ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION APRIL 10, 2018
491 E. PIONEER AVENUE TUESDAY, 6:00 P.M.
HOMER, ALASKA CITY HALL COWLES COUNCIL CHAMBERS

NOTICE OF MEETING
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE- 6:00 p.m.**
2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA** (3 minutes)
4. **RECONSIDERATION**
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
   A. Regular Meeting Minutes for March 22, 2018 **Page 3**

6. **VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS** (10 minutes)
7. **REPORTS** (5 minute each)
   A. Marine Trades Association Report
   B. Chamber Director Report
   C. Pioneer Avenue Task Force Report
   A. Staff Report

8. **PUBLIC HEARING**
9. **PENDING BUSINESS**
   A. Moving Forward with BR&E Action Items - **Page 9**
   Public-Private partnership to create a master plan for a more vibrant, connected central commercial district
   i. Wayfinding-Streetscape Project Proposal **Page 19**

10. **NEW BUSINESS**
11. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**
    A. City Manager's Report March 27th Meeting **Page 23**
    B. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings **Page 27**

12. **COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**(3 minutes)
13. **COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**
14. **COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER** *(If one is assigned)*
15. **COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**
16. **COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**
17. **ADJOURNMENT/ NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY MAY 8, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.** in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Ave, Homer, Alaska.

Session 18-02 a Special Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:00 p.m. on March 22, 2018 at the City Hall Upstairs Conference Room located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS GUSTAFSON, EVANS, MARKS, BROWN, AREVALO

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS RICHARDSON, SANSOM
COUNCILMEMBER SMITH
STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE GROVES (EXCUSED)

STAFF: SPECIAL PROJECTS AND COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR CARROLL
DEPUTY CITY CLERK SMITH

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marks requested a motion to approve the agenda.

GUSTAFSON/EVANS- SO MOVED

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 9,2018 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chair Marks requested a motion to approve the minutes.

GUSTAFSON/EVANS- SO MOVED

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS

A. Carol Swartz, Kachemak Bay Campus Director- Workforce Development

Carol Swartz, Kachemak Bay Campus Director, talked to the commission about Kenai Peninsula College/ Kachemak Bay Campus (KBC) and their role in workforce development and workforce maintenance. Ms. Swartz explained that KBC is one of two campuses under Kenai Peninsula College, which is a part of the University of Alaska school system. She gave a brief overview of the campus and its history. As the community has grown, the campus and the need for education has also grown. KBC's mission is to work with the city to provide accessible career, technical, and educational opportunities to expand the economy and quality of life in our community. Seven hundred and forty two individuals are taking traditional classes, with another one hundred and fifty four that are taking job training and community education classes. Over the years KBC has evolved to have three different types of classes/degrees. The first example of this would be the traditional credit classes/degrees such as the nursing program, the other allied health programs, the business programs, and the marine biology programs. Ms. Swartz explained that the nursing program has been a huge success in workplace development. South Peninsula Hospital, and all of the other doctor offices in Homer no longer have to bring in nurses from other towns or states to work for them, unless they are looking for a certain specialty. Another example is the non-credit/community education classes such as the maritime technology program which is training individuals to improve or start a business in a Maritime trade. She explained that maritime is one of the biggest fields in Homer, and KBC is meeting the need of the community by offering classes to continue to develop that field. The last example is online classes/degrees. Fifty-five percent of KBC's student body are online class takers. KBC also offers an adult basic Education and GED Program that helps people finish up high school for free through grants. The other resource KBC has available is a public meeting space. Ms. Swartz states that they are always renting out their empty rooms for public meetings.

Ms. Swartz also commented that housing for students is a big issue in Homer. The college has no dormitories, so they try to accommodate by helping students from out of town find reasonably priced rentals.

Chair Marks thanked Ms. Swartz and stated that workforce development is one of the long term items that came out of the BR&E Survey. She stated that the college has been working very hard to promote workforce development, but there seems to be a missing link between KBC and the public, according to the survey. Her thoughts are that the business owners and individuals who took the BR&E Survey were mostly small business owners rather than large businesses. Small businesses may not have the time or the knowledge that they can suggest classes or programs to be implemented at the college, unlike larger businesses like South Peninsula Hospital.

Commissioner Brown thanked Ms. Swartz for her presentation and noted that she also picked up on the fact that the college relies on information from the community to develop their programs. She also stated that the Economic Development Advisory Commission needs to facilitate KBC in getting that information to the community.

Commissioner Arevalo suggested that the commission touch base with the individuals who took the survey, about what kind of skills they feel are most needed in the community.

Ms. Swartz commented that next Friday, March 30th, 2018 is the Homer Job Fair at the college that has over 15 employers attending and hiring people on the spot.

REPORTS

A. Marine Trades Association Report

B. Chamber Director Report

C. Pioneer Avenue Task Force Report

Chair Marks reported on behalf of the Pioneer Avenue Task Force and stated that they will begin meeting again on the 28th of March at the Chamber. They are going to be looking into creating a masterplan for a more connected and vibrant central commercial district. They hope to have something to bring back to the commission at their April meeting. She stated that they will also be working on putting together the clean-up day for the Chamber, which will be the first weekend in May.

