



Agenda

City Council Worksession

Monday, January 26, 2026 at 4:00 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: 965 8631 4135 Password: 792566

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

CALL TO ORDER, 4:00 P.M.

AGENDA APPROVAL (Only those matters on the noticed agenda may be considered, pursuant to City Council's Operating Manual, pg. 6)

DISCUSSION TOPIC(S)

- a. Title 21 Zoning Code Process

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minutes)

ADJOURNMENT NO LATER THAN 4:50 P.M.

Next Regular Meeting is **Monday, February 9, at 6 p.m.**, Special Meeting at 3:15 p.m. Worksession at 4:00 p.m., Committee of the whole at 5:00 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

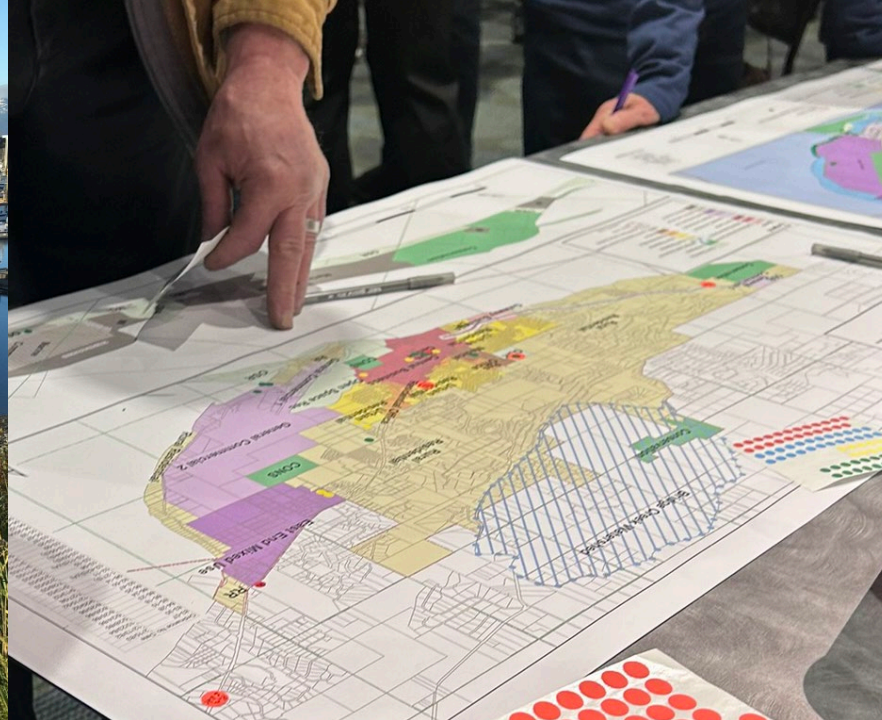


MEMORANDUM

Memorandum 26-020, Providing an Update to City Council on the Process for the Title 21 Zoning Code Re-write Project.

Item Type: Informational Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor Lord and Homer City Council
Date: January 26, 2026
From: Ryan Foster, City Planner
Through: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager

Our project consultants for the Title 21 Zoning Code Re-Write—Shelly Wade from Agnew Beck and Erin Perdu from Stantec—would like to meet with the City Council to discuss next steps. They plan to review the launch of the Public Review Draft, the 45-day public comment period and comment tracking process, and the upcoming public hearings with the Planning Commission and City Council.



