

CITY OF PALMER BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Resolution No. 22-001

A Resolution of the Palmer Board of Economic Development Recommending City Council Provide Funding for a Master Plan for the Railroad Right of Way to Implement Elements of the Brownfield Area Wide Plan.

WHEREAS, the purpose of the city of Palmer Board of Economic Development (BED) is to provide research, public input and disseminate information to the City Council to evaluate economic development opportunities and strategies; and,

WHEREAS, unique local events, tourism and recreational opportunities have a significant impact on Palmer's quality of life and economy; and,

WHEREAS, Palmer has invested heavily in infrastructure, including the Community Center (Depot), MTA Events Center, Visitor Information Center, Palmer Airport, parks, bike paths, pedestrian access and downtown beautification projects; and,

WHEREAS, in 2020 a United States Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Area Wide Planning Study was conducted for downtown Palmer which outlined improvements that could enhance the connectivity and economic opportunities; and,

WHEREAS, the BED unanimously passed Resolution No. 21-001 supporting improvements in the downtown railroad right of way; and,

WHEREAS, the BED recognizes that the Palmer Railroad branch MP A5.1 – MP A6.7 has been placed out of service by the Alaska Railroad and the branch beyond MP 6.7 is under long term permit to the Mat-Su Borough for use as a trail; and

WHEREAS, the BED recognizes railroad reintroduction in downtown Palmer will require significant economic investment for reconstruction of the branch MP A5.1 – MP A6.7 and until this investment is made the community would benefit through utilization of this space NOW through a lease or permit from the ARRC and removal of the current railroad tracks while retaining existing elements of the track to preserve historical significance; and,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Economic Development requests the Palmer City Council fund a Downtown Concept Master Plan with the assistance of a landscape architect and community meetings not to exceed \$20,000; and,

NOW THEREFORE, IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the BED supports these prioritized projects that have been identified in the Palmer Comprehensive Plan, the Area Wide Plan – Eastern Downtown Palmer Study, and the Palmer Urban Revitalization plan, including.

1. Community Event Space (North of Depot)
2. Parking Enhancements on Colony Way and Valley Way
3. Motorized and Non-motorized connectivity
4. Park and Playground improvements in downtown
5. Branding and Signage recognizing Palmer's History

Dusty Silva, Chairperson



Brad Hanson, Director Community Development