D. Staff Report

Jenny Carroll, Special Projects and Communication Coordinator, briefly reviewed her report and mentioned that Chair Marks developed an email that was sent out to all of the survey participants that provided an email address, thanking them and letting them know the commission may be contacting them in the future. She also mentioned that DOT put a hold on the Pioneer Avenue Shave and Pave Project a couple months ago and that she has tried to get someone from their office to come have a conversation with the commission since then, with no luck. The City Manager and several other Department Directors had a meeting with Homer's DOT Representative and more information from that meeting can be found in the upcoming City Manager Report.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

A. Moving Forward with BR&E Action Items
   i. Short Term Items
   ii. Long Term Items

The commission reviewed and discussed all of the items that came out of the survey. Chair Marks stated that one of the biggest topics that came up from the survey was the need for a large vessel haul out/barge mooring facility. She commended the Port & Harbor Commission for actively pushing for the large vessel haul out/ barge mooring facility to happen. She suggested the commission write a letter or memorandum to all of the commissions and boards informing them of the topics that came out of the survey and showing support for everything they have accomplished.

Chair Marks requested a motion to approve the letter of support be sent out to all of the Commissions.

EVANS/AREVALO- MOVED TO APPROVE THE LETTER OF SUPPORT AND THAT IT BE SENT OUT TO THE COMMISSIONS

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

The commission had a brief discussion about the core of engineer's feasibility study.

Ms. Carroll stated that Commissioner Richardson has been looking into workforce retention activities in other communities/ municipalities and will give a brief synopsis at the next meeting in April about what she's learned.

The commission had a brief discussion on how business friendly city code is in regards to signage for a business. Ms. Carroll suggested that they direct their concerns to the Homer Advisory Planning Commission and support them in developing more business friendly signage. Chair Marks asked the commission to read city code on business signage and bring back ideas or concerns that they could recommend to the Homer Advisory Planning Commission at the next meeting.

Chair Marks stated that one of the short term items that came out of the survey was the need for a master plan for a more vibrant and connected central business district. She spoke to the Planning Department about the potential of developing a master plan. When speaking with the Planning Department, Chair Marks discovered that many of the plans are already in place, but they are not in a format that can be used to apply or receive grants. Chair Marks stated that during her meeting, the Planning Department suggested that the commission ask for additional funding to hire a staff person to combine the "building blocks" already in place into one master plan. Chair Marks suggests that the Economic Development Advisory Commission work with the Planning Department and the Homer Advisory Planning Commission to find a way to find funding to create a master plan.

B. Follow-up with Business Participants

The commission discussed the possibility of making an advertisement to keep the survey participants engaged, but ultimately decided against it.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. City Manager's Report March 12th Meeting

Commissioner Gustafson made reference to the Pitman-Robertson funding in the City Managers Report. The commission talked about the process of the funding and everything it entailed.

B. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings

Chair Marks explained the process of reports at the City Council Meeting to New Commissioner Arevalo. Chair Marks will be at the April 9th City Council Meeting, but she will not be at the 23rd City Council Meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR
Chair Marks commented that she is so happy to have Commissioner Arevalo on the commission.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION
Commissioner Arevalo asked that everyone be patient with her during the learning process and that she is happy to be here.

ADJOURN
There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m. The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2017 at 6:00 p.m**. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

_____
HAYLEY SMITH, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved:_____

City of Homer
www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Planning
491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603
Planning@ci.homer.ak.us
(p) 907-235-3106
(f) 907-235-3118

To: Economic Development and Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commissions
From: Jennifer Carroll, Special Projects Coordinator
Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner
Date: April 5, 2018
Subject: Homer Wayfinding and Streetscape Project

Background Information

The City of Homer Economic Development Commission recently completed a Business Retention and Expansion Survey. The most mentioned idea to improve the business climate and quality of life was to have a pedestrian accessible town with trail connected business districts.

As a member of the Pioneer Avenue Revitalization Task Force, the EDC has been active for over two years with other businesses and non-profits to plant peonies, paint murals, and make the downtown core of the community more attractive. Based on the outcomes of the BR&E survey, and with support from the Pioneer Avenue Task Force, the next step the EDC would like to take is to request the City create a pedestrian wayfinding and streetscape plan. To do that, the EDC would like to request support from the City Council in the form of a mid-year budget amendment from the City Council to fund the project. Project costs are very rough at this time, but approximately $25,000- $40,000. The Task Force letter of support for the project will be provided at the meeting.

The outcome of the project would be a comprehensive plan to include a design theme for wayfinding signage, streetscape improvements, and a plant list for landscaping. These would be used by the City in making public improvements, and could be used by private land owners. (A common question received in Planning from commercial developers is “do you have a plant list?” i.e., “what grows well in your community?” Homer does not currently have this resource.)

Definitions

Wayfinding: Navigational systems that help pedestrians determine where they are and where they need to go to reach a destination. Traditionally consisting of signs, wayfinding systems can now also involve GPS systems, web connectivity, and mobile technology. Wayfinding systems can be designed and implemented formally by municipalities and business improvement districts, or informally by walking advocates.

Streetscape: The visual elements of a street, including the road, adjoining buildings, sidewalks, street furniture, trees and open spaces, etc, that combine to form the street's character.

For purposes of the Homer project, street scape is primarily referring to banners, benches, trash cans and landscaping, not the road itself or the sidewalks. Additionally, the signage theme could be modified for different parts of town. The Spit, Old Town and Pioneer Ave might each add their character to the signs, but there would be a color scheme, font and material that would tie them all together. The goal is not strict uniformity, but rather build on Homer's eclectic character while still having identifiable recognizable wayfinding for people.

