



Agenda

Economic Development Advisory Commission Regular Meeting

Tuesday, April 09, 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 Minutes for Regular Meeting on March 12, 2024

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS (10 minute time limit)

- A. Derotha Ferarro, South Peninsula Hospital

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
- F. Guiding Homer's Growth Group
- G. HERC Update

H. Planning Updates

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

[A.](#) Business License

Memorandum from Community Development Director as backup

[B.](#) Comprehensive Plan

NEW BUSINESS

[A.](#) Alaska Small Business Development Center Small Business Advisory Funding

[B.](#) Land Allocation Plan

Memorandum from Community Development Director as backup

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

[A.](#) City Manager's Report

[B.](#) City of Homer Newsletter

[C.](#) EDC Strategic Plan 2024-2025

[D.](#) EDC Meeting Calendar

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minute time limit)

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

ADJOURNMENT

Next Regular Meeting is **Tuesday, May 14, 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 24-03 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:02 p.m. on March 12, 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, HASCHE, KIM & PITZMAN

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER BROWN & STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PEARSON

STAFF: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR ENGBRETSEN & DEPUTY CITY CLERK PETTIT

AGENDA APPROVAL

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

AREVALO/KIM 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

Scott Adams, city resident, thanked Commissioner Pitzman for the information that he included in the packet regarding the pricing of housing in Homer and Alaska in general. He continued, turning his focus to tax assessments for people that live within city limits versus tax assessments for those who do not. He highlighted an example from his own experience, stating that it doesn't sit well with him when he can see his neighbors across the street that have the same view, the same services of utilities, paved roads, and they're getting a better deal on their tax assessment due to the fact that they aren't inside city limits. He reasoned that the higher taxation for Homer residents, when compared to Kenai and Soldotna, may be due to the fact that residents of Homer get a view. His closing thought was that the properties in Homer are assessed in a fashion that drives up the cost of living in Homer.

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Unapproved Minutes for the Regular Meeting on February 13, 2024

KIM/HASCHE MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 13, 2024.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. EDC Staff Report

Community Development Director Engebretsen stated that she has been in contact with the Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of scheduling an annual work session with them for the last week of April. She added that there is no set topic as of yet, but business licenses among other topics will be suitable for discussion at that point. Ms. Engebretsen noted that the EDC has previously discussed participating in the comprehensive plan work that's taking place and suggested the idea of a mixer or a luncheon to be held at the Chamber of Commerce in late August or early September. Lastly, she briefly spoke about the board retreat that she attended at the Chamber of Commerce.

B. Chamber Director Report

C. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

D. Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Report

E. Port Expansion

Ms. Engebretsen informed the group that there is money in the President's budget for continuation of the port expansion study. Mayor Castner added that whatever money the City spends this summer on doing any evaluation will be reimbursable right up to the end of the project. Commissioner Arevalo inquired about how the reimbursement would work. Mayor Castner stated that the money spent would be credited to the entire project. It's being called a 'reimbursement,' but he added that it's what the administration refers to as 'in kind work,' where there's actually not a check made out to the United States Army Corps of Engineers, but rather the City is credited for the work that it's doing.

F. Guiding Homer's Growth Group

Chair Marks noted that she and Commissioner Kim attended the economic vitality chapter of the 2018 comprehensive plan. Mr. Kim added that the discussions are lively and that it's going well. He claimed there were a lot of shifts in paradigm about how things used to be and how best to move forward from here in terms of economic vitality.

G. HERC Update

Ms. Engebretsen stated that the City applied for State Department of Environmental Conservation funding and Brownfield funding for the HERC building. The City expects to hear back from the EPA in the next four months or so regarding the Brownfield funding. She added that the State has a funding stream where once they accept your project, they will work with you for years to secure your funding. She concluded her update by stating that it would be great if the City receives funding for either or both of these.

H. Planning Updates

Commissioner Kim shared that the Comprehensive Steering Plan Committee met last week to work on the plan to make the comprehensive plan as listed out by Agnew::Beck. He added that the firm was very receptive to the Committee's comments and changes. He noted that the open house is at the end of the month for the comprehensive plan, in addition to a website dedicated to the plan that is up and running. He finished his update by informing the Commission that Agnew::Beck will be in town the last week of March conducting public visitations.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

- A. Housing
Memorandum from Economic Development Manager as backup

Commissioner Pitzman delivered a presentation comparing the value of real estate in Homer versus the rest of Alaska. He disputed a claim from a previous EDC meeting earlier in the year where it was said that Homer has affordable housing, citing that the report was reliant on census data, which he argued provides inaccurate figures based on homeowner estimates rather than actual sales data from the MLS. He demonstrated that the average and median sold prices of homes in Homer for 2022 and 2023 surpass the reported census figures, indicating Homer's higher cost of housing when compared to vast majority of the state. Additionally, Mr. Pitzman suggested that Homer is among the less affordable areas in Alaska, especially when compared to Juneau and the rest of Southeast Alaska where limited space for new construction influences the prices.

Mr. Pitzman continued, highlighting the low inventory of real estate in Homer that tends to hover around 40 single-family units, a significant number of which are either highly-priced or in poor condition. He explained that for 14 straight years builders have been building below the previous 52-year average. That statistic compounded with low interest rates have led to a reluctance among homeowners to sell and move. Mr. Pitzman said that there's no easy fix for the problem, and that it will take time to resolve the issue despite efforts by municipalities across the country.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. City Business License
Memorandum from Community Development Director as backup

Community Development Director Engebretsen shared with the Commission that the idea of a city business license has been in the works for quite some time, preceding the short-term rental ordinance that came before the Commission earlier in the year. She added that the City plans to move forward with the idea of a city business license via council action in the near future. Chair Marks opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Arevalo said that four things came to her mind immediately when she heard about the potential for a city business license: why does Council want this on their plate, what would enforcement for a city business look like, how much does the City plan to generate from it, and what are the foreseen arguments against it?

There was general consensus among the Commissioners that the whereas clauses needed to clearly reflect the reasons for why a city business license is needed, with Commissioners noting that this was one of the major complaints of the short-term rental ordinance.

Mayor Caster explained the need for a city business license, stating it's important for the City to know who is operating businesses and why. He mentioned concerns about businesses operating without paying sales tax, such as charter companies from Ninilchik using the harbor. He emphasized the license isn't about heavy taxation, but rather about understanding local business activity. He shared that he would like to make the license valid for 3-year increments and allow multiple businesses under one license. He noted the challenge of identifying eligible businesses for relief funds during the pandemic without the knowledge of tax collection. Mayor Castner assured the Commission that the focus isn't bureaucracy, but rather ensuring awareness of businesses operating within city limits.

Commissioner Kim inquired about how the implementation and enforcement of a city business license would happen. Mayor Caster answered that the City would strive for a complaint-driven system, meaning that if there was a legitimate complaint, there would be a cease and desist order handed out until the complaint was investigated and resolved. He added that he doesn't plan on hiring any enforcement officers if the city business license is implemented.

- B. City Lands
Memorandum from Community Development Director as backup

Community Development Director Engebretsen noted that one of the strategic goals of the Commission is to engage in land planning for city property, as well as the larger problems of constraints on the Spit and within the Central Business District. She added that the Commission should think of this a pre-training for the land allocation plan, and also comprehensive plan conversations. She walked the Commission through the various tools that are available on the Kenai Peninsula Borough parcel viewer.

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 Commissioner Hasche volunteered to deliver the EDC report to Council at Council's March 26th meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Scott Adams, city resident, stated that he's pleased to see the City is going to be able to get some funding for the HERC, but questioned why the facility can't be used for something other than destruction. He spoke briefly on the misconception that people in Homer don't communicate, citing a post on Facebook regarding the short-term rental ordinance that garnered roughly 300 comments from people in or around Homer. Lastly, he shared that he doesn't foresee any pushback from the public on the city business license.

Caroline Venuti, city resident and City Council Member, urged the Commissioners to give Council their feedback regarding the city business license so that Council can get an idea of what the public is saying and thinking. She shared that the City already requires business licenses for food trucks, taxis and itinerant businesses, and that city business licenses have been on the horizon long before short-term rentals came up.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Community Development Director Engebretsen thanked Commissioner Pitzman for all the information he provided for tonight's meeting and thanked him for the time he served on the EDC.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER (If Present)

Mayor Castner thanked the Commissioners for all the work they've done and thanked Commissioner Pitzman for the information he provided at tonight's meeting. He spoke to the comprehensive plan, stating that the reasons for the rewrite are quality of life, economic vitality of the town and the "peas in the jar," reasoning that Homer has a tremendous amount of physical plant that it has to maintain, in addition to a tremendous amount of services that it needs to deliver.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Brennan shared that the next Conversation with a Council Member will be held on April 9th at the library with Donna Aderhold. She thanked the Mayor and Council Member Venuti for attending tonight's meeting, and she thanked Mr. Pitzman and Ms. Engebretsen for the tips they shared in regards to using the Kenai Peninsula Borough parcel viewer.

Commissioner Pitzman thanked Mayor Castner for appointing him to the Commission. He stated that he finds himself in a position that he can't commit to the Commission for next year, reasoning that he doesn't want to be a Zoom participant.

Commissioner Kim thanked Mr. Pitzman for his service on the Commission and the information provided at tonight's meeting. He also thanked the Mayor, Council Member Venuti, city staff, and Scott Adams for always attending. He brought up a public safety incident at one of Homer's local stores, The Fringe. He added that his friend who works here regularly deals with safety incidents from people that are either under the influence or showing threatening behavior. Mr. Kim shared that he reached out to the police department to see if they would be on board with hosting a public safety training. The police department said that they are open to hosting the training. He shared that his same friend that owns The Fringe also lives next to a short-term rental and has a lot of noise issues. Mr. Kim said that he believes there are a lot of unreported incidents of frictions with businesses in town.

Commissioner Arevalo said that she was sad to hear that Mr. Pitzman is leaving the Commission, and she thanked him for all the data he provided in preparation of tonight's meeting. She shared that there are an ample amount of workshops for people who want to grow food in their backyard. She also shared that this upcoming weekend kicks off the Kachemak Bay Science Conference.

Commissioner Hasche noted the King Salmon Tournament that will be happening in a few weeks. He also shared that he will be informally asking people what they think of the potential business license to gauge the palatability of that.

Chair Marks noted the second annual Kenai Peninsula Transportation Gaps and Solutions Event. The event will be open for community members on April 16th from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Challenger Learning Center in Kenai, hosted by the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, April 9, 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: _____



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Business License

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Economic Development Advisory Commission
Meeting Date: April 9, 2024
Staff Contact: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

Summary Statement: At the April 8th City Council meeting, Council will discuss a resolution providing direction for the EDC to consider the creation of a City business license.

