2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan

Adopted by the Homer City Council on November 24, 2025

HomerCompPlanUpdate.com

Bottom right cover photo credit: Derek Mueller

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all Homer residents, businesses, organizations, and other local, regional, state, and federal partners who have contributed to the 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan development process, including City of Homer staff, the Homer Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and past and present City of Homer boards, commissions, and councils.

Homer Spit in 1945. Source: Alaska Digital Archives.

Land Acknowledgement

*We respectfully acknowledge that Homer's lands and waters have been stewarded since time immemorial by the Indigenous peoples of this region: Dena'ina, Sugpiaq, Yup'ik, and Kachemak peoples.**

Homer's heritage also reflects the contributions of Alaska Native families, early homesteaders, fishermen, artists, and generations of residents who have shaped the community into what it is today.

Homer Main Street, 1958. Source: Steve McCutcheon, McCutcheon Collection, Anchorage Museum, B1990.14.5.TV.73.84

"Tuyanitun: Tuggeht," a sculpture on Bishop's Beach, created by local artist Argent Kvasnikoff, a member of the Ninilchik Tribe of Alaska, to celebrate Indigenous stewardship of Homer area lands past, present, and future.

*Land acknowledgement adopted from Bunnel Street Arts Center's land acknowledgement.

Many photos in this plan were submitted by residents during a project photo contest; these photos are listed with photo credits. Uncredited photos were taken by members of the project team.

This plan was produced by Agnew::Beck Consulting in partnership with RESPEC, Kinney Engineering, Northern Economics, Corvus Design, and Stantec.

Homer City Council Ordinance No. 25-64

CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA

City Manager

ORDINANCE 25-64(A)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE HOMER CITY COUNCIL ADOPTING THE 2045 HOMER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND RECOMMENDING ADOPTION BY THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH.

WHEREAS, The Kenai Peninsula Borough as a Second Class Borough shall provide for planning on an areawide basis in accordance with AS 29.40; and

WHEREAS, As provided in Kenai Peninsula Borough Code 21.01.025, cities in the Borough requesting extensive comprehensive plan amendments may recommend to the Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission a change to the city comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, The City of Homer has prepared extensive comprehensive plan amendments in the form of the 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, A comprehensive plan is a public declaration of policy statements, goals, standards and maps for guiding the physical, social and economic development, both private and public, of the City; and

WHEREAS, The 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan will guide the development of the City of Homer; and

WHEREAS, The Homer Planning Commission, in its advisory position to the Kenai Peninsula Borough, and other advisory bodies for the City, have reviewed said plan and or conducted public hearings; and

WHEREAS, The Homer City Council, based upon the recommendation of the Homer Planning Commission, recommends that the Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission and Assembly adopt the 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, The City of Homer Ordains:

Section 1. The 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan is hereby adopted as the City of Homer Comprehensive Plan, superseding the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, the 2006 Homer Town Center Development Plan, and 2010 Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan.

Section 2. The previously adopted Homer Master Roads and Streets Plan (1986), Homer Transportation Plan (2024), remain part of the 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan.

Section 3. Subsection (b) of Homer City Code 21.02.010, Comprehensive Plan-Adoption, is amended to read as follows:

b. The following documents, as initially approved and subsequently amended, are adopted by reference as comprising the Homer Comprehensive Plan.

1. ~~Homer Comprehensive Plan (2018)~~
2. **Homer Comprehensive Plan (2045)**
3. Homer Master Roads and Streets Plan (1986)
4. Homer Transportation Plan (2024)
5. ~~Homer Town Center Development Plan (2006)~~
6. ~~Homer Spit Plan (2010)~~

Section 4. The City of Homer hereby recommends the Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission and Assembly adopt the 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan as extensive comprehensive plan amendments under Kenai Peninsula Borough Code 21.01.025, and as an element of the Official Borough Comprehensive Plan within the City of Homer planning area of the Borough.

Section 5. Sections 1 through 3 of this ordinance shall take effect upon the adoption of the 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan by the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly. The remainder of this ordinance shall take effect upon its adoption by the Homer City Council.

Section 6. Section 3 of this ordinance is of a permanent and general character and shall be included in the city code. The remainder of this ordinance is not of a permanent nature and is a non-code ordinance.

ENACTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA, this 24th day of November, 2025.

CITY OF HOMER

RACHEL LORD, MAYOR

ATTEST:

~~ZACH PETTIT, ACTING~~ CITY CLERK
Amy Woodruff

Introduction: 10/13/25
Public Hearing: 10/27/25 , 11/10/25, 11/24/25
Second Reading: 10/27/25
Effective Date: 11/25/25

YES: 6
NO: Ø
ABSTAIN: Ø
ABSENT: Ø

Kenai Peninsula Borough Ordinance No.

To come in final document when adopted.

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Photo Credit: Derek Mueller

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2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan
Executive Summary

HomerCompPlanUpdate.com

Photo Credit: Derek Mueller

Land Use and Environment

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

- Moderate Growth Desired
- Modernized Zoning is Essential for Attainable Housing, Safety, and Future Growth
- Equitable Access to Recreation and Open Space Enhances Community Well-Being
- Place-Based Planning Strengthens Homer's Distinct District and Regional Role

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C
Promote sustainable and moderate growth that preserves Homer's small-town character.	Plan for responsible development that balances environmental impacts, community connections, and infrastructure capacity.	Modernize zoning and land use regulations to reflect the community's vision.

City-Led Strategies

1. Implement a Future Land Use Map that guides future decisions about land use and growth.
2. Implement zoning reforms to support sustainable growth and attainable housing development.
3. Strategically align development regulations with natural hazard risks and land suitability to support safe, resilient, and responsible growth.
4. Protect and enhance green space in Homer to support critical habitat conservation, recreational access, and community well-being.
5. Advance place-based planning and development that supports Homer's unique community character, encourages targeted infill, and strengthens Homer's role as a regional hub.

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

6. Collaborate with public and private partners to enhance community spaces and recreational infrastructure.
7. Coordinate with regional and state agencies to align land use policies with environmental stewardship and shared planning goals.

Photo: Derek Mueller

Public Facilities and Services

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

- Reliable and Affordable Services
- Accessible, Maintained Community Facilities
- Rising Service Demands and Infrastructure Costs

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C
Provide City services that are available, affordable, and adequate.	Provide and improve City-operated facilities to meet the needs of the community, accommodate desired growth, and support sustainability and conservation goals.	Mitigate risks to City-owned infrastructure from climate change and natural hazards.

City-Led Strategies

1. Provide safe, year-round public facilities for residents of all ages and abilities.
2. Continue to provide high-quality water and sewer services within the City to meet current and anticipated demands.
3. Maintain and improve Port and Harbor infrastructure.
4. Develop new facilities to support access and safety on the Homer Spit.
5. Continue to meet the community's public safety needs for residents, visitors, and first responders.
6. Be responsive to community driven desires to enhance community services and improve the synergy between the City and other community partners to maximize resources and investments.

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

7. Identify and address the deficiencies of the Homer Airport (updated master plan, more reliable year-round service, etc.).
8. Provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to live, work, and play in the community, including encouraging businesses and organizations to create accessible, ADA-compliant facilities.
9. Collaborate with Borough, state, and federal partners to maintain year-round access to community facilities for recreational, educational, social, and cultural activities.

Housing

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

- Housing Supply Does Not Meet the Community Needs
- Rising Costs and Land Availability Limit Housing Development Opportunities
- Unattainable Housing and the High Cost of Living are Barriers to Economic Growth and Quality of Life
- The Rise and Proliferation of Short-Term Rentals

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C	Goal D
Preserve and produce a high-quality, healthy, safe, and energy efficient housing inventory that accommodates for projected population growth and is affordable, attainable, and safe for all Homer residents.	Develop Homer's housing inventory to be compatible with the beloved existing community character while allowing for essential growth and density.	Align housing development with the City's preservation and sustainability goals, minimizing the environmental impact of new construction.	Build strong community and regional partnerships around housing to improve housing attainability and affordability.

City-Led Strategies

1. Implement zoning reforms to encourage attainable housing development for young people, families, seniors, college students, and seasonal workers.
2. Assess Homer's housing needs and maintain data collection.

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

3. Develop incentives and public-private partnerships for affordable and long-term housing development.

Photo: Art Koeninger

Economic Development

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

- Population Expected to See Slight Growth
- Residents Value the Quality of Life but Struggle with Cost of Living, Housing
- Fishing and Tourism Industries Remain Strong Economic Drivers

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C	Goal D	Goal E
Enhance Homer's defined downtown to drive commerce, business, and resident and visitors' services.	Support Homer's economy by honoring traditional industries, while supporting expansion of select industries that maintain the character of Homer.	Support workforce development in key sectors to increase year-round, high wage employment opportunities.	Develop and maintain sustainable, accessible infrastructure that supports a thriving local economy.	Sustain Homer as an active, vibrant, healthy community with year-round opportunities to enjoy art, events, and recreation.

City-Led Strategies

1. Invest in infrastructure that supports economic growth in key sectors.
2. Celebrate Homer's status as a vibrant hub for arts, culture, and community engagement.
3. Sustain Homer's role as an agricultural hub.

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

4. Support Homer's youngest residents and their families by making sure they have what they need to grow and thrive, including access to child care.
5. Expand career and job training resources, particularly in trades, construction, marine trades (including mariculture and shipping industries), and healthcare industries, to retain young residents and provide year-round employment.
6. Support access to quality, affordable health care.
7. Promote fishing and maritime services as viable career options in Homer and demonstrate long-term support for and commitment to the industry.
8. Promote food security.
9. Address barriers to workforce recruitment and retention (e.g., housing, child care).
10. Pursue moderate, sustainable growth in tourism, focusing on activities that benefit small businesses and minimize negative impacts on community character.
11. Support Homer's seniors, including the ability to remain in the community as they age.
12. Support high-quality K-12 and higher education in Homer, support teachers, and sustain lifelong learning opportunities for all residents.

Transportation

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

- Homer Maintains a Separate Transportation Plan
- A Transportation Hub for the Region
- Road and Sidewalk Maintenance is a Community Priority
- Residents Walk and Bike Year-Round
- Traffic Flow and Safety Concerns
- Continued Interest in Transit Opportunities

Goal A	Goal B
Provide a resilient non-motorized transportation network focused on connectivity, safety, and access to the downtown, to schools, and to trails for users of all ages and abilities.	Maintain a safe and sustainable motorized transportation network within Homer year-round to support the movement of people and goods throughout the Greater Homer Area.

City-Led Strategies

1. Build or improve safe roadway and pathway access and connections to key locations.
2. Maintain a year-round transportation network.

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

3. Maintain continued safe airport and ferry operations to support the movement of people and goods to and from the community and maintain Homer's status as a regional hub.
4. Explore public transit options, particularly in the Homer Spit area, to alleviate traffic congestion and improve accessibility for seasonal workers, residents, and visitors.
5. Install benches, trash cans, bike racks and create drop-off and pick-up locations for buses, taxis and visitors, in alignment with the Homer Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan.
6. Explore public parking in downtown.

Note: **The 2024 Transportation Plan** identified four key goals for transportation in the City of Homer:

- *Goal 1:* Increase Safety of Interactions Between Different Modes of Travel
- *Goal 2:* Provide a Connected Network of Local and Collector Roads and Trails That Balances Modes Based on Land Use Contexts
- *Goal 3:* Maintain Transportation Network to Be Usable Year-Round
- *Goal 4:* Provide Expanded Transportation Options for Residents and Visitors

This chapter supplements the 2024 Transportation Plan's specific recommendations and focuses on topics that received less coverage in the Plan.

Photo: Lorna Branzuela

Governance

Overarching Theme Guiding the Plan

- The City of Homer Faces Fiscal Uncertainty

Other Themes Guiding the Plan

- Revenue Growth Driven by Tourism, but Inflation Limits Gains
- Dependence on Sales Tax as a Primary Revenue Source
- Aging Population and Increased Property Tax Exemptions
- Staff Capacity Challenges Impact Service Delivery
- Public Engagement and Fiscal Transparency are Important
- Core Functions Distributed Between the State of Alaska, Kenai Peninsula Borough, and City of Homer
- The Value of Collaboration and Partnerships in Fiscal Sustainability

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C
Maintain long-term financial stability.	Enhance fiscal transparency and community engagement.	Strengthen collaboration and partnerships.

City-Led Strategies

1. Develop a long-term fiscal plan that is proactive, sustainable, and responsive to short-term challenges and opportunities.
2. Diversify revenue streams to reduce dependence on sales and property taxes.
3. Conduct operational efficiency audits to identify cost savings and streamline municipal services.
4. Increase public participation in budget planning, improve access to financial data, and foster community discussions so that policies reflect the needs and priorities of residents both inside and outside City limits.

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

5. Identify opportunities to coordinate with organizations including Tribal organizations, Alaska Native Corporations, public entities, and local and regional non-profits to leverage resources and provide services more cost-effectively.
6. Work with the Kenai Peninsula Borough to advocate for and implement policies that fiscally benefit borough communities.

Photo: Kyra Wagner

Sustainability and Resilience

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

- Natural and Climate-Driven Hazards Increase Risks to People and Infrastructure
- Sustainability and Resilience Are Core to City Planning and Investments
- Open Space and Natural Lands Support Long-Term Community Well-Being

Goal A	Goal B
Protect both existing and new infrastructure from the impacts of climate change, environmental constraints, and hazards.	Encourage Homer residents to be proud stewards of their community and the spectacular natural setting around them.

City-Led Strategies

1. Modernize City operations for long-term efficiency and resilience.
2. Reduce risk from natural hazards through proactive siting and planning.
3. Enhance natural drainage systems.

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

4. Leverage partnerships to advance community-wide sustainability and resilience.

2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan
Core Plan

HomerCompPlanUpdate.com

1. Introduction

The 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan serves as an aspirational guide for shaping the long-term vision, growth, and development of our community. It is a blueprint that sets forth goals, strategies, and actions to inform policymaking and decision-making across land use, infrastructure, housing, transportation, and environmental stewardship. The plan is a living document-intended to be periodically reviewed and amended in response to changing conditions, emerging needs, and evolving community values. Its implementation must always be grounded in the realities of available public resources and pursued in a fiscally responsible and sustainable manner to maintain its relevance and effectiveness serves the community's best interest over time.

Figure 1. City of Homer Vision

Plan Purpose

The City of Homer is updating the 2018 Comprehensive Plan to recognize and celebrate what we have **accomplished**, to address new **challenges and opportunities** for our community, and to coordinate efforts to **achieve our shared vision for a future Homer**.

The 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan serves as a community resource and guide for community leaders, residents, and other partners to protect what residents value most about Homer while enhancing the quality of life for current and future residents. The 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan is **Phase 1** of a two-phased project. In **Phase 2**, the project team will work closely with the City of Homer to update the City's zoning code, Title 21, to support the land use recommendations in the updated plan.