Soldotna is a good example of the community planning for an attractive downtown. You may have noticed driving through Soldotna, that there is new signage being installed. This signage is part of a larger, comprehensive Downtown Improvement Plan. The plan includes different types of signage including details on color and font, landscaping plants, banners and more. Soldotna's plan is a larger project than Homer needs, as it included community branding and vehicle signage. The EDC is not suggesting that extensive a project; instead, this project would focus on pedestrian scale amenities and would build upon the community efforts already underway.

Requested Action: Discuss the project proposal. Request additional information as needed. When ready at a future meeting, make a recommendation on the project to the City Council.

Attachments

1. Draft Request for Proposals and Scope of work
2. Examples from the Soldotna Downtown Improvement Plan

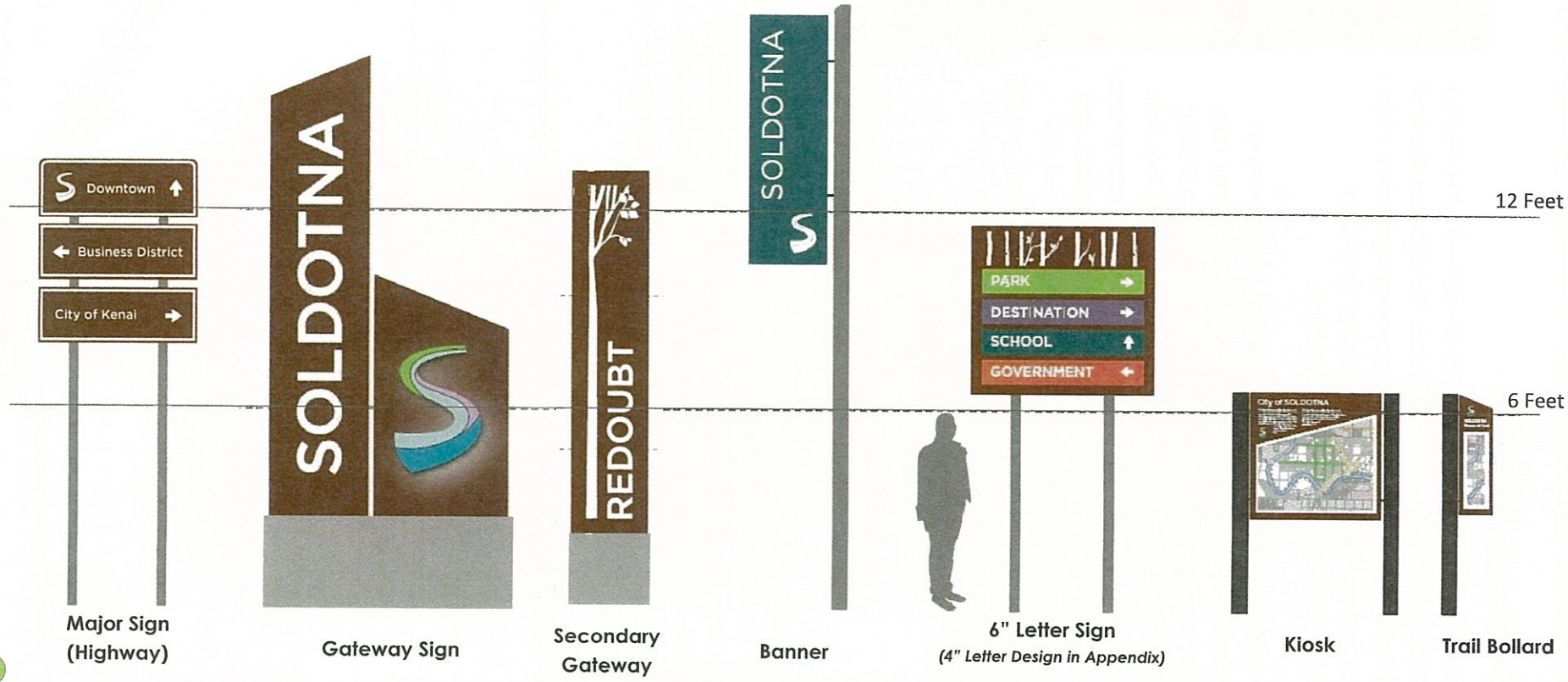
Signage

Existing signage in Soldotna includes one welcome sign (near Mackey Lake Road), older utility pole banners, and a variety of other wayfinding signs, mostly erected through AK DOT&PF. This plan recognizes the need to design and install a family of signs throughout the City that relate to each other through common elements such as color, font, and style/design.

While all signage will not be erected at any given time, the gradual replacement of signage at the end of its functional lifespan, as well as targeted investment over the next years will produce a cohesive and comprehensive approach to communicating with area residents as well as tourists. Gateway signs will announce the presence of Soldotna and create a dramatic instance of place-making and branding. Destination signage will steer the public towards City assets (such as campgrounds and parks) and commonly visited places (such as schools, City Hall, or the library). Pole banners will reinforce the message that Soldotna is a welcoming and beautiful community.

Additional signage is proposed which adds an additional layer of messaging and communication invite pedestrians out of their cars and into the transportation network as primary users. These include secondary gateways, which draw emphasis to key intersections around town; kiosks, which could include parks information or general City maps, and trail bollards, to mark the eventual greenways and trail system proposed to connect and traverse downtown Soldotna.

