



# City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686

## Meeting Agenda Beautification Commission

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Monday, July 21, 2025

5:00 PM

City Council Chambers

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### Regular Meeting

#### REGULAR AGENDA - 5:00 PM

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

#### II. ROLL CALL

#### III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. [Approval of Minutes for Beautification Commission Meeting of May 5, 2025](#)  
[Approval of Minutes for Beautification Commission Meeting of November 11, 2023](#)  
[Approval of Minutes for Beautification Commission Meeting of January 26, 2023](#)

#### IV. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

#### V. NEW BUSINESS

1. [Discussion Item: Moving Commission Priorities Forward/ City Projects Process](#)
2. [Discussion Item: Follow-up on Needed Repairs to Concrete Seat Walls and Decorative Planters on Egan Dr.](#)
3. [Discussion Item: Updating Application Guidelines and Eligibly Criteria for 2026 Beautification Matching Grant Program](#)

#### VI. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

#### VII. ADJOURNMENT



# City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 25-0230, **Version:** 1

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**ITEM TITLE:**

Approval of Minutes for Beautification Commission Meeting of May 5, 2025

**SUBMITTED BY:** Elise Sorum-Birk, Deputy City Clerk

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: n/a

Unencumbered Balance: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

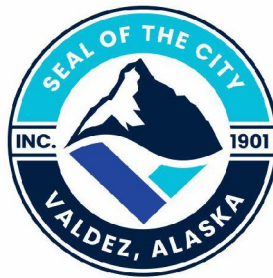
Review and approve minutes.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

The minutes from the Beautification Commissions meeting held on May 5, 2025 are attached for review and approval.

# City of Valdez

*212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686*



## Action Summary

**Monday, May 5, 2025**

**6:00 PM**

**Regular Meeting - Rescheduled from 4/21/25**

**Council Chambers**

## **Beautification Commission**

**REGULAR AGENDA - 6:00 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

**Present** 5 - Magdalena McCay  
Donna Lane (Remote)  
Kathy Nielsen  
Meg Weaver  
Timi Miner

**Absent** 1 - Keena Miller

Also Present Elise Sorum-Birk, Commission Staff  
Sheri Pierce, City Clerk

III. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no business from the floor.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Keena Miller joined the meeting remotely.

1. Approval of Recommendation to City Council to Fund B's Hive 2025 Beautification Matching Grant Project in the Amount of \$700

**MOTION:** Nielsen moved, seconded by Weaver, to approve recommendation to City Council to Fund B's Hive 2025 Beautification Matching Grant Project in the amount of \$610.

It was noted by that, while the agenda statement and request were for \$700 in funding, the actual amount for half the project expenses was \$610.

Discussion occurred on whether repainting was considered maintenance or beautification.

**VOTE ON MOTION**

**Yays:** 6 - McCay, Lane, Nielsen, Weaver, Miller, Miner

2. Approval of Recommendation to City Council to Fund Quad Shot Espresso 2025 Beautification Matching Grant Project in the Amount of \$7388.92

**MOTION:** Nielsen moved, seconded by Miner, to approve recommendation to City Council to fund Quad Shot Espresso 2025 Beautification Matching Grant Project in the amount of \$7388.92.

The applicant was asked about the impact of the State of Alaska right-of-way on the proposed improvements to the corner of the property. Discussion occurred about the removable and seasonal nature of certain portions of the proposed project.

**VOTE ON MOTION**

**Yays:** 6 - Commission Member McCay, Lane, Nielsen, Weaver, Miller, and Miner

3. Approval of Recommendation to City Council to Fund Captain Joe's Gas 2025 Beautification Grant Project in the Amount of \$12,500

**MOTION:** Nielsen moved, seconded by Miner, to approve recommendation to City Council to fund Captain Joe's Gas 2025 Beautification Grant Project in the amount of \$12,500.

Commissioners shared positive feedback on the application overall.

**VOTE ON MOTION**

**Yays:** 6 - Commission Member McCay, Lane, Nielsen, Weaver, Miller, and Miner

4. Approval of Recommendation to City Council to Fund Valdez Outfitters Shop 2025 Beautification Grant Project in the amount of \$12,500

**MOTION:** Nielsen moved, seconded by Lane, to approve recommendation to City Council to Fund Valdez Outfitters 2025 Beautification Grant Project in the amount of \$12,500.

Discussion took place on the existing program requirements and explicit exclusion of roof replacement projects.

**MOTION TO AMEND:** Nielsen moved, seconded by Miller, to indicate in the award letter that roof specific portions of project are ineligible for grant funding.

**VOTE ON MOTION TO AMEND**

**Yays:** 6 - Commission Member McCay, Lane, Nielsen, Weaver, Miller, and Miner

**VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED**

**Yays:** 6 - Commission Member McCay, Lane, Nielsen, Weaver, Miller, and Miner

5. Discussion Items: Needed Repairs to Concrete Seat Walls and Decorative Planters on Egan Dr.

Discussion included:

- The existing maintenance agreement with the State of Alaska and whether there had been any recent conversation with the state on the topic of this agreement.
- Whether the state would assist with repairing damages they caused through snow removal.
- How city Public Works staff had completed some previous repairs for damaged incurred by city operations

- Options for making the design of the seat wall more resilient, including the possibility of making the seat portion removeable.
- A desire to ensure that repairs happened in a timely matter.
- A desire to involve the City Manager in the conversation.
- The overall need for a more comprehensive look at maintenance for the previous beautification project on Egan Drive.

V. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no commission business from the floor.

VI. ADJOURNMENT



# City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 25-0327, **Version:** 1

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**ITEM TITLE:**

Approval of Minutes for Beautification Commission Meeting of November 11, 2023

**SUBMITTED BY:** Elise Sorum-Birk, Deputy City Clerk

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: n/a

Unencumbered Balance: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and approve minutes.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

The minutes from the Beautification Commissions meeting held on November 11, 2023 are attached for review and approval.

# City of Valdez

*212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686*



## DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 16, 2023

6:00 PM

Regular Meeting (Note date change due to holiday)

City Council Chambers

**Beautification Commission**



**REGULAR AGENDA - 6:00 PM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ROLL CALL**

**Present** 4 - Chair Kathy Nielsen  
Commission Member Jennifer Benda  
Commission Member Keena Miller  
Commission Member Sara Irwin Goudreau  
**Excused** 2 - Commission Member Meg Weaver  
Commission Member Magdalena McCay

**III. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND CHAIR PRO TEMPORE**

**MOTION:** Irwin Goudreau moved, seconded by Miller to elect Commissioner Kathy Nielsen as Chair.

**VOTE ON MOTION TO ELECT CHAIR**

**Yays:** 4 - Nielsen, Benda, Miller and Irwin Goudreau

**Absent:** 1 - McCay and Weaver

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**MOTION:** Irwin Goudreau moved, seconded by Miller to elect Commissioner Jenny Benda as Chair Pro Tempore

**VOTE ON MOTION TO ELECT CHAIR PRO TEMPORE**

**Yays:** 4 - Nielsen, Benda, Miller and Irwin Goudreau

**Absent:** 1 - McCay and Weaver

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**IV. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

No Public Business from the Floor was presented.

**V. REPORTS**

- 1. Report: Memorial Bench Policy Director Ken Wilson and Recreation Coordinator Grace Walker**

**Commissioner McCay joined the meeting telephonically.**

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director Ken Wilson and Recreation Coordinator Grace Walker presented to the commission on the memorial bench policy drafted by Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services leadership.

Commission discussion included the following:

- Authority of the city related to placement of monuments or art on private property and times when the Planning and Zoning commission would need to be involved.
- Questions about how best to honor individuals that places were named after by providing historical context as to why existing names had been given.
- Broad nature of the policy and potential need for additional detail.
- Request to clarify that service need not be to “nation, state and city”, but rather, “nation state or city.”
- Concerns about lack of clarity on issues of ownership and maintenance for future monuments and public art.
- Appreciation that a policy was being developed and could provide a starting point for future discussions.
- Need for the Beautification Commission to assist with honing future standards for monument placement.
- Questions related to how “broad public support” would be measured.

## **2. Report: Beautification Matching Grant Program Update**

Commission Staff Liaison Elise Sorum-Birk provided the commission with an update on the Beautification Matching Grant Program.

The commission agreed to scheduling an application review session for the coming year in lieu of the December Regular Meeting.

Questions were asked about outreach and communication with participating businesses.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Deferral of 2023 Beautification Matching Grant to Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 1971**

**MOTION:** Miller moved, seconded by Benda, to approve deferral of the 2023 Beautification Matching Grant to the Fraternal Order of the Eagles.

**VOTE ON MOTION**

**Yays:** 5 - Nielsen, Benda, Miller, McCay, and Irwin Goudreau

**Absent:** 1 - Commission Member Weaver

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Commissioner Irwin Goudreau asked about the commissions' involvement in the review process for matching grant applications.

Chair Nielsen suggested the development of a clearer criteria for deferral of grant awards.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Nielsen adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 25-0328, **Version:** 1

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**ITEM TITLE:**

Approval of Minutes for Beautification Commission Meeting of January 26, 2023

**SUBMITTED BY:** Elise Sorum-Birk, Deputy City Clerk

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: n/a

Unencumbered Balance: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

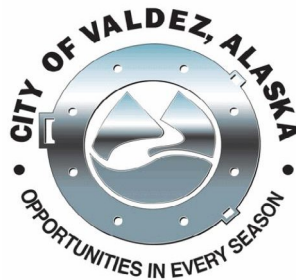
Review and approve minutes.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

The minutes from the Beautification Commissions meeting held on January 26, 2023 are attached for review and approval.

# City of Valdez

*212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686*



## DRAFT - Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 26, 2023

12:00 PM

Regular Meeting

City Council Chambers

## Beautification Commission

**REGULAR AGENDA - 12:00 PM****I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Nielsen called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**Present** 5 - Chair Kathy Nielsen  
Chair Pro Tempore Patricia Relay  
Commission Member Meg Weaver  
Commission Member Jennifer Benda  
Commission Member Donna Lane

**Excused** 2 - Commission Member Abigail Ferrara  
Commission Member Ruth E Knight

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES****1. Approval of Minutes from the December 22, 2022, Beautification Commission Meeting**

The minutes were approved by consent as presented.