The updated Homer Comprehensive Plan is a combination of long-term vision, goals, and practical strategies that will: guide decisions about land use and environment, housing, public services and infrastructure, transportation, economic development, health and wellness, sustainability, resilience and climate change, and quality of life, and more. It provides a roadmap for implementation, with clear priorities and actions.

What is a comprehensive plan?

A combination of **long-term goals** and **short-term strategies** that **guides decisions** about land use, housing, public services and infrastructure, transportation, economic development, health and wellness, sustainability, resilience and climate change, quality of life, and more. The plan provides a road map for implementation with clear priorities and action items. The **Future Land Use Map** in the comprehensive plan provides a blueprint that sets **intent** for how the area will accommodate change and meet resident needs.

What is a zoning code?

Zoning code and the zoning map are local laws governing **how land is used or developed**, where and how buildings are sited, and rules related to how a property functions. Zoning is the tool used for achieving the intent set by the comprehensive plan and goals set in the Future Land Use map.

Why do we need an updated comprehensive plan?

- The first Homer Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1954. The plan has gone through periodic updates every five to ten years. The 2018 update was a technical update and did not include significant changes from the previous major plan, which was completed in 2008.
- The conditions around the Greater Homer Area have evolved since 2018, and the community has made progress from the 2018 Homer Comprehensive Plan.
- The 2018 plan update was conducted internally by City staff with input from the City Council and City commissions/ advisory boards. The 2018 plan did not include a major public participation component.
- The City is updating the zoning and planning sections of the City Code (Title 21) to make the code more effective, efficient, and user-friendly. This update aims to support better development decisions, particularly on key issues like housing, natural hazard mitigation, and urban sprawl. To align the code with Homer's current needs, the City wants to align the code updates alongside the up-to-date plan.

Alaska Statute, Title 29

Title 29 of Alaska Statute requires that cities and boroughs must engage in some form of land use regulation:

AS 29.40.030(b). Comprehensive Plan.
*(a) The **comprehensive plan** is a compilation of policy statements, goals, standards, and maps for guiding the physical, social, and economic development, both private and public and may include, but is not limited to, the following:*
(1) statements of policies, goals, and standards;
(2) a land use plan;
(3) a community facilities plan;
(4) a transportation plan; and
(5) recommendations for implementation of the comprehensive plan.

How does this 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan relate to the 2018 Homer Comprehensive Plan?

The 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan and accompanying Future Land Use Map provide broad direction and guidance for the Homer community. This update process recognized changes to community characteristics and resident needs in the last five years, especially with consideration for Phase 2 of this project, the Homer Title 21 Code Update. For example, this plan includes a chapter on housing to reflect the concerns in Homer and much of the state about the availability of quality, affordable housing, where the 2018 plan did not have a dedicated chapter on housing. The 2018 Plan also emphasized the use of Green Infrastructure, and this Plan recognizes the importance of green infrastructure (i.e., nature-based solutions) but frames these needs in terms of drainage and stormwater management. This updated plan aims to have practical strategies and goals that are widely accepted by the community and implementable by the City of Homer, the community, and other partners.

Some of the recommendations in the 2018 Homer Comprehensive Plan are still relevant today.

This plan includes strategies and actions that have been adapted from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. These strategies and actions are identified in the focus area chapters using a green diamond symbol: ♦

How does this plan relate to other community plans?

2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan

Offers a basis and broad rationale to guide community and regional plans, policies, and actions.

Long-range (10-20 years)

Area plans address specific sites (e.g., Downtown); specialized plans on topics such as housing, accessibility, and transportation.

Mid-range (5-10 years)

City ordinances, policies, and rezoning decisions.

Projects carried out by the Kenai Peninsula Borough, the State of Alaska, and other partners.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) list and City budget.

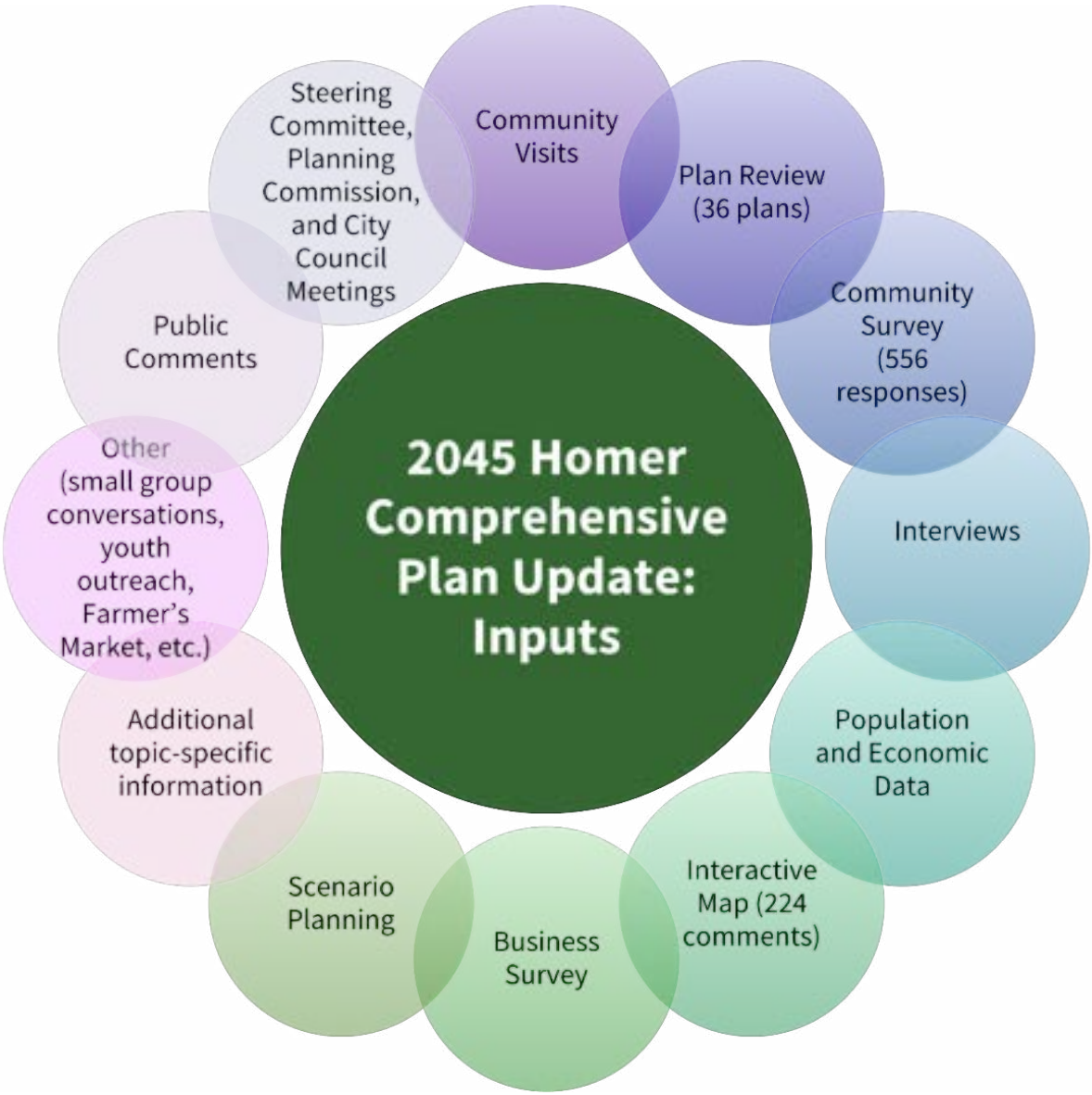
Near-term decisions (daily, monthly, annually)

Methodology

How was this plan developed?

This plan was developed with extensive input from residents, City leadership and staff, commissions, committees, and other community leaders, as well as regional, state, and federal partners. See the list of inputs in Figure 2. The planning process kicked off in December 2023, with adoption in fall 2025. For a detailed summary of the project activities and inputs that contributed to the plan, see Appendix C: Methodology. Detailed summaries of project outreach activities can be found on the project website: homercompplanupdate.com.

Figure 2. Homer 2045 Comprehensive Plan: Inputs



Context

Project Area

The "Greater Homer Area" encompasses the City of Homer and its neighboring communities, including Diamond Ridge, Kachemak City, and Fritz Creek. Located on the southwestern edge of Alaska's Kenai Peninsula, this region contains a broad mix of services, employment, housing, and recreational opportunities. The area is defined by its distinctive geography—coastal lowlands and tidal flats along Kachemak Bay, the narrow 4.5-mile Homer Spit with its seasonal marine commerce, and upland ridges that support residential and agricultural uses with sweeping views of the bay and mountains. The Sterling Highway and Alaska Marine Highway connect these communities to Homer, supporting daily flows of people and goods and reinforcing Homer's role as a regional hub. While the policies in this plan focus on the City of Homer and services within its jurisdiction, they are written with consideration for the City's connections to the greater area it serves (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Map of the Greater Homer Area

Why update the Plan now?

The City of Homer has made progress since the 2008 Homer Comprehensive Plan Update (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Community Accomplishments Since 2008

✓ Built a new police station and completed repairs to fire department	✓ Completed an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan for City facilities	✓ Revised the Community Design Manual
✓ Added public restrooms in downtown Homer and Homer Spit	✓ Completed the Climate Action Plan Progress Report	✓ Reduced parking requirements for homes and businesses
✓ Renovated and expanded City Hall	✓ Constructed port and harbor office	✓ Updated the Homer Transportation Plan
✓ Improved trail systems and built new sidewalks; completed trail between harbor and Seafarers Memorial	✓ Developed updated beach policy and revised Coastal Bluff construction setback regulations	✓ Rezoned areas according to the Future Land Use Map such as creating the Town Center, East End Mixed Use and Medical Zoning Districts
✓ Completed upgrades to End of the Road, Bishop's Beach, Jack Gist, and Karen Hornaday Parks	✓ Increased police and emergency response coverage	✓ Expanded Community Recreation Services and public-private partnerships
✓ Modified City budget and taxation based on major reductions of state funding to municipalities	✓ Completed long-range planning for future facilities such as public works and indoor recreation	✓ Continued purchasing lands in the Bridge Creek Watershed Protection District to protect public drinking water
✓ Completed cruise ship disembarkment improvements and harbor overlook at Deep Water Dock	✓ Completed a Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan and began making improvements	✓ Updated the Homer Spit Plan and followed up with zoning revisions and parking management

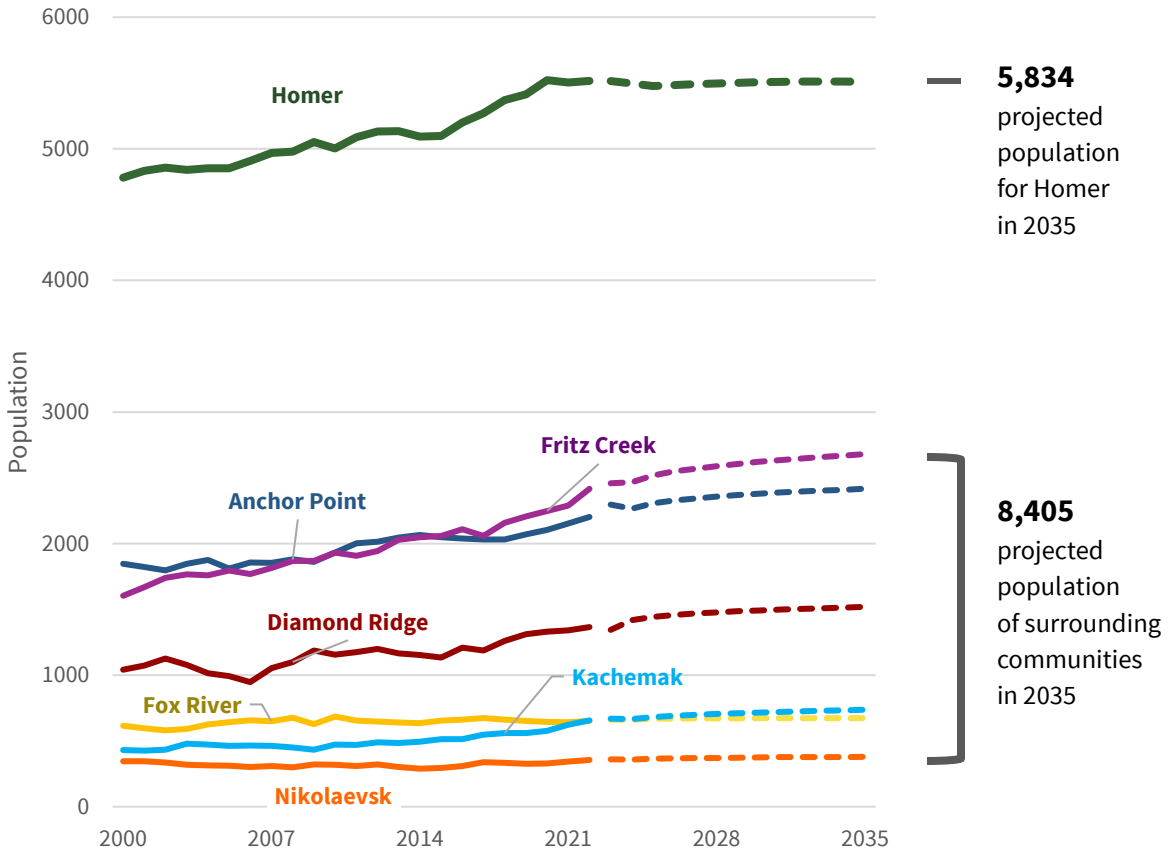
At the same time, the City of Homer and surrounding area have changed significantly since the technical update in 2018. The following are a list of other impactful changes that have occurred:

- Homer is experiencing a **growing senior population;** the percentage of the population that is 65 or older increased from 14 percent to 22 percent between 2013 to 2022. [1]
- The **COVID-19 pandemic** left lasting impacts, from changes in worker habits to higher inflation.
- Impacts from **climate change** are a growing concern.
- The City is planning for **port, harbor, and Homer Spit ("the Spit") improvements** to meet economic needs and increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change.
- **Housing** is increasingly cited as a concern for hiring and retaining workers and for the overall quality of life.
- The City is facing **fiscal uncertainty**, necessitating careful planning and prioritization of resources (see Chapter 7: Governance for more details).