Title 21 Update

City Council Work Session: Timeline and Process Update

January 26, 2026

Facilitated by Project Team Member: Shelly Wade, Agnew::Beck Consulting

Objectives for This Work Session

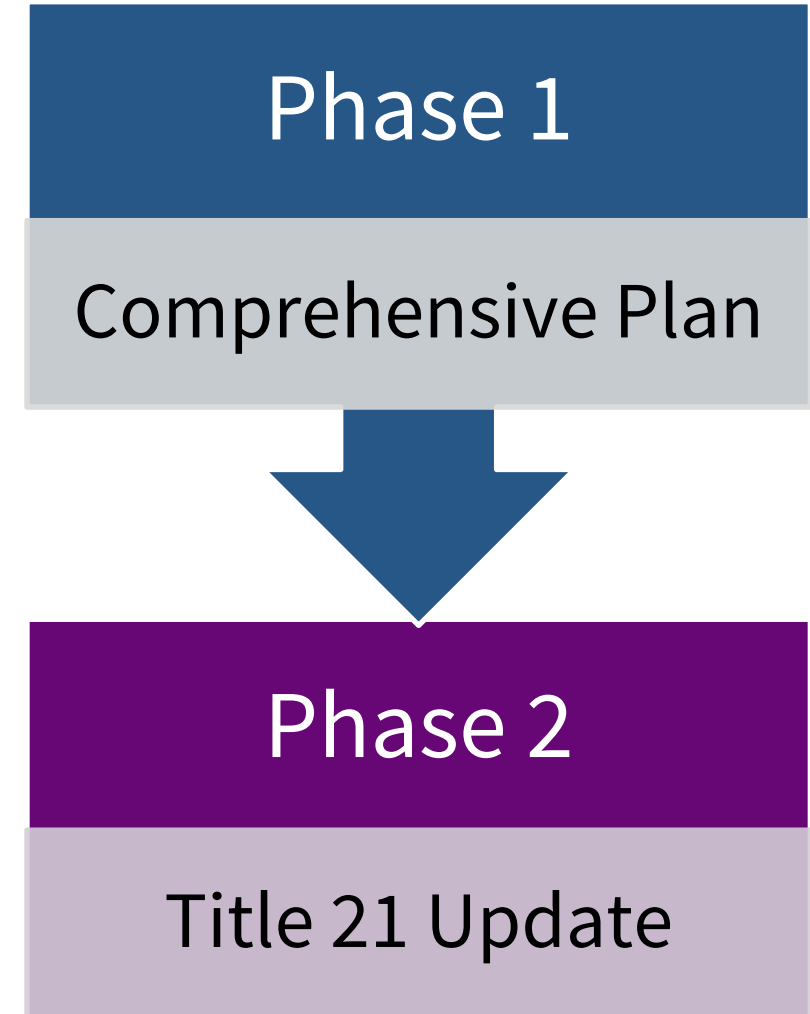
- Review project purpose, timeline, and process.
- Confirm next steps, including timeline for public review draft release of the draft code.
- Share some of the key themes and topics under discussion.



Welcome and Project Purpose

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- The Comprehensive Plan provides:
 - **A basis for regulatory action.** Forms the groundwork for a statutory basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.
 - **A long-term guide.** Assists in the evaluation of public and private proposals that affect the community's physical, social, economic, and environmental characteristics.
 - **A tool for decision-making.** The Plan guides the Planning Commission and City Council in deliberations on zoning, subdivisions, capital improvements, and other matters relating to land use and development.



What is Zoning?

Zoning code is local law governing how land is used or developed, where and how buildings are sited, and other rules related to how a property functions. **The “teeth” of development regulation.**

Homer Zoning Code is known as Title 21.