Please see the attachments for the items presented to Council. Staff will have an update at the EDC meeting.

Attachments

1. Business License Memo
2. Resolution



MEMORANDUM

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

Item Type: Backup Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
Date: 27MAR24
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 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-xx

**CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA**

Venuti/Mayor

RESOLUTION 24-xx

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA
PROVIDING DIRECTION TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
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 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 Commission Chair 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 Commission take time to discuss and develop the idea further; and

WHEREAS, The Council wishes to memorialize direction to the Economic Development Commission 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 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

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Homer City Council this ____th day of _April_, 2024.

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CITY OF HOMER

KEN CASTNER, MAYOR

ATTEST:

MELISSA JACOBSEN, MMC, CITY CLERK



AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Comprehensive Plan

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Economic Development Advisory Commission
Meeting Date: April 9, 2024
Staff Contact: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

Summary Statement: The first community open house was held on Thursday March 28th. Staff will provide an update to the EDC on upcoming events as what's coming up related to the EDC.



MEMORANDUM

Funding for Alaska Small Business Homer Business Advisor

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Economic Development Advisory Commission
Date: April 9, 2024
From: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

Background

As part of the budget process for FY 24/25, Council voted down a \$15,000 annual request to fund the Homer Small Business Advisor position of the Alaska Small Business Development Center (AKSBDC). Council later approved \$10,000 for FY 24, which ends July 1.

The City has begun the process to amend the budget for any changes to FY 25. A City contribution of \$12,000 will support the continued presence of a part time business advisor in Homer.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend the City Council fund the AKSBDC Homer Business Advisory in the amount of \$12,000 for FY 25.



MEMORANDUM

Land Allocation Plan

Item Type: Action Memorandum
Prepared For: Economic Development Advisory Commission
Date: April 9, 2024
From: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director

Requested Action: Review lands currently available for long term lease (Section A), consider staff recommendations, and provide comments to the City Council.

Staff Recommendation: Remove Overslope Area #1 from the Lands Available for Lease portion of the Land Allocation Plan.

Background

Homer City Code Title 18.08 regulates city property leases. Each year, the City Council reviews and passes a resolution on which lands should be available for long term lease. Council may have a work session with the Port and Harbor and Economic Development Advisory Commissions to discuss any changes. The City keeps a report of lands in a document called the Land Allocation Plan. You can see the whole document here: <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/citymanager/land-allocation-plan>. The primary goal for Commission review is Section A, Lands Available for Lease.

Most City leasing occurs on the Spit and at the airport terminal. The Port and Harbor Commission usually provides the most detailed comments about the Spit, as they typically are most familiar with area operations and long-term leases. The Port and Harbor and Economic Development Commissions provide comments by memorandum to the Council. The kinds of comments that code solicits include: which parcels should be available for lease, the lease rate, preferred length of the lease term, and any requirements, preferences or restrictions regarding use and or development.

Airport

At the present time, there is no space available for lease at the Homer Airport Terminal. There is some change occurring in air carriers, an unexpected major disruption to air carrier operations due to the runway construction, and the City is in the process of constructing a new restroom in the terminal. Bryan Hawkins is the Airport Manager and does not recommend the City enter in to any new leases until restroom construction is complete. Airport terminal lease space will be revisited next year.

Spit

There are two properties currently available for long term lease. One is a portion of the former Chip Pad, the large concrete pad on Freight Dock Road. Staff recommends no changes for this property.

The second area available for lease is Overslope Area #1. Staff recommends this area be removed from lands available for lease. Despite a fairly high level of effort by City staff and an applicant, no lease agreement has been reached. Staff does not recommend the City continue to market this property as available. Should circumstances for the City or a potential applicant change in the future, this area could be offer for lease or an applicant could request it.

Staff Recommendation: Remove Overslope Area #1 from the Lands Available for Lease portion of the Land Allocation Plan.

Attachments:

1. HCC 18.08.020
2. Land Allocation Plan Section A, Lands Available for Lease

18.08.020 Land allocation plan – Property available for lease.

a. Unless dedicated or reserved to another purpose, all real property including tide, submerged or shore lands to which the City has a right, title and interest as owner or lessee, or to which the City may become entitled, may be leased as provided in this chapter. In the case of any conflict between this chapter and any local, State or Federal law governing the leasing of City tide and submerged lands, the law governing the leasing of City tide and submerged lands shall prevail.

b. The City administration shall maintain a list of all City-owned properties authorized for lease by Council. This list shall be adopted annually and contain the information required under this chapter. The list may be called the land allocation plan and will be made available to the public at the City Clerk's office.

c. Council shall adopt a land allocation plan that identifies:

1. City-owned property available for lease;
2. The property description, lease rate, preferred length of the lease term for each available parcel; and
3. Any requirements, preferences or restrictions regarding use and/or development.

d. Council may identify property in the land allocation plan that is subject to competitive bidding. Property subject to competitive bidding in the land allocation plan need only identify the property

description in the land allocation plan but all other terms required in subsection (c) of this section shall be identified in the request for proposal for such properties.

e. Prior to the adoption of the land allocation plan, Council shall hold a work session. Commission members and City staff may provide recommendations to Council during the work session regarding City-owned property available for lease and the terms of such leases.

f. The City shall provide public notice of the adoption of the land allocation plan and the City-owned real property available for lease no more than 60 days after its adoption.

g. All uses and activities on City-owned real property available for lease are subject to all applicable local, State, and Federal laws and regulations.

h. The Council may restrict specific City-owned properties to certain uses or classes of use that serve the City's best interest. [Ord. [18-16\(S\)\(A\)](#) § 1, 2018].

Section A

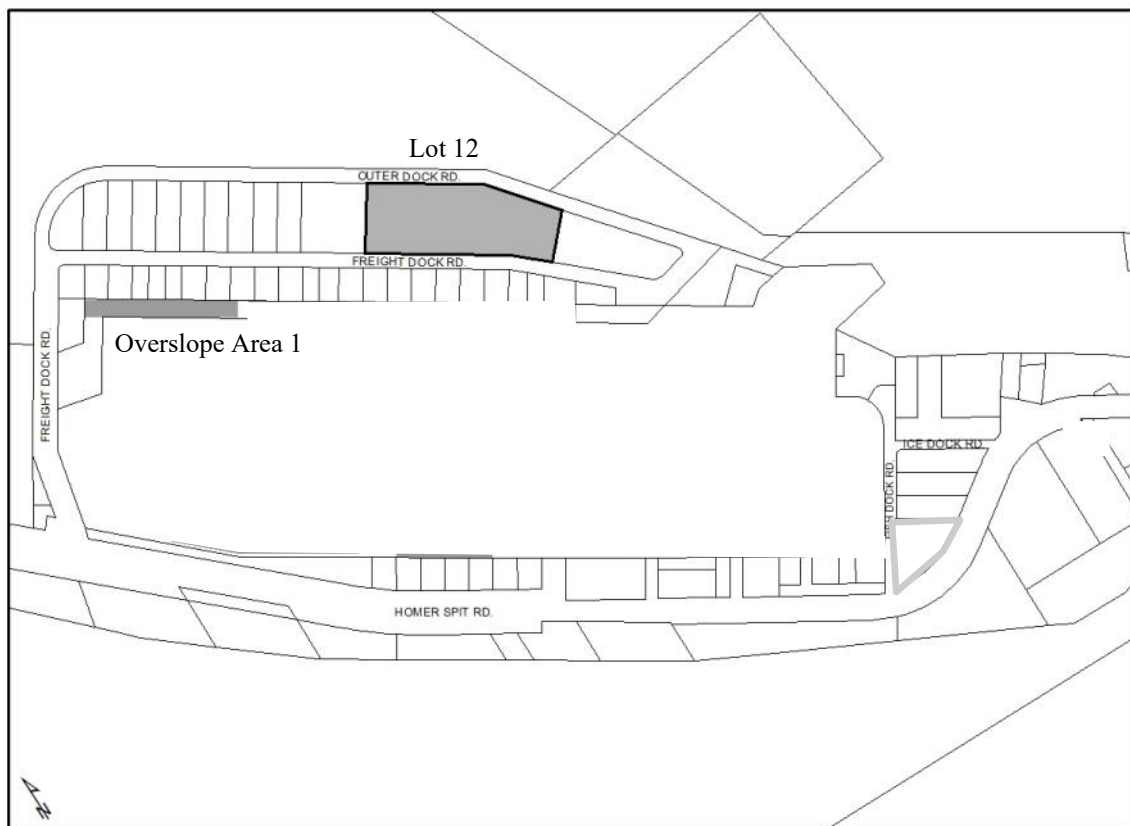
Lands available for lease

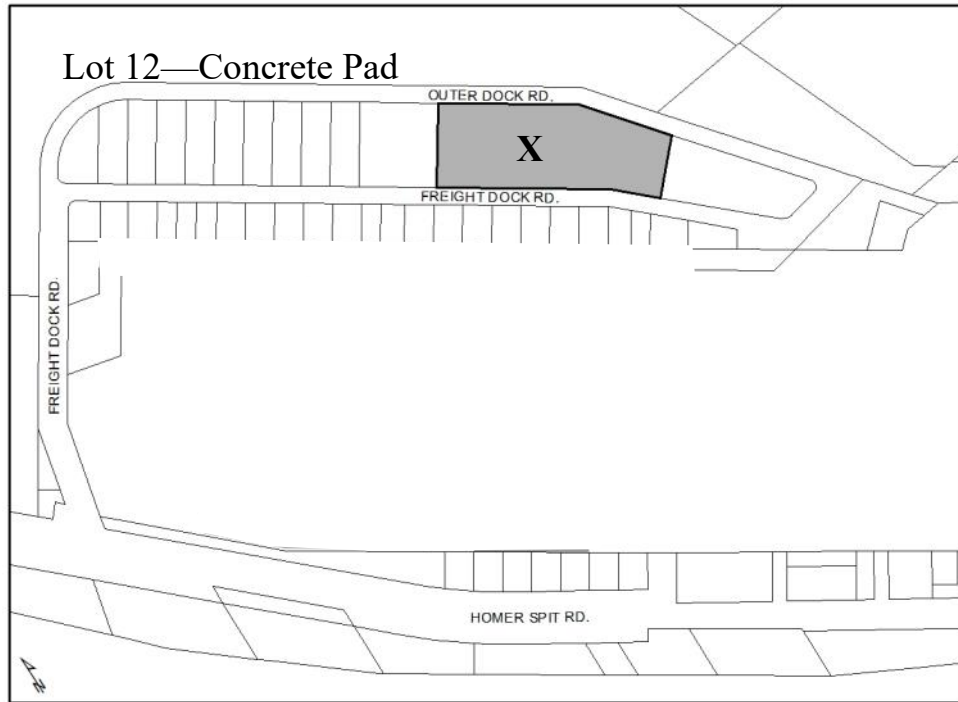
The following lots, and select areas within the Homer Airport are available for lease in 2024. Lease procedures follow the City of Homer City Code, Title 18.