[1] U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 data

- The area's **population has continued to grow**. Figure 5 shows historic and forecasted population trends in Homer and the surrounding communities.
    - Homer's population in 2022 was 15.4 percent larger than it was in 2000 (**green line on chart**).
    - Considered together, the surrounding communities around Homer were 30.0 percent larger in 2022 than in 2000, outpacing growth within City limits.
    - Since 1994, the total population of the surrounding communities has exceeded the population in the City of Homer.
    - Many residents in these surrounding communities work in the City and/or rely on City services, facilities, and businesses. Many of these residents also have shared they would like to live in Homer but cannot afford to live within City boundaries; housing cost and housing affordability are often cited as a barrier.

Figure 5. Historical and Forecasted Population in Homer and Surrounding Community Populations, 2000–2035



Note: Population and economic data in this plan are current as of 2022; updated data are released annually by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Northern Economics analysis (see Appendix F for details). Population projections are updated regularly; for most current estimates, visit https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/article/alaska-population-projections

Community Voices: Highlights from the Community Survey

This section showcases highlights from the community survey, including key themes and findings. To view a detailed summary of community survey results, click here.

Figure 6. Top Themes from Open-Ended Questions in the Community Survey

TOP 3 THEMES: What three things do you **value most** about living in Homer?

Community, small town feel, family and friends

Natural beauty and scenery

Access to outdoor activities and ocean

"Thank you for gathering this input! Homer has been an amazingly connected and healthy place for me, and I want it to remain so for my kids and any who are drawn to our engaged, connected community."

TOP 3 THEMES: What 3 things do you find **most challenging** about living in Homer?

Overall cost of living

Infrastructure and transportation challenges

Lack of affordable housing

"The lack of affordable homes/rentals for locals year-round. I have a year-round dwelling, but I am seeing many service workers being priced out of living here."

TOP 3 THEMES: 20 years from now, what does your **ideal Homer** look like?

Homer has retained its small-town character

Affordable housing and reasonable cost of living

Walkable, vibrant downtown

"I came here to work a seasonal job… I stayed because Homer gave me the space and support to be who I am. I love this place deeply; I love the fun and quirky community that I've found."

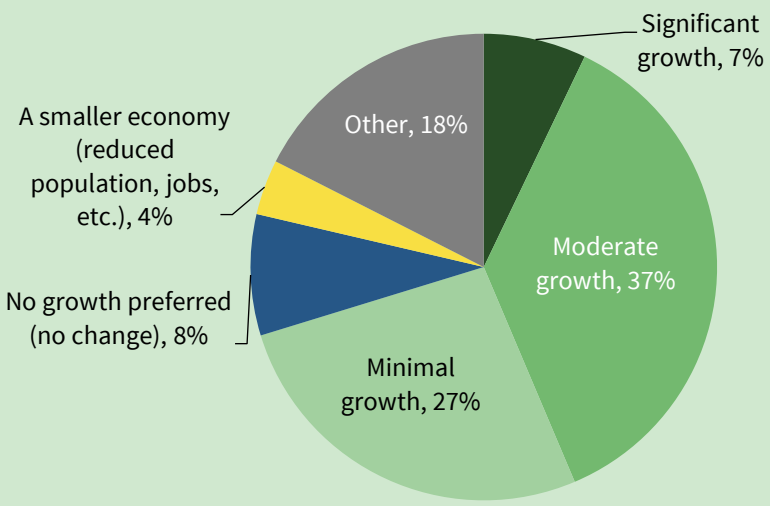
Who responded to the 2024 Community Survey?

Five hundred fifty-six (556) people participated in the survey, exceeding our goal of five hundred participants. Two hundred twenty-four (224) comments were received on the interactive map. Of the 556 survey participants:

- 70 percent have lived in Homer more than a decade.
- 91 percent live in Homer year-round.
- 39 percent reside within the City of Homer limits.[2]

Figure 7. Snapshot of Community Survey Results

Desired Growth



Most open-ended comments about growth discuss "sustainable and controlled growth" with a focus on planning that considers environmental impact, infrastructure capacity, and preservation of Homer's character.

Housing Highlights

- 76% of survey participants are satisfied/very satisfied with their current housing situation.
- 68% say housing is too expensive in Homer.
- 66% say more attainable starter homes are needed for younger residents, families, or residents that wish to downsize.

Quality of Life

- A combined 82% rate the quality of life in Homer as good/ excellent.
- A combined 88% rate Homer as a good/ excellent place to raise a family.

Top Priorities and Projects for Homer to Focus on for the Next 10-20 Years

- Increase supply and accessibility of affordable housing.
- Encourage the retention and creation of more year-round, higher wage jobs.
- Preserve key open public spaces within the city from development.
- Create a livable, walkable, vibrant downtown.
- Encourage renewable energy projects.
- Increase access to recreational opportunities for visitors and residents.

These priorities were identified as "important/ very important" by 74% or more of community survey participants.

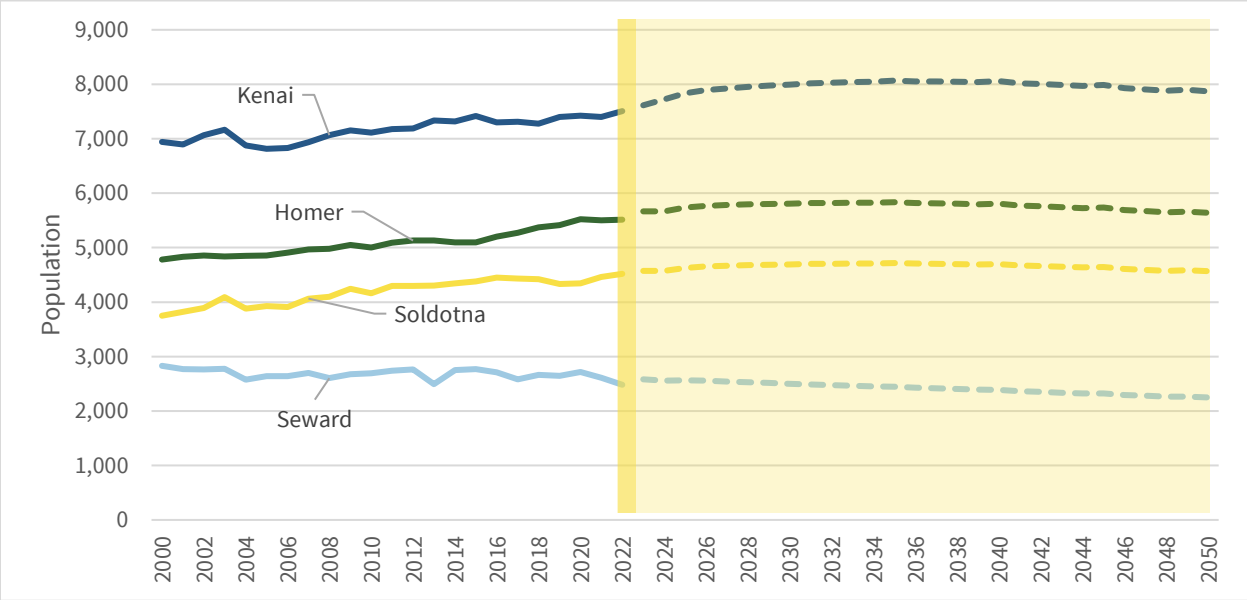
[2] The project team conducted a deeper review of many of the community survey results to check for variations by age, income, and location. There was minimal variance across these categories. See the comparison results at homercompplanupdate.com.

Homer by the Numbers: Where have we been? Where are we today? Where are we headed?

Our People* *Arrows depict trends from 2013-2022*

Total population: 5,515 ↑ 7%	Ages 65+: 22% of population ↑ 8%
Predicted population growth: ↑ 2.3% by 2050	School enrollment: 1,745 ↓ 5%
Median age: 40.8 ↓ 4%	

Figure 8. Historical and Forecasted Populations for Homer and Comparison Cities in the Kenai Peninsula Borough



Sources for this page: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, 2022; US Census Bureau American Community Survey: 2022, 2013 (ACS 5-Year Estimates), Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, 2022, and Northern Economic Analysis, 2024; Northern Economics Analysis, 2024.

*Note: Population and economic data in this plan are current as of 2022; updated data are released annually by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

At-A-Glance Homer History *(adapted from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan)*

- Home to Indigenous people for over 8,000 years; archeological evidence of campsites on the Homer Spit.
- 1896 – Homer Pennock arrived with a crew of 50 gold miners and developed a small settlement on the Spit.
- Early 1900s to today – fishing developed into an important industry.
- 1964 – Year of city's incorporation and the Good Friday earthquake, which devastated Seldovia's waterfront; the Spit also subsided several feet.
- 1989 – Exxon Valdez oil spill impacted Homer's coastline.
- 2002 – Annexation of 4.6 square miles.

Our Economy*

Median annual household income (inflation-adjusted): $69,757 ↑ 30%	Estimated gross earnings for commercial fishermen: $117,873,969 ↑ 42%	Annual unemployment rate: 5.4% ↑ 43%	Top industry: Education, health care and social assistance

Figure 9. Income in Homer and Comparison Communities

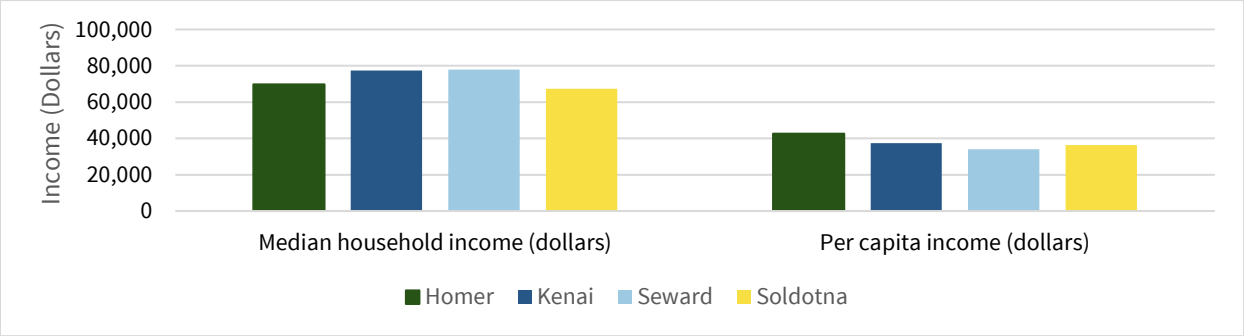
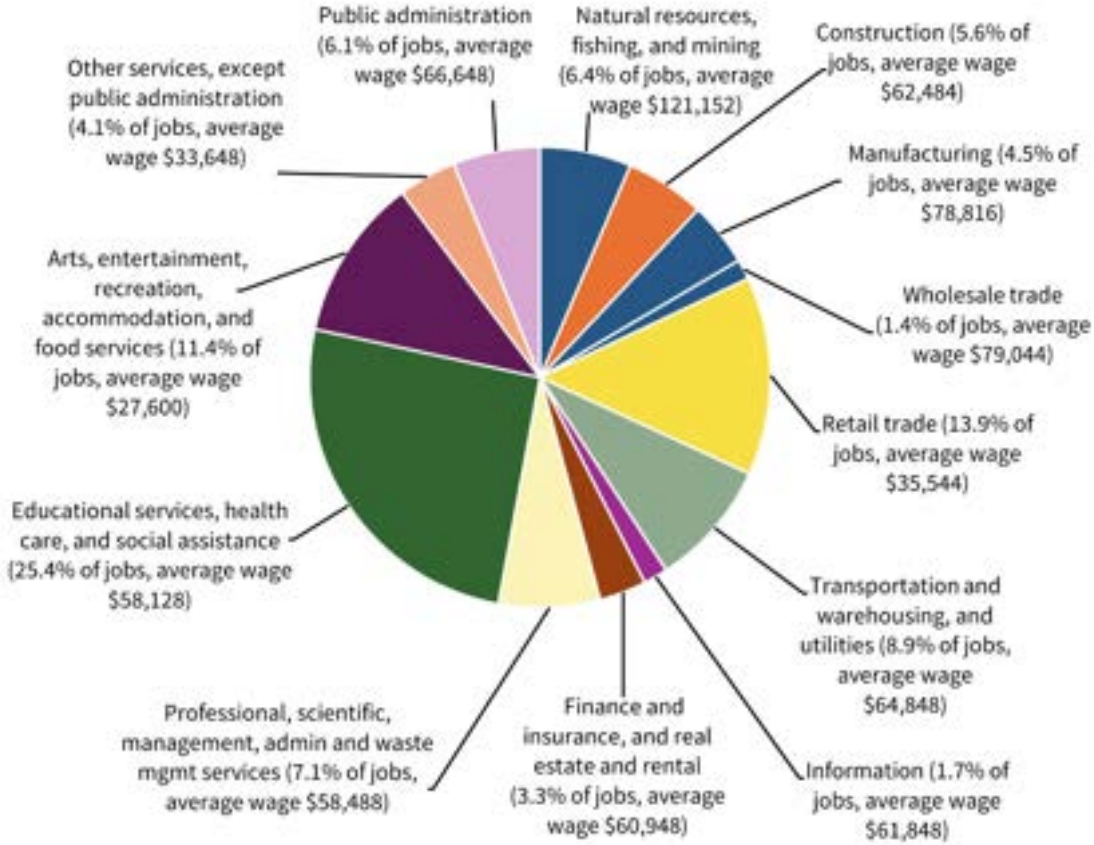


Figure 10. Percentage of Homer Workforce by Industry



Sources for this page: 2018 Homer Comprehensive Plan (History); Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, 2022; US Census Bureau American Community Survey: 2022, 2013 (ACS 5-Year Estimates); ADOLWD Current Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages; Northern Economics Analysis, 2024. *Note: Population and economic data in this plan are current as of 2022; updated data are released annually by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

How to Use This Plan

This plan serves as a basis and rationale for other community policies and actions, including: site-specific and neighborhood plans; specialized plans addressing housing and other topics; ordinances and other policies carrying out comprehensive plan goals; projects carried out by City staff; and a tool for communicating priorities and funding requests to state and federal government or other funders, such as the Capital Improvement Plan CIP list, neighborhood-initiated rezones, or special legislative appropriations.

The goals of this plan give the City and community a broad vision and direction to work toward in the coming years. A key element of this plan is the Future Land Use Map, which offers broad guidance on preferred future land use and will inform future changes to zoning, land uses, housing, transportation, and recreation-related policy decisions.

Most importantly, this plan should serve as a key tool for community leaders and residents in their short-term and long-term planning and decision-making. In conjunction with more detailed plans and current information, the plan should be the backdrop and foundational reference for all City Planning Commission and Council meetings and rulings regarding the project area, and for City departments in their daily operations. See below for a specific breakdown of how different stakeholders might use the plan.