Phase 1

Comprehensive Plan

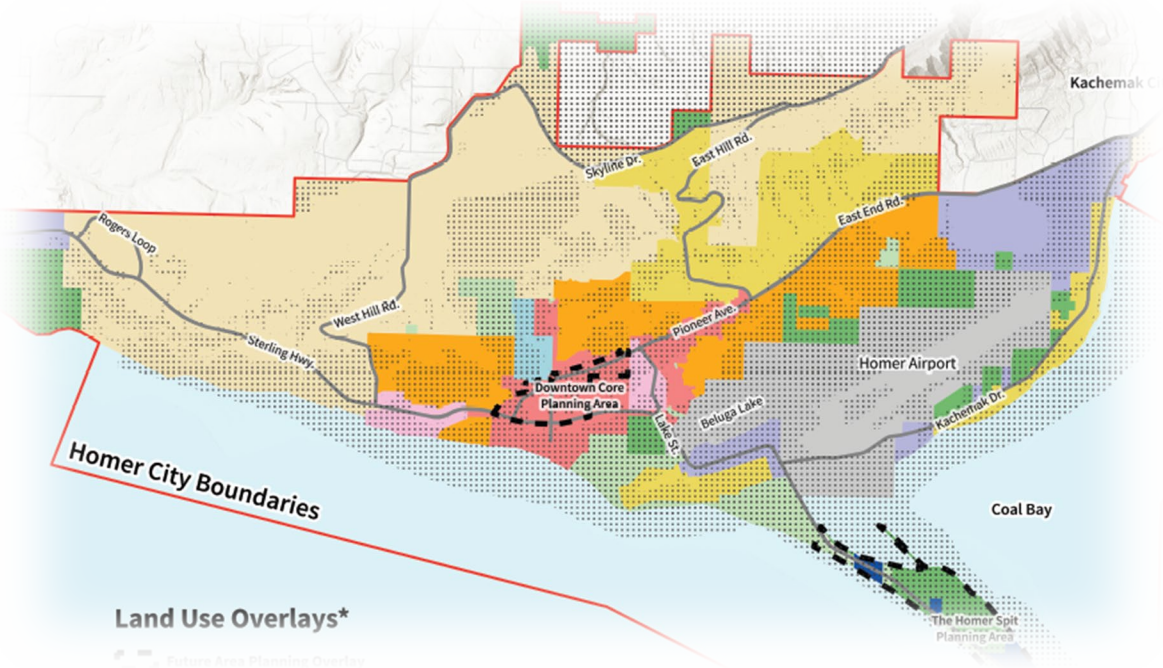


Phase 2

Title 21 Update

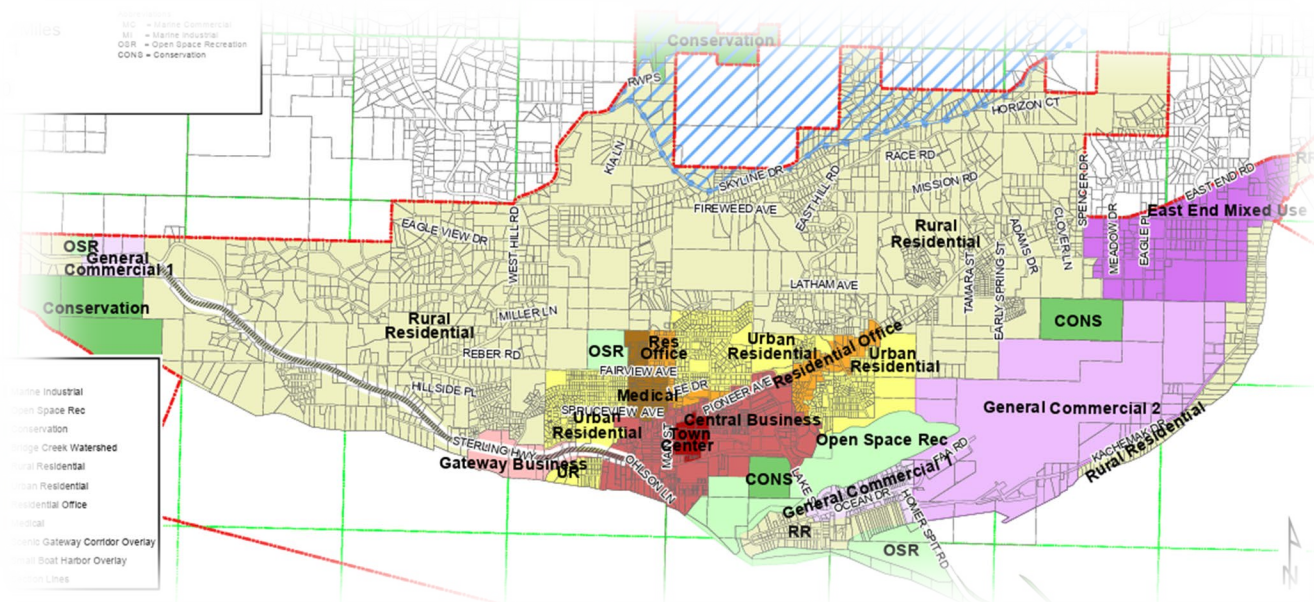
How does the Comprehensive Plan Relate to Zoning?

