



Agenda

Planning Commission Worksession

Wednesday, August 19, 2026 at 5:30 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: 936 2815 3389 Password: 865591

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

CALL TO ORDER, 5:30 P.M.

AGENDA APPROVAL

DISCUSSION TOPIC(S)/PRESENTATIONS

- A. Memorandum 2026-10, Title 21 Public Hearing Draft discussion on Steep Slopes and Administrative Adjustments

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM(S)

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM(S)

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE (3 minute time limit)

ADJOURNMENT

Next regular meeting is September 2, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska



MEMORANDUM

PC 2026-10

Memorandum 2026-10, Title 21 Public Hearing Draft discussion on Steep Slopes and Administrative Adjustments

Item Type: Backup Memorandum
Prepared For: Planning Commission
Date: August 12, 2026
From: Julie Engebretsen, Community Development Director
Ryan Foster, AICP City Planner

Purpose

This memo outlines the topics and desired outcomes for the work session. The Commission will focus on two sections of the Title 21 update: steep slopes and administrative adjustments.

Desired Outcomes

- Discuss staff recommendation on changes to steep slope code
- Discuss any Commission concerns with administrative adjustments
- With Commission consensus, staff will bring forward proposed motions at the 9/16 regular meeting.

Steep Slopes: (draft code p. 134-136)

Concerns about development on steep slopes and the risk of landslides have been recurring themes throughout the Comprehensive Plan and Title 21 update processes. As development continues and more areas of the community are built out, the department is receiving more proposals for new construction on lots with challenging terrain.

The Commission discussed this topic but did not make substantive changes to the current code. Staff recommends strengthening the regulations for development on steep slopes. Under the current code, development on a parcel with an average slope greater than 45% requires review by a third-party engineer. Staff recommends lowering this threshold to an average slope greater than 30%.

Sample motion: Move to amend 21.36.06 by striking (1)a(ii) and amending section (2) to state 30% rather than 45%.

Potential Impacts:

- Require 3rd party engineer review on more projects.
- Increase costs for developers/new homeowners.
- Streamline City review of projects due to higher quality and more complete applications.
- Reduce risks of slope failure and erosion associated with development on steep slopes.

Administrative Adjustments (draft code p. 45-46)

There are three types of Administrative Adjustment: Administrative Exemptions, Encroachment Permits, and Variances. The first two are new to City code; variances are not new.

Administrative Adjustments Table

	What is it?	Process	Intent
Administrative Exemption	Allows for up to 2 feet of building/structure setback adjustment.	Staff approval with review criteria to protect public safety and negative impacts to neighboring properties.	Allow for small setback adjustments based on specific site conditions. Lowest barrier of relief to setbacks only.
Encroachment Permit	Allows for building/structure setback adjustments greater than 2 feet . Can be submitted before or after construction.	Requires a public hearing and Planning Commission approval with review criteria to protect public safety and negative impacts on neighboring properties.	Allow for setback adjustments greater than administrative exemptions, but not as high of a bar as variances. There are many nonconforming structures in Homer from changes in HCC, annexation, and parcel characteristics.
Variance <i>(Current code and no change)</i>	Exceptions to Title 21. Can be more than simply setback adjustments. Usually applications are submitted before construction activity takes place.	Requires a public hearing and Planning Commission approval with rigorous review criteria.	The highest level of approval for <u>exceptions to HCC</u> with rigorous review criteria. Exceptions to HCC are only for the least amount of relief required to reasonably utilize a property.

Requested Action: Staff recommends retaining the draft code 21.10 as written. Please bring forward any discussion and potential amendments.