The Economic Development Office provides information on long term leasing on the Homer Spit as well as short term leases and license agreements, such as vending machines, bike rentals and itinerant merchants. For more information, contact 907-435-3119.

The City Manager's Office handles airport terminal leasing. For more information, contact 907-235-8121 ext 2222.

DRAFT





Designated Use: Lease
Acquisition History:

Area: 5 acres

Parcel Number: 18103220

2022 Assessed Value: \$764,700 (Land: \$507,400, Structure/Improvements: \$257,300)

Legal Description: Homer Spit Subdivision no 5 Lot 12

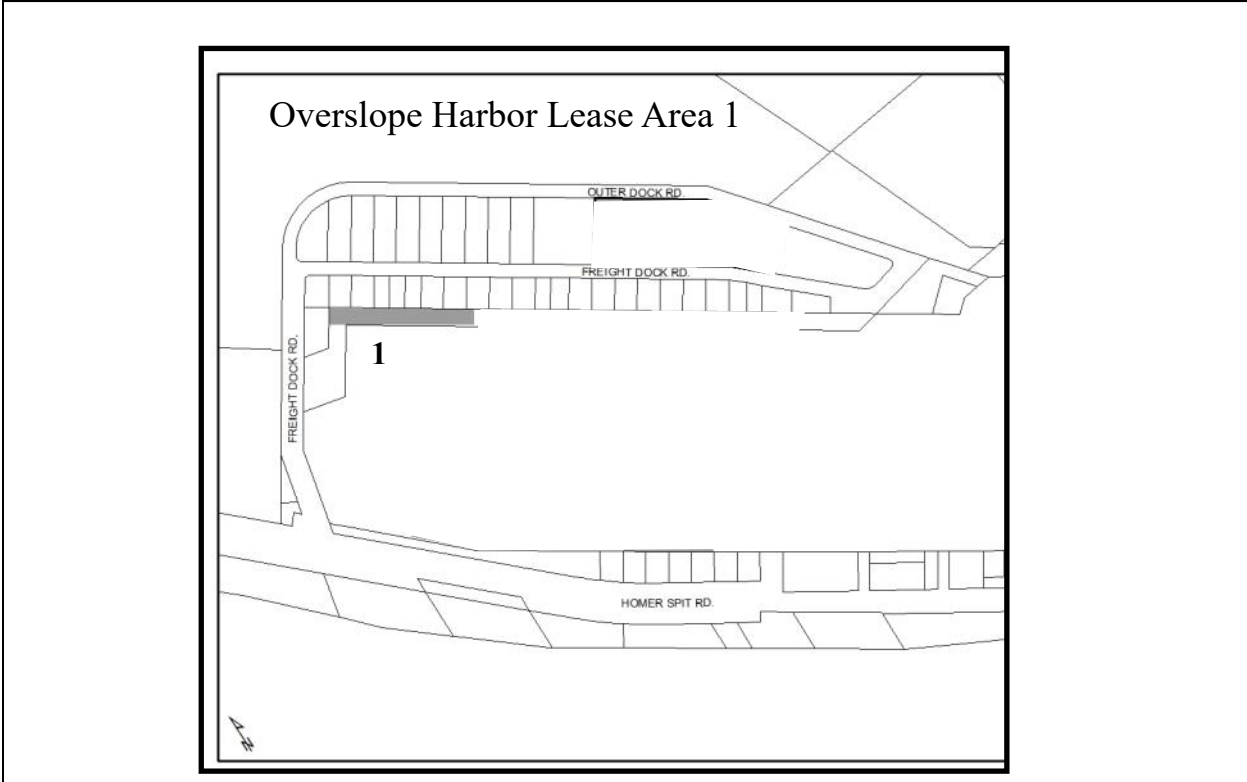
Zoning: Marine Industrial

Infrastructure: Water, sewer, paved road access, fenced, security lighting

Address: 4380 Homer Spit Road

Notes: 1 acre portion under lease per Resolution 23-032 to Alaska Scrap and Recycling 8 year lease with two one year options for renewal.

Prior to a long-term lease the site is appraised. The appraised lease rates for up-lands is approximately \$0.90 per square foot, per annum. Lease rates vary; contact Economic Development at 907-435-3119.



Designated Use: Lease
Resolution 17-33, 23-043

Area:	Parcel Number:
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Legal Description:

Zoning: Marine Commercial and Small Boat Harbor Overlay	
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Infrastructure:	Address:
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Prior to a long-term lease the site is appraised. The appraised lease rates for uplands is approximately \$0.90 per square foot, per annum. Lease rates vary; contact Economic Development at 907-435-3119.

Recommended for Removal



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 Homer City Council
FROM: Melissa Jacobsen, Acting City Manager
DATE: April 4, 2024
SUBJECT: City Manager's Report for April 8, 2024 Council Meeting

Winter King Tournament

Harbormaster Matt Clarke reported that the 2024 Homer Winter Tournament commenced as scheduled on Saturday, March 23rd with 1,056 anglers registered and 301 boats. About 75% of the boats arrive via trailer in the days prior to the tournament. Port & harbor admin and operations worked closely with HCOG to facilitate the tournament. The deep water dock staging area is used for the tournament derby headquarters. This includes use of the staging area, restroom pavilion, guard station (VHF radio room), chip pad (overflow parking), and Freight Dock & Outer Dock Roads for traffic pattern and access control. Port operations staffing and labor is adjusted to cover the shear demand created by the influx of boaters and derby participants. The day prior to the tournament, we double up harbor officers for swing shift and graveyard shifts to accommodate demand. During the morning of the tournament as the vessels depart the harbor, harbor officers patrol the waterways for traffic control and for rapid assist with potentially disabled vessels. Upon the conclusion of the tournament when the vessels return, harbor officers focus on traffic management at the load & launch ramp for retrieval and haul-out. Parking lots swelled in the vicinity of the DWD tournament event headquarters with several hundred people watching the weigh-in, enjoying food & beverage, and listening to live music. As the harbormaster (and derby participant), I was introduced to the Pacific Northwest regional Honda managers as Honda was a primary sponsor of the event. Port & Harbor admin spend numerous hours disseminating information, processing moorage fees and identifying vessels eligible for the one-free night of moorage provided as a concession. Amy Woodruff estimates 75 vessels took advantage of the one free night of moorage. On a positive note, there were no vehicle or vessel accidents, vessel floodings or EMS calls associated with the tournament.

Beluga Slough/Mariner Slough

The education process regarding the mouth of the Beluga Slough has continued since my last report on March 26th. Historically a property owner received a one-time permit for maintenance of the mouth of the slough that is good for 10 years, but the one-time work has been completed. The City has reached out to ACOE to determine if the permit can be modified to allow for another maintenance opportunity or if a new permit will be required. If a new permit is required that will take additional time and the work to open the mouth to allow the slough to drain will be delayed and likely won't happen until after the Shorebird Festival. The work is important to the City because our storm water outfalls are in that area and a lower water level helps the drainage. Also there is a lift station close by and increased water backed up into the slough has the potential to negatively impact that lift station.

Regarding Mariner Slough, the City has a permit and a schedule for maintaining the mouth of that slough and completed the work on April 3rd. The Public Works Director has expressed interest in adding the Beluga Slough to the maintenance schedule and Steve Delahanty from Fish and Wildlife has expressed support for that action.

Fire Truck Update

Chief Kirko provided this update and attached change order for the fire truck build that was started 2 years ago. Over that time there have been increases to the construction of the truck that were not completely unexpected, plus some changes that were made to reduce the cost. Last month he went to the Pierce factory in Wisconsin to work with the sales staff and engineers that are going to provide the final drawings in a few weeks. During that visit he was able to inspect other similar truck builds that were currently in production. This provided him with the opportunity to see things we may have missed during the initial specification meetings, and to see choices that reduced some of the cost to the build. The original change order document came in above \$32,000 and after reviewing other options he was able to reduce it the \$26,188.00 as shown in the attached change order. Once he receives the final engineered drawings, they should begin sometime in August for an October delivery.

Comprehensive Plan Community Visit #1

City Planner Foster shared an update on the Comprehensive Plan’s Community Visit #1 with Agnew::Beck that took place from March 26-29. It consisted of a Joint Work Session with City Council and the Planning Commission, a meeting with the Port & Harbor Commission, a public open house, a meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and several meetings with local organizations and City staff members. The public open house had approximately 75 participants providing feedback on a range of subjects including land use, housing, economic development, growth, recreation, and more. Findings from this first visit will be posted on the project website in April, in advance of the Community Visit #2 anticipated for mid-May. Go to the Homer Comprehensive Plan Update website for project updates at www.homercompplanupdate.com



City of Homer Audit Information

Since the last meeting the finance team completed the corrective action plan for the findings identified in the FY22 audit, and the remaining required documents have been submitted to BDO so we can receive our final statements for Council approval. Once the financial statements are adopted we'll engage with BDO for FY23 and keep our positive forward momentum going on our audit work.

Baycrest Overlook Bathrooms

Public Works Director Kort and I have been in discussion about the bathrooms at the Baycrest Overlook. He's explained that existing pit toilet restrooms at the Baycrest Scenic Overlook were constructed in 1998 by the AK-DOT and have been maintained by the City of Homer Public Works Department since they were constructed. The City is obligated to maintain these Restrooms by an agreement with the AK-DOT with no end date in the agreement. The restroom building has aged past its useful life and is in need of replacement. One side of the restroom is closed, leaving only one stall available for use this season. We will be working to bring some recommendations to Council for consideration on how the City would like to proceed, whether it be funding a rebuild of a more robust structure, request termination of the agreement with the State, or some type of collaborate project.

Congressionally Designated Spending (CDS) Requests

Special Projects and Communications Coordinator Jenny Carroll reports that City staff submitted four FY2025 Congressionally Designated Spending (appropriations) requests to Senator Lisa Murkowski and Representative Mary Peltola. The four requests submitted responded to eligibility criteria of the appropriations subcommittees and are: Homer Harbor Critical Float Systems 4 and 1 Replacement, Homer Spit Climate Resiliency/Erosion Mitigation, A-Frame Water Transmission Line and Beluga Sewer Lift Station. Projects that are selected to move forward to an appropriations committee will be reviewed and must be deemed eligible by the appropriations committee. The City will work with legislative staff members to supply additional information as requested for any projects forwarded to an appropriations committee. The annual appropriations is part of the Federal budget process, which is lengthy, has uncertain timing, and with limited funding, carries no guarantee that Congressionally Directed Spending requests will ultimately be included in the FY2025 spending bills.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Study

BOEM shared the informational flyer attached to this report regarding their Recreation and Tourism Study in the Cook Inlet region. This is part of their ongoing outreach efforts to inform regional stakeholders about the study. They are now in the process of collecting baseline recreation and tourism data and making plans for next year's site visits and focus group meetings.