**Commissioner Knight joined the meeting virtually.**

**IV. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

No Public Business from the Floor was presented.

**V. NEW BUSINESS****1. Discussion Item: Beautification Commission City Project Priorities**

Capital Facilities Director Nate Duval gave an overview of the process for review of project priorities by departments and commissions, city project process overall and process for scoring projects.

Commission discussion included:

- Questions about categorization in relation to urgency and overall city priorities.
- Budget considerations and the annual appropriations process.
- Details related to the spreadsheet and tracking of the amount expended on each project.

- Overview of how a project moves from idea to implementation.
- Interest in looking for additional funding opportunities beyond city funds.
- Desire for Beautification Commission input during design process on larger projects.
- Beautification Commission's role in seeking public feedback on aesthetic considerations projects.
- Questions about role of the Commission.
- Possibility of creating a "Percent for Art" program

## **2. Discussion Item: Coast Guard City Sign Alternative**

Capital Facilities Director Nate Duval shared the proposed design for the Coast Guard City sign.

Commission discussion included:

- Significance of being a Coast Guard City and overview of the process that had taken place to become a city.
- Samples of design on the use of Coast Guard colors (orange and sea blue) versus more traditional American colors (red, white and blue) .
- Whether it would be beneficial to get approval on use of the official Coast Guard logo.
- Concerns and disapproval related to hanging the sign on the "Welcome to Valdez" arch.
- Ownership of decisions related to the arch.
- Need for future guidelines for affixing signs to the arch.
- Maintenance of the arch and other beautification-initiated projects.

## **3. Discussion Item: Initial Conversation Relating to Options for Refurbishing Royal Center Mural.**

**MOTION:** Lane moved, seconded by Weaver, to postpone agenda item to the next regular meeting.

### **VOTE ON MOTION TO POSTPONE:**

**Yays:** 6 - Nielsen, Weaver, Knight, Benda, Relay and Lane

**Absent:** 1 - Ferrara

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**VI. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Commissioner Relay raised a question about why an email relating to nuisance abatement for properties on Homestead Road had been given to the commission. Staff Liaison Sorum-Birk noted that it had been received as a public comment directed to the commission and had also been provided to the Code Enforcement Officer.

Commissioner Weaver expressed a desire to support a project extending the bike path along the Richardson Highway and relayed the conversation she'd had with local state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities staff on the topic.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Nielsen adjourned the meeting at 1:03 p.m.





## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 25-0227, **Version:** 1

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**ITEM TITLE:**

Discussion Item: Moving Commission Priorities Forward/ City Projects Process

**SUBMITTED BY:** Elise Sorum-Birk, Deputy City Clerk

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: n/a

Unencumbered Balance: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

n/a

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

The commission has engaged in planning and project prioritization over the last three years. **The goal of this discussion is to determine how to advocate for and work toward completing the various identified priorities of the commission.**

City Manager Nate Duval will provide a brief overview on the COV projects process for context.

The timing and pathway forward for commission priorities was discussed in May of 2024. This topic continues to be revisited by the commission regularly, but it has proven difficult to translate ideas into action on commission priorities.

Chair McCay asked Beautification staff to put this discussion item on the agenda in hopes that some progress on projects could start to be made.

Attached is an outline of ideas put forward during the commission's 2022 planning work session to guide discussion as well as the document compiling commission priorities from 2023.

In addition, the commission has also discussed the following:

- Designing and installation of a Snow Pole/ Snow Height Gauge
- Development of a Public Art Policy (a committee has been formed to work on this)
- Looking into possible project funding mechanisms, including opportunities like the "Our Town" grant

- Which projects need to be included in capital improvement program requests and level of detail needed to identify a future capital project

## **Summary of Beautification Commission Member Priorities - June 2023**

- **Main Street**

- **Lane:** “The lot on SW corner of Meals and Egan. Although privately owned, it is prominent-ugly on the beginning of our main street.”
- **McCay:** “Fix Egan Street. Develop the street, create the plaza or build apartment buildings with retail space on the bottom floor, have the theme for the main street, make a plan to connect Egan with harbors, Kelsey Dock, Galena, Kobuk, Fairbanks St to have a flow for walkability and future growth of the community.”
- **Benda:** “Improve the empty lots on main street.”

- **Park Strips**

- **Lane:** “All the snow dump areas but mainly the two park areas. They need to be shaped up with good grass cover, quickly, rather than looking like landfills.”
- **Benda:** “Do something with the park strips in town. They are damaged because of snow removal, but we still use them all summer and have built beautiful picnic shelters. Is there a balance that can be found?”
- **McCay:** “It is also disappointing to see the state our park strips are in June (Black Gold Park Strip for example).”

- **Maintenance Planning**

- **Benda:** “Ownership of projects-who maintains them once they are built? Christmas lights still up and on until March is just as sad as no lights at all.”
- **McCay:** “Maintain what we have and take care of the assets that bring visitors to town and provide great recreation opportunities to locals - Develop annual maintenance plans for non-paved roads to main attractions, for example: Valdez Glacier Lake, Robe Lake, Old Town Valdez, Mineral Creek. Make sure the roads are graded several times in the summer, brush is cut, there are portable toilets provided, trash cans or dumpsters, picnic tables in some areas, fire rings, make sure City has MOA agreement with the State of Alaska to provide basic service at Robe Lake instead of pushing the responsibility between City and State and nothing gets done for years.”
- **Knight:** “Figure out a long-term maintenance plan for all beautification projects (i.e., the arch, the welcome sign, the planters and light posts, banners, murals, etc.)”

