



Agenda

Economic Development Advisory Commission Regular Meeting

Tuesday, June 11, 2024 at 6:00 PM

City Hall Cowles Council Chambers In-Person & Via Zoom Webinar

Homer City Hall

491 E. Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603
www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Zoom Webinar ID: 990 0366 1092 Password: 725933

<https://cityofhomer.zoom.us>
Dial: 346-248-7799 or 669-900-6833;
(Toll Free) 888-788-0099 or 877-853-5247

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, 6:00 P.M.

AGENDA APPROVAL

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (3 minute time limit)

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA (Items listed below are considered routine and non-controversial by the Commission and are approved in one motion. If a separate discussion is desired on an item, a Commissioner may request that item be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda under New Business.)

- A. Unapproved Meeting Minutes for May 14, 2024

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS (10 minute time limit)

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. EDC Staff Report
- B. Chamber Director Report
- C. Homer Marine Trades Association Report
- D. Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Report
- E. Port Expansion Project Report
- F. Guiding Homer's Growth Report
- G. HERC Update
- H. Housing Update

- I. Planning Update

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

- [A.](#) Business Licenses

NEW BUSINESS

- [A.](#) Cruise Ships
- [B.](#) Comprehensive Plan Surveys
- [C.](#) Review of Existing Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 7 Economic Vitality

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- [A.](#) City Manager's Report for June 10, 2024 Council Meeting
- [B.](#) EDC Annual Calendar 2024
- C. Commissioner Attendance At City Council Meetings

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minute time limit)

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

ADJOURNMENT

Next Regular Meeting is **TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar.

CALL TO ORDER

Session 24-05 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:02 p.m. on May 14, 2024 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS MARKS, AREVALO, BRENNAN, BROWN & YOUNG

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER HASCHE (EXCUSED) & STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PEARSON

STAFF: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR ENGBRETSSEN & DEPUTY CITY CLERK PETTIT

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marks read the supplemental items into the agenda: **Under Informational Materials Item E. Homer Comprehensive Plan Rewrite Community Snapshot.** She requested a motion and second to approve the agenda as amended.

BROWN/BRENNAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Unapproved Minutes for the Regular Meeting on April 9, 2024

BROWN/AREVALO MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 9, 2024.

Commissioner Brown pointed out that Commissioner Pitzman was included in the Commissioners that were listed as 'present' for the April 9th meeting even though he resigned prior to that meeting. Deputy City Clerk Pettit noted that this was a formatting error on his end, and that he would correct the minutes after the meeting.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

A. Agnew::Beck, Comprehensive Plan

Chair Marks introduced Meg Friedenauer of Agnew::Beck for the purpose of delivering her presentation regarding the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Friedenauer presented to the Commission, covering the following topics:

- Overview of the Comprehensive Plan Rewrite website – community survey, upcoming events, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and how to contact Agnew::Beck.
- Community Snapshot – boundaries that the Comprehensive Plan will encompass, who can take the survey, and what's been learned so far.
- Focus points of this Comprehensive Plan:
 - Land use and environment
 - Housing
 - Public services and infrastructure
 - Transportation
 - Economic development
 - Health and wellness
 - Sustainability
 - Resilience and climate change
 - Quality of life

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. EDC Staff Report

Community Development Director Engebretsen noted that City Council would be receiving the draft budget in a few weeks, and that the City Manager is not planning to include the funding that the EDC has requested for \$10,000 for the Alaska Small Business Development Center. She reminded the Commission that they had passed a motion regarding this funding in one of the recent meetings, and that Council will be receiving that recommendation at their next meeting when the budget is in front of them. Other discussion topics included:

- Resolution that was passed by City Council instructing the EDC and the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission to investigate the potential of cruise ship capacity limits and policies.
- Bayview Park Plan was approved by City Council and will hopefully be done by the end of summer.
- Ongoing work for the Karen Hornaday Park Master Plan and the park walkthrough on Thursday, May 23rd at 5:30 p.m.
 - There were also discussions regarding the future of the campground at the park, and how it is currently being utilized for disc golf.
- Resolution that was passed by City Council requesting the Kenai Peninsula Borough to coordinate with AirBnB for the purpose of sales tax collection for short-term rentals.

B. Chamber Director Report

Community Development Director Engebretsen shared that she helped with the food truck event that was in town this past Friday. She added that the event was well attended and nicely organized, saying that it was nice to see an event of that size taking place somewhere else other than City property.

C. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

Chair Marks noted the report and added that it might be nice to schedule the Association as a visitor/presentation somewhere down the line.

D. Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Report

Chair Marks reported that the Industrial Outlook Forum took place. She stated that she had not heard officially, but had imagined the timing worked much better hosting the Forum in April as opposed to January. She noted several interesting presentations, two of which were presented by Derotha Ferraro who just spoke to the EDC a few weeks ago. There was also a brief discussion regarding transportation services and updates on the Kenai Peninsula. Ms. Marks highlighted that there was a presentation from Sam Tappen, who is the economist for the State of Alaska. In reference to the flyer regarding transportation on the Peninsula, Commissioner Arevalo lauded the taxi companies that operate locally in Homer.

E. Port Expansion

Community Development Director Engebretsen shared that Councilmember Lord and Special Projects and Communications Coordinator Carroll traveled to Washington, D.C. and learned that there was an issue in the funding of the first part of the three-year phase of investigating port expansion. She added that the Army Corps of Engineers has funding to continue their portion of the project, which means that the project will continue more or less on schedule.

F. Guiding Homer's Growth Group

Chair Marks stated that she attended the Guiding Growth Group/Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee meeting with Agnew::Beck. She shared that part of the reason that she went was due to the fact that Commissioner Kim – who previously held a spot on the EDC and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee – is no longer living in Homer. She noted the vacancies on both the EDC and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee that Mr. Kim leaves behind. She welcomed any of the Commissioners to fulfill the formal requirement of having one EDC member on the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

G. HERC Update

Community Development Director Engebretsen reiterated that Homer made the first cut in the State's funding for the Brownfield projects, noting that this is great news. She continued, saying that the City is waiting to hear back from the EPA on whether it's approved for the State to help with the City's buildings. The City is also waiting to hear back from the EPA on a \$1 million grant application that was submitted last fall. Commissioner Young inquired about the goals for both the buildings. Ms. Engebretsen informed him that there are no plans to rehab the smaller building, and that the future plans for the larger building are still yet to be determined. She also shared the City's desire for a new recreation facility altogether. Further discussions revolved around what a new facility might look like, the timeline for a new building, and property conditions.

H. Planning Updates

Community Development Director Engebretsen shared that the Planning Department has already handed out 11 mobile food permits this year. She added that it's been nice to have both a city

engineer and a public works director on the staff team, noting that it's been helpful in getting projects out to bid and moving forward with a lot of things that have been started. She urged anyone interested in serving on the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to submit an application.

I. Housing

Chair Marks reported that the housing group for the MAPP (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships) community needs assessment has decided to divide into a couple of groups to narrow down to get some deliverables. She added that she is a part of the policy and economic development subgroup, and that her group would be meeting with Agnew::Beck on Thursday from 12 p.m. – 1 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

A. Bylaws Review
Memorandum from Community Development Director as backup

Community Development Director Engebretsen recommended the following minor changes to the EDC Bylaws:

1. Article V Staff Roles Section 1, Line 64, changing "Deputy City Planner" to "Community Development Director."
2. Article VI Meetings Section 3, Line 89, the Bylaws currently state a quorum is no needed, but this is out of date. Worksessions do require a quorum, this is a change that has been implemented since the last Bylaw amendment in 2021.

AREVALO/BROWN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE SUGGESTED CHANGES ON LINES 64 AND 89 OF THE BYLAWS AND MOVE THE DOCUMENT FORWARD TO THE EDC'S JUNE MEETING.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Commission Training
Memorandum from Community Development Director as backup
Memorandum EDC-24-006 from Deputy City Clerk as backup

Community Development Director Engebretsen conducted the Commission Training for the group. Topics discussed included the following:

- Open Meetings Act
- Bylaws
- City Code
- Chair's responsibility
- Taking care of business

- C. Elections
Memorandum EDC-24-005 from Deputy City Clerk as backup

BROWN/AREVALO MOVED TO VOTE BY SHOW OF HANDS.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Marks opened the floor for Vice Chair nominations.

Commissioner Brown was nominated; she agreed to accept the position.

With no other nominations called out, Chair Marks declared Commissioner Brown as Vice Chair and passed the gavel.

Vice Chair Brown opened the floor for Chair nominations.

Commission Marks was nominated; she agreed to accept the position.

With no other nominations called out, Vice Chair Brown declared Commissioner Marks as Chair and passed the gavel.

- D. Strategic Plan
Memorandum from Community Development Director as backup

Chair Marks introduced the item by reading of the title and noted that this was mostly a housekeeping item. Discussion topics included:

- Near-term goals: community health needs assessment and community health improvement plan.
- The Commission's relationship with the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District.
- Agnew::Beck's development of the Comprehensive Plan.

- E. Preparation for City Council Work Session in June
Memorandum from Community Development Director as backup

Chair Marks requested that all Commissioners review Chapter 18.5 (Economic Vitality Chapter) of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, in addition to reviewing SWOT information and reviewing the EDC's Strategic Plan in preparation for the joint work session with Council on June 17th.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. City Manager's Report
B. City of Homer Newsletter
C. EDC Strategic Plan 2024-2025
D. EDC Meeting Calendar
E. Homer Comprehensive Plan Rewrite Open House Flyer

Chair Marks noted the informational materials and requested a volunteer to deliver a report to Council at the May 28th meeting. Commissioner Brown volunteered to deliver the May report, and Commissioner Arevalo volunteered to deliver the June report.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Pettit welcomed Commissioner Young to the Commission.

Community Development Director Engebretsen welcomed Commissioner Young and thanked the Commission for the fastest commission training and bylaw training.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER (If Present)

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Arevalo commended the local taxi companies in Homer: Nick's Taxi, Kostas Taxi, Bayside Taxi, Ryder, and Kachecab.

Commissioner Brown seconded Ms. Arevalo's comment, noting that she discovered there is no taxi service in Cordova during a recent visit. She also welcomed Commissioner Young.

Commissioner Young stated that he is excited to be a part of the Commission and to get his feet wet.

Commissioner Brennan welcomed Commissioner Young and thanked Meg Friedenauer of Agnew::Beck for attending tonight's meeting. She also thanked the City of Homer for filling in some potholes on Sterling Highway.

Chair Marks thanked the Commission for electing her as the Chair for another term. She thanked Commissioner Young for stepping in to fill a vacancy on the Commission. She shared her excitement for the peony celebration coming up in July.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, June 11, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers and via Zoom Webinar.

ZACH PETTIT, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

Approved: _____



City of Homer

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TO: Economic Development Advisory Commission
FROM: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director
DATE: June 3, 2024
SUBJECT: June Staff Report

Work session with City Council: The Council and EDC had a tentative date of June 17th for a joint Work Session. Due to constraints on Council (budget cycle and hiring a new City Manager) this work session has been cancelled. It will be rescheduled later in the year.

Brownfield Grant

The City learned our application to the EPA for Brownfield funding for the HERC site was unsuccessful. We will have a debrief on our application in the next several weeks. In better news, we were successful with a State DEC grant for this site – EXCITING- and our collective goal is to move forward with the pieces we would need for a different EPA grant application next fall. At this point that would include soils testing, and a document called an ‘ABCA’, or Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives. This is one of the many steps toward funding and site remediation, and will include some public process.

