



Cordova District Fishermen United
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phone. (907) 424 3447 | fax. (907) 424 3430
web. www.cdfu.org

January 18, 2024

City of Cordova
PO Box 1210
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Re: Breakwater Trail Park

Dear Mayor Allison, City Manager Howorth, and City Council Members,

On behalf of Cordova District Fishermen United (CDFU), I am writing to express support for the proposed vision of the Breakwater Trail Park improvements near K Float at the Cordova Harbor. We are excited by what a safe, attractive waterfront greenspace with amenities will bring to Cordova's fishing community.

Thinking of CDFU members, the entire fleet, and the Cordova community, we are especially interested in Cordova Covered Spaces Working Group's work and private fundraising toward the addition of a covered picnic space. We all want more sheltered places that let us be outside more or for longer periods, whether from rain, snow, high sun or winds. Weather is a barrier for CDFU to dependably hold outdoor events or activities near the harbor, and we regularly desire a dependable space for picnics and other fleet gatherings. We would regularly use this space and add vitality to the area. It makes us smile to think of a fresh, safe greenspace where fishermen can get off their boat and easily walk to relax and meet with each other, family and friends. We expect a covered space with seating, tables and grills would be extremely popular, very well-used by community groups and local families, adding to the reasons people want to live and remain in Cordova.

As a shared public gathering space, a roof also creates a sense of togetherness and collective ownership. This can be subtle, but two separate people pausing five minutes to stare at the harbor from the Fishermen's memorial are two separate people pausing and going about their busy days. But two separate people who both choose to sit under the same picnic shelter at Breakwater Park to admire Orca Inlet are now doing something separately, together, simply



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because they are sharing a roof. Even if they don't interact, they can more easily recognize they are using the same thing and therefore sharing an experience (not alone). With a high seasonal workforce performing stressful work, park places provide an opportunity to replace stress and loneliness with a sense of community, and in turn promote more positive mental health and life choices. We're hopeful that the Breakwater Park project will help foster more positive community off the dock that helps captains retain and grow a healthy crew workforce staying year-round or returning to Cordova year after year to strengthen the Area E fleet.

In current concept renderings of the park improvements it looks like the existing informal parking spaces at the end of Nicholoff Way will need to be made more strategic to accommodate the Breakwater Park plans, and that overall a space of about eight parking spaces will be absorbed to complete the park's ultimate vision. There may be minor inconveniences to the fleet or harbor during any construction phases on improvements, but all is outweighed by what an active waterfront greenspace will mean for quality of life of fishermen and residents.

Cordova deserves a working waterfront with related harbor improvements that reflect its economic force and influence, and we are excited for Breakwater Park upgrades being a part of that. Thank you for the City's efforts collaborating with local volunteers and the Cordova Covered Spaces Working Group to develop Breakwater Trail Park.

Sincerely,

Jess Rude
Executive Director

cc: Natasha Casciano, Cordova Covered Spaces Working Group natasha@cordovagear.com