- **Duck Flats Boardwalk**

- **Neilsen:** “The Stan Stephens memorial boardwalk on the duck flats. Will require permitting. Federal project money may be available. This is a project that provides opportunity for various groups to work together, i.e., educational, environmental, tourism.”
- **Weaver:** “Boardwalk at the flats. (Marsh area)”

- **Royal Center Mural**

- **Lane:** Goldminer mural. High focus area for locals and visitors. Perhaps the repair could be paid for by interested locals. I know a resident who will donate \$1,000 toward the work.
- **Knight:** support the repainting of the All-American Route mural. Make it a community art project activity during Goldrush days.
- **Benda:** Solution to the aging mural on the Egan building.
- **Code Enforcement**
  - **McCay:** “First of all we need to put a major effort into cleaning up our town and enforcing the code. As we drive around in the trolley and see Valdez from the Visitor perspective, it is a little bit disturbing, especially traveling on Robe River Drive (by the schools), Brewery Row, streets near College (Lowe and Mendeltna), Egan Drive.”; “Code Enforcement - maybe put money into educating people about the code (video), neighborhood cleanup days (more than once a year), and educate residents how they can report violations and how the process works from the report to fixing the problem and show results.”
  - **Knight:** “Prioritize the cleanup of the junk yards. Work with Dan to develop plans and a timeline with definitive benchmarks for the clean-up process. If this is not possible, figure out pretty ways to screen the eye sores.”
- **Town Plaza**
  - **Neilsen:** “Town Plaza concept on Fairbanks Drive, between the library and city hall. To be considered and implemented when street or other major maintenance is planned. A central place within our city for visitors to stop and for the community to gather for outdoor activities.
  - **Weaver:** “City Plaza between City Hall and Library”
- **Art Walk**
  - **Knight:** “Work with the Mural Society to figure out themes and places for new murals and then develop a mural/wood sculpture walking tour. One for sure place for a mural is the Museum Annex, since it looks like it will be there for quite a while.”
  - **McCay:** “Murals and Wood Carvings, create Art Walk around town connecting visitors and locals with businesses and creating fantastic marketing opportunities for Valdez. Create a mural theme (Plan as community) for downtown, have another wood carving competition and get more art, maybe have a program offering local businesses to keep the carving in exchange for maintaining and storing it (City could provide small cash incentive for maintenance of the art, this will reduce maintenance for the City). Make plans so everything becomes cohesive, colorful and attractive, use Art Walk to create walking/biking maps for people to explore with some purpose.”
- **Gazebo**
  - **Weaver:** “Removal of the gazebo and add a digital info center like the hatchery has.”
  - **Benda:** “Gazebo-Is there a way to utilize it? Is it really an eyesore, or just a weird unused building?”

- **Bike Path Extension**
  - **McCay:** “I would like to see a wildlife viewing platform at the hatchery and possible extension of the bike path to the canyon.”
  - **Weaver:** “Bike/walking path for ten mile then to the canyon.”
- **Memorial Park Benches**
  - **Weaver:** “Park benches in memorial around the city.”
- **Illegal camping**
  - **McCay:** “Take care of Boondocking with appropriate signage. I am not against boondocking but please provide signage with a vehicle limit per night and basic rules (no toilet on board, no boondocking allowed). We see tents, small vans camping in the old town area, and we also see the aftermath of human waste.”
- **Post Office Area Landscaping**
  - **Lane:** “South side of the Post Office. Again a very high focus area. A few years ago someone enjoyed landscaping this area but now it looks terrible.”
- **General Cleanup Efforts**
  - **McCay:** “Working with the staff and citizens to come up with cleaning up the city. I don’t have a solution to this but cleaning up will sure show the beauty that Valdez has.”
- **Additional comments:**
  - **McCay:** “I think we need a mix of fast summer projects and long-term improvements.”
  - **Neilsen:** “We might want to begin by acknowledging the fixed realities of any project. Such as which department or agency would be responsible for implementation. I'm all for big dreams, but in order not to waste time and energy we have to be pragmatic.”

# Valdez Beautification Commission

## 2022 Strategic Planning Session

August 12<sup>th</sup> 2022

5:00 PM

City Council Chambers

**Overall objective:** To discuss City Beautification Commission's priorities and vision

**Attendees:** Kathy Nielsen, Chair  
Patricia Relay, Chair Pro Tem  
Ruth E. Knight, Commissioner  
Jennifer Benda, Commissioner  
Meg Weaver, Commissioner