Parks Art Recreation and Culture Commission

- The Commission held a park walkthrough at Hornaday Park and continues to work on revising the master plan. Their next meeting is June 20th.
- The Bayview Park Plan has been approved, playground equipment is on the way, and dirt work will go out to bid shortly. By end of summer, this park at the top of Main Street will have a new paved walking trail, play equipment and accessible picnic tables. Funding came from a state grant program and the City HART Trails fund.

Other items

- Its budget time at the City; a public hearing is scheduled for Monday June 10th. Council may adopt the budget or postpone action to another meeting. Fiscal Year 25 starts July 1. This budget is mostly small changes; the majority of the budget was set as part of the two-year budget cycle last spring. In the Community Development Department, I have asked for staffing to be shifted around to better meet our department needs.
- About two years ago, the City changed its food truck licensing. Twelve food trucks have been permitted so far this year with one or two more in process. Its going well and its great to see new businesses opening or expanding to Homer.



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Business Licenses

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Economic Development Advisory Commission
Meeting Date: June 11, 2024
Staff Contact: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

Summary Statement: Review Resolution 24-039(A), volunteer for a task, and report back at a future EDC meeting

Background

The Commission has talked about business licenses a little bit over the past several months. I have attached links to those prior meetings here if you want to see the packets or minutes. I also included a link to Council minutes from their April 8th meeting where they took action.

EDC March 12 2024: <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/edac/economic-development-advisory-commission-regular-meeting-56>

Council April 8: <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/citycouncil/city-council-regular-meeting-313>

EDC April 9: <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/edac/economic-development-advisory-commission-regular-meeting-57>

Discussion

Council provided direction for the EDC, but there was a lot of hesitancy about requiring licenses when Council discussed the issue. Most of Council said they would not support a license but were interested in more information. Therefore, I recommend the Commission gather information, hold an August work session, and then report back to Council. Concurrently, the Chamber has also been talking about doing outreach by having a focus group of business owners talk about the idea. The concept of a license does not have enough support to make it worth doing a lot of public engagement. The City is asking for more input from businesses on cruise ships and the comprehensive plan at the same time, and this business license conversation shouldn't be an issue detracts from these other conversations. I recommend a level of effort of 12 hours of staff time, two hours from each commissioner, and the August work session. If the Commission needs more time this can slide in to September, but suggest we see what we can get done and

Homework

There are ten requests in the Resolution. I have tagged those that are staff topics. If each Commissioner can pick one, results can be emailed to me and I will make a report for the August work session.

1. The proper level of license requirements (work session topic, after we've researched!))
2. Potential costs of licensure for business COMMISSIONER _____
3. Potential costs for the City to administer the program (JULIE)
4. Outreach to the Chamber of Commerce and business community (Julie/Karin/Chamber)
5. How can the City engage with the State of Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing and not duplicate the services available and information collected by that entity COMMISSIONER _____
6. Pros and cons of a City Business Licensing Program Work session topic
7. Consideration of a "no cost program" for data collection purposes only COMMISSIONER _____
8. Challenges and benefits of local business licensing programs in other Alaska communities.
 - o Commissioner _____, with help from Julie to narrow this down
9. Enforcement Plans; (JULIE)
10. What are the other existing licenses required in City limits and how will those licenses will be effected, changed, streamlined or overlap. COMMISSIONER _____ w Julie

Recommendation

Review Resolution 24-039(A), volunteer for a task, and report back at a future EDC meeting

Attachments

Resolution 27-039

CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA

Venuti/Mayor

RESOLUTION 24-039(A)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA
PROVIDING DIRECTION TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ADVISORY COMMISSION REGARDING THE CREATION OF A
BUSINESS LICENSING PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, The City does not currently have a business licensing program; and

WHEREAS, The adoption of a business licensing program has the potential to provide value by enhancing public safety, ensuring compliance with existing regulations, and providing opportunities for connections between the City and businesses by which the City can provide support and deliver public education; and

WHEREAS, The City Council chose “champions” for various City projects at a regular meeting held on October 23, 2023; and

WHEREAS, The investigation of a Citywide business license was a project to which Mayor Castner, Councilmember Venuti, and Economic Development Advisory Commission Chair Karin Marks were assigned champions; and

WHEREAS, The champions have met to discuss the potential scope of a business license program, but wish to have the Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) take time to discuss and develop the idea further; and

WHEREAS, The Council wishes to memorialize direction to the EDC via resolution to ensure clarity for the Commission and the Public regarding the Council’s intent.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Homer, Alaska requests that the Economic Development Advisory Commission investigate the concept of a business licensing program which considers or achieves the following:

- The proper level of license requirements
- Potential costs of licensure for business
- Potential costs for the City to administer the program
- Outreach to the Chamber of Commerce and business community
- **How can the City engage with the State of Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing and not duplicate the services available and information collected by that entity**
- **Pros and cons of a City Business Licensing Program**

- Consideration of a “no cost program” for data collection purposes only
- Challenges and benefits of local business licensing programs in other Alaska communities.
- Enforcement Plans;
- What are the other existing licenses required in City limits and how will those licenses will be effected, changed, streamlined or overlap.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Homer City Council this 8th day of April, 2024.

CITY OF HOMER



KEN CASTNER, MAYOR

ATTEST:



RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, ACTING CITY CLERK



MEMORANDUM

Resolution 24-039, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Providing Direction to the Economic Development Advisory Commission Regarding the Creation of Business Licensing Program.

Item Type: Backup Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
Date: March 27, 2024
From: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director
Councilmember Venuti

The City of Homer does not have a general business license at this time. Council has identified a business licensing program as an interest. In October 2023, the Council designated Mayor Castner, Councilmember Venuti, and Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) Chair Marks as “champions” for this topic. The group has met a few times and wishes to utilize the EDC for further development of the concept before an ordinance is developed for Council consideration.

Depending on the structure of the program, a licensing ordinance could provide various benefits to the City and the community. Licensing can ensure that businesses are operating with existing regulations to include those related to zoning, safety, and public nuisances. It can help to ensure that applicable sales taxes are being collected and that there is a fair playing field for all commercial enterprises within the City. Licensing would also assist the City with data collection that assists planning for land use and operations like paving and snow plowing. It would also give the City a more streamlined channel to provide public education to businesses.

If Council passes the Resolution, the EDC will review existing business licenses regulations in similarly sized communities such as Seward and Palmer, and make recommendations to Council. Staff will investigate associated staff and financial costs for providing an online license program using the City’s existing software.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution 24-039



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Cruise Ships

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Economic Development Advisory Commission
Meeting Date: June 11, 2024
Staff Contact: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

Summary Statement: Review Resolution 24-048, volunteer for a task and report back at a future EDC meeting

Background

Council adopted Resolution 24-048, regarding cruise ships. The resolution includes tasks specific to the Port and Harbor Commission and the EDC.

Discussion

We will discuss the background and timing of this conversation on Cruise Ships at the meeting. The Port and Harbor Commission has met, held some general conversation, and a small group working with staff will respond on that Commission's tasks from Council.

Homework

There are a few requests in the resolution. I'd like to request a Commissioner to work with the Chamber on this issue, and that we use the Chamber to help guide the conversation. Additionally, I will provide the Commission with a list of cruise ship dates. It would be great if you could be eyes on the street on these dates and share your observations. If you can get down on the Spit that's great, otherwise pop down to Pioneer Ave or Old Town and see what visitors are doing.

Resolution: EXCERPT

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) should develop an understanding of City/Municipal cruise ship policies from other communities, and engage in a conversation with the Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders about the effects of the Cruise Ship industry on the local businesses and the community to help inform any potential City policy development.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Both the EDC and the PHC will provide reports back to the City Council with summaries of their conversations, noting where further discussion may be needed, and any immediate policy recommendations by:

Port and Harbor Advisory Commission: July 22, 2024 Council Meeting

Economic Development Advisory Commission: September 23, 2024 Council Meeting

Recommendation

Review Resolution 24-048, volunteer for a task or location during a large cruise ship visit, and report back at a future EDC meeting.

Attachments

Resolution 24-048



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Comprehensive Plan Surveys

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Economic Development Advisory Commission
Meeting Date: June 11, 2024
Staff Contact: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

Summary Statement: Review draft business and visitor surveys, identify any missing topics that should be addressed and provide big picture comments.

Background

The comprehensive plan consultants will be conducting both a business survey and a visitor survey over the summer. The first draft of these surveys will be ready in time for the EDC meeting. I'll email them when I have them if they don't make the packet. The consultants wanted to be sure you had a chance to see them before the July break.

The consultants will be working with the Chamber on both of these and staff, so they will be edited and polished quite a bit. The ask of the EDC is to identify if there are topics that are missing and big picture comments. If you think of anything after the meeting, feel free to email me by Friday the 14th.

Attachments - PENDING

1. Business Survey
2. Visitor Survey



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Review of Existing Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 7 Economic Vitality

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Economic Development Advisory Commission
Meeting Date: June 11, 2024
Staff Contact: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

Summary Statement: Review the existing Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 7 Economic Vitality and related EDC documents. Discuss economic development in Homer and think of any general comments for the Comprehensive Plan consultants, Agnew::Beck.

Background

At the last meeting, we talked about the Commission becoming familiar with the existing comprehensive plan, and some of the more recent work of this group. You requested this information be provided well in advance of our next meeting so I emailed it on Friday May 31st.

This review is in prep for making any more initial comments to the Comprehensive Plan consultants. Considering these documents and the various agenda items at the June meeting, please bring any thoughts or comments you have. This is a very open ended conversation!

Documents:

1. The current EDC strategic plan. The Commission updates this roughly once a year.
2. Chapter 7, Economic Vitality, of the existing comprehensive plan. NOTE: The new plan won't have a separate chapter on the economy. The goal is to bake in economic concepts throughout the document.
3. SWOT – This was Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis to Homer's quality of life. This was sort of a onetime effort, although the Parks Art Recreation and Culture now plans to do their own version for recreation in Homer.

Attachments

1. Strategic Plan
2. Chapter 7, Economic Vitality, of the existing comprehensive plan
3. SWOT –Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats September 2022

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION
2024 -2025 STRATEGIC PLAN & GOALS

Ongoing Goals	1. Use the Commission’s SWOT analysis to develop strategies to implement policies that support Homer’s quality of life.
	2. Keep our ears to the ground and seek out areas of "lack." Confer with Julie about communicating with City Council and advising them on ways to overcome barriers- "the nexus of economic goals."
	3. Be familiar with smart growth principles and best practices, and also green infrastructure concepts. Have these in our toolbox when development decisions come our way for consideration.
Near Term Goals < 6 Months	1. Become familiar with the Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) <i>Opportunity:</i> Invite a speaker from MaPp to educate this EDC on these plans and how they relate to community and economic health.
	2. View economic development through the lens of balancing growth with quality of life. <i>Task:</i> Define positive economic development, and what is the role of the EDC is in balancing growth and quality of life. <i>Task:</i> Review the Business Retention and Expansion Plan for quality of life elements
	3. Housing: affordable short and long term housing. Seasonal workers, general work force, seniors, etc. affordable year round housing. (Marks, Kim) <i>Task:</i> Stay engaged with the City for all housing conversations <i>Task:</i> Have a meeting on housing options and final housing report. <i>Opportunity:</i> Stay engaged with the Guiding Homer’s Growth Conversation
	4. Engage in the Comprehensive Plan Process <i>Opportunity:</i> Participate in public events <i>Opportunity:</i> Encourage business participation at public events <i>Opportunity:</i> Host a Commission event targeted to small businesses
Mid Term Goals 1 - 3 Years (2024 – 2027)	1. Refine how the EDC can work with KPEDD; Economic resiliency planning and other topics as they arise. <i>Opportunity:</i> Attend annual KPEDD Industry Outlook Forum
	2. Downtown vitalization momentum and wayfinding/streetscape plan <i>Status:</i> Wayfinding and Streetscape work ongoing through implementation activities in 2024-2025 <i>Task:</i> Participate in the Transportation Plan, focusing on a walkable town with greenspace and connected business districts <i>Longer term:</i> Consider storefront/Downtown and landscaping improvement program