How to use this Plan if you are a…

Resident Use as a tool to protect or improve the things you love about the area; for example, to propose a trail connection, or to learn about where the community agreed future development might take place.	**City Staff** Guide decision-making on land use changes such as zoning, and permitting; identifies needed policy changes and enforcement priorities.	**City or Regional Representative** Use when City Commissions, Boards, and Council members make decisions, rulings, and create policy in the project area.
Property Owner or Developer Identify areas where different types of growth are encouraged or discouraged while summarizing housing, transportation, and commercial needs.	**Business Owner** Use to understand where your type of business may be best located or what community priorities could inform a business idea and plan.	**Grant Writer** Use to demonstrate communitywide support for key priorities in the project area when applying for funding from state, federal, and other sources.

What's in this Plan

Executive Summary	Core Plan	Appendices
Offers a graphic, condensed summary of the plan, including the City's vision, goals, and strategies for each topic.	Includes additional information on the process, area, and key issues that were used to inform the goals and strategies.	Includes extensive background information, context, and discussion used to inform the Future Land Use Map and related plan goals and strategies. See the Table of Contents for the full list of appendices.

Plan Amendments and Updates

The Kenai Peninsula Borough holds planning and platting authority; therefore, all plan amendments and updates require approval by the Borough. This is intended to be a 20-year plan, although if conditions change significantly in the community within the 20-year period (such as major population growth or population loss), it may be necessary to update sooner.

Chapters in the Core Plan and Chapter Organization

The following chapters are included in the plan:

Chapters are organized into the following components:

Key Themes: Each chapter in this plan begins by identifying key themes that describe current conditions, community perspectives, and relevant trends for that focus area.

Goals: Themes are followed by a broad set of goals. The goals identify long term, aspirational improvements.

City-Led Strategies and Actions: Each chapter includes a set of policies (strategies and actions) that guide residents, the City, and partners in achieving the vision and goals of the plan. A subset of strategies are identified as proposed priority strategies. These strategies were selected based on the community survey and related inputs such as the growth scenarios activity, feedback received during the public review draft, and input from City boards and commissions. Priority strategies include a more detailed action table that identifies who should lead and support implementation, estimated resources (staff capacity, policies, funding) that may be needed, and whether the action is short, medium, or long-term. Appendix J brings the action plans from all chapters into one place, as well as a list of potential funding resources.

Key Icons in the Plan:

Priority: An emerging priority for implementation

Capital: An action that includes a potential capital project

Code: An action that recommends a specific code revision

2018: An action adapted from/carried over from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan

After plan adoption, City staff and commissions use the action plans to collaboratively prepare annual work plans to help guide implementation, with each commission selecting three actions from the plan to advance during the year. These annual work plans will reflect available resources and guide leadership and staff, while also providing Homer residents, businesses, and partners a picture of progress tied to budget and capital improvement priorities.

Potential Partner-Led Strategies: Partners play a key role in achieving the community's vision and goals and supporting implementation of the plan. Following the City-led strategies, each chapter features a set of potential partner-led strategies. Appendix I includes additional detail on these strategies, including a list of potential actions for many of the partner-led strategies.

Policies in Other Chapters: In some cases, a policy may support goals in other chapters. For example, harbor-related policies are relevant in the Public Facilities and Services chapter, the Transportation chapter, and the Economic Development chapter. To reduce redundancy, each policy is only listed once; the end of each chapter features a table with cross-references to other chapters.

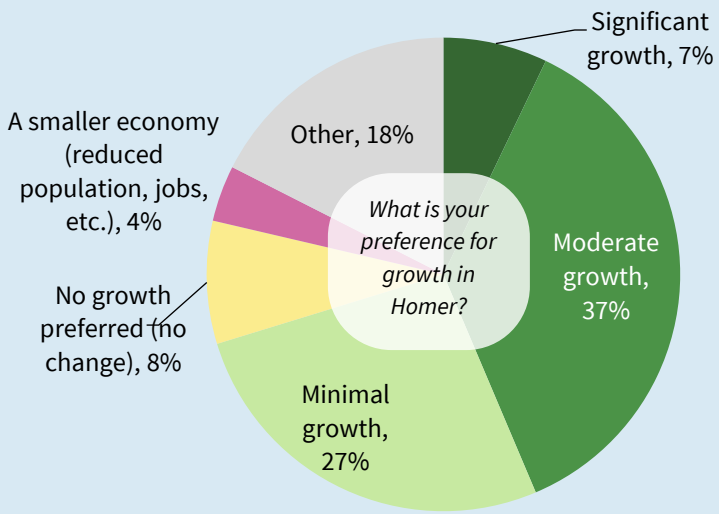
2. Land Use and Environment

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

Moderate Growth Desired

Homer's population is projected to grow at a slower rate over the next 20 years and most residents want to see growth occur moderately and sustainably within City boundaries. [3] As shown in Figure 11, nearly 65 percent of the 548 respondents in the community survey prefer minimal to moderate community and economic growth and 75 percent of the 91 respondents in the Growth Scenarios Report Card chose scenarios that reflect a more dense, central, and connected development pattern. According to multiple comments received from interviews, community events, and surveys, Homer places a high value on preserving its small-town character through growth that prioritizes equitable access to resources, respects ecological benefits and limits, and enhances local resilience.

Figure 11. Results From the 2024 Community Survey



Most open-ended comments about growth discuss "sustainable and controlled growth" with a focus on planning that considers environmental impact, infrastructure capacity, and preservation of Homer's character.

Modernized Zoning is Essential for Attainable Housing, Safety, and Future Growth

Homer's current land use regulations no longer reflect the community's development needs or values. Residents have called for more attainable housing options, greater consideration of natural hazards, and updates to zoning standards that align with infrastructure availability and environmental constraints. Most survey respondents (87 percent) said increasing affordable housing was important, yet many central areas are zoned in ways that limit higher-density options, infill, or non-traditional housing types such as townhomes, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), or modular homes. 66 percent of respondents agreed that starter homes are especially needed. Meanwhile, approximately 35 percent of Homer's land base includes wetlands, steep slopes, or critical habitat that limits development feasibility and increases hazard exposure. [4] Residents want code updates that allow for more flexibility in building types, incentivize infill and redevelopment in appropriate areas, and require private and public development consideration of runoff, slope stability, and infrastructure capacity. Aligning

[3] Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. (2023). *Alaska population projections 2023 to 2050*. https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/pop/projections/pub/popproj.pdf

[4] From spatial analysis performed on environmental constraints overlay of the Future Land Use Map.

Homer's zoning code with these goals is essential to support equitable housing, reduce long-term hazard risks, and guide future growth that respects the City's landscape and resources.

Equitable Access to Recreation and Open Space Enhances Community Well-Being

Residents value the many ways they engage with Homer's outdoors—from informal shoreline access to year-round trail use and recreation in neighborhood parks. In the community survey, 77 percent of respondents identified preservation of public open space as important. Though Homer has a broad inventory of public and quasi-public land, not all areas are easily accessible, and some active-use spaces are not formally protected for open space or recreation in current land use designations. Community members expressed strong interest in improving park facilities, expanding all-season trail networks where feasible, and ensuring beach access remains safe and publicly available. As Homer continues to grow, access to existing open space will be a key factor in maintaining health, social connection, and quality of life for all residents.

Place-Based Planning Strengthens Homer's Distinct District and Regional Role

From the economic and cultural activity on the Homer Spit ("the Spit") to the services concentrated in the downtown core, different areas of Homer serve different functions in the daily life of the community. Residents and stakeholders have called for more detailed planning in these unique places to guide development that supports their intended purposes. Coordinated land use planning, infrastructure investment, and zoning updates in key areas will help maintain Homer's role as a connected regional center.

Homer residents gathered for the October 21st, 2024 Growth Scenarios Work Session.

Goals

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C
Promote sustainable and moderate growth that preserves Homer's small-town character.	Plan for responsible development that balances environmental impacts, community connections, and infrastructure capacity.	Modernize zoning and land use regulations to reflect the community's vision.

A key element of this plan is the **Future Land Use Map**, which offers broad guidance on preferred future land use and growth and will inform future changes to zoning, subdivisions and other land uses, housing, transportation, and recreation-related policy decisions.

Beluga Lake

The Future Land Use Map is a vital tool for guiding development and resource management. Key considerations include:

- *Zoning Designations:* Clear classification of areas for residential, commercial, industrial, and conservation uses.
- *Compatibility with Existing Uses:* Ensuring new land uses align with current neighborhood characteristics and infrastructure.
- *Environmental Considerations:* Incorporating natural features and constraints into land use planning to protect ecosystems.
- *Community Input:* Engaging residents in the planning process to reflect their needs and priorities in the land use designations.

Zoning is a regulatory framework or policy that describes how land can be used in the present; it provides some overarching restrictions to avoid conflicts with land uses within a designated area. A future land use map identifies broad future land use intentions for an area. Zoning codes are law and a way to implement and enforce land use goals within a specified area, while a future land use map aligns with existing and desired future land use in the project area. The plan and the associated Future Land Use Map will not immediately result in zoning changes. Rather, the proposed land use categories and recommended zoning improvements in this plan provide categories and tools to guide land use decisions in the City in a way that guides the vision for the area, promotes planning best practices, and considers local context. If there are proposed rezones in the project area, the Future Land Use Map will guide the zoning actions.

This plan takes two general approaches to guide development in relation to environmental conditions. One is to “overlay” information regarding environmental constraints and opportunities onto the Future Land Use Map. This means, for example, that some portions of an area identified for development would be limited by the site-specific presence of steep slopes, wetland areas, drainage channels, etc. The second broad strategy is to recommend that appropriate standards be adopted so that where development does occur it is designed to respect environmental functions and characteristics. Examples in this category include site development policies for drainage, vegetation, and grading.

A Future Land Use Map DOES:	A Future Land Use Map does NOT:
• Anticipate development needs, opportunities, constraints. • Identify suitable/unsuitable types of development. • Propose recommendations for how an area should develop. • Establish policies and standards to guide development. • Recommend improvements to zoning codes. • Guide decisions about rezones and future area planning.	• Act as a zoning document. • Make changes to existing zoning codes. • Apply retroactively.

City-Led Strategies and Actions

1. Implement a Future Land Use Map that guides future decisions about land use and growth. ✱ ♦

Note: Actions associated with this strategy are encompassed in Land Use and Environment Strategy 2.

Figure 12. Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Primary Categories

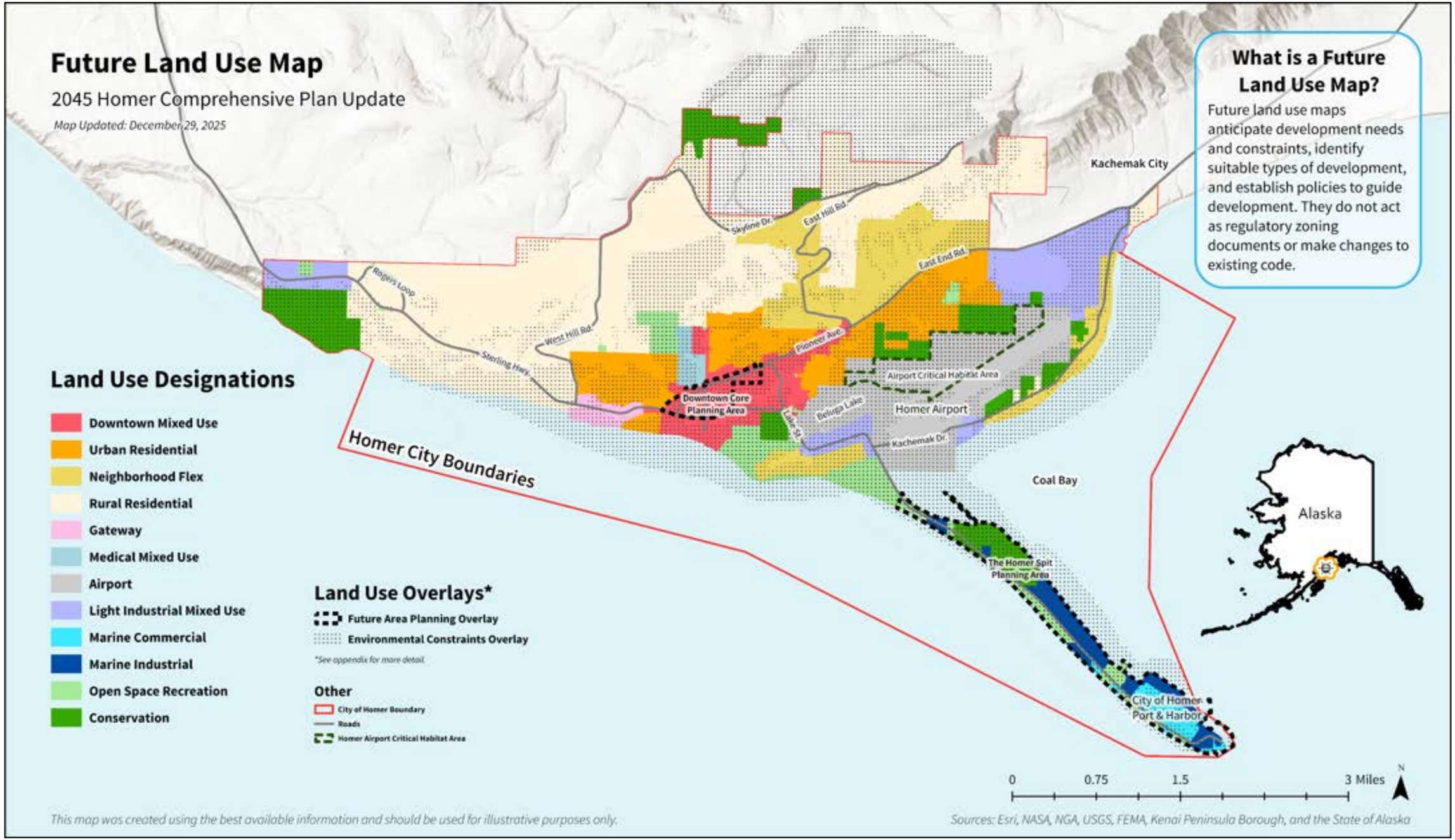
Future Land Use Map Primary Categories				
Category	**Intended Land Uses**	**Application Areas**	**Use Examples**	**2018 FLUM**
Downtown Mixed Use	The urban core of Homer, allowing for a **mix of commercial, community, and high to medium density residential uses** (low lot size minimums, high lot coverage, reduced setback limitations and parking maximums) with adaptability to changing market needs. A focus on close proximities and a walkable, human-scale environment, enabling all-day and all-season use by all.	Combination of the 2018 Future Land Use Designations for Downtown Mixed Use, Medical District, Office Residential and Town Center	Hospitals, live-work spaces, mixed use buildings, retail, eateries, community facilities, multi-unit housing, apartment buildings, parks	Downtown Mixed Use, Medical District, Residential Office and Town Center
Urban Residential	**Medium density** residential uses with compatible public and light commercial uses that generate low traffic volumes, and areas for infill and densification.	2018 Future Land Use Designations for Urban Residential	Emphasis on varied housing (single unit, accessory dwellings, cottage clusters)	Urban Residential
Neighborhood Flex	A mix of residential and compatible uses that emphasize **adaptability—**to topography, mix of housing types, and variety of community uses. Supports a mix of housing types and small-scale community uses within walkable areas that respond to environmental constraints. Designed to balance access to services with preservation of landscape character.	Same as 2018 Future Land Use Designation for Residential Transition	Varied housing types, community garden, neighborhood café, corner store, schools, churches	Residential Transition
Rural Residential	**Low density** residential uses that may not have access to public utilities.	Same as 2018 Future Land Use Designation for Rural Residential	Single family units with accessory dwellings, lodges, conservation areas	Rural Residential
Gateway	**Commercia**l and **mixed-use** development that supports the visitor industry and provides services for both residents and travelers entering Homer. Emphasizes an attractive, walkable built environment with uses that enhance Homer's identity as the gateway to Kachemak Bay.	Same as current zone area for Gateway Business District, south of Sterling Highway	Lodging, restaurants, visitor facilities, mixed-use buildings with upper-story housing	Gateway Business District
Medical Mixed Use	The Medical District of Homer, allowing for **medical facilities and other mixed uses supportive of the district**, with an emphasis on accessible design and amenities that meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.	Same as current zone areas for Medical District	Medical facilities, professional offices, assisted living facilities, varied housing types, parks	Medical District