**Recorder:** Elise Sorum-Birk, Deputy City Clerk **Absent:** Abigail Ferrara, Commissioner

### *Notes from Discussion*

Reference	VMC Powers and Duties	Text
A	2.66.020 (A)	Work to advocate for, promote, and enhance the aesthetics of the local human-built environment to reflect the beauty of the surrounding natural environment.
B	2.66.020 (B)	Work to build community, a sense of place, and civic pride through beautification projects, educational programming, grant programs, and other activities focused on the aesthetics of Valdez, including but not limited to design, landscaping, and public art.
C	2.66.020 (C)	Receive, consider, and evaluate public input, opinions, and recommendations regarding aesthetics of the community and advise the city council of any findings or recommendations.
D	2.66.020 (D)	Advise on aesthetic components of city projects and public-private partnerships, as requested.
E	2.66.020 (E)	Advise on code enforcement efforts related to community aesthetics, as requested.
F	2.66.020 (F)	Consult with other city boards and commissions on their work as it relates to community aesthetics.
G	2.66.020 (G)	Participate in the city comprehensive planning process as it relates to community aesthetics.
H	2.66.020 (H)	Make recommendations to city council through the city budget process regarding beautification programs and beautification project priorities for funding.
I	2.66.020 (I)	Meet at least once per month and cause minutes of each meeting to be recorded.
J	2.66.020 (J)	Perform such other activities as may be requested of it by the city council.

Priority/ Project	Additional Notes/ Goals	Related Reference(s)
Beautification Matching Grant Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting a variety of projects, not just art</li> <li>Requesting funds from Council during the budget process to support the program</li> <li>Public/ private partnership</li> <li>Bolstering the existing program is the top priority for the current year</li> </ul>	A, B, H

Priority/ Project	Additional Notes/ Goals	Related Reference(s)
Engage with the comprehensive planning process moving forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question: How is this plan reexamined and adapted moving forward?</li> <li>• Engage with P&amp;Z Commission and Planning</li> <li>• Can commission members engage on Title 17 rewrite?</li> </ul>	A, F, G
Landscaping and beautification of park strips and snow lots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Parks and Rec Commission and parks maintenance staff</li> <li>• Need for resilient updates to green spaces</li> <li>• Challenges with balancing snow removal and desired summertime uses</li> </ul>	D, F
Support code enforcement activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach out to Danial Plaster relating to code enforcement</li> <li>• Find out more about whether connexes are allowable in the downtown core.</li> </ul>	E
Gather public input on beautification priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host a public meeting to gather input on beautification initiatives</li> <li>• Use Flash Vote to get public input on projects/ priorities</li> </ul>	C
Support wayfinding and trail signage/ upkeep projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with EDC and Economic Development department – what is the next phase</li> <li>• Explore having more walking trails and boardwalks downtown</li> <li>• Trails as an excellent aspect of beautification</li> </ul>	B, D, F
Continued improvement of Main Street/ Egan Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with Capital Facilities Department on the annual timing for light pole decorations (Graduation banners, holiday lights, etc.)</li> <li>• Look at options to make this street more walkable/ citizen and tourist friendly</li> <li>• Provide input on any proposed development on vacant lots (i.e. pipeline property)</li> <li>• Example given on Homer Spit shops- how to work toward something like this?</li> </ul>	A, D
Town Square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with city administration to see this project through</li> <li>• This has been ongoing and talked about extensively/ planned for in the past</li> </ul>	
Develop an Art Walk for Valdez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can engage with VCVB and Economic Development department</li> <li>• Integrate wooden statues and mural into a map</li> </ul>	

**Other topics brought up (idea parking lot):**

- Valdez Mural Society – how to work in partnership with/ support the work of this group
- Concerns over the community perception that the commission just gives out money - exploring how to move away from this perception while still supporting the grant program
- William T Riker Statute – engaging the group looking for this
- Creating a duck flats boardwalk
- Work on the gazebo



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 25-0228, **Version:** 1

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**ITEM TITLE:**

Discussion Item: Follow-up on Needed Repairs to Concrete Seat Walls and Decorative Planters on Egan Dr.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Elise Sorum-Birk, Deputy City Clerk

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: n/a

Unencumbered Balance: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

n/a

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

Commissioner Meg Weaver requested a discussion of needed to repair to seat walls along Egan Drive on the May 5, 2025 meeting agenda.

The commission reviewed the maintenance agreement with the state, discussed the need for a maintenance plan for Egan Dr, and discussed possible options to increase durability of the seat walls (such as making the seat tops removable). City Manager Nate Duval has been invited to discuss this topic with the commission.

These decorative concrete walls and planters were installed in 2016 as part of the Egan Drive Beautification Project (310-1150-58000), with final touch up work happening in 2017. The original contractor was Prosser-Dagg Construction Company LLC out of Palmer. Repairs were discussed by the Beautification Task Force in recent years, but scope and cost have not yet been explored.





## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 25-0229, **Version:** 1

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**ITEM TITLE:**

Discussion Item: Updating Application Guidelines and Eligibly Criteria for 2026 Beautification Matching Grant Program

**SUBMITTED BY:** Elise Sorum-Birk, Deputy City Clerk

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: n/a

Unencumbered Balance: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and update application and parameters for matching grant program.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

The Beautification Matching Grant program has been active for many years and small adjustments have been made to the application and judging criteria over time. The last major review of criteria took place with the creation of the 2023 application packet.

Attached is a copy of the 2025 application packet to review and suggest changes for.

Concerns have been raised on issues of improvements that are seasonal in nature or removable.