Future Land Use Map



Provides broad, long-range **guidance** for the general types and patterns of development envisioned across the community.

Zoning Map

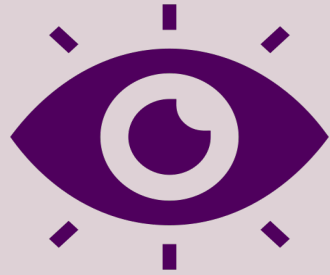


Regulates (it's law!) land use at the parcel level; defines what can be built and how land can be used.

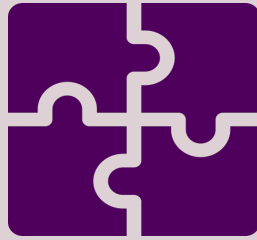
Title 21 Update: Code Revision Goals



Streamline development processes and increase predictability



Increase code clarity and flexibility



Better align the code with community plans



Consider natural hazards and preserve natural features



Simplify, reorganize, and add visuals to make the code more user friendly

Timeline and Process

January – March 2025


- Compile background and gather initial feedback.
- Review existing code and identify updates.

Other Homer Plans (e.g., Transportation Plan, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Community Design Manual)

Analysis of City of Homer Land Use Applications and Trends

Technical Code Audit

Small Group Discussions with Homer Groups that work with the Code (Builders, Developers, Guiding Growth/ Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships, Business Owners, Realtors)

 *Monthly Meetings with **Planning Commission** on Code Topics and Potential Changes*

April – November 2025

- Staff, legal team, PC review of draft code.
- Gather stakeholder and public input on potential changes.



2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan

Community Input from Open House (in person & virtual)

Planning & Zoning Best Practices

Input from City Staff (ongoing)



*One-on-one interviews with **Planning Commission** and **City Council***

November 2025 – Spring 2026

- Conduct Planning Commission work sessions on key topics.
- Refine draft code for public review.



*Input from **Planning Commission** via Work Sessions: Housing and District Changes, Development Process, and Environmental Features*

Public Comments



*One-on-one interviews with **City Council***



Planning Commission



City Council

Title 21 Inputs to Date

City Council Participation

- ◆ One-on-one interviews in April 2025
- ◆ City Council progress reports (on website)
- ◆ (Proposed) second round of one-on-one interviews during Public Comment Period

City Council Progress Reports

- November 2025 Progress Report
- September 2025 Progress Report
- August 2025 Progress Report
- July 2025 Progress Report
- June 2025 Progress Report
- April 2025 Progress Report