Future Land Use Map Primary Categories				
Category	**Intended Land Uses**	**Application Areas**	**Use Examples**	**2018 FLUM**
Airport	**State-owned lands with multiple uses** associated with the Homer Airport where preferences might supersede City land use intent. Includes critical habitat and adjacent airport-related uses.	State lands associated with the Homer Airport as designated by the 2001 Kenai Area Plan	Manufacturing and processing, worker housing, airports, cold storage facilities	Commercial 2 and Conservation
Light Industrial Mixed Use	Predominately **commercial and industrial uses** that generally require direct motor vehicle access and potentially larger land areas. **Residential uses are accessory.**	Combination of current zone areas for East End Mixed Use and General Commercial 1	Warehousing and distribution hubs, building supply stores, supportive infrastructure	East and Mixed Use and Commercial 1
Marine Commercial	**Water-dependent or related commercial uses** requiring direct motor vehicle access, potentially larger land areas, and benefit from proximity or convenient connection to the waterfront.	Same as current zone areas for Marine Commercial along the Spit	Retail, restaurants, cold storage, docks, marine charters, accessory lodging	*Not included*
Marine Industrial	**Water-dependent industrial uses** that require direct marine access for their operation, direct motor vehicle access, and potentially larger land areas. **Commercial uses are accessory.**	Same as current zone areas for Marine Industrial	Fish processing, marine transportation, cold storage	*Not included*
Open Space Recreation	**Public lands** with **uses that promote public recreation and access opportunities** while preserving the natural and scenic resources of the areas.	Same as current zone areas for Open Space Recreation	Community parks, playgrounds, recreation facilities, trails	Open Space Recreation
Conservation / Deed Restricted	**Public** and **private lands** that **serve key environmental functions**, such as critical habitat or watershed areas, to be maintained in an undisturbed and natural state.	Same as current zone areas for Conservation plus areas dedicated as conservation	Habitat protection facilities with education facilities or non-motorized trails	Conservation, and Open Space Recreation

Figure 13. Future Land Use Map Overlays

Future Land Use Map Overlay Categories The overlays defined on the map cover areas with base land use designations but identify special provisions in addition to the base designation.		
Category	**Description**	**Application Areas**
Area Plan	Areas where further planning efforts may be needed and/or where additional development regulations may apply.	The Homer Spit (encompassing the Small Boat Harbor Overlay) and the Downtown Area
Environmental Constraints	Known areas of environmental constraints, such as critical habitat and steep slopes, to help identify places where more detailed site analysis may be warranted if areas are to be developed or improved.	Flood zones, coastal bluff instability, scarps, hydric soils, key watersheds, and slopes 30 percent or greater

Figure 14. Future Land Use Map



Icon Key:

- ⚡ Priority: An Emerging priority for implementation
- 🛠 Capital: An action that includes a potential capital project
- ✱ Code: An action that recommends a specific code revision
- ♦ 2018: An action adapted from/carried over from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan

2. Implement zoning reforms to support sustainable growth and attainable housing development. ⚡

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Prioritize zoning reforms that expand housing choice, including support for higher-density and mixed-use development, infill, and housing types such as ADUs, townhomes, and modular homes. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
b. Create zoning tools like form-based codes and flexible use standards that accommodate evolving land uses and building types. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
c. Create consistent design and infrastructure standards that reflect neighborhood character and support multi-modal access. ✱ ♦	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
d. Align development regulations with community service availability, promoting growth in areas already served by schools, utilities, and other key services. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
e. Simplify and clarify the development approval process and related staff procedures. ✱ ♦	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
f. Improve enforcement and reporting procedures to address development-related health and safety issues, within scope of zoning and permitting authority. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
g. Gauge community and stakeholder support for zoning and policy tools that expand housing options, such as density bonuses, parking requirement adjustments, and other potential incentives for affordable and long-term housing development.	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
h. Modify zoning and permitting tools to support small business growth and economic resilience, including consideration for locally owned and emerging industries.	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
i. Explore building codes and incentive programs to increase energy efficiency.	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
j. Clarify the definition of short-term rentals in city code (now referred to as Bed and Breakfasts) and define in what zones and under what circumstances short-term rentals may be allowed. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)

3. Strategically align development regulations with natural hazard risks and land suitability to support safe, resilient, and responsible growth. ⚡

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Use the City of Homer 2022 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan to inform updates to zoning and development codes, ensuring land use decisions reflect the latest risk assessments. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Clarify zoning procedures and criteria for rezoning reviews to maintain consistency with the comprehensive plan and hazard mitigation goals. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
c. Update development standards for steep slopes, drainage ways, and erosion prone areas such as shown on the environmental constraints overlay included in this plan, to manage grading, erosion, runoff, and vegetation clearing. Encourage the use of green infrastructure and site-responsive design solutions to improve drainage and reduce hazard exposure. ✱ ♦	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
d. Strengthen stormwater and erosion control provisions in City code, incorporating green infrastructure techniques—such as vegetated buffers and infiltration features—to reduce coastal bluff erosion and other site-based hazards. ✱♦	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
e. Improve coordination between subdivision design standards and site-level review to carry hazard mitigation measures through from platting to construction. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
f. Consider expanding the range of conditions that may be applied to Conditional Use Permits to address riparian protection, soil stability, wetland preservation, and related site concerns. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
g. Develop fill requirements for parcels located in targeted areas documented to contain 66% or greater hydric soils. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

4. Protect and enhance green space in Homer to support critical habitat conservation, recreational access, and community well-being.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Complete priority upgrades to existing City parks, including Karen Hornaday Park, Bayview Park, and Jack Gist Park.	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department, City Council	Karen Hornaday: $1.1M Jack Gist: $840k Bayview: $190k (all from FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Continue to improve existing trails and public access points to meet the needs of families, seniors, and residents and visitors with limited mobility.	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department. ADA Advisory Board	Undetermined	Ongoing
c. Enhance or improve safe public access to beaches at designated public access points as feasible.	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
d. Develop and implement a Master Park and Recreation Plan to proactively guide park maintenance, upgrades, and future facility needs.	City Administration, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
e. Continue to develop a city strategy for targeted open space acquisition.	City Council	Undetermined	Long (more than 5 years)

5. Advance place-based planning and development that supports Homer's unique community character, encourages targeted infill, and strengthens Homer's role as a regional hub.

Action
a. Lead area planning efforts for the Spit and downtown core. These efforts should address land use, infrastructure needs, environmental hazards, economic development, and recreational access. Area plans should inform updates to zoning maps, capital improvements, and long-term planning priorities.
b. Support compact, walkable downtown development that encourages mixed-use buildings, incremental infill, and redevelopment of underutilized parcels. Update development standards, such as building form, setbacks, lot size, and lot coverage, so that projects contribute to a financially productive, pedestrian-friendly streetscape.
c. Develop a Homer Spit Master Plan to guide long-term land use, infrastructure investment, harbor operations, and climate adaptation. The plan should address erosion and sea level rise, coordinate City-owned leases, balance economic and recreational uses, and protect environmental resources. It should inform updates to zoning, capital improvements, and emergency management policies.
d. Prioritize infrastructure investments—such as street improvements, multimodal access, water and sewer upgrades, and broadband—in areas identified for infill and redevelopment through area planning efforts. Compile development standards into a unified design manual that integrates transportation, streetscape, and infrastructure guidance.
e. Coordinate with relevant agencies to improve land use planning around key public assets, including the Homer Airport. Work to align local zoning and infrastructure improvements with future airport operations, economic development goals, and state transportation plans.

"Future growth should consider how development may impact environmental resources both inside and outside the city boundary."

~ Community Meeting

"Keeping Homer Homer is valid, but there are different interpretations of that. To me, it means keeping it unique, allowing people to have a choice, and providing affordable housing."

~ Stakeholder Interview

What is 'infill'?

*Infill is the **strategic use of underutilized or vacant land** within already developed areas to create new housing, businesses, or public spaces. Using this redevelopment strategy maximizes existing infrastructure, helps create connected, walkable neighborhoods, and revitalizes communities without expanding into undeveloped land.*

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

6. **Collaborate with public and private partners to enhance community spaces and recreational infrastructure.** ♦
7. **Coordinate with regional and state agencies to align land use policies with environmental stewardship and shared planning goals.**

Policies Supporting Land Use and Environment in Other Chapters

The table below summarizes the location of related policies in other parts of the plan that support and contribute to Homer's land use and environment goals. They are shown in order by chapter.

Topic	Chapter and Strategy Number of Related Policies					
	3. Public Facilities & Services	4. Housing	5. Economic Development	6. Transportation	7. Governance	8. Sustainability & Resilience
Open space and parks connectivity	1					3
Area planning	4		1, 5	5		
Airport area	7			4		
Hazard mitigation and climate-responsive land use	5				4	2
Zoning reform for housing		1				
Preserving community character			9			
Infill and dense development			5	1, 2	3	
Wayfinding				2		
Education about infill, density					4	
Partnerships, open space management					5	
Mapping tools to guide development						4

"Unless Homer embraces change and alters the status quo, we will experience more of the sprawl model of development that we are already witnessing."

~ Growth Scenarios Report Card Results

"Emphasize infill development, however, do it in a thoughtful way."

~ Community Survey Results

Photo Credit: Derek Mueller

3. Public Facilities and Services

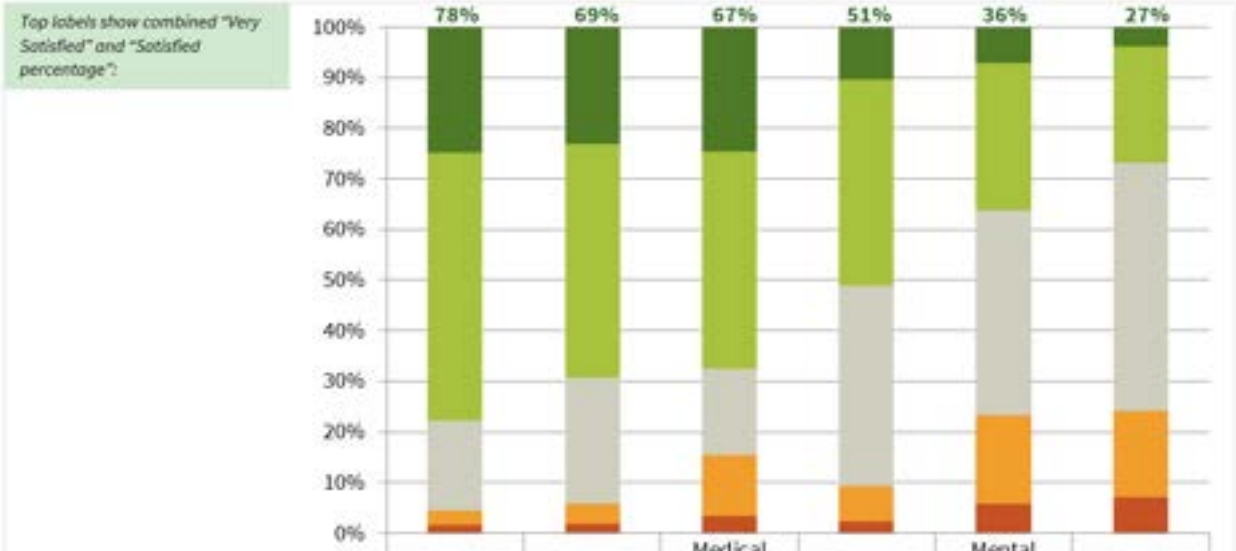
Key Themes Guiding the Plan

Reliable and Affordable Services

The City of Homer provides a range of services, including water, sewer, road maintenance, community development, recreation, parks, port and harbor management, fire protection, law enforcement, planning, and emergency services. The City relies on other public and private entities, such as the Kenai Peninsula Borough [5], for other services such as education, healthcare, and solid waste management; the State of Alaska manages many of the important transportation facilities, including the airport and major roadways. Although responses to the community survey show general satisfaction with fire, law enforcement, and emergency services (Figure 15), there are some concerns about inadequate funding and staffing levels.

Figure 15. Responses to the 2024 Homer Community Survey Question, "How satisfied are you with the availability of the following Health and Safety programs or services in Homer?"

Answered: 552



	Fire & Emergency	Law Enforcement	Medical Services & Hospital	Public Health	Mental Health Services	Senior Services
Very Satisfied	25%	23%	25%	10%	7%	4%
Satisfied	53%	46%	43%	41%	29%	23%
Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	18%	25%	17%	40%	40%	49%
Dissatisfied	3%	4%	12%	7%	17%	17%
Very Dissatisfied	2%	2%	3%	2%	6%	7%

[5] Agnew::Beck Consulting. (2019), *2019 Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan*. Prepared for the Kenai Peninsula Borough with support from Alaska Map Company, ASRC Energy Services, Alaska Survey Research, Casey Planning and Design, Northern Economics, and PDC Inc. Engineers. https://www.kpb.us/images/KPB/PLN/PlansReports/Comp_Plan/2019_KPB_Comprehensive_Plan.pdf

Accessible, Maintained Community Facilities

The City of Homer owns and manages a variety of facilities in the community, ranging from the Public Library to the Airport Terminal. An increasing population necessitates the strategic improvement of public services and infrastructure, including public safety, utilities, and recreational facilities. For example, Homer has identified a multi-use community recreation center as a longtime community priority. Improvements to Homer's infrastructure are necessary to support growth and attract businesses; these are supported by the community as shown through the community survey and public comments. At the same time, existing facilities in the community have significant ongoing maintenance needs that sometimes stretch the capacity of City staff and its aging equipment. The City maintains a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that identifies priorities for major capital expenditures, including both new and existing facilities. The CIP is a six-year plan, updated annually.