	3. Engage in land planning for city property as well as the larger problems of constraints on the Spit, and within the Central Business District. <i>Opportunity:</i> Participate in the Land Allocation Plan annual review <i>Opportunity:</i> Participate in Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Rewrite projects
Long Term Goals 5 Years or More (2025+)	4. Assess jobs training needs, workforce development, availability of workers and workforce supports including child care, housing. <i>Opportunity:</i> Invite speakers to talk about workforce development such as KPB, South Peninsula Hospital <i>Opportunity:</i> Engage in Comprehensive Plan and other outreach opportunities
	1. Multipurpose community center (HERC) Pioneer redevelopment vs new facility in a new location. <i>Status:</i> The City is applying for funding to remediate the existing HERC site. Separately, there is discussion about finding a different site for a new facility. 2. Plan for a new Business Retention and Expansion Plan BR&E <i>Opportunity:</i> Consider a funding request for the FY 2026-27 budget

OVERALL EDC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Economic Development Advisory Commission will act in an advisory capacity to the City Manager and the City Council on the overall economic development planning for the City of Homer in accordance with Homer City Code Chapter 2.76; www.codepublishing.com/AK/Homer. The EDC also assists with official City planning documents including the following:

- Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD) – Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (link will bring you to all KPEDD reports): <https://kpedd.org/reports>
- Homer’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS): www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/economicdevelopment/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy
- Business Retention and Expansion Survey Report (BR&E): <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/economicdevelopment/2017-business-retention-expansion-survey-report>
- Homer Comprehensive Plan: <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/planning/comprehensive-plan>

DUTIES OF COMMISSION/STAFF

Commissioners

- Attend City Council meetings as assigned.
- Attend work sessions and training opportunities.
- Come prepared to make a motion for action at meetings, or ask staff before the meeting for more information.
- Communicate with City Council members to gain support on EDC-related projects that need sponsorship at the Council level.

Staff (Julie Engebretsen)

- Aid the Chair in setting the agenda.
- Compile packet material from commissioners, write backup memos, and submit to Clerk.
- Provide information on items the commission needs to review annually.
- Inform the Commission of City Council actions and discussion of economic development related issues.

Clerk's Office

- Aid Staff in compiling packet materials and print/distribute them to the Commission.
- Aid Staff and Chair in setting the agenda.
- Tracking yearly items such as reappointments and elections.
- Help the Commission learn to be more efficient and effective in their meetings.
- Support the Commission's ability to communicate with the Mayor and City Council (through Memorandums, Resolutions, and Ordinances).

***City of Homer
Economic Development Advisory Commission***

Vision Statement

The Economic Development Advisory Commission provides a forum for civic and business engagement on behalf of the City of Homer with the goal of fostering sustainable growth of an economically diverse community while preserving its cultural and natural heritage to maintain a high quality of life.

Mission Statement

The Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) of the City of Homer is a volunteer advisory body that bridges citizens and city government. Our core mission is to foster sustainable economic growth, safeguard our rich culture and natural heritage, and promote a high quality of life for Homer residents and businesses.

The EDC serves as a resource for our local community by providing a platform for engagement in economic matters. Commissioners facilitate community quality of life initiatives and offer actionable recommendations to the City of Homer. Through collaboration and a lens of diverse perspectives, we aim to bring lasting value to our city. We believe that by engaging with our community and facilitating discussions on sustainable economic growth, we can play a role in shaping a positive economic future for our community.

CHAPTER 7 ECONOMIC VITALITY

Vision Statement: Homer's economic industries remain strong and show continued growth.

Overview

This chapter presents goals and objectives related to economic development. While the private and non-profit sectors, along with state and federal spending, ultimately drives much of the economic activity, local government plays an important role in stimulating and guiding growth through its land use and infrastructure policies and projects.

The 1989 comprehensive plan stated:

Though it is generally recognized that fishing has been the backbone of the Homer economy for the past forty years, diversification of the Homer economy has taken place, especially in the last few years. Tourism, commercial and government services, retail trade, and a retirement population have been added in [the 1980s]...

These trends have continued and perhaps accelerated in the years since the 1989 plan. Additionally, as state and federal funding has changed, local and regional governments are bearing increased costs in providing services. Private sector economic health and growth are required to build the tax base if residents want to maintain existing government services and facilities.

Most of the economic development actions presented here are tied to topics addressed in other chapters. For example, recommendations regarding commercial development are included in Chapter 4 – Land Use. As a result, much of the value of this chapter is for those readers who are focused on economic issues and want to see a compilation of plan policies regarding economic development together in a single chapter. In 2011, the city adopted the Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS document is a broad document covering many sectors of Homer's economy.

Homer's quality of life is a principal economic asset. Maintaining and improving the quality of life in Homer is crucial to keeping existing business and attracting new business and professional activity. Quality of life is challenging to define because it involves many dimensions of a community to which people place varying degrees of importance. The elements of quality of life that are particularly valuable to economic development are those that make the community especially attractive to residents, visitors, and small businesses. While there is room for further improvement, Homer currently possesses many such elements.

Homer's Quality of Life Elements

- A strikingly beautiful natural setting
- A diverse, engaged, involved community, and rich civic life
- Diverse culture and leisure activities, including ready access to parks and a wide range of year-round outdoor recreation
- Eclectic neighborhoods such as Old Town and Pioneer Ave.
- Access to education and lifelong learning
- A feeling of safety and freedom from crime
- A clean, healthy, natural environment
- An active arts community, tradition of skill and interest in performing and visual arts
- Multiple transportation and access options, a developing trail system, and road access to Anchorage
- Access to commercial and recreational activities in and around Kachemak Bay
- High quality, comprehensive healthcare service

Summary of Goals

- GOAL 1:** Define and encourage economic development that meets the desires and interests of Homer residents and supports the unique character of the community.
- GOAL 2:** Encourage the retention and creation of more year-round and higher wage employment.
- GOAL 3:** Identify and promote industries that show a capacity for growth.
- GOAL 4:** Support renewable and non-renewable energy services.
- GOAL 5:** Strengthen Homer as a tourism destination.
- GOAL 6:** Support community efforts to establish affordable housing.

Goals and Objectives for Economic Vitality

GOAL 1: Define and encourage economic development that meets the desires and interests of Homer residents and supports the unique character of the community.

Homer residents would like to foster economic development in its many existing sectors. Education, sustainable tourism, health care, construction, commercial fishing and marine industries, arts, and culture are the industries that Homer has been built upon. These industries are viable and stable today and offer good prospects for growth. The remainder of this chapter looks in more detail at steps to strengthen Homer's economy, and to do so in a manner that provides economic opportunity while sustaining Homer's unique character and high quality of life.

Implementation Strategies

- Support local businesses with internal and external policies.
- Partner with organizations that have interests in the success of local merchants and products.
- Review and update city economic plans.



GOAL 2: Encourage the retention and creation of more year-round, higher wage jobs.

Homer residents desire more year round, living wage jobs. This in turn will help support small businesses, and the tax base.

Objective A: Increase year-round employment that will enable local people to work, live, and raise their families in Homer.

While almost all city actions will ultimately affect the course of economic change and job growth, city actions to promote year-round jobs include those listed below:

Implementation Strategies

- Consider zoning regulations that support new business opportunities while minimizing negative impacts.
- Evaluate opportunities to create and support public and private infrastructure.
- Encourage science, information infrastructure, and technology-based business development.
- Evaluate regional or other successes for opportunity within Homer.

Objective B: Encourage retention of existing and the relocation of new Federal and State Government jobs and training programs to Homer.

Government jobs are an important part of the local and regional economy. Government employment, whether research, visitor or education related, comprises 17.5% of local jobs. (American Community Survey 2014). Some government employment is found in every community, such as local, borough and state jobs related to day-to-day activities (airports, roads, schools, etc.). In addition, Homer has many residents who are employed through state agencies such as state parks, the court system, public health, the university, including the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve, and federal agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, which are headquartered in Homer. The Coast Guard also has a presence in the community. The City of Homer is also known as an important base for marine research and education activities.

Implementation Strategies

- Work to retain existing state and federal jobs.
- Promote Homer as a place to expand and attract government operations



Homer: Not just the Halibut Capital of the World

Objective C: Support efforts to increase the scale and scope of the education industry to support a skilled workforce.

Education is important to Homer's economic vitality for two reasons. First, it provides residents with the ability to acquire the skills and knowledge ("human capital") needed to succeed in the global economy, and find a local job. To the extent people can acquire these skills and knowledge without leaving home, they can earn higher incomes, create new businesses and jobs for others, keep their education expenditures circulating in the local economy, and provide the skilled workers needed for existing local jobs. Education is also an exportable product if people come to Homer to learn.

University of Alaska provides essential post-secondary and vocational education to Homer residents. The economic impact is broad and significant. Additional educational programs are provided by several nonprofit organizations operating in Homer and across Kachemak Bay. The marine environment and spectacular setting of Homer and Kachemak Bay are significant assets that could lead to growth of the education industry. The implementation strategies below apply not only to Kenai Peninsula College (KPC), but also to any other interested educational institution.

Implementation Strategies

- Support development of programs that prepare individuals through workforce development
- Support opportunities for partnerships and collaborative educational programs

GOAL 3: Identify and promote industries that show a capacity for growth.

Objective A: Recognize emerging industries.

Homer is a place of big ideas and entrepreneurial spirit. Examples include the fervor with which local agriculture has developed, particularly high tunnel cultivation and commercial peony growing. These are growing local and regional business opportunities. Over time, there will be new economic opportunities that arise; the city should be open to these new ideas and support those that show reasonable opportunities for growth.

Implementation Strategies

- Interact with those involved in introducing new industries and services to Homer

Objective B: Promote the marine trades including mariculture and shipping industries.

Homer's harbor and associated marine trade and services activities are an important component of the local and regional economy. Marine related activities could be expanded to increase the number of living wage, skilled jobs in the community. Local seafood processing, boat building, and fabrication services offer a chance for a local product to reach the local, state and national markets. Homer's public and private port facilities also serve as a staging area for freight destined to more remote parts of the coast.

Implementation Strategies

- Work to identify and support infrastructure for marine related industries

Objective C: Promote recreation, the arts, and non-governmental organizations as a complement to tourism and as an export industry.

Recreation and the arts are key components of the Homer economy and support the tourism industry and Homer's quality of life. Actions to promote the arts include those listed below. Some of these objectives are best carried out by the City, while others are best undertaken by local arts groups and tourism marketing organizations with City cooperation and encouragement.

Implementation Strategies

- Consider and review zoning for opportunities that support the arts industry
- Support sustainable recreational facilities and opportunities (*see Objective E of Chapter 6, Public Services and Facilities*)

Objective D: Support the health care and wellness industries.

Health care and wellness are a growing sector of Homer's economy. This is partially driven by an aging population, but also by resident's desire for improved health. Over the past decade, South Peninsula Hospital has completed a major expansion, several new dental clinics have been constructed, and the Seldovia Village Tribe constructed both a medical clinic and a wellness center. Specialized medical services such as surgeries, sleep studies, oncology and VA care are also available. As the health care industry continues to change, Homer can expect to see growth in the types of medical services available, and more jobs in this field.

Implementation Strategies

- Support allied programs and businesses that strengthen Homer's local health care opportunities

GOAL 4: Support regional renewable and non-renewable energy exploration and production.

