

Introduced by:	Cooper, Cox, Smalley, Dunne
Date:	05/05/20
Hearing:	06/16/20
Action:	Enacted as Amended
Vote:	7 Yes, 2 No, 0 Absent

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH  
ORDINANCE 2020-25**

**AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE RESILIENCE AND SECURITY ADVISORY  
COMMISSION FOR THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH**

**WHEREAS,** annual air temperatures in the Kenai Peninsula Borough have risen by 3.4 degrees Fahrenheit since 1969 and July 2019 was the warmest month on record in Alaska; and

**WHEREAS,** over the past half-century, annual available water on the western Kenai Peninsula has declined 62%, according to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and in 2019 Kenai Peninsula communities experienced severe drought and the Kenai Peninsula Borough declared an emergency disaster on behalf of Seldovia and Nanwalek due to severe water shortages; and

**WHEREAS,** significant warming trends in our rivers and ocean are beginning to harm tourism, subsistence, sport, and commercial fisheries, water temperatures in non-glacial Cook Inlet streams routinely exceed physiological thresholds for salmon during the month of July, according to Cook Inletkeeper, and in 2019 warm water conditions exceeded temperatures forecasted for 2069, causing high rates of pre-spawn mortality of salmon across the state. NOAA has determined that a recent series of collapses in Pacific Cod fisheries are linked to warming ocean conditions, and these same warming ocean conditions appear to be harming salmon survival. Warming of nearshore waters is increasing the rate of harmful algal blooms, such as PSP, hurting the mariculture industry. Ocean acidification will continue to damage vital nurseries for many fish stocks in Kachemak Bay and Cook Inlet, according to the National Estuarine Research Reserve; and

**WHEREAS,** according to USDA, Forest Service, current winter trends indicate that the southern Kenai Peninsula will lose 10-20% of its snowpack by 2030-2059, which threatens winter tourism, recreation, as well as fish and wildlife that are at the center of our culture and economies. As winters warm, private property values are threatened by increased instances of flash flooding, which results in erosion and bluff instability, according to new research by the University of Alberta. According to the Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, erosion rates on the eastern shores of Cook Inlet are 1 foot per year, and 2.3 feet per year in the western Homer area; and

**WHEREAS,** the Alaska Division of Forestry changed the official start date of the statewide fire season from May 1 to April 1 in response to the Tracy Avenue Fire that threatened Homer in 2005, the first spring grassland fire on the peninsula. There is a projected 66% increase in the estimated value of human structures (e.g. homes, businesses) that are at risk of fire in the next half century on the Kenai Peninsula, according to the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for the Chugach National Forest and the Kenai Peninsula. According to the Anchorage Daily News, the 2019 Swan Lake Fire on the Kenai Peninsula was far and away the most expensive fire in the country at an estimated cost to fight of \$46 million; this estimate does not include heavy losses to tourism revenue, losses to private property, or significant losses associated with repair of roads or power lines. A study in *Climatic Change* estimates that costs due to increased wildfires across Alaska are \$1.1 to \$2.1 billion annually from 2006 through the end of the century; and

**WHEREAS,** the Caribou Hills was the epicenter of an unprecedented spruce bark beetle outbreak that eventually culled about 1 million acres of Sitka, white and Lutz spruce on the southern and central Kenai Peninsula from the mid-1980s through the 1990s, sustained by consecutive summers of above-average temperatures, according to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. The northern peninsula and the MatSu have been hard hit by spruce bark beetle in the past couple years, and spruce bark beetle's range is expanding as the state warms, and the scale of outbreaks is increasing; and

**WHEREAS,** the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has determined that the effects of the changing climate are "beginning to impact Alaska's natural systems and the uses they sustain"; and

**WHEREAS,** a resilience and security commission is needed to guide and support the borough's programmatic responses to these challenges and to implement comprehensive strategic planning to mitigate known hazards, adapt to significant changes, and modernize and diversify our energy sector; and

**WHEREAS,** the 2019 Kenai Peninsula Comprehensive Plan, Focus Area: Land Use, Objective G, Strategy 1 states, "Form a Kenai Peninsula Borough Commission on Sustainability"; and

**WHEREAS,** the 2019 Kenai Peninsula Comprehensive Plan, Focus Area: Land Use, Objective G, Strategy 2 states, "Develop a climate change action plan..."; and