2025 City of Valdez  
Beautification Matching Grant Program

*MISSION: WORK TO BUILD COMMUNITY, A SENSE OF PLACE, AND CIVIC PRIDE THROUGH FUNDING BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS FOCUSED ON THE AESTHETICS OF VALDEZ, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO DESIGN, LANDSCAPING, AND PUBLIC ART.*

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17th - APPLICATION PERIOD OPENS

MONDAY, JANUARY 27th - MATCHING GRANT FAQ LUNCH & LEARN

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17th - GRANT APPLICATION HELP SESSION

FRIDAY, MARCH 21st - DEADLINE FOR 2025 GRANT APPLICATIONS

FRIDAY, APRIL 18th - APPLICANTS INFORMED OF AWARDS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12th - DEADLINE FOR REIMBURSEMENT PACKET

**SUBMIT APPLICATIONS:**

BY EMAIL – [COVBOARDS@VALDEZAK.GOV](mailto:COVBOARDS@VALDEZAK.GOV)

BY MAIL – CITY OF VALDEZ, PO BOX 307, VALDEZ, AK 99686

IN PERSON – TO THE FRONT DESK AT CITY HALL

## 2025 Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program

***City of Valdez Beautification Commission Mission: Work to advocate for, promote, and enhance the aesthetics of the local human-built environment to reflect the beauty of the surrounding natural environment.***

***Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program Mission: Work to build community, a sense of place, and civic pride through funding beautification projects focused on the aesthetics of Valdez, including but not limited to design, landscaping, and public art.***

The Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program offers a financial incentive designed to assist local businesses or commercial property owners in improving the business setting for investors as well as providing an overall upgrade in appearance for residents and visitors.

2025 will be the tenth year of the program and continues with the expansion of eligible properties outside the core downtown district.

The 2025 matching grant program's goal is to improve the overall aesthetics of Valdez through:

- Improving the overall quality of building/structure façades in order to attract more local residents and visitors to shop, eat, and do business in Valdez.
- Encouraging businesses to invest in additional aesthetic and design improvements including landscaping and public art.
- Encouraging and incentivizing property/business owners to reinvest in our community.
- Encouraging grant applicants to strengthen the local economy through utilizing local vendors, contractors, and materials.

### **ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES:**

Properties located in the following [zoning districts](#) are eligible to apply for funding: **Central Business District, General Commercial, Waterfront Industrial and Light Industrial.**

Properties may be mixed use but must be used primarily for a business purpose to be eligible for grant funding.

Properties must be up to date on their property taxes and may not have open code violations to apply.

### **INELIGIBLE PROPERTIES:**

Properties located in the following [zoning districts](#) are not eligible to apply for funding: **Neighborhood Mixed Use, Rural Residential, Moderate Density Residential, High Density Residential, Heavy Industrial, and Conservation.**

Strictly residential properties, home occupation, and properties with delinquent property taxes are not eligible for the matching grant program. Buildings that are publicly owned or owned by a non-profit are not eligible to receive grant funding.

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## **TIER ONE AND TIER TWO:**

Eligible properties will be designated in one of two tiers based on location, visibility and whether grant program funds have been received previously. Due to program goals and limited program funding, properties designated as “Tier One” will be given priority for grant selection, however “Tier Two” properties may also be considered.

**TIER ONE:** Eligible properties located in the outlined area below **or located within 100 feet of the Richardson Highway corridor:**



**TIER TWO:** Eligible properties located within Valdez city limits, but outside of the Tier One designated areas. Eligible properties which have previously received a beautification matching grant.

**GUIDELINES:**

All projects must be approved before any work begins. Grants will not be awarded retroactively.

Property owners should be the applicant when possible. If an applicant is not the owner of the building, they must obtain the property owner's written approval prior to applying.

Any changes to the project after grant approval must be approved before work commences or the grant will be forfeited.

Eligible aesthetic improvements must be to the exterior of a building and may include, but are not limited to:

- Significant overall architectural or design improvements.
- Landscaping improvements – including artwork or murals.
- Removal of old signage and exterior clutter (including the removal of unsightly structures and shipping containers from properties).
- Facade improvements – i.e., signage upgrades, murals, siding, etc.

**ELIGIBLE COSTS (WITH APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION):**

- Materials and shipping costs for approved improvements.
- Costs from appropriately licensed third-party vendors or contractors.
- Architectural and engineering services.
- City or State fees and permits directly related to the project.

**INELIGIBLE COSTS:**

- Improvements commenced prior to application approval or issuance of notice to proceed.
- Improvements not specifically noted in the award letter.
- Improvements which are considered routine maintenance (examples include replacement of light bulbs without an associated facade improvement, pavement replacement without an associated landscaping improvement, etc.)
- Simple replacement of like items, such as a replacement of a sign with the exact same sign.
- Improvements made to previous work funded by a Beautification Matching Grant, unless the work is part of a phased beautification project.
- Repairs caused by damage to a building, structure, or property that should be completed through an insurance claim.
- Partial or full roof replacement.
- Construction of a new building.
- Applicant or property owner labor.



## **SELECTION PROCESS:**

Total funding available for the Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program is determined by the Valdez City Council. Due to limited funding, projects meeting the criteria of this program will be presented to the City of Valdez Beautification Commission for selection.