Homer citizens support researching and pursuing renewable energy projects. Outside of the city, oil and gas exploration continues. Supporting the exploration, extraction, and renewable energy industries does not necessarily have to compromise Homer's scenery or quality of life. There are many opportunities to benefit from the construction, research, and extraction activities, whether through direct employment, or by providing services such as worker housing, catering, fuel, payroll, and transportation to local and non-local contractors who work on site (*also, see Chapter 8, Energy Plan*).

Implementation Strategies

- Consider Homer's ability to provide support services

GOAL 5: Strengthen Homer as a tourism, business travel, education and recreation event destination.

Homer is already one of Alaska's premier tourist destinations and appears to be enjoying continuing growth in visitation and expenditures. A trend is also emerging to hold professional conferences and educational events in the community in addition to the many athletic, cultural and recreation opportunities. City actions can have a significant impact on the economic importance of the visitor economy by promoting longer stays, increased expenditures per person, and more repeat visitation.

Equally important, City government plays a crucial role in guiding the growth of tourism to maximize its benefits and to minimize the costs imposed on the people of Homer.

Objective A: Invest in local infrastructure, parks, and civic improvements that will serve locals well as visitors by promoting longer stays, increased expenditures per person, and more repeat visitation as a form of economic development.

One economic development strategy is to find ways to encourage visitors to stay in the community longer during their visit, or to visit again in the future. The Farmer's Market in downtown Anchorage is an example; visitors to the market also visit other downtown businesses. Even staying an hour or two longer in the community may result in visitors eating more meals in local restaurants or spending more money shopping. The City benefits through increased sales tax revenue. To keep Homer an attractive destination requires that the City and private business work in partnership to provide the basic services that visitors and locals expect. These improvements and public expenditures should also benefit local taxpayers.

Effort should be made in the future to have more tourists visit downtown Homer to support year round businesses. Seasonally, the Spit will continue to be a huge draw, but investment in tourist amenities should be equally focused on downtown Homer.

Implementation Strategies

- Maintain a welcoming environment that serves the needs of visitors

Objective B: Support efforts to improve community attractions, including land and water trails, and access to marine activities and the marine environment. Improve links between attractions.

Homer can be considered to have three main tourism destination areas: The downtown and Old Town area, the Spit, and the area across Kachemak Bay. While each of these areas currently attracts numerous visitors, it is likely that more tourists could be accommodated and more spending could be encouraged if the unique attributes of each area were further developed and if better connections were made among the three areas. Ideally, the enhancements that attract more tourists equally benefit local residents as well, resulting in an increase to business activity, tax receipts, and quality of life.

Implementation Strategies

- Improve the ability and convenience of travelers to travel throughout Homer

Objective C: Increase the net benefits that tourism brings to Homer.

Homer's distinctive character and attractions create substantial economic benefits to the community in terms of jobs, business opportunities, and tax revenues. Tourism also helps the community host a greater number and diversity of businesses and services than what local spending alone can support. While tourism creates a wide array of benefits, it can also be disruptive to local life. For example, tourism may exacerbate traffic congestion, transform commercial areas from local to visitor-serving, cause crowding at recreation destinations enjoyed by residents, and potentially adversely affect fish, wildlife, and other elements of the natural environment. Community members have expressed a desire to encourage tourism activities that do not require extensive changes to the existing environment, but rather help to conserve Homer's natural setting and improve the area.

As a result of this mix of positive and potential negative impacts, Homer should pursue a guided tourism growth policy. The community will promote tourism growth, but do so in a manner that helps sustain the qualities of the community that attract residents and visitors.

Implementation Strategies

- Promote tourist amenities that provide benefits beyond the tourist season
- Review the cost to maintain tourist amenities and minimize the amount of local subsidy
- Promote tourist activities that have the least negative impact to locals
- Promote Homer as a tourist destination

GOAL 6: Support community efforts to establish affordable housing.

Many residents expressed the view that economic development depends, at least in part, on a balance between income and the cost of living. Strategies to promote a diverse range of housing options are discussed in *Chapter 4, Land Use*. This goal is included as a component of economic vitality to explicitly reflect the connection between housing opportunities and the economic well-being of Homer.

City government has few tools to address the issue of affordable housing. The direct role of the City of Homer is limited by the fact the City is not a housing authority, and city taxation and development fees are relatively low. In recent years, the Economic Development Commission (EDC) has studied Homer's tax policies. The EDC found that the tax credits for housing that the city could institute do not significantly affect the cost of housing. The market demand is for homes that are more expensive, and the high cost of real estate and land development results in very few new 'affordable' housing units. However, the city can support the efforts of other groups in building new affordable housing units, which will free up units on the private rental market.

Implementation Strategies

- Consider support mechanisms for special population

Economic Vitality Implementation Table

Table 10. Chapter 7, Economic Vitality Implementation Table

Project	Timeframe			Ongoing	Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term		
Goal 1 - Encourage Economic Development					
1-1 Support Chamber’s Buy Local campaign and source city purchases locally when price competitive.				x	Administration
1-2 Continue the local bidders preference in city procurement policies.				x	City Council
1-3 Review and make zoning recommendations that promote local agriculture and other locally sourced products.	x			x	HAPC
1-4 Plan for economic development by partnering with organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce. Retain an active board role with the chamber, and involvement with Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District, Inc. (KPEDD), Homer Marine Trades, non-profits and other similar organizations.				x	Administration
1-5 Review the Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Plan.		x			EDC
1-6 Create an action plan from the CEDS plan.	x				Administration, EDC
1-7 Stay abreast of the requirements of information technology infrastructure.				x	HAPC, EDC
Goal 2 - Encourage Year-round Jobs					
2-A-1 Review zoning regulations to ensure new businesses and development are not unduly restricted.				x	HAPC
2-A-2 Continue to invest in community infrastructure and transportation systems (see Chapter 5, Transportation).				x	City Council, Administration
2-A-3 Identify business needs through business retention program participation.				x	EDC
2-A-4 Stay abreast of the needs of technology-based business and review the ability of the city to support.				x	EDC
2-A-5 Partner with KPEDD to identify options for incentives to encourage local business growth.	x			x	EDC, Administration
2-A-6 Work with KPEDD to identify regional successes.	x			x	EDC, Administration
2-B-1 When local state or federal jobs are being considered for elimination or relocation, lobby to retain them.				x	City Council, Administration

Project	Timeframe			Ongoing	Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term		
2-B-2 Actively work with the Coast Guard to support the retention and expansion of facilities in Homer.	x			x	City Council, Administration
2-B-3 Work with state and federal authorities to promote the expansion of their activities in Homer.				x	City Council, Administration
2-C-1 Keep abreast of KPC program offerings and consider resolutions of support.				x	City Council
2-C-2 Review zoning requirements in regard to student housing opportunities.		x			HAPC
2-C-3 Support collaborative educational programs.				x	City Council
2-C-4 Connect sources of information that contribute to identifying local job training needs.				x	EDC, Administration
Goal 3 – Promote Growing Industries					
3-A-1 Periodically review land use regulation effects upon new business opportunities.				x	HAPC, Planning
3-B-1 Make ice available year round for fish processing, when demand dictates.		x			Port
3-B-2 Continue to evaluate demands and plan to address ways to support the fishing industry.				x	Port and Harbor Commission
3-B-3 Continue efforts to expand the Deep Water Dock and other Harbor infrastructure.	x			x	Administration, Port, City Council
3-B-4 Continue East Boat Harbor expansion studies.				x	Administration, Port, City Council
3-C-1 Review zoning for opportunities that accommodates art studio, art education activities, and residential living (<i>also, see chapter 4, Land Use</i>).	x				Planning, HAPC
3-C-2 Investigate options for creating a new, multi-purpose cultural, performing arts and community center in Homer's town center (<i>see the Town Center Plan and Park Art Recreation and Culture Needs Assessment</i>).			x		Administration
3-D-1 Lobby for support of Kenai Peninsula College (KPC) programs supporting the local healthcare industries.				x	City Council
3-D-2 Consider shared marketing opportunities to also include Homer as a healthcare destination.				x	Administration, Chamber of Commerce

Project		Timeframe			Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term	Ongoing	
Goal 4 – Support Energy Exploration and Production					
4-1 Maintain and/or expand industrial zones.				x	Planning Commission
4-2 Support community efforts to remediate brownfield locations via letters and resolutions of support and technical assistance for grant applications.				x	Administration, City Council, other departments as appropriate
4-3 Continue to review zoning options for provisions of renewable energy systems in the City.				x	Planning Commission
4-4 Promote renewable energy development regionally with resolutions of support.				x	City Council
4-5 Review how land use policies may be used to support energy, mining, oil, and gas support services.				x	Planning Commission
Goal 5 – Strengthen Homer as a Destination					
5-A-1 Support and fund beautification efforts on Pioneer Avenue through budget appropriations, CIP, cost sharing and grant applications.				x	City Council, Administration
5-A-2 Ensure that City facilities are sufficient to support events that draw visitors such as festivals and activities (e.g., clean restrooms on the Spit, RV dump stations, adequate trash collection, park maintenance, etc.).				x	City Council, Administration, Public Works
5-B-1 Review opportunities to improve shuttle stops (also, see 5-B-3).				x	Public Works, City Council
5-B-2 Design and build a wayfinding system that includes the Spit, Pioneer Ave., and Old Town, consider a local partnership.		x			City of Homer, Chamber of Commerce, community partner
5-B-3 Consider constructing ADA accessible sidewalk improvements and installing benches and trashcans at central shuttle stops, such as the corner of Bunnell and Main.	x				Public Works, City Council
5-C-1 Adequately fund maintenance of public facilities.				x	City Council, Administration, Public Works
5-C-2 When planning new amenities, evaluate projects benefits for both residents and visitors (e.g., trails).				x	City Council, Administration, Public Works
5-C-3 Support eco-tourism concepts and passive or quiet low-impact recreation activities in marketing information.				x	City partnership with Chamber of Commerce

Project	Timeframe			Ongoing	Primary Duty
	Near Term	Mid Term	Longer Term		
5-C-4 When opportunities arise, work with private sector partners to support private sector establishment of conference and convention capabilities.				x	Administration
5-C-5 Review infrastructure capacity for the ability to meet current and future demands.				x	Public works
5-C-6 Recommend and support taxation policies and fee structures that result in revenues from tourism that cover the city's costs in providing services to tourists.	x			x	City Council and City Departments
5-C-7 Support shoulder season activities that are not seasonally dependent as a way to expand the local economy.				x	Public Works, Administration, City Council
5-C-8 Identify, promote and expand, and target visitor markets, including Alaska residents, out-of-state independent travelers, and small group package tour travelers.				x	Chamber of Commerce, KPTMC
5-C-9 Accommodate and encourage events such as the Shorebird Festival and Kachemak Bay Writers' Conference, professional and educational conferences, and sporting tournaments.				x	Administration, City Council, and community partners
Goal 6 – Support Efforts to Establish Affordable Housing					
6-1 Support the efforts of other organizations to provide housing for target populations such as seniors, low income and special needs residents. Write letters or pass resolutions of support.				x	City Council, Administration
6-2 Support senior housing that allows seniors to age within the community, such as assisted living and long term care. Write letters or pass resolutions in of support for grant applications to expand housing.				x	City Council, Administration
6-3 Maintain land use regulations that support cradle to grave housing options for special populations.				x	HAPC

Background

The City of Homer Economic Development Advisory Commission has an ongoing goal of defining what is positive economic growth for Homer, and how it leads to the quality of life and growth outcomes desired by the community. The Commission has begun working on this goal by conducting a SWOT analysis - strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats- for Homer's quality of life. There are four board categories included in this document: Business Climate, Built Environment, Natural Environment and Social Climate. As the Commission discovered, it's the people who make Homer, Homer. This analysis is offered as a gateway to a larger community conversation about Homer's future as a place to live, work and thrive as we proceed to Homer Comprehensive Plan.