Attachments:

- April Anniversaries
- Fire Truck Change Order
- BOEM Flyer
- Homer Foundation's Grant Report to the City



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: April 8, 2024
SUBJECT: April 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.

Joe Young	Public Works	17	Years
Rick Pitta	Police	15	Years
Erica Hollis	Port	12	Years
Jean Arno	Public Works	10	Years
Jaclyn Arndt	Fire	8	Years
Dave Berry	Library	5	Years
Ricky Borland	Port	5	Years
Aaron Yeaton	Public Works	5	Years
Will Kern	Public Works	3	Years
Joe Kahles	Fire	2	Years

Bid 996: Homer VFD Enforcer Pumper Tender - Job 38962
 Enforcer Chassis, Aerials/Tankers, Tandem Axle
 Homer AK
 Last Updated: 3/28/2024
 Change order

Item #	Date	Option	Change Type	Description	Change Total
1	3/20/24	0004218	Changed	Changed from 35' ladder to 28'	\$185.05
2	3/20/24	0097930	Changed	Changed rear warning lights from single color to Duo	\$678.87
3	3/20/24	608055	Changed	Changed to aluminum hose cover on front bumper	\$768.71
4	3/20/24	698960	Changed	Changed to raised hose tray with 2 inch lip on front bumper	\$133.86
5	3/20/24	632103	Changed	Changed to two tone body paint	(\$401.07)
6	3/20/24	751129	Changed	Changed to painted front grille	\$991.61
7	3/20/24	590424	Added	Added painted rear compartment door below tank dump	\$211.21
8	3/20/24	805652	Changed	Changed to painted steel bumper	\$993.96
9	3/21/24	0698960	Added	Added Line-X to front bumper	\$1,114.19
10	3/20/24	770192	Added	Added (1) body power duplex to compartment	\$390.54
11	3/20/24	40475	Changed	Changed inverter to battery charger with shoreline connection	(\$1,699.03)
12	3/20/24	742003	Changed	Deleted radio installation by Pierce	(\$890.88)
13	3/20/24	607217	Added	Added headsets for driver, officer, and 4 crew cab positions	\$8,170.96
14	3/20/24	632658	Added	Added mounting surface for entire engine tunnel	\$551.45
15	3/20/24	0760404	Added	Added black out package to rear scene lights	\$1,169.46
16	3/20/24	080294	Changed	Changed wiper control location	\$136.28
17	3/20/24	802940	Changed	Added moose light switch	\$591.37
18	3/20/24	548009	Deleted	Deleted Golight spotlights on cab roof and added light bars at 15 degree	\$1,670.26
19	3/20/24	548015	Added	Added (2) scene lights on side of body each side	\$2,041.77
20	3/20/24	781466	Added	Added vinyl hosebed cover	\$1,136.14
21	3/20/24	742770	Added	Changed rear warning beacon lights to red and blue	\$625.23
22	3/20/24	-	Deleted	Deleted special crosslay construction	(\$278.67)
23	3/20/24	813848	Changed	Added blackout to cab steps	\$1,579.45
24	3/20/24	59024	Changed	Changed to black cab mirrors	\$327.94
25	3/20/24	0632103	Added	Changed to rear cab wall painted, removed aluminum treadplate	(\$203.46)
26	3/20/24	783153	Changed	Changed spare wiring circuits, added power USB, remote head power, 30A radio power	\$297.34
27	3/20/24	804651	Added	Added blackout to headlight, directional lights, and warning light bezels	\$751.18
28	3/20/24	746142	Added	Added blackout to stepping surface lights on cab and pump panel	\$169.21
29	3/20/24	889577	Added	Added blackout to rear taillights	\$591.80
30	3/20/24	794744	Deleted	Deleted officer switch for side and front scene lights	(\$403.87)
31	3/20/24	892330	Deleted	Deleted telescopic lights on pump house	(\$6,279.61)
32	3/20/24	97930	Changed	Changed to rubber rub rails and fender crowns	\$200.33
33	3/20/24	776357	Added	Added front of body brushed scuffplate	\$233.91
34	3/20/24	776995	Added	Added blackout to handrails	\$2,319.30
35	3/20/24	740249	Changed	Painted air bottle compartments, fuel/def doors with black latches	\$622.56
36	3/20/24	740247	Added	Added blackout to steps on rear and pump house area	\$710.53
37	3/20/24	0004990	Changed	Changed rear discharge to hosebed area	\$197.72
38	3/20/24	889306	Added	Added blackout to whelen m6 warning lights with M6V2 tied to reverse and perimeter circuit	\$1,057.24
39	3/20/24	733343	Added	Added blackout to rear beacon warning light mounting brackets	\$217.69
40	3/20/24	733336	Changed	Recessed traffic director into rear wall	(\$4.23)
41	3/20/24	891982	Added	Additional Blackout to front grille, Pierce logo	\$425.53
42	3/20/24	40803	Added	Blackout front bumper discharge	\$124.57
43	3/20/24	57300	Added	Added blackout to side warning lights and tied M6V2 to reverse and perimeter circuit	\$854.76
44	3/21/24	0002283	Changed	Painted tow hooks	\$223.00
45	3/21/24	0091106	Added	Added TFT Extenda gun deluge	\$3,883.91

Change Order Total	\$26,188.09
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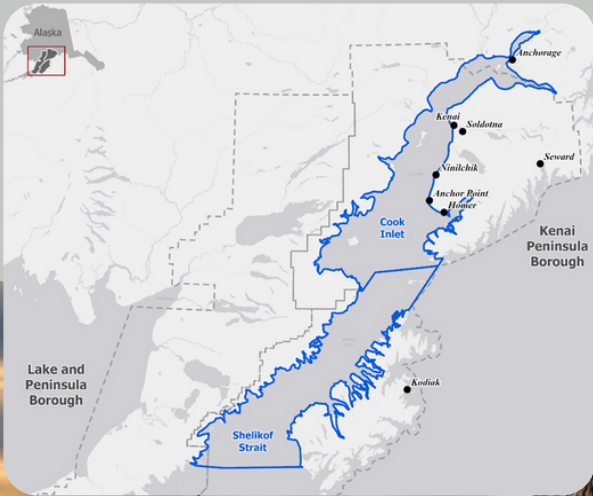
By signing this form, I do hereby authorize the representing Pierce Dealer to coordinate the changes, additions, and deletions listed on the preceding page(s) for the prices listed on each change made. I understand and agree that any additions or changes that were not part of the original contract may adversely impact the scheduled completion of the apparatus. If the scheduled completion is affected, the Pierce authorized Dealer will notify you of such a change at the time this change is presented. I understand and agree that once this change request is signed, it becomes part of the original contract entered into between the authorized Pierce Dealer and the customer.

Customer Signature: _____

Sales Representative Signature: _____

Study on Recreation and Tourism in the Cook Inlet

This study will inform our understanding of the effects of energy development activities in the Cook Inlet on recreation and tourism, helping guide future analysis and resource management decisions.



The Study Area



Goals of the Study

Map recreation sites in the region

Collect data on activities, levels of use, and expenditures

Discover what people value about recreational opportunities

Gauge attitudes about how offshore energy development could impact recreation and tourism



Activities

2024: Baseline data collection

2025: Site visits and focus groups to inform survey development

Contact us if you have any questions or have information that can help inform the study

BOEM TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVE: Jeffrey Brooks
BOEM jeffrey.brooks@boem.gov

PROJECT MANAGER: Maura Flight
IEC mflight@indecon.com

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH LEAD: Leah Cuyno
Northern Economics leah.cuyno@norecon.com

TECHNICAL LEAD: Eric Horsch
IEC ehorsch@indecon.com



City of Homer
 City Manager
 491 East Pioneer Ave
 Homer AK 99603

March 28, 2024

Re: City of Homer Grants Program 2024

Dear City Manager:

The Homer Foundation has administered the City of Homer Grants Program since 2000. In that time over \$960,719 has been awarded to local nonprofits to support the programs and services they provide to the community.

A total of \$34,170 was available for distribution in the 2024 funding cycle. This funding included \$25,000 from the city budget line item and earned income from the City of Homer’s endowment fund. The total amount is administered under an agreement between the City of Homer and the Homer Foundation. Recommendations for awards are at the discretion of the City of Homer Grants Committee.

This year’s City of Homer Grants Committee consisted of HF Board of Directors Paul Seaton (chair), Sara Reinert, and Ken Taylor, with community members Kathy Hill, Uran Christensen, Francie Roberts, Karen Wuestenfeld, and Britta Frank. All participants adhere to the Homer Foundation’s Conflict of Interest Policy. Karen Wuestenfeld disclosed that she is on the board of Kachemak Heritage Land Trust. Ken Taylor disclosed that he is on the committee of Kachemak Heritage Land Trust.

A total of 14 applications were received and reviewed. Kachemak Nordic Ski Club applied but were deemed ineligible due to receiving in-kind support from the City of Homer during the previous fiscal year. The committee’s recommendations for the following awards were approved by the Homer Foundation board of trustees at their March 27th board meeting:

Organization	2024 Awards
Bunnell Street Art Gallery	\$ 1,000
Center for AK Coastal Studies	\$ 3,000
Cook Inlet Keeper	\$ 1,000
Homer Animal Friends	\$ 1,500
Homer Community Food Pantry	\$ 4,170
Homer Council on the Arts	\$ 4,000
Homer Farmers Market	\$ 1,500
Homer Hockey Association	\$ 3,000
Homer OPUS	\$ 3,000
Kachemak Bay Family Planning Cl	\$ 4,500

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust	\$ 1,000
KBBI	\$ 3,500
<u>SPROUT</u>	<u>\$ 3,000</u>
Total:	\$ 34,170

It is a difficult task to review organizations with very different missions, but all committee members agreed these nonprofits are high-functioning organizations providing valuable programs and services to the community. The committee this year was very impressed by these organizations and the broad services they provide to our community.

Each year, we take the opportunity to compile a synopsis of the economic impact of the nonprofits that have submitted applications. In 2023, these organizations generated over \$7.1 million in revenues, including \$3.6 million in new money coming into Homer from State, Federal, and Foundation grants. They also employ 100 full, part-time, and seasonal employees with combined personnel expenses exceeding \$4.1 million. The data from these organizations help to illustrate just how important Homer’s nonprofit sector is as an economic driver in our economy.