***Applications are due to the City Clerk's Office no later than 5:00 pm. on Friday, March 21, 2025. Applications received after the due date shall not be considered.***

A complete grant application may be submitted to the City Clerk's Office by email, mail or in-person at city hall. This application must include:

- Detailed written description of proposed work.
- Sketches or drawings of proposed improvements, including samples/photographs of paint colors or materials to be used (do not need to be professionally drawn, but are required for application consideration).
- Color "before" photographs of the area or areas to be improved (submitted electronically if possible).
- Bids for contracted work (if applicable).
- Budget breakdown – including itemized list of estimated costs associated with the project.
- A letter/narrative addressed to the Beautification Commission explaining how the proposed work adds to the aesthetics of your property and our community.

**The City may require more detail in order to issue permits after application approval.**

***Please note: Depending on available funding for the grant program, awarded matching grants may be less than the full amount requested in the project application.***

Eligible projects will be scored by the Beautification Commission during their regular April 2025 meeting.

Projects will be given higher priority if they make substantial visible improvements, are high visibility projects, result in improvements to surrounding properties, utilize locally procured materials/labor/contractors, or fall into Tier One. Removal of exterior clutter, landscaping projects, public art and building facade improvements will also be given higher priority in the selection process. Plans for ongoing upkeep of the proposed improvements will also be considered by the commission.

The Beautification Commission will then forward the recommended list of grant awardees and grant amounts to the Valdez City Council for final funding approval at the next available regular Council meeting. Once grant projects are approved, City Clerk's Office staff will mail matching grant award letters which include a "Notice to Proceed" for the project. The Notice to Proceed document must be signed by the grant recipient and returned to the City Clerk's Office before construction on the grant project begins.

## **PROJECT EXECUTION:**

Following approval, the applicant must secure all required federal, state, and municipal permits. **Projects that fail to obtain proper permitting shall forfeit their grant funding.**

If an applicant enters into an agreement with a contractor for the completion of specified eligible improvements, the applicant is solely responsible for the payment of services rendered on said project.

**Awardees must complete the eligible improvements and submit the reimbursement packet by December 12, 2025, as outlined in the Notice to Proceed, unless otherwise extended in writing by the City of Valdez.**

Extensions may only be granted one time, on a case-by-case basis, for exceptional circumstances. An extension may only be made for one additional grant cycle. **Extension requests must be submitted to the City Clerk's Office in writing prior to December 12, 2025, or will not be considered.** Extensions may be approved by City Clerk's Office staff if they meet criteria determined by the Beautification Commission. If the City Clerk's Office does not grant an extension, the applicant may appeal to the Beautification Commission.

In the event the grant reimbursement package is not submitted by the deadline and a time extension has not been granted, the City of Valdez reserves the right to terminate the grant award without any liability to the applicant, so that those funds may be dedicated elsewhere.

## **GRANT AMOUNTS:**

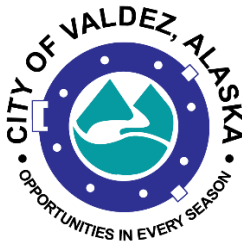
Applicants can apply for a grant rebate to pay for up to 50 percent of the cost of improvements, with a maximum reimbursement of \$12,500 per building. Projects involving corner buildings or spanning more than one lot/parcel may request larger grant amounts, not to exceed a maximum reimbursement of \$25,000.

**Please note: Depending on the number of applications and available funding for the grant program, awarded matching grants may be less than the full amount requested in the project application.**

## **GRANT REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS:**

Once the eligible improvements have been completed, the awardee shall notify the City through completion of a grant reimbursement request package. The applicant must submit documentation to the City as outlined in the reimbursement package below, including associated receipts and paid invoices for verification of eligible costs, copies of permits and inspection reports, the appropriate business W-9, and if a contractor was used, proof that the contract was paid. Applicants must also submit color before and after photographs when requesting grant reimbursement (preferably in electronic form).

After reviewing the accuracy of receipts and/or invoices for the eligible improvements, and upon verification that the eligible improvements have been completed in accordance with the grant award scope and project design drawings, plans, or specifications; the City will reimburse the applicant the matching grant amount within 30 days. **Only those improvements outlined in the grant award letter will be eligible for reimbursement.**



# Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program 2025 Application

## 1. PROJECT LOCATION

Address to be improved: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor Parcel ID Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Business or Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this property (check one):    \_\_\_\_\_ Tier One    \_\_\_\_\_ Tier Two

## 2. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you: \_\_\_\_\_ Own \_\_\_\_\_ Rent (month to month) \_\_\_\_\_ Lease

If leased, date of lease expiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Property Owner(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



### 3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Please attach the following to this application for consideration:

- Detailed written description of proposed work.
- Sketches or drawings of proposed improvements, including samples/photographs of paint colors or materials to be used (do not need to be professionally drawn, but are required for application consideration).
- Color “before” photographs of the area or areas to be improved (submitted electronically if possible).
- Bids for contracted work.
- Budget breakdown – including itemized list of costs associated with the project.
- A letter/narrative addressed to the Beautification Commission detailing how the proposed work adds to the aesthetics of your property and our community.