Acknowledgments

Economic Development Commission

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Strengths

- Small town feel and scale
- Eclectic businesses, buildings and people
- Wide variety of locally owned small businesses
- Integrated town with outdoor environment
- Connected community with vibrant cultural and business groups

Weaknesses

- Lack of worker support: Housing, Childcare, Training.
- Difficulty for early to mid- career residents to thrive
- Some infrastructures is in need of repair (roads) or expansion - storm water + green infrastructure
- Local regulation is not resulting in the patterns and development the community would like to see.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Opportunities

- Encourage multi-family housing
- Increase ease of walking and biking
- Collaborate with community partners on habitat, climate, erosion and other natural environment issues that impact quality of life
- Find ways to keep young or returning residents in the community

Threats

- Difficult to recruit new talent
- Poor retention of workers
- Loss of town/wildlife interface
- New residents may not become involved in the community; slow loss of volunteer run organizations, events and services; Risk of gentrification; becoming a community of empty households.
- Costs of living and doing business

Business climate

Strengths	Variety of businesses and activities.	Working town with rich history.	Lots of jobs for entry level workers.	Small, locally owned business are the majority; few chains.	Vibrant cultural community that has rich opportunities for arts, sports, music, gathering, education, and entertainment.	Community that is growing and maturing, that is developing opportunities for families, businesses, visitors, but at a pace that does not create change so quickly that what is here is lost or displaced.
Threats + Weaknesses	Low availability of vocational training.	Not enough homes available for sale or rent to meet the demand. Affects the work force and tax paying residents.	Lack of year round affordable housing. Problem for entry level and low income workers, and also potential future middle income workers. Losing the potential to build up the work force due to entry/early hurdles.	Cost of living and doing business here is increasing. Harder to live and move here. (food, housing, development, energy costs).	Risk of over-regulation. Potential mismatch between level of local regulation and community desire for regulation.	Uncertain energy supplies and future prices (natural gas in Cook Inlet).
Opportunities	Tax breaks could encourage growth by certain groups that could improve commerce. A tax break to encourage certain business activities, such as construction of multi family homes.	Solicit developers (could be from outside of Homer) to build multifamily housing.	Keeping youth in the community and providing skills training to grow the local work force. Kachemak Bay Campus, voc tech training/apprenticeship programs , and partnerships with existing businesses such as NOMAR, Bayweld and other small manufacturing operations are all opportunities.		Promote policies that are favorable to economic growth (tax environment, seasonal labor initiatives, etc.).	Balance growth with cohesive town "feel."

Built Environment - Town buildings and infrastructure

Strengths	Eclectic, organic feel to the town. Human scale buildings.	Integrated town with the outdoors - can observe wildlife (moose, eagles) and be in nature.	Small town feel and scale.	Multiple economic zones; Homer Spit, spit trail & boardwalks, Pioneer Ave, Old Town, Ocean Drive, East End Road.	Wild spaces - less manicured yards, trails in town, remote access opportunities to the back country and across the bay.	Unique houses, not cookie cutter.
Threats + Weaknesses	Lack of mechanisms to pay for growth or balance the pace of change.	Infrastructure - road system in need of repair, limited access options. Storm water management is a growing issue.	Lack of housing including multi family housing and creative ideas for seasonal housing.	Low density can cause sprawl; cost of utilities and infrastructure increases as a result.	Lower levels of energy efficiency, at risk for pricing swings in energy prices.	Cookie cutter buildings/strip mall.
Opportunities	Accommodate population growth with zones of increased density & reduced commute. Encourage ADU's (Accessory Dwelling Units).	Use the City HART Fund wisely to address roads maintenance + trails.	Increase walkability/biking. Promote an easy flow of people whether they walk, bike or drive within the community, with wayfinding. Plan for all transportation modes to keep the small town feel and the opportunity to meet.	Manage growth wisely, such as road and infrastructure planning with new subdivisions, planning for pedestrian and storm water drainage, and rezoning to allow more housing and tiny homes.	Collaborate with the Homer Chamber of Commerce to help maintain focus towards building up our local small businesses across sectors.	Aesthetics: Use some natural living landscape to break up box store type look. Blend built environment with nature.

Natural Environment

Strengths	Natural beauty	Community connection to outdoors, nature, skiing and beaches in the same day.	Coastal living - maritime culture of sport and commercial fishing and water based activities	Abundant and pristine natural resources.	Large areas of park and public lands surrounding Homer.
Threats + Weaknesses	Human affect on natural environment. Pollution, overfishing, lack of crab in K Bay, warming climate.	Development of lands without consideration of wildlife/habitat corridors, wetlands (salmon habitat, water connectivity) + groundwater + storm water flow channels.	Destruction of built and natural environment. Storm drains and roads based on 1970's planning and engineering ideas.	Oil + gas lease sale potential in lower cook inlet.	Fisheries: closure of lowed CI salmon fishery, other declining or poorly managed fisheries. Large vessel trawl fleets. (threat to marine economy, wealth + culture).
Opportunities	Local potential for use of alternative energy sources from Tidal energy to household heat pumps.	Study groundwater to increased understanding of this local resource and the ability to plan for the natural environment.	Collaborate with partnerships to create connected greenspace for trails, water management, and wildlife. Purchase or preserve key habitat locations.	Identify wildlife and habitat corridors, and take steps to maintain the health of local fish and wildlife within these corridors.	Fisheries: City could be participating more in partnerships that aim to identify solutions to bycatch issues.

Social Climate

Strengths	Community has many social connections between residents, and also with the natural environment.	Small business and small non-profit, integrated nature of the community (fundraising, meeting community needs).	Community feeling: People are here by choice at the end of the road.	Eclectic nature of the town and people	Safety - low crime	Diverse and rich heritage.	"Work from Anywhere" trends increasing nationally to benefit novel living locations.
Threats + Weaknesses	Cost of living does not support middle/low income work. Median income 60K, Median House costs of \$20K/year	Many young families need to work outside of Homer to live year-round. Childcare difficult to obtain.	How to entice mid-career small business owners to move to Homer, and have all new residents embrace Homer culture.	Explosive growth (outside wealth outpacing local population) second homes, short term rentals, rapid change.	Addiction education - need for resources, outreach, networking.	Risk of losing the full character of Homer. Not talking to enough people about Homer's future.	Not a very age - diverse population. Unbalanced demographics. 20% of the population over 65. Increasing rate of snowbirds.
Opportunities	Provide education on what government does. Highlight what makes Homer a unified community.	Educate the community on how decisions will impact taxes, utility rates, and cost of living as Homer grows.	Use social appeal to support businesses in obtaining out of area workers. Resource in helping get H2B & vetted workers.	Art/murals/ landscaping as a draw for downtown, in a thoughtful way. Could encourage more businesses participation, cost sharing	Partner w NTC or SVT on community health, well being & cultural heritage. They have other funding streams not available to the City.	Revisit the Parks, Art Rec+ Culture needs assessment, and potential city partnerships with other organizations	Provide a spectrum of housing for all residents: housing first.



City of Homer

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Melissa Jacobsen, Interim City Manager
DATE: June , 2024
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for June 10, 2024 Council Meeting

A BIG Thank You to Senator Murkowski!

The City thanks Senator Murkowski for selecting two of Homer's Community Designated Spending requests to move forward for Appropriations Subcommittee consideration.

The Senator forwarded the [Homer Spit Climate Resiliency Project](#) to the [Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies subcommittee](#) and the [Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies](#) for funding consideration. The project develops resiliency data and evaluates a range of coastal erosion mitigation measures for the Homer Spit to inform and produce a climate resiliency action plan. The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and the US Army Corps of Engineers would be lead participants in the project under agency agreements. She also advanced the Design and Permitting phase of the Homer Harbor Critical Float Replacement project to the [Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee](#).

Senator Murkowski's selections is great news, but is just one step in a long decision-making process. The next step is for the individual appropriations bills to be drafted, amended and approved by the Appropriations Committees. After that comes floor consideration and bicameral negotiations on final spending levels and individual provisions. Senator Murkowski's office said they would keep the City informed as they learn more about which Alaska projects are able to be funded, and at what level, towards the fall.

Capital Improvement Plan Update Underway

The annual cycle of updating the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) kicked off after approval of the CIP development schedule at the last Council meeting. The CIP is a 6-year planning document for major acquisition and construction projects. While most of the CIP projects are specific to City government infrastructure and services (e.g. roads, water/sewer projects, harbor or public safety projects), the CIP contains a separate section for projects sponsored by area non-profits. Organizations can propose a new project for the FY26 CIP by filling out a Nomination Form and submitting it to the City by the end of June. To be eligible, projects must have a value of \$25,000 or greater, result in a fixed asset with a useful life of at least three years and provide benefits to the Homer community. Go to <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/citymanager/city-homer-solicits-nominations-2025-2030-capital-improvement-plan> for more information.

Work on the CIP will continue through the summer, to gather comments and recommendations from City departments and advisory bodies, and into the fall, with final City Council adoption of the entire CIP and the City's legislative priority list in September.

Spit Parking

If you've been out on the spit recently you've probably noticed the new parking delineations in the free parking areas and a new area for RV day use parking. I've attached a few photos here, along with a memo and area map from the Port Director that includes all the details for parking this summer. A big thank you to the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission and Port and Harbor staff for all your work on parking around the harbor!



Electoral and Public Information Signs

Elections are coming up! And with that comes Election Signs. It's important for candidates and their supporters to remember a few key points about displaying signs. We're also seeing other signs with a similar appearance to electoral signs that are more of a public information type sign. For clarification Homer City Code 21.60 defines-

- **An electoral sign** is any sign used to advertise or promote a political party, or the election or defeat of a candidate initiative, referendum or proposition at an election and,
 - Can be placed on private property with the permission of the owner
 - Must not impede visibility for turning vehicles
 - Can be a maximum of 16 square feet in area (per side if double sided)
 - May be placed up to 60 days prior to an election and removed within 7 days after
- **A public sign** is an off premise sign, other that provides direction or information, identifies public facilities, or a district of the City. There are specific rules for public signs in Homer City Code 21.60.097 but the important message for this report is,
 - No public sign is allowed without a permit from the City.

Sometimes there is some confusion when it comes to City and State right-of-way. State Roads include the Sterling Highway to the end of the Spit, East End Road, and Diamond Ridge Road over the ridge to East Skyline, as well as East Hill, West Hill, and Kachemak Drive. A State press release is attached for more information regarding signage.

Contact City Planning for information on signs in City Limits, planning@ci.homer.ak.us



Illegal sign in State ROW

Attachments:

- June Employee Anniversaries
- Grant Summary Update
- Spit Parking Memo and Map
- AKDOT Sign Information
- Letter from Homer Food Pantry



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603

citymanager@cityofhomer-ak.gov

(p) 907-235-8121 x2222

(f) 907-235-3148

Memorandum

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: Andrea Browning
DATE: June 10, 2024
SUBJECT: June Employee Anniversaries

I would like to take the time to thank the following employees for the dedication, commitment and service they have provided the City and taxpayers of Homer over the years.