E-Newsletters

- January 2026
- December 2025
- October 2025

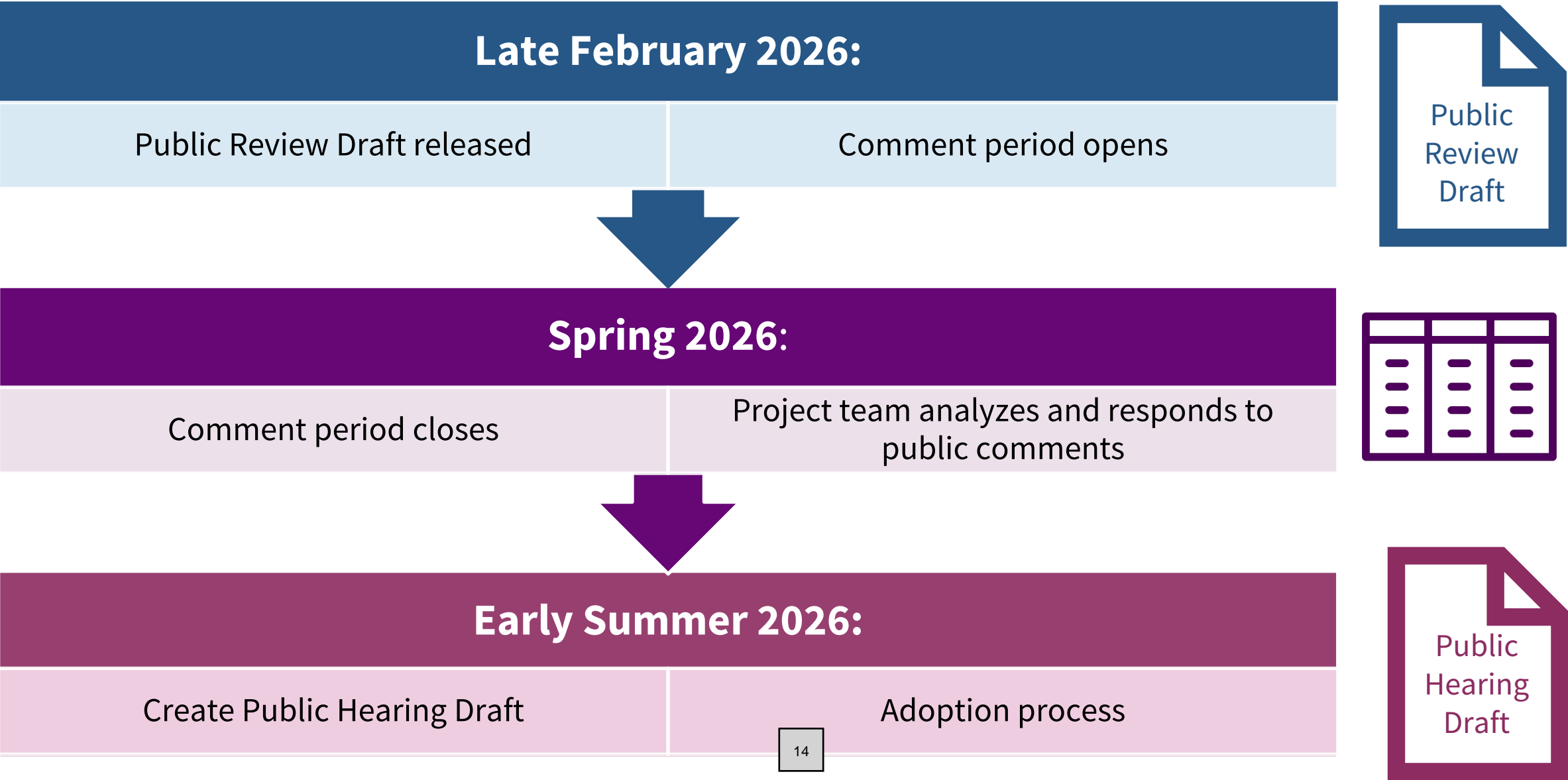
How has the Timeline Evolved?

- Previous timelines anticipated the Public Review Draft of the code would be released in late 2025.
- Timeline has been adjusted to ensure time for:
 - Virtual Open House feedback.
 - Four additional work sessions with the Planning Commission.
 - One-on-one interviews with Planning Commissioners.And to account for some delays due to meeting cancellations.
- Public Review Draft release of the draft code is tentatively set for late February.
 - This could shift if there are still areas of uncertainty we are working through.



We heard you: we don't want to rush this process.

Next Steps



Next Steps – the Details

Late February 2026: Release Public Review Draft

- Release and promote the **Public Review Draft** of the code.
- Accept public comments on the draft code.
- Meet with the City’s legal team to review the draft code.
- Hold one-on-one conversations with Planning Commissioners and City Council Members.



Spring 2026: Categorize, Analyze, and Respond to Public Comments

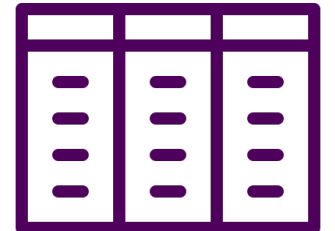
Early Summer 2026: Create Public Hearing Draft and Adoption Process

Next Steps – the Details

Late February 2026: Release Public Review Draft

Spring 2026: Categorize, Analyze, and Respond to Public Comments

- Compile all comments into a comment tracker.
- Prepare summary of comments and identify proposed revisions; share and discuss with Planning Commission.
- Share response to comments with the public.