Further descriptions of each of these sign types is included on the following pages.



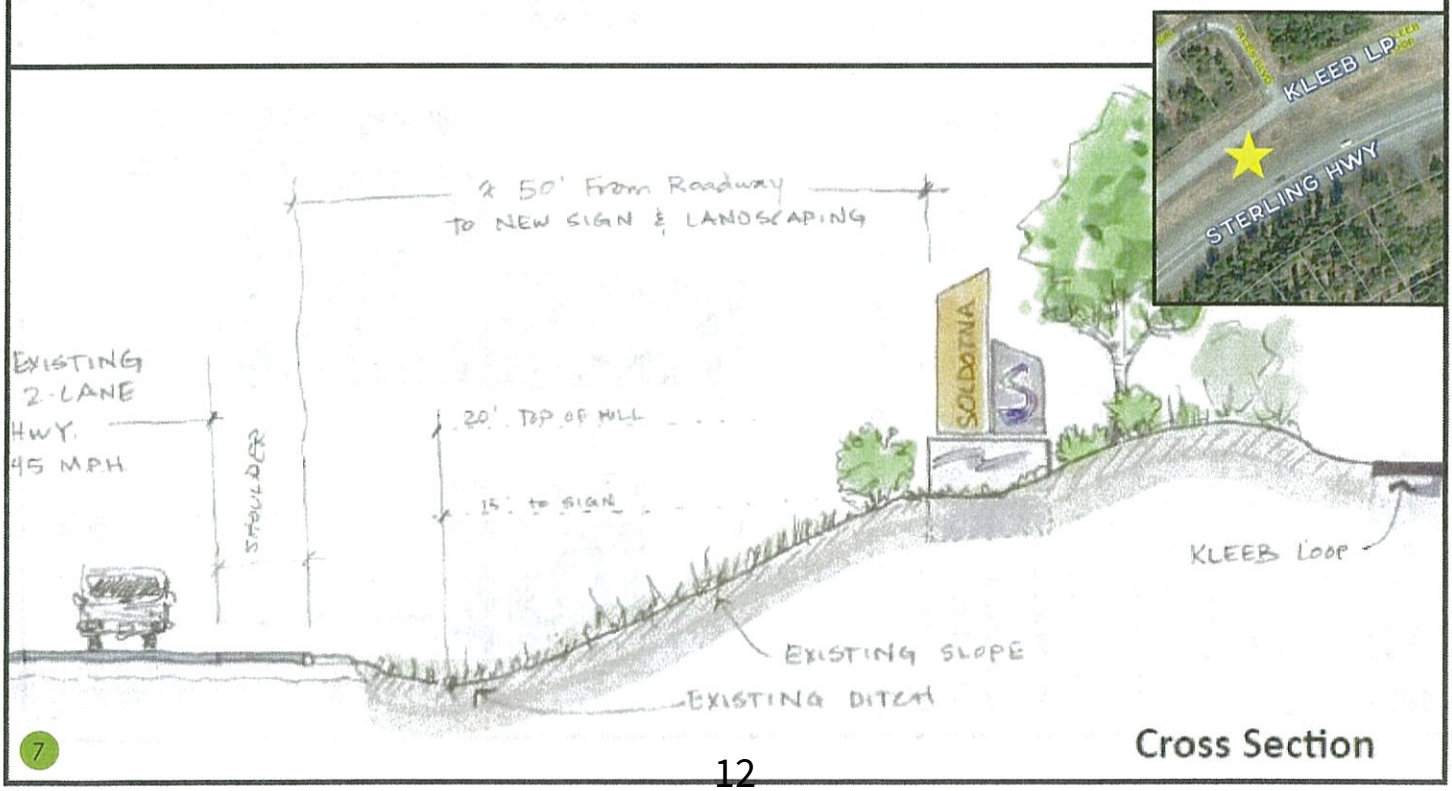
Gateway Signs

Soldotna has one existing gateway sign—on the Sterling Highway near Mackey Lake Road. This sign is at the end of its functional lifespan. New gateway signs are a critical component of branding, marketing, and visual enhancement in downtown Soldotna.

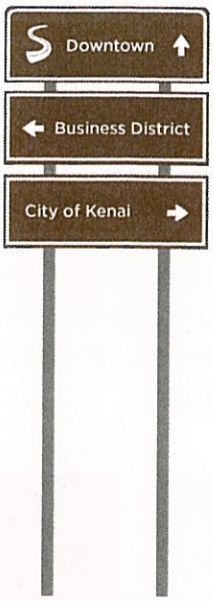
Throughout the visioning process with the Downtown Planning Team, the design and locations of three new gateway signs were defined. Two signs (on the Sterling Highway) are proposed for construction within the State of Alaska right-of-way, subject to review and approval by the Department of Transportation + Public Facilities and other agencies as appropriate. The third sign (on the Kenai Spur Highway) is proposed for construction on land owned by the Kenai Peninsula Borough, subject to their review and approval as appropriate.

Gateway Sign #1: Sterling Highway / Kleeb Loop

This monument sign will replace the existing welcome signage at Mackey Lake Road with a new sign between the Sterling Highway and Kleeb Loop, approximately across from the latter's intersection with Pace's Boulevard. The sign will alert travelers from Anchorage, Seward, Cooper Landing and Sterling of their arrival in downtown Soldotna. The proposed location is subject to DOT approval through an encroachment permit.