During times of economic downturn which were apparent in these organizations' decrease in revenue this last year, the City’s continued support is more important than ever by providing important general operating support. These organizations are also able to leverage additional funding with City support. The community benefits because a strong nonprofit community makes Homer a safer, healthier, and more vibrant place to live, play, and work.

On behalf of the nonprofit community, the Foundation Board thanks the City of Homer for its continued support for Homer’s vital, and economically important nonprofit community.

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Miller, Executive Director
Homer Foundation
235.0551
mmiller@homerfoundation.org

cc: City Council
Mayor

2023 City of Homer Grants Program: Project Report – Homer Farmers Market

GRANT AWARD PERIOD: FY2023

GRANT NUMBER: 23-COH6

REPORT DATE: 02/29/24

APPLICANT: HOMER FARMERS MARKET

CONTACT PERSON: LAUREN JEREW

PROJECT TITLE: CITY OF HOMER GRANTS PROGRAM

FISCAL YEAR START DATE: 01/01/24

AMOUNT AWARDED: \$3,000



HOMER FARMERS MARKET – GRANT SUMMARY

The Homer Farmers Market was honored to be a recipient of the 2023 Homer Foundation's City of Homer Grants Program. This was our seventh year participating in this grant program and the board and staff would like to send their deepest gratitude for the continued support. We look forward to future collaborations between our organizations to serve our community with quality programming and to building a more equitable and healthy local food system.

This past season the Homer Farmers Market celebrated its 24th Year in operation. Generous grants from the Homer Foundation, Alaska Farmers Market Association, and other private donors were crucial to our success this season.

We were honored to bring back many returning vendors in 2023, as well as welcome new faces to the market! We also started hosting kids vending days and brought back Zucchini Fest for the first time since 2019. It was great to feel the sense of community at the market, and welcome people from all walks of life to explore and have fun together!



Homer Farmers Market
on Ocean Drive

Sat. 10-3 & Wed. 2-5
May 27 – September 30, 2023

WIC, FMNP & EBT coupons accepted • Please bring cash in small increments

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

HOW FUNDS WERE EXPENDED: \$3,000

As a “general operating support” grant, funding was distributed throughout many programs. Below we describe these programs and their impacts.

LIST OF PROGRAMS & CORRELATING COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL BENEFITS:

- **SNAP/Quest EBT Program**
 - This program allows those with SNAP (formally known as food stamps) benefits to access funds to spend on allow items at the market
 - Through funding from the Alaska Farmers Market Association, we were able to match \$6,291 in SNAP this year!
 - This program allows us to also run credit cards for “market coins,” eliminating the need for individual vendors to have a credit card terminal. The market pays all fees for their program, saving vendors money, time, and effort.
- **Kids Activities & Kids Vending Days**
 - Collaborating with the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies, we hosted a weekly kids activity tent. It was well attended by kids ranging in age from 2-15!
 - We also brought back three opportunities for kids in the community to vend for free on Wednesdays. We had 15+ kid vendors, who sold everything from artwork and jewelry to dandelion syrup!

MARKET DEMOGRAPHICS

- SNAP Users: 12 new users in 2023
- Estimated Visitor Total for Season: 19,200
- Number of Vendors: 60
- Age range of grant recipients: ALL! 0-75+

EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIONS:

- **Private Anonymous Donors-** \$3,000 in funding for SNAP/EBT Program operation
- **Food Pantry -** \$18,000 partnership with the Homer & Anchor Point Food Pantries, where goods were purchased directly at the market and donated to the Food Pantry. This was made possible by the Alaska Farmers Market Association.

PUBLICITY AND PUBLIC THANK YOUS:

- Homer News
- Homer Farmer Market Facebook
- Homer Farmers Market Annual Meeting presentation
- Word of Mouth at the market and beyond

OTHER ATTACHMENTS:

- 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT (BUDGET TO ACTUAL)
- LETTERS TO EDITOR
- DIRECTOR'S REPPORT
- THANK YOU LETTER TO HOMER FOUNDATION



October 5, 2023

City of Homer
Homer Foundation City Grant Program
491 East Pioneer
Homer, AK 99603

Dear Mayor Castner, City of Homer Council members, and Homer Foundation Board of Directors,

I am writing on behalf of Kachemak Heritage Land Trust to thank you for the 2023 grant award from the City of Homer through the Homer Foundation (Grant #23-COH10). This grant funded general operating support including outreach and stewardship of Homer and Anchor Point properties.

Funding from the City shows our other supporters and grant funders that we are supported by our local government which is highly valuable to our organization. We so appreciate the City's dedication to our work and look forward to continuing to build and maintain a strong connection to the City's goals, including work under consideration in the Beluga wetlands area and on the Poopdeck Trail.

Sincerely,

Carson Chambers
Communications and Development Manager



February 7, 2024

Homer City Council
City of Homer
491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603

Dear City Council Members:

Thank you to the City of Homer for your continued commitment to supporting the nonprofit community through funds administered by the Homer Foundation. This consistent support makes a big difference to our organization and constituents in our capacity to provide a wide range of services to local residents.

As a community-based organization, Cook Inletkeeper develops programs that combine science, advocacy, and education to further our mission of protecting Alaska's Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains. In Homer a shining example is, our annual Electronics Recycling Event which in its 18th year facilitated safe and responsible recycling of potentially harmful electronic devices. In partnership with communities across the Bay, on the Central Peninsula and Seward, we facilitated recycling of 39,237 lbs. of electronic waste from the Kenai Peninsula in 2023.

Additionally, this support has aided in the continuation of Homer Drawdown which in 2023 focused on non-motorized transportation and worked closely with the City to assist with the public process of the 20-year Master Transportation plan- garnering over 500 public comments. We've continued to expand our focus on local foods; helping to build a local food economy through the Alaska Food Hub, which provided 1052 Homer-area citizens locally grown, harvested and crafted products this past year. Keeping money circulating locally helps us all.

So, thank you. Support from the City of Homer demonstrates the Council's commitment to making Homer a world-class place to live, work and play. And thank you too for your dedicated service to our community.

Sincerely,

Loren Barrett
Co-Executive Director

cc: Homer Foundation



February 6, 2024

Homer City Council
Homer City Hall
491 East Pioneer Ave.
Homer, AK 99603

Dear Council,

On behalf of Homer Council on the Arts and its Board of Directors, I would like to express our gratitude for funding from the City of Homer Grants Program during FY23. This operating support is a crucial component of HCOA's budget, providing stability for operations and allowing us to offer our mission-driven programs.

We're proud of the programs we've been able to build and expand over the past year. Eight solo and six group gallery exhibits featured a total of 115 artists, and the Nutcracker Faire continues to grow as a venue for local artisans. Education offerings have included spring and summer camps, popular ceramics classes, and a variety of workshops. We hosted six touring performers, many including outreach and workshops in their visit to Homer. These included traditional Irish music, a Scandinavian week with fiddle and dance, and a teaching residency and performance by Brazilian multi-instrumentalist Eduardo Mendonça. Mendonça took the outreach record, engaging with 269 students at four schools.

Thank you for continuing to support and promote the arts as a key aspect of our city's culture and economy, and for your financial support to Homer Council on the Arts.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Bartlett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Scott" and last name "Bartlett" clearly visible.

Scott Bartlett
Executive Director

To: The Homer Foundation
3733 Ben Walters Lane
Suite 7
Homer, AK, 99603



From: Homer Farmers Market
P.O. Box 2274
Homer, AK, 99603

February 28th, 2024

To Whom it May Concern:

The Homer Farmers Market would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of The Homer Foundation staff, board members, and donors that support and administer the City of Homer Grant Program. We were awarded \$3,000, and your generosity was vital to the success of the Homer Farmers Market's 2023 season.

The City of Homer Grant managed by the Homer Foundation allowed us to support multiple programs in 2023: SNAP matching, collaborations with both the Homer and Anchor Point Food Pantries, Zucchini Fest, and Kids Activities hosted by Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies. All of these programs and events add value to our community, and we are fortunate to have such a great organization working to support local nonprofit organizations.

From the Homer Farmers Market Board of Directors & Staff - thank you!

Sincerely,

Lauren Jerew, Market Director



P.O. Box 2703, Homer, Alaska 99603 - (907) 235-2647
www.kevinbellarena.org | info@homerhockey.org

Dear Members of the Homer City Council,

I hope this letter finds you well. On behalf of the Homer Hockey Association (HHA), I extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Homer City Council for their unwavering support in providing funding to the City of Homer Grants Program administered by the Homer Foundation.

Our collaboration has played a pivotal role in the success of the Kevin Bell Arena, and we are thrilled to share the exciting developments of this season. HHA and the Kevin Bell Arena are experiencing an exceptional year, and we take immense pride in offering on-ice recreational activities to our local community, as well as to individuals and groups across the State of Alaska.

Here are some highlights of our programs and achievements:

Diverse Recreational Programs: We conduct a range of weekly programs, including school field trips, community public skate, home ice for the Mariner's high school hockey team, girls and co-ed youth hockey teams, men's and women's adult hockey leagues, figure skating, broomball, curling, Learn to Skate programs, and skating opportunities for the underserved.

Tournaments: This season, we are excited to host several tournaments catering to different age groups and skill levels. These tournaments combined will be hosting 60 teams:

- Adult Coed Tournament
- Adult Women's Tournament
- Youth (8 years and Under) Tournament
- Youth (14 years and Under) State Championship Tournament
- Youth (12 years and Under) State Championship Tournament
- Adult Men's Advanced & Intermediate Level Tournaments

The impact of the Kevin Bell Arena extends beyond our city, bringing thousands of visitors to our community since its opening in 2005. This has not only contributed to the vitality of the service industry but has also generated significant tax revenue for the City of Homer.

We deeply appreciate the City of Homer's recognition of the health and economic benefits that our non-profit organization brings to the community. Your continued financial support is invaluable to us, and we want to express our sincere thanks to the Homer City Council for their ongoing commitment to the Homer Hockey Association and the Kevin Bell Arena.

Thank you once again for your unwavering support. We look forward to further enhancing our community through the joy and camaraderie that our programs and facilities bring to all.