Early Summer 2026: Create Public Hearing Draft and Adoption Process

Next Steps – the Details

Late February 2026: Release Public Review Draft

Spring 2026: Categorize, Analyze, and Respond to Public Comments

Early Summer 2026: Create Public Hearing Draft and Adoption Process

- Conduct Joint Work Session (Planning Commission & City Council) for sharing and discussing proposed Public Hearing Draft of the updated code.
- Create Public Hearing Draft and begin adoption process with Planning Commission and City Council.
- Invite public comment and testimony.
- City Council amendments to City Code must be referred to and considered by the Planning Commission. [Ord. 16-57 § 2, 2017; Ord. 10-58, 2011].



Process for Public Review of Draft Code

Companion to the Draft Code: “How to Navigate the Code.” *Example from Valdez Zoning Revision Process*

How to Read the Draft Code

Table of Contents

Description	
17.01 General Provisions	Establishes the purpose of Title 17, how it was developed, and provides for emergency declarations
17.02 Definitions	Provides a list of definitions
17.04 Administration & Enforcement	Describes the zoning commission review process
17.06 Zoning Districts	Designates the allowed uses for each zoning district
17.08 Specific Use Standards	Assigns additional standards for specific uses beyond general standards
17.09 Planned Unit Developments	Provides a process for large site developments
17.13 Site Development Standards	Specifies the standards for site development
17.20 Nonconforming Situations	Defines a process for nonconforming situations

City of Valdez: Title 17 Revision | Guide to the New Draft Code

Summary of Major Changes

Approval Process

- Adds a review matrix (17.04.030a)
- Adds clear submittal requirements for each application type (17.04)
- Provides details for specific applications, such as code amendments, lot modifications, conditional uses, and more (17.04)

City of Valdez: Title 17 Revision | Guide to the New Draft Code

Revisions

- Consolidate (see SL)
- Create groupings
- Include process types (17.04)
- Adds details (17.06)

Summary of Major Changes



Housing

- Allows more housing types in more districts
- Permits worker housing as conditional in commercial and industrial districts



17.04.139
(B)(7)(c) & (B)(c)

- Allows mobile and manufactured homes anywhere detached housing is allowed (See Table)
- Establishes permit requirements for short-term rentals to include zoning clearance review, business license submittal, and caretaker/owner registration (17.08030J)
- Bases the number of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) per lot, on lot size (starting at 8,000 sf) (17.08.030A(b))
- Specifies that RVs are not considered housing units relevant to ADU standards (17.08.030A)

City of Valdez: Title 17 Revision | Guide to the New Draft Code | October 2023

How to Comment

- ✓ Does the draft code do a good job of reflecting project goals?
- ✓ Are you someone who will need to reference the code in the future?
- ✓ Do you have questions about the process?
- ✓ We want to know!



Use our **comment form** to provide feedback before November 3.



Provide **testimony** at upcoming P&Z and Council meetings during the ordinance public hearings. Dates TBD in December and January.



Use phone or email to contact us directly. **Email comments to** zoning@valdezak.gov



Visit the **project website** - zoningvaldez.com - to find updates, comment form, survey, and more!

There will be multiple opportunities to provide feedback over the next couple of months, and we hope you will.


City of Valdez: Title 17 Revision | Guide to the New Draft Code | October 2023

Promoting the Draft Code


- Posted to project and City websites.
- Shared via City's Facebook page.
- Announced via e-blast to project distribution list (over 300 contacts).
- Announced in newspaper.
- Flyer in City Council, Commission, and Boards/Committee packets.



A comment form will be available to guide the public in providing input.



Homer Title 21 Update



Did you miss the November Title 21 Open House?

Visit the
Virtual Open House

to share your comments, questions, and levels of support for different emerging changes to Title 21.

Open through January 16, 2026.

HomerT21CodeUpdate.com

Visit the website to:
View the Open House results | See the project timeline | Learn about other opportunities to contribute

Example Facebook promotion image for the Virtual Open House

Key Themes

Reminder: What Does Zoning Include?