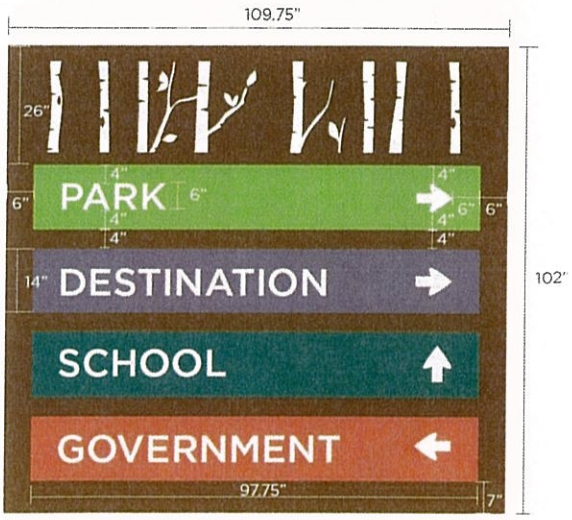
Wayfinding Signs



A suite of possible wayfinding signs has been designed for use in various locations. The design at the right can be used at locations to showcase regional destinations (the airport, directions to Kenai or Homer, Captain Cook State Park, etc.), while the signs below can be used for more local destinations such as schools, shopping, or parks.

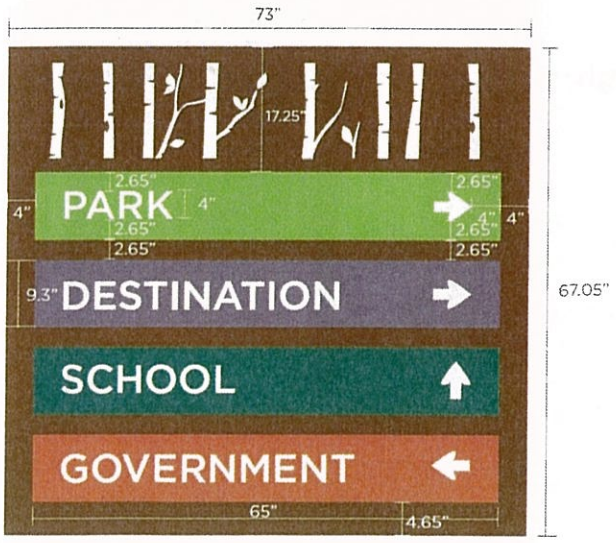
A map of suggested wayfinding sign locations is included on the following page. This map should be reviewed and finalized prior to design, funding and installation of wayfinding signage in the future. A rubric of local destinations is included on page twelve and should similarly be finalized at a future date to ensure accuracy at time of completion.

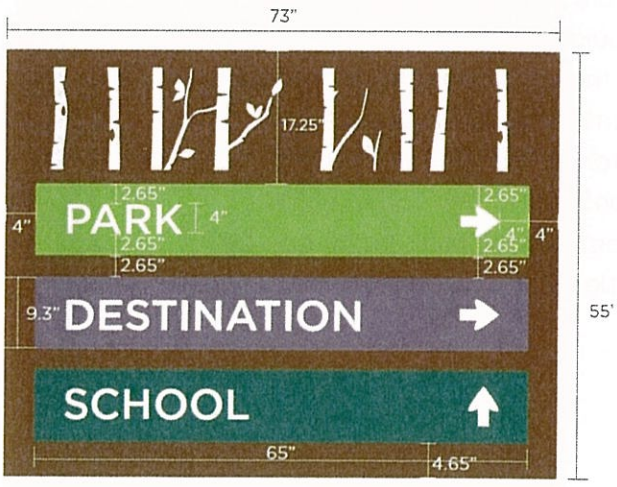
6 Inch Letter Signs (For Use at 35 MPH or Higher)



Font for 6" panel is Gotham Medium at 600 pt.

4 Inch Letter Signs (For Use at 30 MPH or Lower)





Font for 4" panel is Gotham Medium at 398.82 pt.

Utility Pole Banners

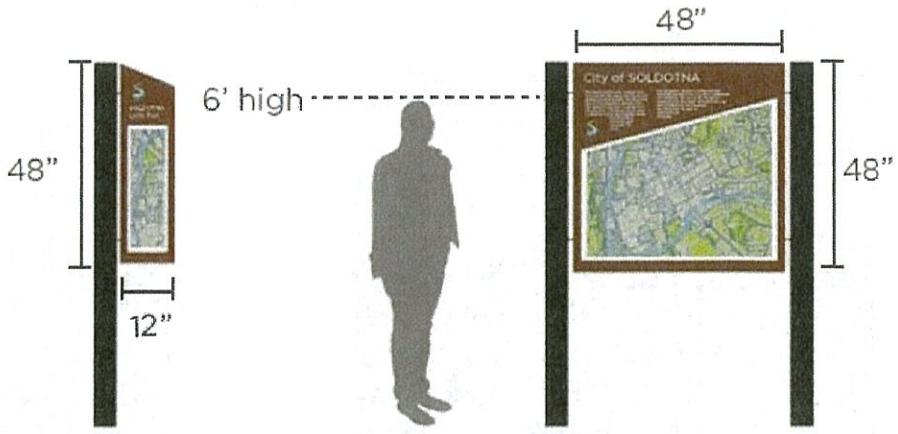
The existing banners erected on utility or light poles throughout downtown are aged and nearing the end of their functional lifespan. Additionally, the existing banners are non-standard industry sized, making piecemeal replacement due to damage more difficult and expensive. New banners will adopt the City's design standards and aesthetically enhance the area.

