CITY OF CORDOVA, ALASKA
RESOLUTION 07-22-20

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORDOVA, ALASKA
SUPPORTING AND PLACING THE HIGHEST PRIORITY ON REPAIRS TO THE COPPER
RIVER HIGHWAY AND URGING THE STATE OF ALASKA TO FUND SUCH REPAIRS

WHEREAS, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AKDoT&PF) is in the
process of drafting a Copper River Highway Transportation Master Plan which will help envision the
future of the highway corridor from mile post 0 (Cordova ferry terminal) to mile post 51 (Abercrombie
Creek); and

WHEREAS, in December 2019, AKDoT&PF completed a Planning and Environmental Linkage
Study (PEL) of the CRH from Mile Post 27 through Mile Post 51; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the PEL was to get a head start on the planning and requirements
under NEPA for any projects aimed at repair and replacement of the damaged transportation
infrastructure on the Copper River Highway; and

WHEREAS, the need for the PEL was manifold: 1) the August 2011 closure of bridge number
339 for public safety reasons, 2) the eastward migration of the main channel of the Copper River which
as of September 4, 2019 had caused the loss of 2,875 feet of the CRH to erosion and threatens more of
the same, 3) the August 2016 damage to the ice breaker protecting Pier 1 of the Million Dollar Bridge,
4) the determination that 25 damaged culverts within the highway segment of the PEL study area are
inadequate for fish passage requirements, and others; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned loss of infrastructure has had a negative effect on the commerce
in Cordova because of the diminished tourism due to the inability of visitors to reach the once-popular
USFS Child’s Glacier Campground and Recreational Area; and

WHEREAS, Cordova’s economic driver, commercial salmon fishing, is especially negatively
affected by the impassable culverts, the roads and bridges eroding into the river which is critical salmon
habitat and the vulnerability of the sonar station to damage by ice bergs or eroding parts of the Million
Dollar Bridge, as it is crucial to determine salmon escapement, an integral tool for the sustainable
management of fisheries; and

WHEREAS, The Native Village of Eyak conducts ecological research in the CRH PEL study
area including the operation of a fish wheel to collect biological samples of salmon which helps in the
management of commercial, subsistence, and personal use fisheries throughout the Copper River
Watershed; and

WHEREAS, as AKDoT&PF works toward final Master Plan, the draft vision statement has
begun to take shape as follows: “The Copper River Highway will be a safe, reliable, multi-modal
transportation corridor that provides access to recreational, economic, and cultural activities for
community members and visitors alike while sustaining the area’s scenic, cultural, and ecological attributes”; and

WHEREAS, a local stakeholder advisory committee is advising AKDoT&PF through this project which when completed, will document transportation issues and needs, prioritize community-identified projects, and identify potential alternatives and funding sources.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Cordova places the highest priority on repairs to the Copper River Highway, eagerly anticipates the completion of the AKDoT&PF Copper River Highway Transportation Master Plan and urges the State of Alaska to fund projects that emerge from the report to make the Copper River Highway usable again.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 6th DAY OF JULY 2022

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David Allison, Mayor

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Susan Bourgeois, CMC, City Clerk