Photo Credit: HERC Task Force Final Recommendation Report, 2018

> *"Create a centralized community space that serves all the community."*
>
> ~ Community Survey Results

Accessibility and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements are also essential to ensuring that all members of the community—regardless of age, ability, or mobility—can safely and comfortably access and enjoy public facilities. Inclusive design not only upholds civil rights and legal standards but also strengthens community equity and cohesion by expanding participation in public life and supporting the dignity of every resident. [6] Many of the projects on Homer's CIP feature needed ADA improvements, including to key facilities such as City Hall.

Rising Service Demands and Infrastructure Costs

As a regional hub, Homer provides many services that also benefit residents outside of City limits, such as its recreation facilities and the library. At the same time, maintaining and upgrading infrastructure—especially water and sewer systems—is a financial challenge due to a limited customer base. In 2000, the City of Homer successfully petitioned to annex just over 25 square miles of land to the West, North, and East of City limits. While this annexation helped grow the City's tax base to support the provision of services, some of the homes within the annexed areas are still not served by City services. The water and sewer services within the City are adequate, but stormwater runoff impacts the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant.

> *"Make sure infrastructure keeps up with growth."*
>
> ~ Community Survey Results

> *"Focus on responsibility to replace aged buildings, such as fire station that benefit all residents and visitors."*
>
> ~ Growth Scenarios Report Card Results

[6] "Does improving accessibility boost local economies? ADA compliance can be costly for community – but the financial benefits may be bigger," Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Dec. 1, 2022. https://cmap.illinois.gov/news-updates/does-improving-accessibility-boost-local-economies/

Goals

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C
Provide City services that are available, affordable, and adequate.	Provide and improve City-operated facilities to meet the needs of the community, accommodate desired growth, and support sustainability and conservation goals.	Mitigate risks to City-owned infrastructure from climate change and natural hazards.

City-Led Strategies and Actions

Icon Key:

- Priority: An emerging priority for implementation
- Capital: An action that includes a potential capital project
- Code: An action that recommends a specific code revision
- 2018: An action adapted from/carried over from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan

1. Provide safe, year-round public facilities for residents of all ages and abilities.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Maintain the library as a thriving community space for learning and connecting, including assessing the library's anticipated need for growth and improvements over the next decade and planning for upgrades.	Library Advisory Board, Library Department, Information Technology Department	Remodel engineering study: $75k (FY26 CIP)	Ongoing
b. Implement the 2023 City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas and Campgrounds and the Transition Plan for City Facilities to correct deficiencies and implement policies that increase accessibility of Homer's public facilities and recreation spaces. Priority sites for upgrades include City Hall, Karen Hornaday Park, the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon Accessible Ramp and Fishing Platform, and removing parking and pavement barriers at City facilities.	ADA Advisory Board, Administration Department, Public Works Department, Port and Harbor Department	City Hall: $1.1M Fishing Lagoon Ramp and Platform: $770k Parking Barrier Removal: $386k (all from FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Plan for and construct a new, multi-purpose community center in Homer's downtown to serve the social, recreation, cultural, and educational needs of the Homer community. Preferred features include a general-purpose gymnasium, multi-purpose space for instructional programs, safe walking/running, dedicated space for youth, and possible emergency shelter.	Administration Department, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, City Council	~$16.05M (FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)
d. Demolish the Homer Education and Recreation Complex (HERC) and identify opportunities for remediation of the site.	Administration Department, City Council	Undetermined	Long (more than 5 years)

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
e. Consider and evaluate changing the City's organizational structure to provide park facilities and recreation services by establishing a dedicated Parks and Recreation Department.	Administration Department, Finance Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
f. Maintain City facilities at levels that are sufficient to support events that draw visitors such as festivals and activities (e.g., clean restrooms on the Homer Spit ("the Spit"), RV dump stations, adequate trash collection, etc.).	Administration Department, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
g. Update the Homer Airport Terminal to address deferred maintenance and improve accessibility.	Public Works Department, Administration Department, City Council	$1.3 M for initial repairs and renovations (FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)

2. Continue to provide high-quality water and sewer services within the City to meet current and anticipated demands.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Update the 2006 Water and Sewer Master Plan.	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Continue to build, upgrade, and replace water and wastewater infrastructure to meet industry standards, changing regulatory requirements, and replace aging systems.	Public Works Department	$707k for wastewater treatment plant improvements $10.4 M for water storage and distribution improvements (FY26 CIP)	Ongoing
c. Maintain the water and sewer Capital Asset Repair and Maintenance Allowance (CARMA) funds for repair and replacement of facilities that serve existing customers.	Finance Department, Public Works Department, City Council	Undetermined	Ongoing
d. Use the Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program (HAWSP) to fund the design and construction of facilities that support new and existing customers.	Finance Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
e. Continue to limit and manage development in the Bridge Creek Watershed Protection District to maintain its suitability as a drinking water source.	City Council, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing

3. Maintain and improve Port and Harbor infrastructure.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Develop a long-range Port and Harbor Management Plan that considers the environmental and economic significance of the Spit, the impacts of climate change, and natural hazards like earthquakes, tsunamis, and erosion.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Erosion Mitigation: $4M (FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Maintain infrastructure to maximize longevity and ensure safety of users.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
c. Maintain and promote Homer's status as a "working waterfront" by being a partner for the Alaska Marine Highway System, the U.S. Coast Guard, commercial operations, and other state and federal partners.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
d. Plan for and construct a large vessel haul out facility.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	$5.3 M (from FY26 CIP)	Long (more than 5 years)
e. Consider opportunities to integrate complementary marine industrial and tourism uses, for example by constructing walking paths and viewing platforms that would allow visitors to observe aspects of the marine trades that they may not be able to see elsewhere.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
f. Continue to explore the operational, financial, and environmental feasibility of the harbor expansion and related infrastructure, including environmental review, geotechnical studies, and funding strategies to align with public safety, traffic, and parking objectives on the Spit.	Port and Harbor Department, Community Development Department, Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, City Administration, City Council	$278 mil (FY26 CIP)	Long (5+ years)

4. Develop new facilities to support access and safety on the Homer Spit.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Develop new non-motorized infrastructure providing safe access to the harbor and improve the accessibility of existing infrastructure, including ADA improvements at the Fishing Hole.	ADA Advisory Board, Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
b. Further Develop parking at the base of the spit such as on existing underutilized airport parking areas on Kachemak Drive, designate formal parking areas to minimize parking in unsuitable areas, and consider seasonal shuttles and pay-to-park options in congested areas to reduce traffic.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department, City Council	Undetermined	Long (5+ years)
c. Evaluate the need for a new parking structure on the Spit that could also serve as a shelter-in-place location during tsunamis.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Long (5+ years)

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
d. Improve viewpoints for wildlife observation. 🛠	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department, Public Works Department, Planning Commission, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
e. Evaluate the uses of City-owned property on the Spit and confirm uses align with the needs and aesthetics of the area.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)

5. Continue to meet the community's public safety needs for residents, visitors, and first responders.

Action
a. Conduct a needs assessment and strategic plan for fire, emergency, and law enforcement services to identify gaps in funding and staffing and develop recommendations for maintaining and improving these services.
b. Complete planning for and construct a new fire station. 🛠
c. Support the mission and capacity needs of the Homer Police Department.
d. Upgrade the City's fire department fleet of vehicles to maximize firefighting capabilities and meet Insurance Services Office (ISO) requirements. 🛠
e. Collaborate with the Kenai Peninsula Borough to implement recommendations in the Safe Streets and Roads for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan.

6. Be responsive to community driven desires to enhance community services and improve the synergy between the City and other community partners to maximize resources and investments.

Action
a. Provide technical assistance to community organizations seeking to expand their services. ♦
b. Partner with community organizations to supplement or expand City services and the operating hours of City facilities. ♦

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

7. Identify and address the deficiencies of the Homer Airport (updated master plan, more reliable year-round service, etc.).

8. Provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to live, work, and play in the community, including encouraging businesses and organizations to create accessible, ADA-compliant facilities.

9. Collaborate with Borough, state, federal, and non-profit partners to maintain year-round access to community facilities for recreational, educational, social, and cultural activities.

Policies Supporting Public Facilities and Services in Other Chapters

The table below summarizes the location of related policies in other parts of the plan that support and contribute to Homer's public facilities and services goals. They are shown in order by chapter.

Topic	Chapter and Strategy Number of Related Policies					
	2. Land Use & Environment	4. Housing	5. Economic Development	6. Transportation	7. Governance	8. Sustainability & Resilience
Parks and trails	4					
Policies for specific community areas	5					
Marine trades			1			
Homer Spit development	5		1			
Community use of facilities			2			
Roads, sidewalks, and bike lanes				1, 2		
Wayfinding				1, 9		
Parking				1		
Airport and ferry				4		
Financing of facility and service improvements					1	
Infill of water-sewer					2	
Engaging residents in service and facility planning and spending					2, 3	
Energy efficiency of municipal facilities						1
Hazard mitigation and placement of municipal facilities						1
Stormwater and green infrastructure						3

Aerial view of the Homer Spit at dawn. Credit: Tim Hatfield

Public Works facility: plans for a new facility are underway.

4. Housing

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

Housing Supply Does Not Meet the Community Needs

Although Homer has a relatively high overall housing vacancy rate, many residents continue to face difficulty finding homes that are affordable, available year-round, and suited to their household needs. In the past decade, the City has added a modest number of new housing units each year—averaging 36 units annually between 2013 and 2023. [7, 8] However, the types of homes being built have not kept pace with the needs of working families, older adults, and younger residents entering the housing market. According to the community survey, 68 percent of respondents said housing is too expensive, and 66 percent said more attainable homes are needed for people just starting out or seeking to downsize. With long-term population growth projected at just 2.3 percent through 2050, the core challenge is not growth pressure but the mismatch between existing housing stock and what year-round residents can access. Zoning reforms that support a greater variety of housing types—especially in areas served by infrastructure and close to services—can help the City respond to these persistent gaps.

Rising Costs and Land Availability Limit Housing Development Opportunities

Housing in Homer has become significantly more expensive, limiting options for residents across income levels, particularly young professionals, families, and older adults seeking to downsize. As of November 2024, the median home listing price in Homer was approximately $550,000—a 97 percent increase since 2018 and well above the statewide median of $396,000. [9] According to census data, half of all renter households in Homer (358 out of 702) are cost-burdened, spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing. [10] These figures do not reflect additional barriers such as limited availability of pet-friendly units, or housing that is in good condition and available year-round. High construction costs—driven by inflation, labor shortages, shipping expenses, and rising material prices—also constrain new development. Nationally, construction costs have

Examples of non-traditional affordable housing types in Alaska. Credits: Tlingit and Haida Housing Authority, Sitka Conservation Society, Cook Inlet Housing Authority

[7] Alaska Division of Research and Analysis Section. (2024). *Alaska New Housing Units Multiple Years.* Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/housing/new.html

[8] U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B25070: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income.*

[9] Specific number based on https://www.realtor.com data; other sources were compared and numbers were comparable.

[10] U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S2501: Occupancy Characteristics.*

increased by 40 percent since 2018, according to the Mortenson Construction Cost Index.[11] While the 2023 Homer Housing Review identified 1,163 vacant tax parcels within City limits with an average lot size of 1.3 acres, many of these properties face significant development barriers, including wetlands, steep slopes, and lack of access to utilities.[12] These conditions increase the cost and complexity of construction and limit the feasibility of building new homes. Addressing these constraints through targeted infrastructure investment and infill-oriented zoning strategies will be essential to expanding the range of housing options available to the community.

Unattainable Housing and the High Cost of Living are Barriers to Economic Growth and Quality of Life

> *"Affordable housing developers would benefit from a simplified process with the city."*
>
> ~ Growth Scenario Report Card

Limited access to affordable, attainable housing continues to challenge Homer's ability to retain essential workers, support local businesses, and meet the needs of a changing population. In the Homer business survey, 13 percent of respondents identified a lack of housing for seasonal employees as a key hiring barrier, second only to the shortage of qualified applicants. In interviews, the high cost of housing was also cited as a reason why more fishermen do not live in Homer year-round. Seniors seeking to age in place and younger residents starting families or attending college locally often face limited choices that are affordable, accessible, and available year-round. Conversion of existing homes to short-term rentals has further constrained available year-round housing supply. While some workers find more attainable housing outside City limits, they may lack access to City services and representation, weakening civic connection and economic participation. More broadly, Homer's high cost of living—including housing, transportation, and construction—adds on residents and local employers alike. Expanding housing options for year-round workers, seniors, and young people is essential to sustaining the local economy and ensuring Homer remains a livable community for all generations.

Figure 16. Top Five Community Areas for Improvement, Historical Perspective

Top 5 Community Areas for Improvement, Historical Perspective

	2015 Perceptions Survey (590 responses)	2019/2020 Perceptions Survey (469 responses)	2023 Perceptions Survey (1,020 responses)
1	Jobs and economic opportunities (48%)	Jobs and economic opportunities (13%)	Housing (58%)
2	Public transport (38%)	Substance abuse treatment (13%)	Public transportation (24%)
3	Substance abuse treatment (36%)	Housing (12%)	Jobs and economic opportunities (20%)
4	Housing (26%)	Public transportation (12%)	Substance abuse treatment (17%)
5	Access to job training and higher education (17%)	Respect for varied viewpoints (10%)	Behavioral health services (17%)

Source: Perception of Community Health Survey

Image from the 2023 Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) Community Health Needs Assessment

[11] Mortenson. (2024). *Construction Cost Index Report.* https://www.mortenson.com/cost-index

[12] City of Homer. (2023). *Homer Housing Review.* https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/communitydevelopment/housing

The Rise and Proliferation of Short-Term Rentals

In the Homer Comprehensive Plan Revision Community Survey, about 18 percent of respondents identified vacation rentals as a barrier to housing, reflecting concerns about housing availability and neighborhood integrity. Data about the number of short-term rentals in Homer varies: the city identified approximately 326 short-term rental units in 2022 using a now-discontinued city software subscription. This represents 14.8 percent of the total housing stock, a notably high percentage compared to other communities in Alaska (see Figure 17). Kenai Peninsula Borough Land Management Department estimated 475+/- Airbnb, and 260 +/- VRBO offerings in the "greater Homer area" in its March 2023 Homer Housing Review.

New housing development in Homer, 2025.