Final photo selection is ongoing for the banner project, but the general design has been set through this process: a full-length photo of a Soldotna-area activity (with people, if appropriate) or geographic feature. The watermark "S" logo, with "SOLDOTNA" across the center of the logo, will appear center-bottom of the banner photo.

In the future, secondary banners may be ordered and installed as desired by elected officials, administration, or the community. These banners could be installed on major streets (Redoubt, Marydale, Kobuk, Binkley, and Birch)

Other Signage Considerations

Future signage for other needs should coordinate with and carry on the common style and design elements seen in this section. For instance, trail bollards (left) or markers and pedestrian-scale informational kiosks (right) can be designed in a similar manner.



Appendix—Materials

Parklex: for use as exterior cover on civic buildings as appropriate (see existing buildings, such as the library) and on downtown signage as appropriate (monument signs).

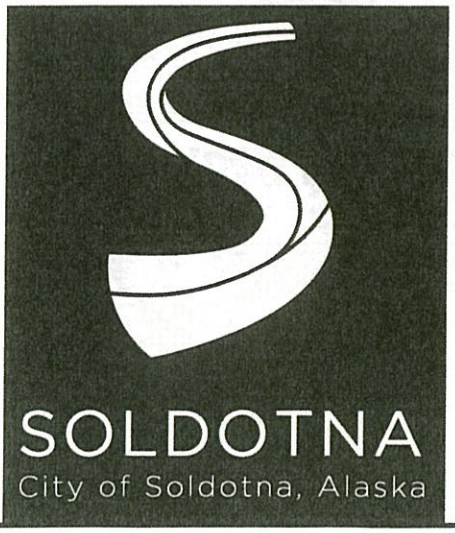
Metal: for use in signage where Parklex proves too susceptible to weather-related distress or too expensive for large quantity signage (e.g., wayfinding signs). Color should match the dark brown used on Parklex for signage.

Concrete or rock bases: for use on monument signage and other projects as a base material.

Appendix—Existing Branding

The City has created design language for future projects. This language has been incorporated into the recommendations in this project, including colors, fonts, and building materials. For the entire list of colors, and more instructions on the use of file types, logo variations, and sizes, please see the City of Soldotna Graphic Standards Manual.

Logo



SOLDOTNA
City of Soldotna, Alaska

Colors

Hex: 7AC143
Hex: BA9DCA
Hex: B5E1E1
Hex: 00A0AF

Fonts

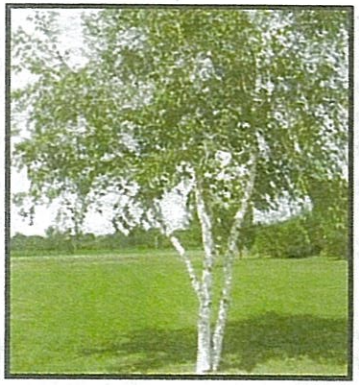
Gotham Bold
Gotham Book
Gotham Light

Century Gothic Bold
Century Gothic Regular

Garamond Regular

Appendix—Landscape planting suggestions

TREES	DESCRIPTION	HEIGHT X SPREAD	SPECIAL NEEDS	CAN TOLERATE	MOOSE RESISTANT?	OK UNDER POWERLINES?
White Paper Birch *Betula papyrifera*	Large native tree, white bark, medium-fast growing. Golden fall color.	50' x 20'	Needs root space		NO	NO
Quaking Aspen *Populus tremuloides*	Native deciduous tree. Turns gold in fall. Leaves tremble with a breeze. Can spread by roots - keep distance from foundations and pavement.	75' x 12'	Works best in groupings		Somewhat (fence when young)	NO
Amur Chokecherry *Prunus maackii*	Ornamental tree, rounded form. Rust-orange bark. Gold fall color. Non-significant flowers/fruits	20' x 20'	Pruning	Small areas	Mostly	YES
Canada Red Cherry *Prunus virginiana*	Medium sized tree with rounded form. Dark red leaves.	20' x 20'	Pruning	Small areas		YES
Siberian / European Larch *Larix siberica or Larix decidua*	Deciduous conifer. Soft needles that turn golden in the fall. Fast growing. Conical form.	60' x 20'			Somewhat (fence when young)	NO
White or Colorado Green Spruce *Picea glauca or Picea pungens*	Evergreen, medium-slow growing. Dark green foliage	60' x 12'	Best in Sun	Drought	YES	NO



White Paper Birch

Quaking Aspen

Amur Chokecherry (Fall color)

Larch (fall color)