**WHEREAS,** the Borough Comprehensive Plan outlines strategies for renewable energy: Focus Area: Energy & Utilities, Objective C states, "Support residential, community and region-wide renewable energy initiatives and projects...Charge the commission with developing a renewable energy strategy to investigate and make recommendations for feasible renewable energies for Kenai Peninsula"; and

- WHEREAS,** the 2019 Kenai Peninsula Comprehensive Plan, Focus Area: Agriculture & Mariculture, Objective A states, “Support a more sustainable and resilient Kenai Peninsula by increasing production and distribution of quality, healthy agricultural products for local, state and export markets”; and
- WHEREAS,** the 2019 Kenai Peninsula Comprehensive Plan, Focus Area: Agriculture & Mariculture, Objective C states, “Encourage greater local and regional self-sufficiency”; and
- WHEREAS,** the 2019 Kenai Peninsula Comprehensive Plan, Focus Area: Agriculture & Mariculture, Objective B states, “Sustain and create new agriculture-related jobs and businesses”; and
- WHEREAS,** the 2019 Kenai Peninsula Comprehensive Plan, Focus Area: Solid Waste Services, Objective C states, “Increase awareness of and opportunities for waste reduction and landfill diversion, including Reduce, Recycle, Reuse”; and
- WHEREAS,** the City Councils of Seldovia, Homer and Soldotna all passed resolutions in support of the establishment of a commission to develop strategic responses to warming trends in our environment for the protection of public safety and welfare; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Homer has a climate action plan and the City of Seward is working on a climate action plan; and
- WHEREAS,** a resilience and security commission supports the ongoing work within the borough to improve energy and climate security through such projects as Bradley and Grant Lake hydroelectric, the Soldotna landfill gas energy project; the Kenai Peninsula Agriculture Initiative; the installation of electric vehicle charging stations; the banning of single-use plastic bags in Soldotna, Kenai, Seward and Homer; the development of regional building efficiency standards by the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation; the development of the borough All-Hazard Mitigation Plan; the creation of climate action plans by the cities of Homer and Seward; as well as the ongoing monitoring of climate changes on the peninsula by such institutions as the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and the University of Alaska; and
- WHEREAS,** the Kenai Peninsula Borough has over 148 facilities and investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy for these facilities represent enormous potential savings on electricity and maintenance costs over the mid- and long-term; and
- WHEREAS,** the Kenai Peninsula Borough Land Management Division is developing an agricultural initiative and pilot project with the strategy of managing borough land designated as agricultural land for long-term agricultural production and the initiative needs a commission to provide guidance and oversight; and

**WHEREAS,** it is in KPB's interest to implement policies that mitigate against known hazards, invest in local agriculture, improve the efficiency of buildings and transportation, reduce solid waste, protect habitats of fish and wildlife, and invest in modern, clean, local sources of energy; and

**WHEREAS,** these policies will have additional benefits for residents, including cost savings, job creation, bolstering self-reliance, increased economic stability through market diversification, greater protection of public natural resources, and better public health outcomes; and

**WHEREAS,** investments in hazard mitigation, energy efficiency, grid diversification, food security, and waste reduction generally pay for themselves and create long-term jobs and,

**WHEREAS,** financial and technical support for the commission is available through numerous public and private institutions who support community resilience and security; and

**WHEREAS,** for these reasons, in accordance with the Borough Comprehensive Plan, the Kenai Peninsula Borough shall establish a Resilience and Security Commission to develop and recommend sustainability solutions for the borough; and

**WHEREAS,** the Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting of June 8, 2020 recommended approval by unanimous vote;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH:**

**SECTION 1.** The assembly hereby establishes the Resilience and Security Commission for the borough subject to the provisions in this ordinance.

**SECTION 2. Purpose and Scope.** The commission will advise the administration and assembly on developing sustainability solutions for the Kenai Peninsula Borough to promote the economic security, safety, self-reliance, and wellbeing of its inhabitants, while maintaining the ability of future generations to do the same.