Sincerely,



Mike Barth, President
Homer Hockey Association



Dear Homer City Council (Sprout Champions),

In 2023, Sprout Family Services was awarded the Homer Foundation City Grant to support programming for families with young children. Because of this funding, we were able to offer more opportunities for caregivers to build social connections, learn about child development, and positively foster their child’s growth. It is our mission at Sprout to promote the healthy development of children *in partnership* with families and *community*. The Homer Foundation City Grant is one way the Homer City Council can play an active role in this partnership. *How does the Homer Foundation City Grant positively impact the families served by Sprout?*

Playgroup Champions

Funds from the city grant were used to purchase developmentally appropriate equipment, toys, food, and safety supplies for use at Sprout sponsored playgroups. These items allow us to create safe, play environments that engage families and encourage young children to explore. Funds from the grant were also used to support increasing a caregiver’s knowledge of child development. We offer families valuable information on early childhood development through the Parents As Teachers curriculum. If a caregiver has a question about development, including topics ranging from sleep to dental health, we can give them information that is grounded in research, relationship based, and relevant to their child’s needs.

Parenting Workshop Support

Funds from the city grant were also used to purchase an annual subscription to the Conscious Discipline e-course “Building Resilient Homes & Schools.” Up to 75 individuals/families now have access to content that builds family resilience through brain-based social emotional learning. Sprout will also be able to dedicate staff time to leading workshops that focus on the skills of Conscious Discipline and how they can uniquely apply to families.

There are many ways to partner with families to ensure their children have healthy, safe, and positive starts. We are grateful for the Homer City Council and their contribution to programming that puts Sprout’s partnerships with families first. Sprout’s vision is that all children are valued and fully nurtured and give the same to the next generation. Thanks to City Council we can work on that vision together!



Kachemak Nordic Ski Club
Box 44
Homer, Alaska 99603

Homer City Council

Dear Homer City Council,

The town of Homer is a beautiful place to call home. Those of us who are fortunate to live here have great access to many services you would typically find in much larger communities. Our schools, library, art activities, outdoor trails and recreational opportunities are a large part of what makes the community of Homer such a special place. Many of these opportunities would not be possible without the support of the Homer City Council.

As a board member for the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club we were delighted to receive a \$3,500 grant this year from the Homer City Council via the Homer Foundation. Our club is pleased that you recognize the important role we play in the health (both mental and physical) of Homer residents during the winter. Over the last several years our enrollment has seen a marked increase of members of all ages. Our goal is to provide world class ski trails to Homer residents and to foster a lifelong love of skiing. We continue to expand our trail systems, programs and rental of skis to Homer youth. As with all operations the cost of doing business continues to increase. Your contribution enabled us to fill in the gaps so that we are looking forward to yet another great winter of skiing. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Melissa Cloud



Kachemak Bay Broadcasting, Inc.,
Listener Supported Public Radio

*We provide news, information, and entertainment
to foster community engagement.*

January 31, 2024

Dear Homer City Council,

KBBI would like to recognize the importance of the Homer Grants program, or which KBBI was an award recipient in Fiscal Year 2023. Our distribution of \$3,000.00 was used for General Operating Support. An essential component of what we do here that is often overlooked and difficult to fund.

We thank the City of Homer for partnering with the Homer Foundation to administer this funding to KBBI and our incredible Nonprofit community. One of Homer's greatest strengths is its Nonprofit sector, and this partly due to the leadership of the City of Homer and the Homer Foundation. It is rare to find funds for operating support in any grant program and to be able to apply for it locally is extremely valuable to us at the station and to our cohort in the community.

Thank you for your support of our community,

Loren Barrett
KBBI Development Director

CITY OF HOMER NEWSLETTER

VOL. III - ISSUE VIII | APRIL 2024



WHAT'S INSIDE?

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NEW DESIGNS FOR HOMER LIBRARY CARDS

April 7 - 13 is National Library Week, and we're celebrating big at Homer Public Library! In honor of this, we are unveiling three new library card designs. Choose from Forest, Mountains, Tidepool, or stick with the Classic design when you sign up for a new library card! If you'd like to replace your current card, the cost is \$5.

The new cards were designed by local artist Rachel Tussey and complement her existing artwork on BOB the Bookmobile.



- New Designs for Homer Library Cards
- Library Events
- Community Corner
- Community Recreation
- City Hall
- Clerks
- Community Development
- Port & Harbor
- Harbor Expansion Study Update
- Public Works
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Public Safety Corner
- Meet City Staff
- Municipal Art Collection
- Stay Connected with City Council

Discover something new today and see the latest City project updates information! Learn about ways community members can get involved at City Hall and in the Homer community.

CELEBRATION OF LIFELONG LEARNING

Come support the Friends of Homer Library for a Celebration of Lifelong Learning event at the Homer Public Library. Enjoy appetizers from Tickled Pear, live music, a trivia tree, a silent auction, entertainment, awards and desserts from BB's Bakery.

When: Saturday, April 20, at 6:00 pm

Where: Homer Public Library, 500 Hazel Ave.

Tickets: \$40, Available at the library's front desk starting April 1

Follow us on Social Media

- City Hall: [@cityofhomerak](#)
- Parks & Recreation: [@homerparksandrec](#)
- Homer Public Library: [@homerpubliclibrary](#)
- Homer Police: [@homerpolice](#)
- Fire Department: [@HomerVolFireDept](#)

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[Click Here to Subscribe](#)

LIBRARY EVENTS

VIRTUAL AUTHOR TALKS

Zoom in and listen to your favorite authors talk about their latest books. For a complete list of Upcoming Speakers, go to libraryc.org/homerlibrary/upcoming.

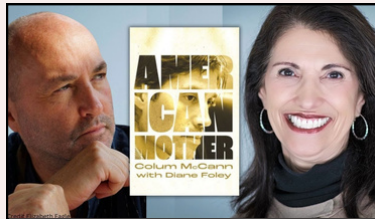
April 2 at 10 am

The Foods, People, and Innovations That Feed Us—A Sweeping History of Food and Culture with Smithsonian Curator **Paula J. Johnson**



April 9 at 10 am

From Murder to Atonement—Confronting My Son’s Killer with **Diane Foley & Colum McCann**



April 17 at 4 pm

A Literary Examination of Power, Love, and Art with **Xochitl Gonzalez**



SPECIAL & ONGOING EVENTS



Councilmember Conversations

Noon to 1 pm, the second Tuesday of each month, September - May, at the Homer Public Library.

April 9: Donna Aderhold

Lit Lineup 2024

The Homer Public Library has created a community-wide initiative to read fifteen books throughout the year.

View the list and submit entries [here](#). You could be eligible to win the grand prize!



Check out more library programs and events



Homer Public Library
500 Hazel Street - 907-235-3180
circ@ci.homer.ak.us
www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library



COMMUNITY CORNER

What's happening around the City of Homer

32nd Annual Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival May 8 - 12, 2024

Experience the joy of Spring's return and the migration of birds along the picturesque shores of Kachemak Bay during the Shorebird Festival.



Homer stands out as one of Alaska's premier locations for witnessing the awe-inspiring sight of thousands of shorebirds.

The four-day Festival embodies a cherished Homer tradition, celebrating the birds' return with many enriching activities. From seminars and workshops to children's activities and guided tours, there are birding opportunities suited for individuals of all ages and skill levels. Whether you're a novice or a seasoned enthusiast, there's something for everyone.

Explore further and secure your spot for festival events by going to kachemakshorebird.org.



[Register and Buy Tickets](#)



[Download a Program of Events](#)

Homer Steps Up - May 1 - 28, 2024 - FREE Event Organized by South Peninsula Hospital

The City of Homer is proud to co-sponsor the Homer Steps Up challenge, again! You too can register in groups to help our community stay active and healthy.

Registration opens April 1st for this FREE event running from May 1st to 28th, open to all residents of the Southern Kenai Peninsula. Form teams of 5-25 members and track your steps using a fitness tracker, smartphone, or manual entry.

Walk to Win! Weekly drawings for prizes, end-of-challenge cash prize drawings, and \$500, \$300, or \$200 to donate to your team's local non-profit of choice!



For more information and to register, visit:



homerstepsup.com

COMMUNITY RECREATION

INLET WINDS COMMUNITY BAND FREE CONCERT

A performance you don't want to miss! The Inlet Winds Community Band invites you to the Mariner Theater at Homer High School on Saturday, April 13 at 7pm for a FREE performance.

Under the guidance of Co-Directors Mary and Eric Simondsen, local adult and high school musicians have dedicated themselves to months of practice to prepare a captivating program of songs.

When: Saturday, April 13, 7:00 pm

Where: Homer High School, Mariner Theater

Fee: FREE

Program

Fanfare -HAYABUSA -Satoshi Yagisawa

Watchman Tell Us of the Night -Mark Camphouse

Rollo Takes a Walk -David Maslanka

-Intermission-

Armenian Dances -Loris Chobanian

The Rowan Tree -Randall Standridge

March from Symphonic Metamorphosis -Paul Hindemith



SUCCESSFUL PICKLEBALL INJURY PREVENTION CLINIC

Preventing injury in pickleball is important to enjoy the game and participate in the sport for the long term.

Staff from our local Summit Physical Therapy generously volunteered their time and expertise to instruct community members on injury prevention while playing pickleball. A total of 18 individuals attended the 2-hour clinic at the HERC gym and found it very beneficial. Summit Physical Therapy brought their own equipment and led participants through dynamic warm-ups, targeted stretches, agility exercises, and much more. They also provided portable cold wrap machines, kinesiology tape, massage guns, and other tools.



Pickleball Injury Prevention Clinic Attendees with Summit Physical Therapy Staff

A big thanks to Summit Physical Therapy, and we look forward to offering more preventive sessions in the future.

CITY HALL

SISTER CITY ART EXHIBIT AT THE PRATT MUSEUM



2024 marks the City of Homer's 40th Anniversary as a Sister City with Teshio, Hokkaido, Japan. Established April 7, 1984, Teshio and Homer have enjoyed a profound camaraderie and sharing of families, student exchanges, ideals, and memorabilia.

As part of our community's 40-year celebration, eighteen pieces of art that Teshio has generously gifted the City over the years will be on display in the Main Lobby of the Pratt Museum from **May 1 to September 7**.

This exhibit provides an opportunity to learn more about our Sister City, foster a stronger connection with Teshio, and view these cherished pieces that are part of the City of Homer's Municipal Art Collection.

A First Friday Exhibition will be held **Friday, May 3rd** at 4:00 pm and will be free to the public.

More info on the [Sister City Program](#) and the [Municipal Art Collection](#) can be found on the City of Homer website.

TOMODACHI TAIKO DRUMMING EVENT

Mark your calendars for an exciting event as part of the 40th Sister City Anniversary celebrations! The City of Homer and the Alaska Japanese Club are thrilled to invite the Tomodachi Taiko Association to bring the rhythms of Japanese Taiko drumming to Homer High School's Mariner Theater on **May 4th**. Join us for a performance featuring 12 drummers from Anchorage and Japan and immerse yourself in the peaceful yet powerful beats of this ancient art form. Additionally, students from the Alaska Japanese Club will showcase their own skills in special Taiko performances throughout the day.