Canada Red Cherry

Colorado Spruce

Appendix—Landscape planting suggestions

SHRUBS	DESCRIPTION	HEIGHT X SPREAD	SPECIAL NEEDS	CAN TOLERATE	MOOSE RESISTANT?	GOOD FOR HEDGE?
Lilac (Canadian) *Syringa prestoniae*	Large shrub. Flowers mid summer. Very fragrant.	12' x 10'	Full SUN for best appearance		YES	
False Spriea *Sorbaria sorbifolia*	Medium shrub, feathery white blossom. Winter interest (seed head). Red fall color.	5' x 5'	Grooming to stay attractive	Drought	YES	
Rugosa Roses *Rosa rugose*	Very hardy. Nice foliage. Several varieties of size and flower color. Spreads via roots	3'-5' tall spreading		Drought	YES	
Black Chokeberry 'Autumn Magic' *Aronia melanocarpa*	Dark green foliage. White flowers, black berries, red fall color	5' x 5'	Full SUN for best appearance	Part Shade	Somewhat	YES. 3-4 plants per 10 l.f.
Alpine Currant *Ribes alpinum*	Medium green foliage. Gold fall color.	4' x 4'		Sun or Shade	YES	YES 4-5 plants per 10 l.f.
Hedge Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster lucidus*	Dark green foliage. Red fall color if in full sun.	6' x 4'	Full SUN for best appearance	Drought	YES	YES 4-5 plants per 10 l.f.
American Cranberrybush *Viburnum trilobum*	Hardy shrub with lobed leaves. White flowers, red berries, deep red fall foliage.	6'-10' high x 4'-6' wide	Full SUN for best color		NO	YES

'Donald Wyman' Lilac (pink)

False Spirea (in bloom)

Black Chokeberry

Rugosa Rose

Alpine Currant

Alpine Currant (fall color)

Hedge Cotoneaster

Hedge Cotoneaster (fall color)

DRAFT

Homer Wayfinding and Streetscape Improvement Plan

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Purpose and Background

Purpose

The City of Homer Economic Development Commission (EDC) recently completed a Business Retention & Expansion Survey with the goal of identifying areas where the EDC can work to improve the local business climate. The most frequently mentioned idea to improve the business climate and quality of life was to have a pedestrian accessible town with trail connected business districts.

Downtown Homer and the Homer Spit have been areas of renewed public interest. On Pioneer Avenue, recent mural paintings and peony plantings have been supported by the Pioneer Revitalization citizens group. Old Town Homer is another area with an active business community that has promoted community place making. On the Homer Spit, the City has completed a paved trail around the harbor, built restrooms, and further invested in pedestrian infrastructure. Overall, many pieces of the community are coming together to create better pedestrian access, but Homer still lacks a wayfinding system so that the travelling public can easily navigate the community.

As part of an overall economic development effort, the EDC proposes soliciting professional consulting services from experienced firms for the development of a Wayfinding and Streetscape plan.

The City anticipates spending no more than $_____ to develop the plan, with a goal of project completion by_____.

The plan should provide cohesive and attractive information and amenities to assist the travelling public to navigate efficiently to key destinations within the City. The City plans to use the document to guide future City purchases of enhancements such as trash cans, benches, banners and wayfinding signage, to make landscaping decisions, and to fund and install wayfinding signage. Private businesses may choose to augment the City's efforts by utilizing the plant list, by purchasing coordinating trash cans, benches, etc., or by hosting a wayfinding location.

Project Area

The area covered by this plan includes Pioneer Avenue from _____X. The area includes local and state rights-of-way. While there will be a concentration on Pioneer Avenue, connections to and wayfinding between the Central Business District, Old Town and the Homer Spit should be evaluated and included.

Background Information

Provide info here on pedestrian patterns, summer trolley service, HART funding, Spit and old town improvements

Project Scope and Specifications

2.1 Scope

The Consultant selected to complete the Homer Wayfinding project is expected to conduct, at minimum, the following tasks (2.1.1-2.x). In the response to the RFP, the Consultant may expand on these tasks, provide detail on how they are to be accomplished, and/or suggest additional tasks as warranted to meet the stated project objectives.

2.1.1 Project Meetings

The Consultant will work with City staff to discuss project progress/direction, to acquire necessary materials already produced (e.g. mapping data), etc. Project meetings shall be established at the beginning and conclusion of the process, with additional meetings scheduled as necessary at the discretion of the City and/or Consultant. The Consultant and staff shall present the final Wayfinding Plan to the _____X Commission and the City Council, and attend any additional public meetings necessary, as determined by the Consultant and Project Coordinator.

2.1.2 Communications

2.1.3 Implementation Strategy

The Consultant shall develop an implementation strategy to enable City staff to carry out the results contained in the Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan in a manner that is fiscally and operationally logical.

2.1.4 Public Participation

The Consultant shall develop a program to:

1. Identify user groups and their specific wayfinding/streetscape needs;
2. Work with members of the public to build upon previous community work to refine and articulate a shared vision of streetscape and wayfinding improvements, through a process that is transparent and inclusive.

2.1.5 Wayfinding Plan

The consultant shall develop a comprehensive wayfinding plan to include the following elements:

1. Primary destinations warranting inclusion on directional signs;

DRAFT

2. Design and locate signage to direct pedestrians to local attractions, parks and recreational opportunities, keeping safety, maintenance costs and replacement costs in mind;
3. Guidelines for sign design;
4. Identify appropriate location and sign design for permanent gateway signage from the Sterling Highway onto Pioneer Avenue.
5. Design pole banners to utilize existing infrastructure on Pioneer Ave
6. Identify ways that wayfinding can be cohesive across the City while enhancing and reflecting the distinctive character of each economic district…

2.1.6 Streetscape Enhancements

The consultant shall develop the concept of high-quality streetscapes, including the following elements:

1. A plant list of salt and moose tolerant vegetation for flower beds along busy streets
2. Locate and design street furniture, such as pedestrian areas, refuse receptacles, amenities for bicyclists, flower baskets or bed, etc.
3. ….