The scope of matters subject to consideration by the resilience and security commission includes:

1. Divert materials that would otherwise be discarded in landfills within the borough to extend the lifetime of landfills and save taxpayer dollars;
2. Improve cost and energy efficiency of buildings;
3. Improve cost and energy efficiency of transportation;

4. Increase use of local, clean energy to (a) modernize electricity generation, storage and distribution; (b) increase energy independence; (c) diversify the grid and reduce supply volatility;
5. Support hazard mitigation planning that accounts for changing environmental conditions;
6. Improve food security through support of local agriculture, protection of the ecological integrity of fish and wildlife habitat, protection of water resources, and other means;
7. Conduct cost-benefit analyses of sustainable resource initiatives;
8. Actively engage and communicate with borough communities to develop and institute sustainable resource initiatives through community workgroups, task-forces, online media, etc.;
9. Seek funding to support the work of the commission; and
10. Other similar efforts focused on protection of our natural resources, economy, security and wellbeing.

**SECTION 3. Duties.** The duties of the commission are as follows to the extent the duties performed are within the scope of the borough's legally authorized powers:

- A. Collaborate with borough staff, communities, utilities, agencies, universities, and the private sector to lead the development and modification of strategic planning to mitigate and adapt to significant changes in our environment;
- B. Develop programmatic strategies for sustainable development that anticipate, adapt to, and mitigate against changes in our natural systems;
- C. Collaborate with utility cooperatives to conduct energy assessments, evaluate borough investments in the energy sector, and diversify energy portfolios;
- D. Conduct cost-benefit analyses of strategic support of sectors with good long-term outlook, such as building and transportation efficiency, renewable energy, agriculture, tourism, and fishing;
- E. Lead implementation of strategies through continued collaboration with the mayor, assembly, staff, agencies, utilities, universities, the private sector, and communities;

- F. Provide metrics for monitoring progress toward meeting goals, and report annually to the mayor and assembly at the end of January on the progress made for the previous year along with recommendations on how to support or improve those efforts;
- G. Actively engage and communicate with borough communities to collaboratively develop and institute sustainable resource initiatives through citizen workgroups, task-forces, online media, etc.; and
- H. Make recommendations to the mayor on public purpose grants that promote sustainability goals of the borough.

**SECTION 4. Memberships.** The resilience and security commission shall consist of nine voting members appointed by the mayor and approved by the assembly. Appointed members shall have experience in at least one of the ten areas defining the scope of the commission and shall serve overlapping three-year terms for no more than two consecutive terms.

Sustainability commissioners shall submit a resume with their application to be appointed by the mayor and approved by the assembly from each of the following geographic areas as generally described below.

- 1. East Peninsula including areas of Seward, Moose Pass, Cooper Landing
- 2. Southwest Borough including areas of Seldovia, Port Graham, Homer, Kachemak City, Nanwalek
- 3. South Central including areas of Anchor Point, Ninilchik, Kasilof, Clam Gulch
- 4. Central shall have two seats including areas of Sterling, Kenai, Soldotna, Kalifornsky
- 5. Northwest Borough including areas of Hope, Tyonek, Nikiski
- 6. Three At-Large Seats

In addition, the commission may appoint two non-voting youth members. Youth members shall serve one-year terms.

**SECTION 5. Officers.** A chair, vice-chair and recording secretary of the commission shall be selected annually from and by the appointed members of the commission.

The Commission shall coordinate with the planning department to publicize meetings, post the minutes, etc. The Assembly President may appoint an assembly member to be the assembly representative for this advisory commission.

**SECTION 6. Meetings.** Meetings shall occur once a month at assembly chambers.

**SECTION 7. Duration.** The commission shall continue until disbanded by the assembly by ordinance.


**SECTION 8. Investigation and recommendation authority.** The resilience and security commission may consider and investigate subject matter tending to the development and betterment of the borough, now and in the future. It may make recommendations as it considers advisable to the planning commission, administration and the assembly. The commission must request approval to make or have made energy assessments, analyses, surveys, maps or plans through the budget process.

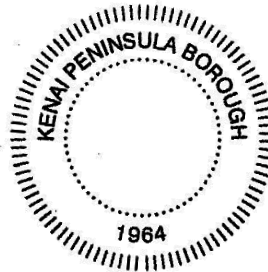
**SECTION 9.** That this ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its enactment.

**ENACTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH THIS 16TH DAY OF JUNE, 2020**

ATTEST:

  
Johni Blankenship, MMC, Borough Clerk

  
Kelly Cooper, Assembly President



Yes: Carpenter, Cox, Dunne, Hibbert, Johnson, Smalley, Cooper

No: Bjorkman, Blakeley

Absent: None