

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.”