DRAFT

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

TO: Mayor Zak and Homer City Council

FROM: Katie Koester, City Manager

DATE: March 21, 2018

SUBJECT: March 27 City Manager's Report

Project Updates from ADOT

Joselyn Biloon, a Planner with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities met with City Planner Abboud, Public Works Director Meyer, Harbormaster Hawkins and myself to update the City on several Homer area projects. The scope of work for the 2018 season includes intersection improvements at Main Street and the Sterling Highway and improvements at the Airport such as perimeter fencing, wind cone replacements and design of a storage building.

Repaving Lake Street - 2,500 linear feet of pavement from Pioneer Avenue to the Sterling Highway with sidewalks and drainage improvements, is scheduled for 2019 at the earliest. Postponed until 2019 is the Pioneer Avenue resurfacing project that includes drainage, signage, striping, ADA curb ramps and sidewalk improvements.

East and West Hill Road improvements are on the radar too. The projects may include resurfacing, signage, striping, drainage, curb ramps, guardrails, lighting and utility relocation.

State of the City address

The Homer Chamber of Commerce invited me to address their membership in a State of the City Address on March 13th. My comments started with reference to the steady nature of growth in Homer and the health of our diverse economy, especially when compared to other parts of Alaska. I went into detail regarding the end of the suspension of the Homer Accelerated Roads and Trails (HART) sales tax and what using those funds for road maintenance looks like for the 2019 budget. I also gave them an update on important capital projects for the City: the Police Station in the near term and the Large Vessel Harbor as a major long-term economic development project. The tenor of my presentation was generally upbeat and optimistic: the City and the Community of Homer have been proactive in addressing fiscal issues and creative in coming together to solve problems and meet the community's needs. I was rewarded for my time with a case of toilet paper; a humorous yet practical twist on the Homer Chamber of Commerce shop local campaign. I really appreciated the opportunity to present to the group and share how great the City is doing.

Preferred Alternative Selected for Cooper Landing Bypass Project

After much public process, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities selected Juneau Creek as the preferred alternative for the Cooper Landing Bypass project this month. The City of Homer signed a joint letter with Kenai Peninsula Mayors expressing concern with the G-South Alternative, which would have exposed a lot of traffic, and potential, for contamination, to the Kenai River. The Department will now collect further public involvement, after which one of the 4 alternative designs will be chosen. This project has been in the planning stages for over 30 years. Visit www.sterlinghighway.net for more information on the project and different designs.

City of Homer Road Miles Maintained

Council has requested information on the increase in road miles maintained over the years. I appreciate the opportunity to take a historical look at road maintenance. It is easy to absorb the impact of a few extra feet of road here and there; however it is important to acknowledge that all those feet add up and have an impact on the City's ability to provide services.

Below is information regarding road miles maintained from Public Works Director Meyer:

	Total Miles	# of Equipment Operators	Operators per Road Mile
Road Maintained 2001	27.14	4	6.8
Roads Maintained 2001 after Annexation	40.24	5	8.0
Roads added since 2006	6.56		
Roads Currently Maintained	46.8	4.5	10.4

Sales Tax Data

Data on taxable sales is in for 2017. Revenue is up just shy of 2% (or a little over $100,000) from 2017 budget, which is great news considering the 2017 budget took into account a steady increase in sales tax returns over the last few years. It is promising to see the trend continue. The attached chart details taxable sales by line of business and tells an interesting story about the economy of Homer. Not surprisingly, retail makes up almost half of the taxable sales in Homer. Right behind it are visitor services such as restaurant/bar, lodging, and guiding.

Fire Chief Kadel

I am pleased to announce that Assistant Fire Chief Terry Kadel has accepted a permanent position as Fire Chief with the Homer Volunteer Fire Department. As you know, Terry Kadel has been serving as Acting Fire Chief since Chief Robert Painter's retirement in January. Chief Kadel is a strong communicator, understands complex organizations and has the leadership skills to grow the department. I am confident Chief Kadel will provide clear direction for the amazing group of staff and volunteers that sign up to protect our homes and property and are there for us in an emergency. I am hoping to advertise the Assistant Fire Chief position as soon as possible so we can move quickly and have a complete leadership team at the Homer Volunteer Fire Department. A ceremony officially swearing Chief Kadel in as Fire Chief is scheduled for the April 9th meeting.

The SAFER grant will provide assistance for funding HVFD staff through 2018, though the City will apply for the additional 6 months missed on the front end of the grant for the first half of 2019. I will be requesting funding for the Assistant Chief position in the 2019 budget with the hopes of being reimbursed for 6 months of salary through SAFER.

Enc:

City of Homer Taxable Sales by Line of Business
Letter of Support for Kachemak Bay Family Planning Clinic

2018 HOMER CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS
ADVISORY COMMISSION/ BOARD ATTENDANCE

Commissions are invited to report to the City Council at the Council's regular meetings under Item 8. Announcements/Presentations/Borough Report/Commission Reports. This is the Commission's opportunity to give Council a brief update on their work. Generally the Commissioner who will be reporting will attend one of the two meetings for the month they are scheduled to attend.

The following Meeting Dates for City Council for 2018 is as follows:

January 8, 22 _____

February 12, 26 _____

March 12, 27 _____

April 9, 23 _____

May 14, 29 _____

June 11, 25 _____

July 23 _____

August 13, 27 _____

September 10, 24 _____

October 8, 22 _____

November 26 _____

December 10 _____