The Japanese Club students have been working hard to create drums since September. They have made 30 cardboard drums, a 50-gallon Taiko drum, and 30 pairs of Taiko drum sticks called bachi. They have been rehearsing twice a week to prepare for this special event. The students will also perform on **April 19th** for the Jubilee Youth Performing Arts Show at Homer Mariner Theater.



Taiko Drum



Japanese Club students with homemade Taiko drums participating in Homer's Winter Carnival

Japanese Taiko drums are traditional percussion instruments that originated in Japan centuries ago. They are characterized by their large size and deep, resonant tones, which are produced by striking the drumheads with wooden sticks called bachi. Taiko drumming is not just about the music; it's a cultural art form that embodies strength, unity, and spirited performances.

Don't miss the unique opportunity to learn how to build Japanese Taiko drums at our drum making workshop on **Friday evening, May 3rd**! Stay tuned for further event details, which will be posted on the City of Homer website and social media. Mark your calendars and get ready to experience the energy of Taiko drumming like never before!

CLERKS

HOW TO RUN FOR ELECTED OFFICE EVENT

Are you interested in running for public office this year? Or thinking about it for future elections? Maybe you are just curious about the process?

On Thursday, April 4th, there is a free event on How to Run For Elected Office.

The event will feature a presentation on how to run for elected office and a Q&A session with a panel of past elected officials. Application and filing materials will be on hand for review. Oh, and don't forget, there will be refreshments too!

When: Thursday, April 4th, from 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Where: Homer City Hall, 491 E Pioneer Avenue

More Info: Facebook [@kpvotes](#), Instagram [@kpvotes](#), email kenaipeninsulavotes@gmail.com, or call 907-299-2517

Thanks to Kenai Peninsula Votes and the League of Women Voters on the Kenai who are sponsoring this event with the City of Homer.

Why is it important to run for Public Office?

Participation in public service is essential for a thriving society and community. Decisions and policies shape what our society looks like now and in the future.

How to Run For Elected Office
City - Borough - State

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters on the Kenai, Kenai Peninsula Votes, and the City of Homer

Thursday, April 4th 2024
Homer City Hall
491 E Pioneer Ave.
from 5:30pm - 7:30pm

✓ **What's covered during the event:**

- Presentation on how to run for elected office
- Materials will be available for reference
- Q&A with panel of past elected officials
- Refreshments
- Networking period (time permitting)

For more information: 907-299-2517 - kenaipeninsulavotes@gmail.com

It's important for these reasons:

Representation:

It ensures diverse voices are heard and represented in decision-making.

Policy Impact:

Candidates shape policies that affect every aspect of society.

Driving Change:

Running empowers individuals to champion causes and drive meaningful change.

Accountability:

Elected officials are held accountable for their actions, fostering transparency.

Inspiration:

It inspires future generations to engage in civic leadership and public service.

Community Resilience:

Builds community engagement and resilience in addressing challenges.

Preserving Democracy:

Demonstrates a commitment to upholding democratic values and principles by choosing our leaders through voting.

Running for public office is not just a personal endeavor but a vital civic duty that shapes the future of our communities and nation.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

HOMER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REWRITE



Community members noting on maps areas of importance.

The City of Homer launched its 2018 Comprehensive Plan at the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center on March 28th, drawing a full house of 75-80 participants.

With support from the Anchorage-based consulting group Agnew::Beck, the city is updating its plan, sparking enthusiastic engagement from community members who offered valuable feedback. Shelly Wade, a principal/owner from Agnew::Beck, led discussions on walkability, recreational access, protection of green spaces, and preserving Homer's "small town vibe". Attendees stressed the importance of youth involvement in the rewriting process, as they will be the ones living in Homer in 20 years.

Moving forward, the consulting team plans to continue community engagement through surveys and future visits. Your engagement and ideas got the planning team off to a great start. Let's keep it rolling!

For ways to get involved, contribute your ideas, and to receive updates, go to homercompplanupdate.com.

PORT & HARBOR U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY STUDENT VISIT

Homer's Port and Harbor welcomed four Midshipmen students from the Annapolis, Maryland U.S. Naval Academy for a three-day field study on harbor design. The students traveled to Homer as part of their capstone senior design project as ocean engineers. The team selected the Homer Harbor Expansion (HHE) as their final project and reached out through the HHE website to ask questions prior to scheduling the visit. In addition to meeting with our Port and Harbor team and HDR engineers, the students also gathered site-specific data, such as soundings to measure ocean depth, sediment samples, and information on other site characteristics.

The Ocean Engineering Program at the Naval Academy guides students to explore coastal, offshore, underwater, and environmental engineering to address challenges in ocean environments. Students design structures for shore protection, harsh ocean conditions, underwater living (submarines), underwater working systems (cables, pipelines, shipwrecks, etc.), while also tackling pollution and resource management issues.

Homer feels honored to have been chosen by these young professionals to support their studies. Our harbor's captivating and distinctive geography offers a truly special learning environment. We hope that collaborating with these students during their visit will lead to innovative methods that will benefit ours and many other harbors in the future.



Left to Right: Midn 1/C Tanner Cummins, Deputy Harbormaster Aaron Glidden, Midn 1/C Daniel Gantz, Port Director Bryan Hawkins, Midn 1/C Michael Lancaster, Harbormaster Matt Clarke, Midn 1/C Daniel McMann

Click here to learn more about the U.S. Naval Academy Ocean Engineering Program:



Ocean Engineering Major

Ocean Engineering page for Naval Architecture & Ocean Engineering at USNA.edu. Updated Tue Feb 20 14:46:20 EST 2024.

 NavalAcademy

CLICK HERE 

HOMER HARBOR EXPANSION

STUDY UPDATE



Great news for our community!

Federal continuation funds for the Homer Harbor Expansion General Investigation were included in the Fiscal Year 2025 Presidential budget, which was released to Congress on March 11. Though confirmation of the funding is contingent upon approval from Congress during the budgetary process, this is very positive news. The announcement underscores the USACE's commitment to advancing the General Investigation, as well as the support of the Alaska Congressional Delegation.

The General Investigation study allows us to identify sustainable solutions to meet the escalating demands of maritime transportation across the region and address safety concerns, while balancing environmental stewardship and economic vitality.

The US Corps of Engineers project team will be doing environmental fieldwork this summer utilizing remaining Fiscal Year 2023 study funds. The team's first visit will be in April to coincide with an ecological modeling workshop they are also hosting as part of the study. The City is presently contracting for geophysical survey work to map beneath the seafloor in

the area proposed for the harbor expansion. The survey is expected to begin later in the summer. Completing these two study components will allow the US Army Corps of Engineers to move forward with design work when study activities resume in full.



Keep engaged with the study at www.homerharborexpan.com

ALASKA DOT HOMER AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is currently engaged in a construction project to rehabilitate and improve Homer Airport runways and taxiways with the goals of extending the service life of the airport, improving safety, and improving airport perimeter access for airport security, maintenance, wildlife hazard management, and airfield rescue operations.



View closure schedule and details about the project on the City of Homer webpage, DOT&PF Homer Airport Improvement Project Info:



<https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/airport/dotpf-homer-airport-improvement-project-info>

Stay up to date with DOT&PF's Airport Improvement Project. You can provide public comment via their online comment form.



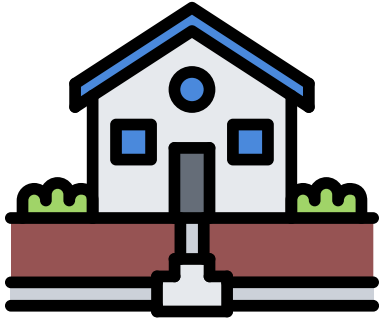
[Homer Airport Improvements - Public Involvement](https://dot.alaska.gov/creg/homerairport/involvement.shtml)

<https://dot.alaska.gov/creg/homerairport/involvement.shtml>

PUBLIC WORKS

WATER AND WASTEWATER COLLECTIONS SYSTEM CLEANING

The City of Homer's Water and Wastewater Collections Department needs your help to keep the wastewater collection system clean and operating smoothly! Homeowners and business owners are encouraged to regularly clean their water and sewer lines to prevent pipe damage and clogs, ultimately saving money on costly repairs. Cleaning out these systems pushes debris into the wastewater collection system, which can then be maintained by the City and transported to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.



All drainage lines from homes or businesses are linked to the City's collection system. The system consists of water and sewer main pipes, manholes, cleanouts, siphons, lift stations, and key structures, organized into five routes, each receiving annual cleaning. Hydro Jetting is the method used for cleaning, which is a safe and eco-friendly technique utilizing pressurized water and air to eliminate undesirable substances from the system.

Whether from sinks, showers, or toilets, every drain connects to the sewer lines. By maintaining and regularly inspecting systems in your home or business, you contribute to the city's efforts to ensure everything runs well.

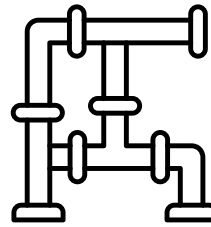


What you can do:



Adopt Good Habits

- Dispose of grease in the trash.
- Use drain strainers.
- Run water regularly.
- Check for leaks.
- Maintain garbage disposals.
- Mindful flushing.
- Use quality cleaning materials.



Routine Maintenance:

- Schedule routine inspections every two years.
- Avoiding tree root intrusion on sewer and water lines.
- Install backwater prevention valves.
- Maintain septic systems.

CITY OF HOMER AWARDED EPA AQUARIUS RECOGNITION

The City of Homer is incredibly proud to announce it has been awarded a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) AQUARIUS Recognition for the Seawall Armor Rock Installation Project. The AQUARIUS Recognition Program nationally recognizes Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) funded projects for exceptional focus on six main areas. Homer was chosen for its "Excellence in Climate Change Mitigation and Resiliency."

In May 2021, the City completed a significant erosion defense project partially funded by Alaska's DWSRF Program. Focused on reinforcing an existing seawall with armor rock, the project aimed to combat accelerated erosion along the coastline that threatened property and utility infrastructure. Shoreline erosion rates estimated from historical air photos from 1951 to 2002 averaged about 3.5 feet per year. The seawall constructed in 2004 helps protect properties from erosion.

By enhancing the wall's defense with the installation of armor rock, the project ensures stability to utilities infrastructure, including wastewater in the area, and critical drinking water that supplies residents and businesses in Homer. Overall, the City of Homer took decisive action to prevent water supply failures that would have affected residents, tourists, retail businesses, the Alaska Marine Highway ferry terminal, the fishing industry, hotels, and outdoor enthusiasts that use the Spit as an access point to the wonders of Kachemak Bay.