**Applications missing any of the above items will not be considered.**

### 4. ESTIMATED TIMELINE FOR PROJECT COMPLETION:

\_\_\_\_\_

### 5. ESTIMATED COSTS

TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL MATCHING GRANT REQUESTED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Depending on available funding for the grant program, awarded matching grants may be less than the full amount requested in this project application.** Could and would you proceed with this project if you are awarded less than the full matching grant amount requested?

Circle one: YES NO

Please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, I confirm I have read and understand the requirements and process for the 2025 Beautification Matching Grant Program. The information submitted in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Property Owner Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program

City of Valdez  
Beautification Commission  
Attn: City Clerk's Office  
PO BOX 307  
Valdez, AK 99686

PROPERTY  
OWNER PO Box  
XXX  
Valdez, AK 99686

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Congratulations! The Valdez Beautification Commission selected XXXXXXXX as a recipient of a 2025 Valdez Beautification Matching Grant.

Based upon your application, program guidelines and available grant funding, the Valdez City Council approved your award as follows:

XXXXXXXX Aesthetic Improvements (As outlined in application) \$XXXX

**Total Award: \$XXXX**

Only approved work, based upon your original application and up to the funding level and scope above, will be reimbursed. Any changes to the project after grant approval must be authorized by the Beautification Commission before work commences or the grant will be forfeited.

**All grant eligible improvements must be completed, and your grant reimbursement package submitted by December 12, 2025.** Time extensions may only be granted on a case-by-case basis and for exceptional circumstances. **Requests for time extension must be made in writing and submitted prior to the grant reimbursement deadline.** In the event the improvements are not completed by the deadline, the City of Valdez reserves the right to terminate the grant award without liability to you, so that those funds may be dedicated elsewhere.

Please note, if you enter into an agreement with a contractor for the completion of specified eligible improvements, then you are solely responsible for the payment of services rendered on said project. Additionally, failure to obtain proper municipal, state, and federal permits for your project will result in ineligibility for grant funding reimbursement.

Grant funding is only awarded after all project work is complete and the required grant documentation submitted to the City.

Please carefully read and follow the steps outlined below to ensure grant reimbursement:

- 1. Sign and return the attached 'Notice to Proceed' before beginning any work.**
- 2.** Apply and secure all permits required by the City of Valdez, State of Alaska, or other regulatory bodies.
- 3.** Save all original receipts associated with grant-eligible project related work, including materials purchased, payment to third party vendors, contractors, architectural or engineering services, and paid fees and permits.
- 4.** Schedule and receive any building or other inspections required by the City of Valdez, State of Alaska, or other regulatory bodies.
- 5.** Take color "after" photographs of the area(s) improved as part of the grant award once project work is complete.
- 6.** Submit the following to the City in one documentation package for review:
  - Completed Beautification Matching Grant Reimbursement Form.
  - A copy of this letter.
  - Copy of your completed Notice to Proceed.
  - Color "before" and "after" photographs (submitted electronically if possible).
  - Copies of all permits and inspection reports associated with the project.
  - Document itemizing all expenses related to the project.
  - Originals of all receipts associated with the project (all invoices must indicate they have been paid prior to submission).
  - Proof of contractor payment (if applicable).
  - Copy of your business' IRS W-9.

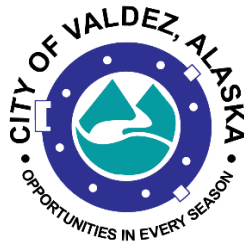
City of Valdez  
Beautification Matching Grant Program  
Attn: City Clerk's Office  
PO Box 307  
Valdez, AK 99686

Email: COVBoards@valdezak.gov

After reviewing the accuracy of receipts and/or invoices for the eligible improvements, and upon verification that the eligible improvements have been completed in accordance with the design drawings, plans, specifications, or grant application; the City will reimburse you up to the grant award amount outlined in this letter. Reimbursement will be provided within 30 days.

Sincerely,

Magdalena McCay  
Beautification Commission  
Chair



# Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program **NOTICE TO PROCEED**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Project: Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program

To: XXXXXXXX

**In accordance with the Agreement dated \_\_\_\_\_, you are to complete the  
WORK not later than December 12, 2025.**

Summary of WORK:

- XXXXXXXX
- XXXXXXXX

Total estimated project costs are \$XXXXXX. A maximum reimbursement of \$XXXXX has been approved.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ACCEPTANCE OF NOTICE**

Receipt of above NOTICE to proceed is hereby acknowledged by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ this, the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_



# Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program **REIMBURSEMENT FORM**

Name of Grantee: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Item(s) to be Reimbursed (Attached itemized list which must match submitted receipts):

Total Project Costs: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total to be Reimbursed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Submit the following to the City Clerk's Office with this form and before the established deadline to be eligible for 50/50 grant reimbursement:**

- Completed Beautification Matching Grant Reimbursement Form.
- A copy of this letter.
- Copy of your completed Notice to Proceed.
- Color "before" and "after" photographs (submitted electronically if possible).
- Copies of all permits and inspection reports associated with the project.
- Document itemizing all expenses related to the project (typed or handwritten).
- Originals of all receipts associated with the project (all invoices must indicate they have been paid prior to submission).
- Proof of contractor payment (if applicable).
- Copy of your business' IRS W-9.

***I declare under the penalty of perjury that the information I have provided herein is true and correct.***

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_