Melissa Jacobsen	Clerks	20	Years
Mike Illg	Admin	18	Years
Mike Szocinski	Public Works	12	Years
Jessica Poling	Police	7	Years
Bethany Christman	Public Works	5	Years
Russell Anderson	Public Works	5	Years
James Tingley	Public Works	4	Years
Zach Pettit	Clerks	1	Year
Andrew Williamson	Public Works	1	Year

FY23 Project Supported	TPC	Grant Fund	Grant Funds Req	Match/Local Cost	Status	Notes
Slope Stability- Erosion Mitigation Program						
Kachemak Drive Peatland Water Quality Improvement (Kahcemak Sponge)	\$4,388,791	NOAA Habitat Conservation KBNERS led/City partner	\$ 1,188,275.00 (land acquisition)	\$ 418,000.00 (land acquisition)	Submitted Awarded 4/1/2023 Award Executed	UAA accepted award; sent sub-award agreement to City Ord 23-46 to accept sub-award introduced 6/26/23 Grant is for Kachemak Drive peatlands acquisition
Beluga Slough Stormwater Treatment System	\$ 690,000.00	Alaska Clean Water Actions	\$ 153,307.00	\$ 107,182.00	Submitted 11/9/2022 Awarded 3/1/2023 Accepted via Ord 23-16(S)	City Council approved grant agreement Ord City costs in-kind + elibigle for funds from ADEC Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund
Transportation						
Transportation Planning	\$ 960,000.00	Safe Streets For All KPB Applic/City partner	\$ 960,000.00	\$ 23,000.00 (in-kind)	Award announced KPB executing grant agreement	Application approved Reso 22-063
Non-Motorized Transp Network (REACH Project)	\$ 2,050,000.00	Fed FY24 RAISE Planning Grant	\$ 2,050,000.00	\$ -	Submitted 2/28/24 Awaiting award decision	FY23 RAISE REACH applic (approved Ord 23-012) finalist, not awarded but a Merit application and encouraged to apply in FY24. Reso 24-007 approving HDR grant writing assistance Reso 24-018 Supporting FY24 application
Homer All-Ages & Abilities Pedestrian Pathway	\$ 3,900,000.00	State of AK Transportation Alternatives (TAP) (AK DOT&PF manages/constructs)	\$ 3,432,000.00	\$ 468,000.00	Submitted 2/15/2023 Advanced to final round: Public Evaluation Board (PEB) TAP funding awarded, awaiting negotiations with DOT on a Memorandum of Agreement	HAPP sections in PW's 5-year road plan Project support Reso 23-011 approved PEB Review 12/202024 (\$500,000 set aside in HART for grant matching)
Main Street Rehab/ Sidewalk South	\$ 4,200,000.00	State of AK Community Transportation Program (CTP)	\$ 3,696,000.00	\$ 504,000.00	Submitted 2/15/2023 Advanced to final round Not funded	Main St in 7-10 year horizon in PW Road Plan Project support Reso 23-011 approved PEB Review 12/202024 (\$500,000 set aside in HART for grant matching)
Port & Harbor						
Float Systems 4 & 1 Replacement	\$ 60,240,898.00	FY24 Fed Port Infrastructure Development Projects (PIDP)	\$47,891,514	\$ 12,349,384.00 (20.5% match)	Submitted 5/10/24	Applic approved Reso 23-040 FY23 applic made it to Secretary's desk but was not funded Added to draft STIP as illustrative project HDR application support Ords 24-12 & 24-13 Revenue bond or TIFIA loan for match
		Municipal Harbor Grant			Grant for construction only must complete design to apply	If funded, leverages State match to lower City match on Federal PIDP Grant
	\$ 2,205,000.00	Denali Commission Grant Design/Env Review/Permitting	\$ 1,102,500.00	\$ 1,102,500.00 (from budgeted match funds)	Grant deadline 4/12/24 Submitted, awaiting decision	Can be used as non-Federal Match for PIDP application If funded, leverages Denali Commission match to lower City match.
	\$ 2,205,000.00	FY25 CPF(Appropriations) Req Design/Env Review/Permitting	\$ 1,543,500.00	\$ 661,500.00 (from budgeted match funds)	Submitted 3/22/2024	5/13/2024 Rep Peltola forwarded to PIDP Committee 6/4/2024 Sen Murkowski forwarded to THUD Committee

designates grants awarded

designates grants NOT awarded

designates updates since the 04/15/24 grant update

FY23 Project Supported	TPC	Grant Fund	Grant Funds Req	Match/Local Cost	Status	Notes
Fish Grinding Building Replace & Drainage Improvements	\$ 374,978.00	ADFG Dingle-Johnson	\$ 250,000.00 (preliminary)	\$ 93,744.50 (preliminary)	Submitted 7/12/2022 Prelim award announced 7/7/2023 \$41,950 awarded for Phase 1	\$100,000 allocated in FY23 City Capital Budget; for final design and partial match; additional match to meet 25% of construction cost may be necessary Ordinance 24-16 accepted grant
Building Code Development	\$ 587,500.00	State BRIC Sub-Grant (Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities)	\$ 470,000.00	\$ 117,500.00	Submitted 12/21/2022 Accepted for further review Awaiting decision	Council Approved application Reso 22-086 25% local match required 1st Req. for Information submitted to FEMA 5/17/24
Parks & Recreation						
Bayview Park Renovations	\$ 139,230.00	State of AK Healthy & Equitable Community Round 2	\$ 74,919.00	\$ 52,314.00 Addl redistribution funds requested	Submitted 4/24/2023 Awarded 5/8/2023 Accepted via Ord 23-36	Council Approved Resolution 23-031 \$12,000 donation from Kach Bay Rotary Additional funds from HART approved in COH Cap budget
HERC HazMat Assesement & Remediation		EPA Multipurpose Brownfield Federal Discretionary Grant	\$1,000,000		Submitted 11/13/2023 Not awarded.	Appllc approved via Council Resolution 23-117
		AK DEC Brownfileds Assesment & Cleanup (DBAC)			Submitted 2/15/2024 DBAC services approved	DBAC Services pending EPA review No local match required; State provides the services
Utilities - Infrastructure						
Spit Road Erosion Mitigation	\$ 1,812,052.00	FY23-24 Federal PROTECT Program	\$ 1,812,052	-	Submitted 8/18/2023 Not Awarded	Application requested planning funds for Homer Spit Erosion Mitigation. City of Homer is project sponsor, but it awarded City will enter MOU with DOT to implement grant activities
		FEMA BRIC Grant			Submitted Awaiting decision	State of AK submitted applic with AML's assistance State to pay 25% match
	\$ 1,794,420	FY25 CDS (Appropriations) Req	\$ 1,414,420	\$ 380,000 (State of AK match)	Submitted 3/22/2024	Selected by Senator Murkowski to move to Appropriations Committee
Raw Water Transmission Main		FEMA Disaster Mitigation	\$ 1,988,650 (direct project costs)	-	Submitted 1/30/2020 Obligating Award Document Recd 11/3/2023	4/11/23: Responded to latest FEMA request for information 5/2/23: Congressional Delegation approved award 7/11/23: FEMA Received Period of Performance Waiver 11/13 Ordinance to accept the grant approved 4/1/2024 Grant Kick-off Meeting with DHS&EM
A-Frame Water Transmission Main		CDS (Appropriations) Request	\$ 794,360	\$ 264,787 (AK Revolving Loan Funds)	Submitted 3/22/2024	Awaiting decision
IT - Communications						
FY22 Cybersecurity (City-wide Cybersecurity Assessment and Remote Backup System for Cybersecurity Response & Recovery)	\$ 252,794.00	AK Division of Homeland Security FY22 State & Local Cyberscurity Grant Program	\$ 50,000	-	Submitted 8/31/2023 Award announced	\$50,000 awarded for Cybersecurity Assessment Ord 24-15 accepected award
FY22-23 Cybersecurity - Remote BU system, SIEM, Cybersec Plan	\$ 328,943	AK Division of Homeland Security	\$ 328,943	-	3/8/2024 Grant Deadline Submitted 3/8/2024	Awaiting Decision
Public Safety Communications (HPD Backup Repeater & Radio Equip HVFD APX-600 Radio Upgrade)	\$ 119,046.56	AK Division of Homeland Security FY23 State Homeland Security Grant Program	\$ 88,196.56	\$ -	Submitted 1/31/2023 Prelim Award 9/18/2023 Obligating Award Document Recd	11/13 Ordinance 23-55 to accept approved



MEMORANDUM

Spit Parking Plan/Updates for the Season (2024)

Item Type: Informational Memorandum
Prepared For: Homer City Council & Mayor Castner
Date: June 5, 2024
From: Bryan Hawkins, Port Director
Through: Melissa Jacobsen, Acting City Manager

As we move into another busy summer season we're gearing up for the crowd out at the Harbor. Part of that preparation always includes our parking facilities and how we can best use the limited space available. Staff, commissions, and the public have been weighing in, planning, and thinking about 2024 since last fall. I know Council is already aware of fee changes in the parking realm via the recent adoption of the amendment to our tariff, but I'd also like to provide and update of the physical changes and space management for this upcoming year. The following changes are the ones we've settled on for 2024. Please see below:

- 2024 Parking Updates Steel Grid Parking Lot
 - Memorial Day – Labor Day:
 - \$10 Calendar Day Fee Parking
 - No Long-term Parking
 - Vehicles 20' & Under
 - Labor Day – Memorial Day:
 - Free Short-term parking up to 7 consecutive days
 - Long-term parking by permit only

In an effort toward grouping similar areas under the same management/fee type, the paved area adjacent to the steel grid will be treated the same way as the paved areas at the tops of each of the ramps.

- 2024 Parking Updates Ramps 3-5
 - No Vehicles Exceeding 20' in length (maximum vehicle size limit is 20')
 - 7-Day free short-term parking
 - Long-term vehicle parking by permit only.

Longer vehicles and RVs, when parked in these areas, have been found to cause impaired line of sight for vehicles attempting to exit onto the roadway. They also have been found to cause flow pattern and other parking issues. For safety and efficiency of space, vehicles exceeding 20' in length will no longer be allowed in these areas. The newly created parking (signed with a highway traffic reader board) lot behind Bob's Trophy Charters with its egress driveways exiting onto the less trafficked Outer Dock Rd instead of the main Sterling Hwy will be dedicated to oversized vehicles.

As an additional safety measure for the Ramp 3 to 5 areas, we will be installing parking delineation from ramp 3 to Freight Dock road at the transition point between the parking lot and roadway/right of way, separating the parked vehicles from the main roadway and creating dedicated "driveways". In its current configuration, vehicles were able to exit at any point along the 1500' of parking lot and this causes sightline issues for drivers with concern to pedestrians and bicycles using the shoulder corridor. The delineation will provide designated parking lot entrances and exits, signaling to everyone that this is an area to approach and exit with caution as you join traffic in the roadway. The delineation consists of black parking pylons that will effectively separate the parking from the highway but will be temporary and removed after the season in September.