During 2023 and 2024, Homer City Council considered an ordinance to address short-term rentals that garnered significant support and opposition. The ordinance failed, and city councilmembers looked to the public process in the comprehensive plan update to help clarify issues related to housing and short-term rentals. While the support and opposition were varied, general support centered interest in regulating short-term rentals to maintain neighborhood cohesion and keep commercial businesses out of Homer's residential zones, while opposition focused on the economic value of short-term rentals as small businesses that support Homer's economy. Further, the definitions of Bed and Breakfasts and short-term rentals are not clear in current city code.

Figure 17. Short-Term Rentals as a Percent of Total Housing Units

Community	Short-Term Rentals	Total Housing Units	Percent of Total Units
Girdwood	310	1,839	16.9 percent
Homer	**326**	**2,201**	**14.8 percent**
Kenai Peninsula	2,149	31,330	6.9 percent
Sitka	151	4,229	3.6 percent
Juneau	379	13,792	2.7 percent
Kodiak Island	140	5,450	2.6 percent
Chugach	72	3,287	2.2 percent
Matanuska-Susitna	903	42,018	2.1 percent
Ketchikan Gateway	127	6,427	2.0 percent
Anchorage, Municipality	2,323	118,293	2.0 percent
Fairbanks North Star	717	44,270	1.6 percent
Wrangell-Petersburg	37	3,251	1.1 percent

Source: Extracted from the Girdwood Economic and Housing Analysis, April 2024. Data comes from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2017-2021); City of Homer October 2022 City Council Work Session; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Alaska Economic Trends, September 2022; AirDNA Quarterly Reports for Girdwood 2023 Q3.

Goals

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C	Goal D
Preserve and produce a high-quality, healthy, safe, and energy efficient housing inventory that accommodates for projected population growth and is affordable, attainable, and safe for all Homer residents.	Develop Homer's housing inventory to be compatible with the beloved existing community character while allowing for essential growth and density.	Align housing development with the City's preservation and sustainability goals, minimizing the environmental impact of new construction.	Build strong community and regional partnerships around housing to improve housing attainability and affordability.

City-Led Strategies and Actions

Icon Key:

- ⚡ Priority: An emerging priority for implementation
- 🛠 Capital: An action that includes a potential capital project
- ✱ Code: An action that recommends a specific code revision
- ♦ 2018: An action adapted from/carried over from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan

1. **Implement zoning reforms to encourage attainable housing development for young people, families, seniors, college students, and seasonal workers.** ⚡ ✱
   Note: Actions associated with this strategy are encompassed in Land Use and Environment Strategy 2.
2. **Assess Homer's housing needs and maintain data collection.** ⚡

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Complete a housing stock report and buildable lands inventory.	Administration Department, Community Development Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Evaluate the City's land portfolio to identify any feasible opportunities for strategic dispositions.	Administration Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Update housing indicators (Figure 18) annually to track housing issues, constraints, needs, and opportunities; share updates online.	Community Development Department, Administration Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years
d. Monitor short-term rentals and their impact on the housing market and develop strategies to mitigate impacts of short-term rentals on year-round housing.	Administration Department, Community Development Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

3. **Develop incentives and public-private partnerships for affordable and long-term housing development.**

Policies Supporting Housing in Other Chapters

The table below summarizes the location of related policies in other parts of the plan that support and contribute to Homer's housing goals. They are shown in order by chapter.

	Chapter and Strategy Number of Related Policies					
Topic	2. Land Use & Environment	3. Public Facilities & Services	5. Economic Development	6. Transportation	7. Governance	8. Sustainability & Resilience
Zoning reforms for housing	1, 2					
Infrastructure support and future needs		2			3	
Aging in place			4, 10			
Fiscal tools to support attainable housing					2	
Education and partnerships for housing accessibility			8		4	4
Land suitability						2

Figure 18. Housing Indicators

Indicator	Description	What it tells us	Sources
New Housing Units	Quarterly report of new single family, multi-family, and mobile home units.	Tracking the number of new housing units added to the market can help track how well the market is responding to demand and track progress toward new housing goals.	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) Alaska Housing Market Indicators Report (available at https://www.ahfc.us/efficiency/education-and-events/research-information-center/alaska-housing-market-indicators or https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/housing/new.html)
Housing Occupancy and Vacancy Rates	Total occupied/vacant housing units, homeowner vacancy rate, rental vacancy rate.	Vacancy rates below five percent are an indication of a tight housing market that could limit housing mobility and is often a sign of pent-up demand. A growing number of vacant units can be an indication that the housing supply is not meeting the needs of residents and the existing housing stock is not being used to its full potential.	U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates: Table DP04 SELECTED HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS (available at https://data.census.gov/)
Housing Tenure	Owner-occupied housing units, renter-occupied housing units, and average household size for both owner-occupied and renter-occupied units.	The relative demand/need for ownership *versus* rental housing in a community. Household size can indicate the housing unit size that renters and owners are looking for, respectively.	U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates: Table DP04 SELECTED HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS (available at https://data.census.gov/)
Overcrowding	Occupants per room.	Often an indication of pent-up demand within a community,	U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year

Indicator	Description	What it tells us	Sources
		overcrowding is defined as more than 1.0 person per room. Severe overcrowding is defined as 1.5 or more people per room.	Estimates: Table DP04 SELECTED HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS (available at https://data.census.gov/)
Affordability	Selected monthly ownership costs as a percentage of household income (SMOCAPI) and gross rent as a percentage of household income (GRAPI).	Households that spend more than 30 percent of their total income on housing costs are considered to be cost burdened. Spending a larger portion of household income on housing limits the amount of income available for other non-discretionary spending, such as food, clothing, and transportation.	U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates: Table DP04 SELECTED HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS (available at https://data.census.gov/)
Median Family Income	Median family income and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) income limits broken down by persons in family and income limit category.	HUD sets income limits that determine eligibility for assisted housing programs including the Public Housing, Section 8 project-based, Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, Section 202 housing for the elderly, and Section 811 housing for persons with disabilities programs.	The Department of Housing and Urban Development, FY 2023 Income Limits Summary (available at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html#query_2023)
Local Building Permit Activity	Data collected by local assessors on the number and or type of building activity occurring in the community.	Data that describe current building activity in the community can help track how well the market is responding to demand and any progress toward new housing goals.	Local Accessors/Municipal Planning Departments
Housing Wage	Housing wage is an estimate of the hourly wage a full-time worker must earn to afford a modest rental home at HUD's fair market rent (FMR) without spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs.	Illustrates the gap between renters' wages and the cost of rental housing.	National Low Income Housing Coalition, Out of Reach Dashboards (available at https://nlihc.org/oor/state/ak)
Population Estimates/ Components of Change	Components of change including births, deaths, and net migration.	Helpful information around how a community is changing/ growing and what role housing could play in population dynamics moving forward.	Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce, Alaska Population Estimates (available at https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/data-pages/alaska-population-estimates)

Photo Credit: Art Koeninger

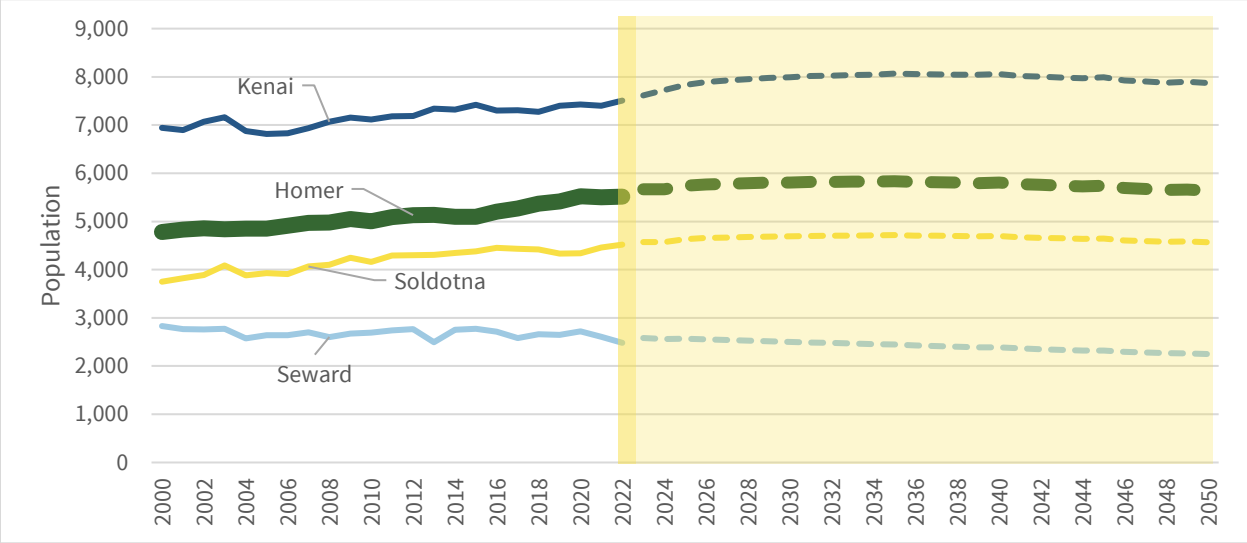
5. Economic Development

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

Population Expected to See Slight Growth

Homer's population has been steadily increasing, with a 15.4 percent growth from 2000 to 2022, and is projected to continue growing slightly until 2050 (Figure 19). The City has a growing senior population (increasing from 14 percent in 2013 to 22 percent in 2022). This growth presents unique economic challenges and opportunities, particularly in housing and healthcare services. Homer has a higher per capita income compared to nearby communities, and its median household income has seen a modest increase over the past decade. However, residents are still concerned about the high cost of living and doing business in Homer and cite those costs as one of the biggest challenges of living in Homer.

Figure 19. Historical and Forecasted Populations for Homer and Comparison Cities in the Kenai Peninsula Borough



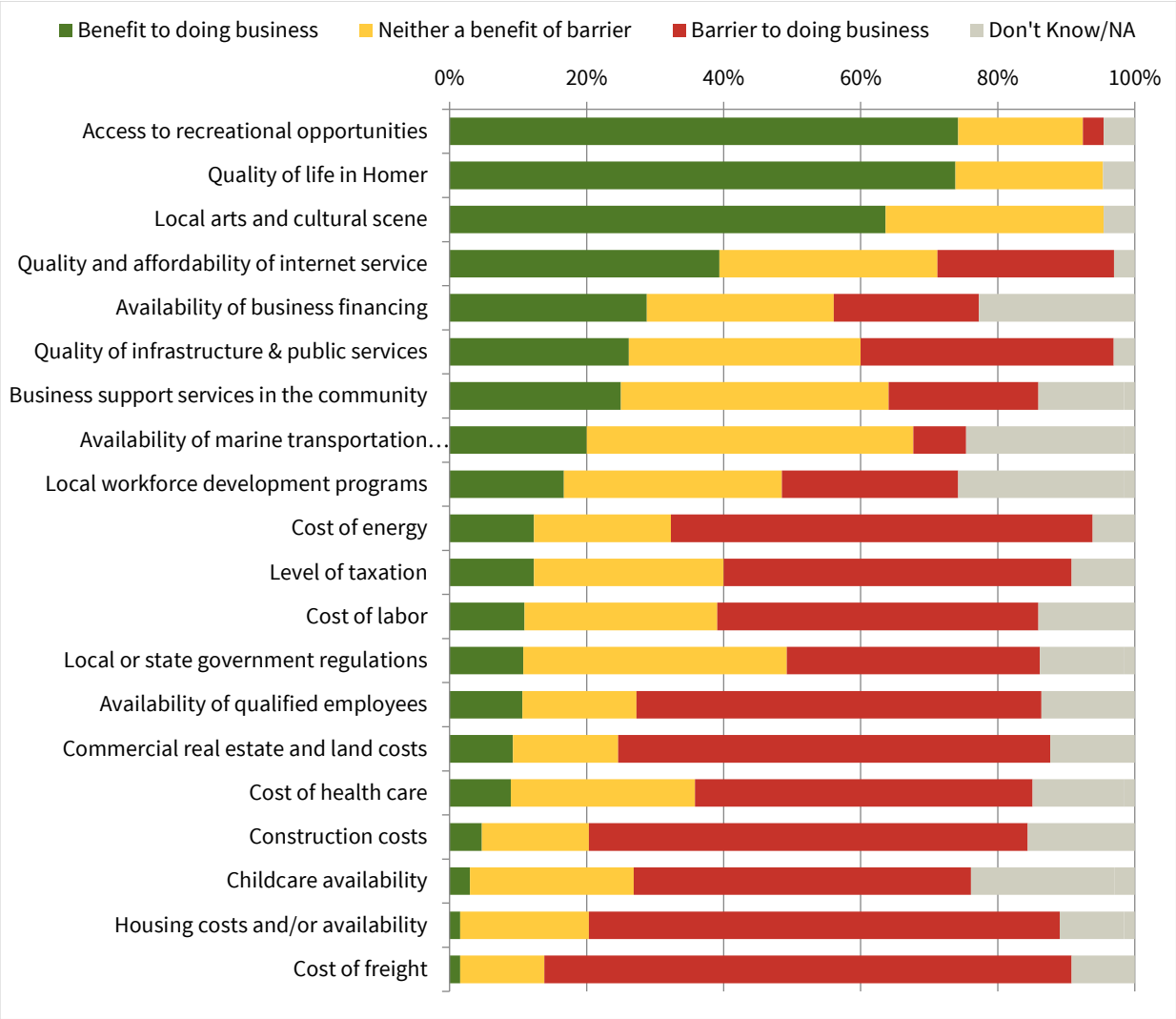
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development data (accessed 2024), and Northern Economics analysis; see Appendix F: About Homer – Community Background for more detailed analysis. Note: Population and economic data in this plan are current as of 2022; updated data are released annually by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

During the planning process for this update, the comprehensive planning team worked with the community to explore different levels and types of growth. Community survey respondents were asked about preferred levels of growth; three scenarios were later developed to explore what a desired future Homer could look like, and residents had the opportunity to review and grade the different options. In both the community survey and the growth scenarios activity, most participants indicate support for minimal to moderate growth. The Homer community also expresses an ongoing desire to manage growth so that it remains sustainable and does not compromise the quality of life, character, or the environment in the community.