This award reflects Homer's commitment to environmental stewardship and use of innovative designs to protect our shores from further erosion.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

HVFD FIRE ACADEMY

Have you ever considered a career as an emergency responder? The Homer Volunteer Fire Department is looking for dedicated volunteers who are eager to learn.

Be sure to register in time to **attend training from March 25th through July 20th.**

This program equips participants with the essential skills and knowledge needed to excel in firefighting and emergency medical services.

Training will consist of fundamental Fire Fighter I and Fire Fighter II techniques, as well as Hazmat awareness and operations. Recruits gain hands-on experience under the guidance of experienced instructors.

For those looking to start a career as a volunteer firefighter or EMT, this training will provide a pathway for you to make a meaningful impact on your community.

Stop by the Homer fire station located at 604 E. Pioneer Ave., or call 907-235-3155 for more information!



2024 Fire Academy Take The Next Step

Kick start your career as an emergency responder by becoming a volunteer firefighter or EMT.

Receive free training when you become a volunteer. Stop by the Homer fire station or call 907-235-3155 for more information! Stop by today.

Starting March 25th - July 20th
HVFD Fire Academy will consist of Firefighter I training, Hazmat awareness, Hazmat operations, and Firefighter II training.



POLICE DEPARTMENT

NATIONAL RX TAKE BACK DAY APRIL 27, 2024

For over ten years, the HPD has participated in the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administrations (DEA) National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Last year, over 22 tons of medications were collected from the Pacific Northwest states (Alaska, Washington, Oregon and Idaho) alone.

The take back program aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of prescription drugs while also educating the general public about the potential for medication abuse. We encourage all families, friends and neighbors to participate. Unused prescription drugs can end up in the wrong hands, which can be dangerous and tragic.

At the Homer Police Department, every day is Take Back Day. There is a permanent collection box in the front entrance lobby. Help keep your family and community safe by turning in unneeded medications for proper disposal.





In this section, we aim to keep readers informed about the latest developments in public safety in the community. Whether it's news about crime prevention, emergency preparedness, or updates on local law enforcement activities, we've got you covered. Our goal is to promote a safe and secure environment for all community members and visitors of Homer, and we believe that staying informed is a crucial part of achieving that. Read on to learn more about what's happening in public safety in Homer.

APRIL IS NATIONAL DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH

During the month of April, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is raising awareness of the danger of distracted driving. Did you know that distracted driving claimed the lives of 3,522 people in 2021 alone? By being aware and changing habits while on the road can save you a ticket and can save lives.

According to the NHTSA site, “Distracted driving comes in many forms: adjusting the radio or GPS, applying makeup, eating and drinking. But it’s cell phone use — specifically, texting, talking, and social media use — that is the most common distraction. Texting, which includes messaging, is considered the most dangerous type of distracted driving because it combines visual, manual and cognitive distraction.”



Here are some simple tips for a safer ride:

- Need to text? Pull over in a safe spot. No text or notification is worth risking a life on the road.
- Designate a passenger as your "designated texter" for calls or messages.
- Avoid scrolling through apps while driving. Put your phone out of reach until you arrive.

SAFETY TIPS FOR MOOSE ENCOUNTERS



It’s that time of year when moose often come to graze where snow has melted. Keep these safety tips in mind if you encounter moose while out on walks, on the trail, in your neighborhood, or while driving.

The Alaska Highway Safety Office offers the following tips to help avoid a deadly confrontation with moose:

- Never feed a moose
- Give moose at least 50 feet. If it doesn't yield as you approach, give it the trail.
- If a moose lays its ears back or its hackles (the hairs on its hump) rise, it's angry or afraid and may charge.
- Moose kick with their front as well as hind feet so we suggest not confronting them directly.
- Don't corner moose into fences or houses.
- If a moose charges, there are few options available to you but it has been suggested by many others to simply get behind a tree. A theory stands that you can run around the trunk faster than the gangly moose.
- Never get between a cow and her calf.

MEET THE STAFF

Work Anniversaries

Thank you to the following staff members for your dedication, commitment, and service to the City of Homer!

March

Names	Dept.	Years
Matt Clarke	Port	23 Years
Elton Anderson	Port	18 Years
Renee Krause	Clerks	17 Years
Mike Parish	Public Works	10 Years
Angie Kalugin	Finance	9 Years
Elizabeth Fischer	Finance	7 Years
Kurt Read	Port	7 Years
Matt Smith	Library	6 Years
Matt Steffy	Planning	6 Years
Amber Baldus	Fire	2 Years
Bill Jirsa	IT	1 Year
Michael de la Torre	Police	1 Year
Kane Graham	Police	1 Year



Roslyn Kriegh

Meet **Roslyn Kriegh** who joined the Port & Harbor in March as Port Property Associate.

Roslyn was born and raised on Kodiak Island. Her husband, Thomas Vanek, is from Ninilchik. They have spent the last 7 years in California and Washington state pursuing education and supporting their extended family.

Homer is where they always planned to return, she says, “near our families and in the state we adore. We couldn’t imagine a better place to establish our futures.”

Although Roslyn is still settling into her position, she has been enjoying her interactions with everyone and their excitement for the upcoming season! Outside of work she has several hobbies including a passion for ornithology, animal husbandry, freshwater aquariums, and chickens. Ask her to learn more!

Welcome to the Team!



We want to extend a warm welcome to **Bradley Gullikson**, who joins the Homer Police Department as a Police Officer. Bradley comes to us from the Alaska State Troopers and brings valuable knowledge and experience to the team.

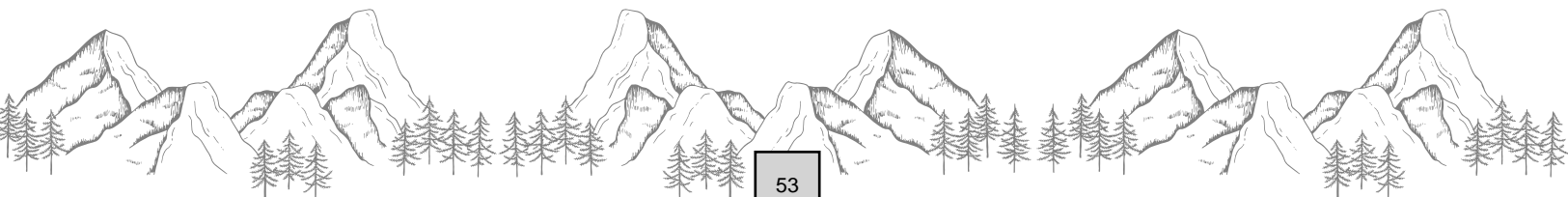


Stephen Overdorf

Stephen Overdorf joins Public Works as a full-time Equipment Operator Apprentice. Stephen has worked the last two seasons as a winter temp, working with Airport Building Maintenance.

Stephen came to Homer from Kenai in January of 2000 and was actually a part of the crew that built the Fish Factory in Homer. In his spare time, he works with his sawmill and maintains his hobby farm with goats and a garden.

When asked about what he likes most about Homer, he says, “It’s the best place on earth!” We can agree on that.



CITY OF HOMER ROSTER

Mayor - Ken Castner (2024)

City Council

Donna Aderhold (2024)

Jason Davis (2025)

Shelley Erickson (2024)

Storm P. Hansen (2025)

Rachel Lord (2026)

Caroline Venuti (2026)

City Staff Leadership

Melissa Jacobsen, Acting City Manager, MMC, City Clerk/Deputy
Director of Administration

Mark Robl, Chief of Police

Bill Jirsa, Chief Technology Officer

Julie Engebretsen, Director of Community Development

Elizabeth Walton, Finance Director

Mark Kirko, Fire Chief

Dave Berry, Library Director

Andrea Browning, Personnel Director

Bryan Hawkins, Port Director

Dan Kort, Public Works Director

Ryan Foster, City Planner

Mike Illg, Community Recreation Manager

Commissions and Boards

ADA Advisory Board

Economic Development Advisory Commission

Library Advisory Board

Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission

Planning Commission

Port and Harbor Advisory Commission

MUNICIPAL ART COLLECTION



Fireweed Wall Mural by Josh Nordstrom - City Hall



Pocket Pebble by Melisse Reichman -
Boathouse Pavilion on the Spit

Learn more about the municipal art collection at:

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/
prac/city-homer-municipal-art-collection](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/prac/city-homer-municipal-art-collection)

STAY CONNECTED TO CITY COUNCIL

Go to cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/stay-connected-city-council to find instructions on how to listen, provide testimony, and participate in the meetings via Zoom.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

April

- | | | |
|----|---------|--|
| 1 | 3:30 pm | Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Regular Meeting |
| 3 | 5:30 pm | Planning Commission Worksession |
| 3 | 6:30 pm | Planning Commission Regular Meeting |
| 9 | 6:00 pm | Economic Development Advisory Commission Regular Meeting |
| 11 | 4:00 pm | ADA Advisory Board |
| 15 | 3:30 pm | Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Regular Meeting |
| 16 | 5:30 pm | Library Advisory Board Regular Meeting |
| 17 | 5:30 pm | Planning Commission Worksession |
| 17 | 6:30 pm | Planning Commission Regular Meeting |
| 18 | 5:30 pm | Parks, Art, Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission Regular Meeting |
| 24 | 5:30 pm | Port & Harbor Advisory Commission Regular Meeting |
| 29 | 3:30 pm | Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Regular Meeting |



JOIN OUR TEAM

- Find current job listings for the City of Homer
- Sign up for Job Alerts
- Apply Online at: cityofhomerak.applicantpro.com/jobs

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The City of Homer Newsletter is published monthly. For questions or comments, please contact the Office of the City Manager at citymanager@ci.homer.ak.us.

City of Homer

491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska 99603

907-235-8121

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION
2024 -2025 STRATEGIC PLAN & GOALS**

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

	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Opportunity:</i> Participate in the Land Allocation Plan annual review</p> <p><i>Opportunity:</i> Participate in Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Rewrite projects</p>
	<p>4. Assess jobs training needs, workforce development, availability of workers and workforce supports including child care, housing.</p> <p><i>Opportunity:</i> Invite speakers to talk about workforce development such as KPB, South Peninsula Hospital</p> <p><i>Opportunity:</i> Engage in Comprehensive Plan and other outreach opportunities</p>
<p>Long Term Goals 5 Years or More (2025+)</p>	<p>1. Multipurpose community center (HERC) Pioneer redevelopment vs new facility in a new location.</p> <p><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.</p> <p>2. Plan for a new Business Retention and Expansion Plan BR&E</p> <p><i>Opportunity:</i> Consider a funding request for the FY 2026-27 budget</p>

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.

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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.