➤ 2024 Parking Updates Ramp 2 Restrooms

- Bus loading Zone is discontinued and replaced with short-term, 1-hour parking

This area was found to be too congested to provide safe and easy access for large buses, additionally it was often full, or blocked by other vehicles. Three new areas with better approaches and more space, located with access to the walking trails and shops, have been created (see update for lot 9&10 and Bob's trophy lot west)

➤ 2024 Parking Updates Lots 9 & 10, and area next to chamber of commerce kiosk (ramp 4 parking area)

- The shoulder lane between the lot 9 spit walking trail and Homer Spit Road will be designated as a passenger bus loading zone.
- An area in front of the chamber of commerce kiosk by ramp 4 parking area will be designated as a passenger bus loading zone

➤ 2024 Parking Updates Bob's Trophy Lot West

- The parking lot will be dedicated to Oversized Vehicle Parking Only, 21' Minimum Limit
- Free 7-day Short-term parking
- Long-term parking by permit only

- No Camping
- The area in the red will be dedicated to passenger bus loading zones

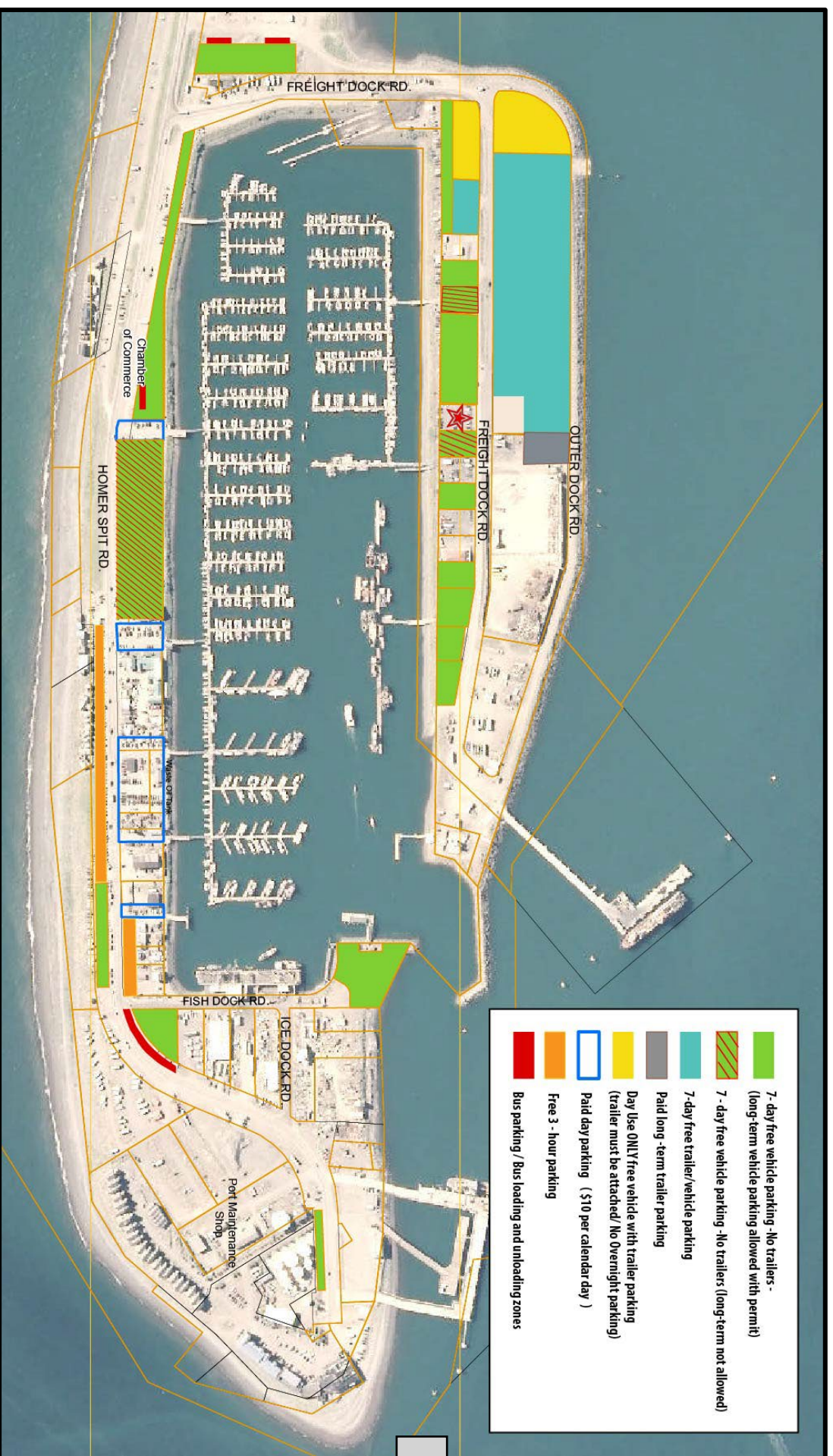
For an overview of the whole parking plan and areas of interest, please see our attached current parking map.

RECOMMENDATION:

Informational. No action needed.

Attached: Homer Spit Parking Map

City of Homer Port & Harbor Facilities Vehicle Parking



(Restrictions for vehicles over 20'. See Reverse Side for Parking Areas where vehicles over 20' are allowed.)



Annual / Monthly / Weekly Long Term Vehicle Parking Passes

Long term means vehicles that are parked anywhere in the port facility (excluding leased lots) in excess of seven consecutive calendar days. Annual and monthly passes are available for vehicles under 20'. Monthly passes are available for vehicles over 20'. **All Vehicles over 20' are Restricted to the Seafarer's Memorial parking lot, 7 Day free trailer parking area, or Parking area at the junction of Homer Spit Rd/Outer Dock Rd across from Pier one campground.**

- Regular annual price: **\$150.00**
- Discounted annual price for vessel owners with reserved stall or pay transient annual moorage: **\$100.00**
- Monthly pass for vehicles less than 20': **\$70.00**
- Monthly pass for vehicles over 20': **\$85.00**
- Annual passes are valid January 1 to December 31 of the year being used. Monthly passes are 30 consecutive days.
- Weekly pass for vehicles less than 20': **\$25.00**
- Weekly pass for vehicles over 20': **\$35.00**
- Restricted long-term parking areas from May 1 to October 1 – See map for seasonal restricted areas.
- Passes are purchased at the Harbormaster's Office, or online at tocite.net/HomerAK
- Only ONE vehicle can be registered under each permit.

Seasonal Fee-Pay Vehicle Parking Lot Pass

During the summer, the paved ramp access parking areas become PAID parking lots. For individuals that frequently use these areas, a fee-pay parking pass, good for the season, can be purchased in lieu of paying \$10.00 each day.

- Pass price: **\$150.00**
- Passes are valid Memorial Day to Labor Day.
- Park in the Paid Parking Areas located in between ramps 1&2, in the paved areas at the top of Ramp 3 & 4 and the steel grid
- Only vehicles less than 20' allowed.
- Passes are purchased at the Harbormaster's Office, or online at tocite.net/HomerAK
- Only ONE vehicle can be registered under each permit.
- Monthly Fee-Pay Vehicle Parking Lot Pass also available for **\$100.00**
- No long term parking allowed in these parking areas May 1 through October 1.

Monthly Boat Trailer Parking (No Boats on Trailers)

- For boat trailers parked for more than 7 consecutive days
- \$7/per foot per month
- Passes are purchased at the Harbormaster's Office. A numbered plastic tag will be issued.
- Paid Boat Trailer parking located across Freight Dock Road from the Harbormaster's Office



Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

You are here: [DOT&PF](#) > [Office of the Commissioner](#) > [Newsroom](#) > Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 11, 2018

Press Release: 18-1040

Contact:

Shannon McCarthy, (907) 269-0448, shannon.mccarthy@alaska.gov

Meadow Bailey, (907) 451-2240, meadow.bailey@alaska.gov

DOT&PF campaign sign laws clarified

(JUNEAU, Alaska) – On Sept. 10, 2018, the Alaska Superior Court ordered the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to clarify how laws restricting outdoor advertising will be applied during the current campaign season to political signs within and outside of state highway rights of way.

The Alaska Superior Court directs:

- Unauthorized signs within state highway rights of way, including both commercial and political signs, remain illegal under AS 19.25.75-180. DOT&PF will continue to enforce this ban; any sign placed within a state highway right of way may be removed by DOT&PF crews without prior notice.
- Small, temporary, political campaign signs no larger than 4' x 8' may be displayed on private property adjacent to state highway rights of way by the owners or occupants of that property, provided they have not been paid to display the signs.
- DOT&PF will continue its current practice of not removing small, temporary, political campaign signs from private property outside highway rights of way.
- All signs that pose a safety concern to roadway users will be subject to removal by DOT&PF regardless of the content of the signs or whether they are located on private property.

In 1998, Alaskans overwhelmingly voted to keep the state free from [outdoor advertising](#), both within and along the state's public rights of way. Alaska [statutes](#) and [regulations](#) address unauthorized signs, including such signs displayed on parked vehicles and some signs on private property. Those statutes and regulations remain in full force and effect, except for small, temporary, political campaign signs permitted by the Court's order outside highway rights of way.

A copy of the order can be viewed [here](#).

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities oversees 237 airports, 9 ferries serving 35 communities along 3,500 marine miles, over 5,600 miles of highway and 839 public facilities throughout the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to "**Keep Alaska Moving** through service and infrastructure."

#

[Main Newsroom Page](#)



Homer Community Food Pantry

770 East End Road

Homer, AK 99603

907 235-1968

EIN 92-0153030

homerfoodpantry@gmail.com

City of Homer
City Council Members
491 E Pioneer Avenue
Homer, AK 99603

RE: Thank you for the City of Homer Grant funded through the Homer Foundation

Dear Mayor Castner and Council Members,

On behalf of the Homer Community Food Pantry board of directors, volunteers and clients, I'd like to extend our sincere appreciation for your generous grant funded through the Homer Foundation in the amount of \$4,170.

With ongoing inflation, we have seen a significant increase in the need in our community due to the higher cost of food, rent, and utilities. We are currently serving more than 160 families on a weekly basis, an increase of about 20% over last year. Clearly more families are struggling, which has placed stress on our available funds to meet the needs of our most vulnerable.

We are currently purchasing food at an average of \$12,000 per month with another \$3,000 - \$4,000 per month in emergency aid, mostly for rent and utilities. We look for every possible cost-saving measure available as we've noticed that inflation has also affected our donors ability to give as much as they have in years past.

Thank you for your unending support of the Food Pantry. Your award of \$4,170 will be instrumental in providing consistency for our clients as we assist them while they navigate through this difficult time.

To all of you, a heartwarming thanks from all of us at the Food Pantry! We are so fortunate to live in such a caring community.

Be well,

Cinda Martin
Homer Community Food Pantry Treasurer
(907) 399-4574
homerfoodpantry@gmail.com



The Pantry Door



Published monthly by the Homer Community Food Pantry – May, 2024

Scan to donate!

The City of Homer Provides for HCFP!

We have been awarded a check in the amount of \$4,170 for the Food Pantry from the City of Homer through the Homer Foundation. Our work of providing assistance to those in need would simply not happen without YOU!

Just a reminder...Homer Fish Processing has offered to process any fish you want to donate to the Homer Food Pantry for free! They are located at 1302 Ocean Dr. 907-235-1997. Just let them know it's for the Pantry!

Fish In, Out, On!

Sharon and Jerry Froeschle stopped by the food pantry this week with a large container of vacuum sealed halibut! They said they were cleaning out their freezer & preparing for another year of fish and decided to donate last year's fish. Halibut is such a treasured catch for the pantry!



A big THANKS to the Kenai Peninsula Food Bank!

Every week we purchase food at a greatly reduced price from the KPFB. This week we had a great haul of 600+ lbs of a variety of fish. We appreciate all that you do for the Homer Food Pantry!

Providing food and emergency assistance, 54 compassion, to those seeking our services.

770 East End Rd., Homer, Alaska 99603

907-235-1968 text or voice

homerfoodpantry@gmail.com

Thank You to USDA Local Food Assistance!



Kyra Harty is shown donating eggs from **Empire Homestead**

Kyra Harty, manager of **Alaska Food Hub**, informed us that Farmers Markets across the state have access to USDA Local Food purchase Assistance (LFPA) which allows managers to purchase local foods at full market price and donate to anti-hunger organizations. This is a win for our local farmers and those who need it most! We are thrilled to receive these farm fresh eggs, which are utilized by our cooks to prepare meals for the Community Free Fridge. Many vendors have their products available every Wednesday at the **Alaska Food Hub**, which operates out of Homer United Methodist Church. Check it out!

Senior Center Sandwich Club!



Sandy Christen said to me one day, "Have you ever seen the movie, **The Starfish Throwers**?" It's a beautiful documentary about altruism and things people have done to help feed people around the world. One of those things is a former teacher who makes totes of sandwiches and delivers them to the homeless in the wee hours of the night, every night. To make a long story short, out of that sprung her idea of the seniors at the Senior Center making sandwiches for our Community Free Fridge! (Pictured above are **Sharon Shealy**, **Sandy Christen** and **Mary Sanders**.) What a beautiful way to give back to our community! We welcome and give gratitude to **The Senior Sandwich Club**!