Districts

Where types of uses should be allowed or excluded.



Residential districts



Commercial districts



Industrial districts



Marine districts



Mixed use districts

Uses

Activities or structures allowed in each district.



Residential



Commercial



Industrial



Park

Other standards



Lot dimensions and setbacks: how close you can build to the property line



Use standards: limited hours of operation, disposal of waste, etc.



Design standards: requirements for appearance or architectural features.

Key Themes of Proposed Code Changes

Featured at Open House and Planning Commission Work Session Discussions. See website for details!

Consolidating and/or
Creating New Zoning
Districts

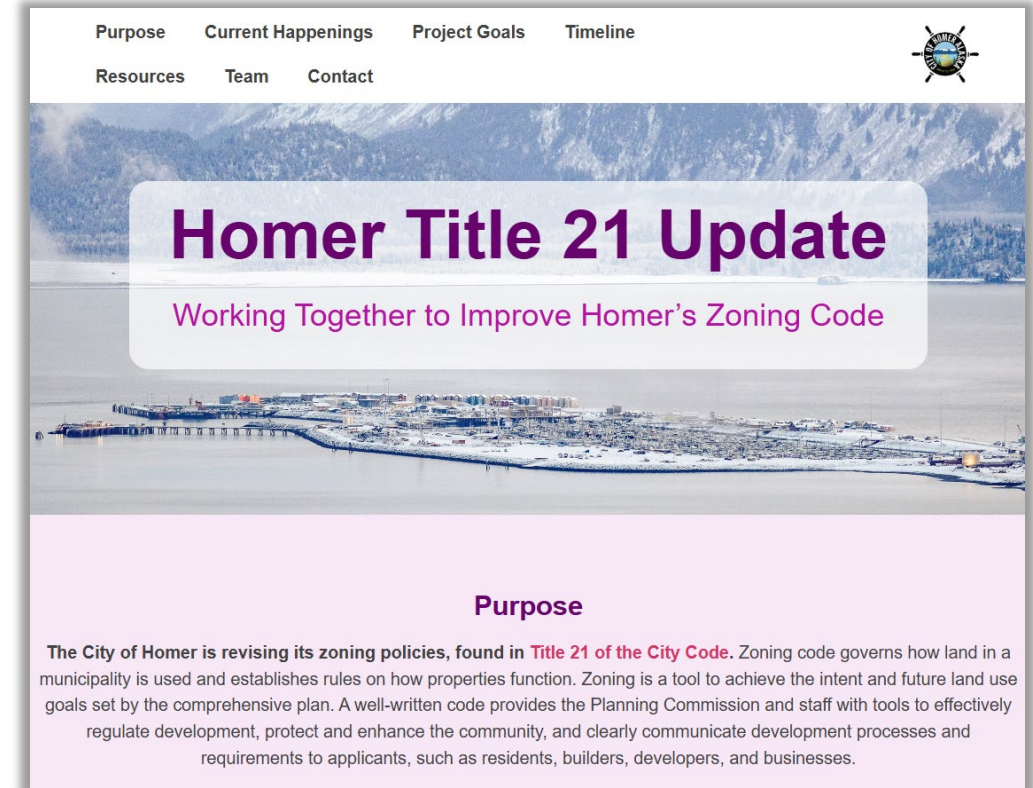
Facilitate More Housing
in More Places

Simplify the
Development Process

Address Natural Hazards
and Preserve Natural
Features (Wetlands,
Steep Slopes)

Visit the Project Website for More

- Materials and Summary from the **Community Open House**.
- **Project Documents** and links to **Meeting Materials** from conversations with the Planning Commission (11), City Staff (1), Port & Harbor Advisory Commission (1).
- Spring **Stakeholder Engagement** summary.
- Copies of **E-Newsletters** and City Council **Progress Reports**.
- Link to a **Virtual Comment Card** for sharing comments.
- And more!



Homert21CodeUpdate.com

Thank you! Questions, Comments?

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