridor has led to decades of divestment and decline in
14 the area, and causes ongoing health and safety risks to an economically
15 disadvantaged community; and
16

17 **WHEREAS,** the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities has
18 completed its first year of a Seward to Glenn Mobility Planning and Environmental
19 Linkages (PEL) Study, but many community members have found it unresponsive
20 to neighborhood priorities and concerns, with thru-traffic prioritized and vehicle
21 level-of-service metrics emphasized, in spite of the fact that an overwhelming
22 proportion of public comments received from neighbors emphasized the need to
23 prioritize safety for non-motorized travel; and
24

25 **WHEREAS,** with AO 2014-108, the Assembly adopted the Fairview Neighborhood
26 Plan which included the findings of fact in Planning and Zoning Resolution 2014-
27 032, notably #13 which reads:
28

29 Gambell Street is neither safe for the public, nor safe for traffic; it is time to
30 stop studying Gambell Street and to take action for improvements.
31 Concerning the AMATS plan noted on page 32, to delay [a project] until 2035
32 could be considered a taking, through the 20-year delays asked of property
33 owners. Public agencies should make their decisions in a timelier manner;
34 and
35

36 **WHEREAS,** the Fairview Community Council has taken the community-led initiative
37 to partner with NeighborWorks Alaska to apply for funding through the U.S.
38 Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program grant
39 opportunity, in an effort to restore balance by incorporating the priorities of land use,
40 non-motorized mobility, neighborhood connectivity, and economic development;
41 and
42

43 **WHEREAS,** the “Reconnecting Fairview” proposal seeks to fund planning activities
44 for the revitalization of the East Downtown and Fairview neighborhoods that utilize
45 a robust public engagement and community visioning process combined with
46 important technical analysis to restore neighborhood unity, enhance year-round

1 mobility, and achieve concurrence on a revitalization strategy for the physically
2 fractured Fairview community;

3
4 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Anchorage Assembly strongly supports
5 the “Reconnecting Fairview” collaboration between the Fairview Community Council
6 and NeighborWorks Alaska and their effort to secure funding through the
7 Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program and the U.S. Department of
8 Transportation.
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11 **PASSED AND APPROVED** by the Anchorage Assembly this 9th day of November,
12 2022.
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15 *Christopher Constant*

16 _____
17 Chair

18 **ATTEST:**

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21 *Jennifer Veneklasen*

22 _____
23 Municipal Clerk