A special thanks to...

- ***Gary Porter** from **Bald Mountain Air Service** for his donations of cereal, cheese, hot dogs and buns.
- ***Mike Hiller** who has offered to help us out with some of our food container purchasing needs.
- *All of **YOU** who show up weekly in support of the pantry through your labor and/or donations. We are **nourished and blessed** through the generosity of those who are dedicated in so many ways to the **Homer Community Food Pantry**.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION

2024 Calendar

	AGENDA DEADLINE	MEETING	CITY COUNCIL MEETING FOR REPORT*	ANNUAL TOPICS/EVENTS
JANUARY	Wednesday 1/3 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 1/9 6:00 p.m.	Monday 1/22 6:00 p.m.	• City Budget Review/Develop Requests *may be n/a during non-budget years • Land Allocation Plan Review • KPEDD Industry Outlook Forum
FEBRUARY	Wednesday 2/7 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 2/13 6:00 p.m.	Monday 2/26 6:00 p.m.	• KPC Job Fair
MARCH	Wednesday 3/6 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 3/12 6:00 p.m.	Tuesday 3/25 6:00 p.m.	• Clerk Reappointment Notices Sent Out • Update from Public Works Director • KPEDD CEDS Review
APRIL	Wednesday 4/3 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 4/9 6:00 p.m.	Monday 4/22 6:00 p.m.	• Terms Expire April 1st • Advisory Body Training Worksession
MAY	Wednesday 5/8 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 5/14 6:00 p.m.	Tuesday 5/28 6:00 p.m.	• Annual Review of Commission's Bylaws • Election of EDC Officers
JUNE	Wednesday 6/5 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 6/11 6:00 p.m.	Monday 6/24 6:00 p.m.	• Comprehensive Plan Review
JULY	No Regular Meeting			
AUGUST	Wednesday 8/7 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 8/13 6:00 p.m.	Monday 8/26 6:00 p.m.	• Capital Improvement Plan Review • Update from Public Works Director
SEPTEMBER	Wednesday 9/4 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 9/10 6:00 p.m.	Monday 9/23 6:00 p.m.	• Workforce Development Speaker
OCTOBER	Wednesday 10/2 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 10/8 6:00 p.m.	Monday 10/14 6:00 p.m.	• Annual Review of EDC's Strategic Plan/Goals & BR&E
NOVEMBER	Wednesday 11/6 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday 11/12 6:00 p.m.	Monday 11/25 6:00 p.m.	• Chamber's Annual Presentation to EDC • Approve Meeting Schedule for Upcoming Year
DECEMBER	No Regular Meeting			

*The Commission's opportunity to give their report to City Council is scheduled for the Council's regular meeting following the Commission's regular meeting, under Agenda Item 8 – Announcements/ Presentations/ Borough Report/Commission Reports.



City of Homer

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Office of the City Clerk

491 East Pioneer Avenue

Homer, Alaska 99603

clerk@cityofhomer-ak.gov

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(f) 907-235-3143

Memorandum

Agenda Changes/Supplemental Packet

TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION
FROM: ZACH PETTIT, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I
DATE: JUNE 11, 2024
SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

10. B. Comprehensive Plan Surveys

Page 17

Homer Comprehensive Plan Rewrite – 2024 Business Survey

Pg 3 Supp.

Homer Visitor Survey: Summer 2024

Pg 7 Supp.



Homer Comprehensive Plan Rewrite

2024 Business Survey

Introduction:

- Thank you for taking the time to complete this important survey of businesses to help guide the future of Homer and to update the Homer Comprehensive Plan. The information, ideas, and concerns you share about doing business in the Greater Homer area will help shape future decisions about land use, transportation, public facilities and services, economic development, housing, and related infrastructure and programs in Homer over the next 20 years. Visit <https://homercompplanupdate.com/> for more information about the Comprehensive Plan Rewrite.
- The survey is open to business owners or managers in the Greater Homer area.
- It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the survey.

DEADLINE:

- The Homer Comprehensive Plan Rewrite Project Consultant Team will administer and summarize all results and all responses are anonymous.

Questions

1. How long has your business operated in the Greater Homer area?

- Less than year
- 1-5 years
- 6 -10 years
- 11-25 years
- More than 25 years

2. What months of the year to you operate? (Mark all that apply)

- a. Year round
- b. January
- c. February
- d. March
- e. April
- f. May
- g. June
- h. July
- i. August
- j. September

- k. October
- l. November
- m. December
- n. Other (please explain)

3. What is your average number of employees?

- Self-employed – I work for myself
- 1-5 employees
- 6 -10 employees
- 11-25 employees
- 26-50 employees
- 51 to 100 employees
- More than 100 employees

4. Does your number of employees fluctuate throughout the year?

- No, I maintain about the same number of employees year round
- Yes, I have a varying number of employees depending on the time of year.
- If yes, please explain. For example, “I hire about 5-8 additional employees in the summer months to serve an increased number of customers.”

5. How difficult is it to hire new employees?

- a. Not difficult at all
- b. Somewhat difficult
- c. Very difficult
- d. Not applicable – don’t have employees
- e. Other: Please explain

6. What is the biggest challenge to hiring and retaining employees?

- a. Lack of qualified applicants
- b. Can’t pay what prospective employees expect
- c. Inconsistent workload
- d. Seasonal issues
- e. Training
- f. Not applicable – don’t have employees
- g. Other: Please explain

7. What is your primary business sector? Please choose only one. *(Categories based on the classification categories from the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development)*

- **Educational and health services** (schools, colleges, technical and trade schools, educational support services; hospitals, medical offices, nursing and residential care, child day care services)
- **Leisure and hospitality** (arts, entertainment, accommodations, restaurants, bars and other food service establishments)
- **Government** (municipal, state, federal, Tribal organizations)
- **Natural resources and mining** (agriculture, fishing, hunting, mining)
- **Construction** (construction, specialty trade contractors)
- **Manufacturing** (food, apparel, textiles, wood products, fabricated products, electrical equipment or other manufactured products)
- **Wholesale trade** (service providers in areas of vehicle parts, commercial equipment, hardware, heating, plumbing, other wholesalers)
- **Retail trade** (most retail stores selling to individual customers)
- **Transportation and warehousing and utilities** (air transportation, water taxis, freight trucking, sightseeing transportation, warehousing and storage, and utilities)
- **Information** (publishers, broadcasters, telecommunications, data processing, web services)
- **Finance and insurance and real estate and rental** (securities, investments, insurance carriers, real estate agents and brokers offices, rental and leasing services)
- **Professional, scientific, administration, waste management** (legal services, accounting, scientific, design, and advertising services, office administrative services, waste collection, treatment, and disposal)
- **Other services** (repair and maintenance services, personal care services, drycleaning and laundry, member organizations that include religious, grantmaking, social advocacy and civic, social, business or professional organizations)

8. Please describe your customer base:

- Primarily serve area residents
- Primarily serve visitors and tourists
- Serve both visitors and residents about equally
- Don't know
- Other (please specify):

9. How would you describe the current business climate in the Greater Homer area?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent

10. Over the next year, the economic conditions in the Greater Homer area will:

- Get better
- Stay the same
- Get worse
- I don't know

11. Over the next year, I anticipate:

- Expanding my business by adding positions/jobs
- Maintaining my business by retaining the same number of positions/jobs
- Decreasing my business by reducing positions/jobs
- I don't know

12. How do you measure success within your industry/sector?

(open ended)

13. Please rate the following factors as “benefits” or “barriers” to doing business in Greater Homer. (Each item given a choice as a barrier, neither, benefit, don't know)

- Quality of life
- Access to recreational opportunities
- Local arts and cultural scene
- Quality and affordability of internet service
- Availability of business financing
- Cost of labor
- Availability of qualified employees
- Commercial real estate and land costs
- Quality of community infrastructure and public services
- Cost of energy
- Cost of health care
- Availability and quality of local workforce development programs
- Level of taxation
- Local or state government regulations
- Childcare availability
- Housing costs and/or availability
- Availability of marine transportation options
- Construction costs
- Cost of freight
- Business support services in the community

14. What three things do you need most to have a successful and thriving business?

– three short answer open-ended

15. What else would you like to share regarding owning and doing business in the Greater Homer area?

(open ended)

Homer Visitor Survey: Summer 2024

Thank you for visiting Homer! We are updating our community plan and want to learn about your trip so we can make Homer an even better place to visit.

Please take just five minutes to share about your Homer experience. Share your name and contact info to be entered to win [need to identify - a locally-made craft or treat from a Homer-based business? Ok to add Chamber logo?]



COMPLETE THIS HARD COPY

Drop boxes are located at:

(insert)

RESPOND ONLINE

Scan this code with your phone to go directly to the survey page or visit:

(insert)

About Your Trip

1. How did you arrive in Homer?

- ☐ By vehicle
- ☐ By cruise ship
- ☐ By commercial flight
- ☐ By ferry
- ☐ Other: _____

2. Why did you choose to visit Homer? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Friends and/or family live here
- ☐ Recommendation from family, friend or colleague
- ☐ Recommendation from professional travel source (e.g., magazine, website/mobile application, TV show)
- ☐ Festival or special event: _____
- ☐ Part of a larger tour package
- ☐ Here for work
- ☐ Other (please share): _____

3. What sources did you use to plan your trip to Homer? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Brochures
- ☐ City of Homer
- ☐ Homer Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center
- ☐ Facebook, Instagram or other social media
- ☐ Friends/family
- ☐ Information from previous visit(s)
- ☐ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or U.S.D.A. Forest Service resources (including Alaska Islands & Ocean Visitor Center)
- ☐ Magazine/newspaper/television
- ☐ Other travel guides (e.g., Lonely Planet, Fodor's, etc.)
- ☐ Websites/mobile applications
- ☐ Other (please share): _____

4. What did you do/ what are you planning to do on your visit? (select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Biking | ☐ Museums and historical attractions |
| ☐ Camping | ☐ Rafting |
| ☐ Conference, training, festival, gathering
(please indicate here: _____) | ☐ Shopping |
| ☐ Day cruise/whale watching | ☐ Sightseeing |
| ☐ Fishing, guided ____ unguided ____ | ☐ Visiting friends and relatives |
| ☐ Hunting, guided ____ unguided ____ | ☐ Walking and hiking |
| ☐ Kayaking | ☐ Wildlife viewing (including birdwatching) |
| | ☐ Other (please share): _____ |

5. How many days did you spend/are you planning to spend in Homer? _____ days

6. Where did you stay/are you staying? _____

Feedback on Your Visit

7. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with your Homer trip? (circle one)

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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8. How likely are you to return to Homer? (circle one)

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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9. What did you/do you like most about your trip to Homer?

10. What did you/do you like least about your trip to Homer?

11. What would improve your Homer experience?

12. How does Homer compare with other Alaska destinations in terms of value for the money of your trip? (circle one)

Much worse	Worse	About the same	Better	Much better	I don't know
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About You

13. Where do you live?

City: _____
State: _____
Country: _____

14. What is your age?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ 0-18 years old | ☐ 45-55 years old |
| ☐ 19-24 years old | ☐ 55-64 years old |
| ☐ 25-34 years old | ☐ 65 or older |
| ☐ 35-44 years old | |

Have other comments, suggestions or ideas?

15. Share your thoughts in the space below.

16. Contact Information (Optional)

If you would like to be eligible for a Homer-made gift, please enter your contact information. This information will only be used to contact gift winners – we will not be sending you anything or sharing your contact information with others. Your name will NOT be associated with your responses.

First and Last Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Want to learn more about Homer's community plan?

Check out our project website: <https://homercompplanupdate.com/>