Residents Value the Quality of Life but Struggle with Cost of Living, Housing

Homer is vibrant with small businesses, many nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and active civic engagement. However, like many of Alaska's communities, Homer residents and businesses face a high cost of living, especially when it comes to housing affordability and availability (see Housing Chapter 4). Some of the same characteristics that residents and businesses value, such as the small town feel and the beautiful environment, also attract many visitors each summer, bringing challenges such as congestion and pressures on the housing market. Families value Homer's schools, safe feel, and high quality of life; however, they similarly cite housing costs, limited childcare availability, and limited year-round employment as barriers to choosing Homer as a place to raise a family. Homer has valued for 45 years the practical and comprehensive education, job training, and lifelong learning opportunities provided by the University of Alaska's Kachemak Bay Campus (KBC). Based on a 2024 survey of Homer businesses (Figure 20), business owners cite barriers to attracting and training employees as their primary obstacle to doing business in Homer. Expanding educational training could help build a skilled workforce, which is essential for supporting local industries and attracting new businesses. Homer businesses are also impacted by the global trend of increases in online purchases, sometimes at the expense of local stores that provide jobs and support the local tax base.

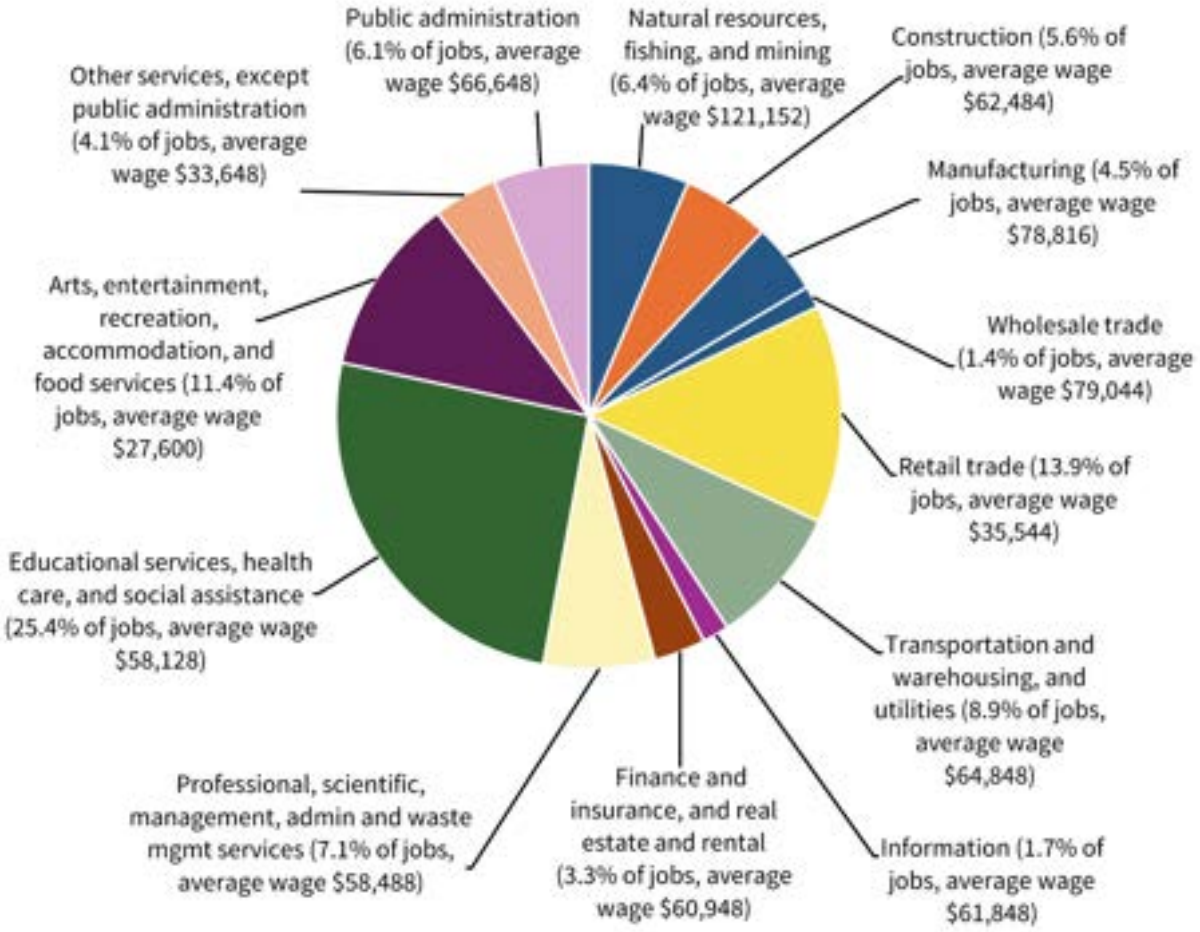
Figure 20. Responses to the Homer Business Survey Question, "Please rate the following factors as benefits or barriers to doing business in the Greater Homer Area."



Fishing and Tourism Industries Remain Strong Economic Drivers

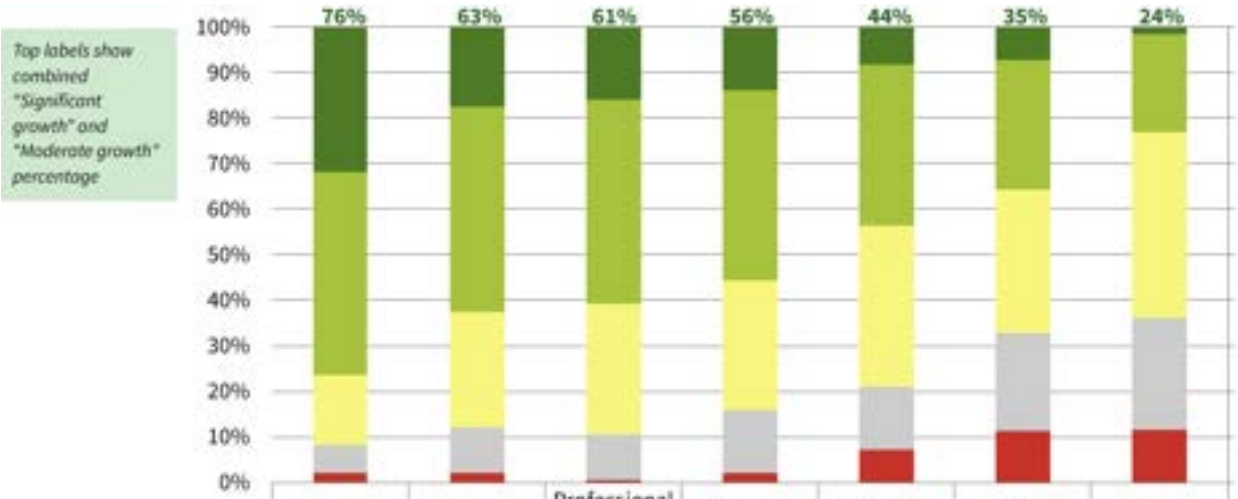
The largest industry sectors in Homer by share of workforce include education, healthcare, retail trade, and arts and entertainment (Figure 21). The fishing industry, although employing a smaller portion of the workforce, continues to play an important role in Homer's economy through high per-worker earnings and its broader contributions of commercial, charter, and subsistence fishing, which support local businesses, cultural identity, and food security. Tourism and marine trades are not specifically identified in state industry data, but both are identified as key industries in the community. Tourism is a critical component of Homer's economy, but there is concern about relying too heavily on this industry or growing this industry at the expense of other priorities important to residents. The community survey showed support for growing the potential of the marine trades industry to provide new economic opportunities and support existing community strengths (Figure 22). Homer also has a thriving agriculture sector and is nicknamed the "City of Peonies."

Figure 21. Percentage of Homer Workforce by Industry and Annual Wages by Industry for the Kenai Peninsula Borough



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development based on Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages and Northern Economics Analysis, 2024. Excludes self-employed individuals and those serving in the armed forces. Categories based on the North American Industry Classification System: https://www.bls.gov/cew/classifications/industry/home.htm. Categories may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Figure 22. Responses to the 2024 Homer Community Survey: Preferred Level of Growth by Economic Sector



	Education	Healthcare	Professional or Service Industry	Marine Trades	Construc-tion	Visitor Industry	Government
Significant growth	32%	18%	16%	14%	8%	7%	2%
Moderate growth	44%	45%	45%	42%	36%	28%	22%
Minimal growth	16%	25%	29%	28%	35%	31%	41%
No growth / change	6%	10%	10%	14%	14%	22%	25%
Smaller than existing	2%	2%	1%	2%	7%	11%	12%

"We need growth that reflects community values and benefits the local economy – not growth for growth's sake. Keep local input central."

~ Community Survey Results

"A diverse economy is a healthier economy."

~ Business Survey Results

Goals

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C	Goal D	Goal E
Enhance Homer's defined downtown to drive commerce, business, and resident and visitors' services.	Support Homer's economy by honoring traditional industries, while supporting expansion of select industries that maintain the character of Homer.	Support workforce development in key sectors to increase year-round, high wage employment opportunities.	Develop and maintain sustainable, accessible infrastructure that supports a thriving local economy.	Sustain Homer as an active, vibrant, healthy community with year-round opportunities to enjoy art, events, and recreation.

City-Led Strategies and Actions

Icon Key:

- Priority: An emerging priority for implementation
- Capital: An action that includes a potential capital project
- Code: An action that recommends a specific code revision
- 2018: An action adapted from/carried over from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan

1. Invest in infrastructure that supports economic growth in key sectors.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Incentivize sustainable growth of the marine trades in Homer to expand services offered locally, create jobs, support fishing, increase the City's taxbase, and reduce the need to travel to other areas of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest.	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Economic Development Commission, Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
b. Continue to develop the Homer Spit ("the Spit") in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner to provide opportunities for marine trades and tourism.	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Economic Development Commission, Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing

2. Celebrate Homer's status as a vibrant hub for arts, culture, and community engagement.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Update the Parks, Art, Recreation, and Culture Needs Assessment, and continue to expand City partnerships with other organizations and entities to implement recommendations.	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission Administration Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Support arts and culture installations and spaces in the community, including Homer's museums and galleries and on the Spit.	Economic Development Commission, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission	Undetermined	Ongoing
c. Collaborate with citizen groups and nonprofit organizations to address community needs by providing limited technical assistance and the option to use City land or facilities at reduced rates.	City Administration, City Council	Undetermined	Ongoing
d. Increase the presence of Alaska Native art, signage, and history around Homer.	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing

3. **Sustain Homer's role as an agricultural hub.**

Action	
a.	Support limited small scale farming and backyard gardens to strengthen the local food economy.
b.	Maintain Homer's role as an agricultural hub for the surrounding area by supporting efforts that facilitate the processing, storage, distribution, and marketing of local agricultural products (e.g., farmer's markets).

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

4. **Support Homer's youngest residents and their families by making sure they have what they need to grow and thrive, including access to child care.**
5. **Expand career and job training resources, particularly in trades, construction, marine trades (including mariculture and shipping industries), and healthcare industries, to retain young residents and provide year-round employment.**
6. **Support access to quality, affordable health care.**
7. **Promote fishing and maritime services as viable career options in Homer and demonstrate long-term support for and commitment to the industry.**
8. **Promote food security.**
9. **Address barriers to workforce recruitment and retention (e.g., housing, child care).**
10. **Pursue moderate, sustainable growth in tourism, focusing on activities that benefit small businesses and minimize negative impacts on community character.**
11. **Support Homer's seniors, including the ability to remain in the community as they age.**
12. **Support high-quality K-12 and higher education in Homer, support teachers, and sustain lifelong learning opportunities for all residents.**

South Peninsula Hospital

"The cost of housing is not reflective of our local economy and is rapidly outpacing the middle class wage earner."

~ Community Survey *Results*

Policies Supporting Economic Development in Other Chapters

The table below summarizes the location of related policies in other parts of the plan that support and contribute to Homer's economic development goals. They are shown in order by chapter.

	Chapter and Strategy Number of Related Policies					
Topic	2. Land Use & Environment	3. Public Facilities & Services	4. Housing	6. Transportation	7. Governance	8. Sustainability & Resilience
Improve zoning code to promote growth in desired areas and simplify permitting and procedures	2					
Thriving downtown	5					
Guide planning at the Homer Spit	5	4				
City facilities equipped to host large events		1				
Maintenance of existing parks and restrooms that enhance visitor experiences		1				
Port and harbor infrastructure		3				
Homer airport						
Accessible, ADA compliant facilities, including businesses		7				
Affordable, attainable housing			1, 2, 3			
City center parking and walkability				1		
Public transportation options to improve accessibility for seasonal workers, residents, and visitors				5		

Vendors in front of Homer business on Contractor's Day

6. Transportation

Key Themes Guiding the Plan

Homer Maintains a Separate Transportation Plan

The 2024 Transportation Plan identified four key goals for transportation in the City of Homer:

- *Goal 1:* Increase Safety of Interactions Between Different Modes of Travel
- *Goal 2:* Provide a Connected Network of Local and Collector Roads and Trails That Balances Modes Based on Land Use Contexts
- *Goal 3:* Maintain Transportation Network to Be Usable Year-Round
- *Goal 4:* Provide Expanded Transportation Options for Residents and Visitors

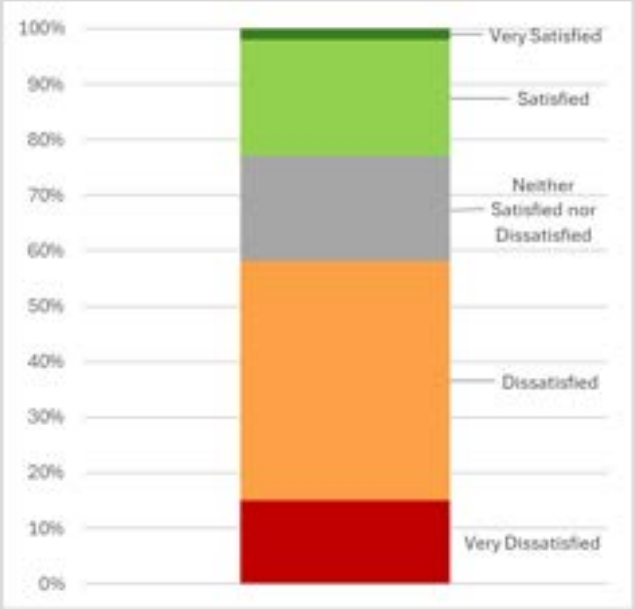
The 2024 Transportation Plan includes specific recommendations. The policies in this chapter supplement those already identified in the Transportation Plan and focus on topics that received less coverage in the Transportation Plan.

A Transportation Hub for the Region

Homer is connected to other parts of the Kenai Peninsula by road, air, and water. Homer's port is a key connection point for distributing goods and moving people around the Kenai Peninsula and beyond. Homer is one of the only communities on the Kenai Peninsula serviced by the Alaska Marine Highway System. For details on the airport, port, and harbor, see the Public Facilities and Services Chapter 3.

Figure 23. Responses to the 2024 Homer Community Survey Question, "How satisfied are you with the availability of Roads and Sidewalks in Homer?"

Results show almost 60 percent of residents want more roads and sidewalks; write-in comments indicate residents specifically want more walking and biking facilities.



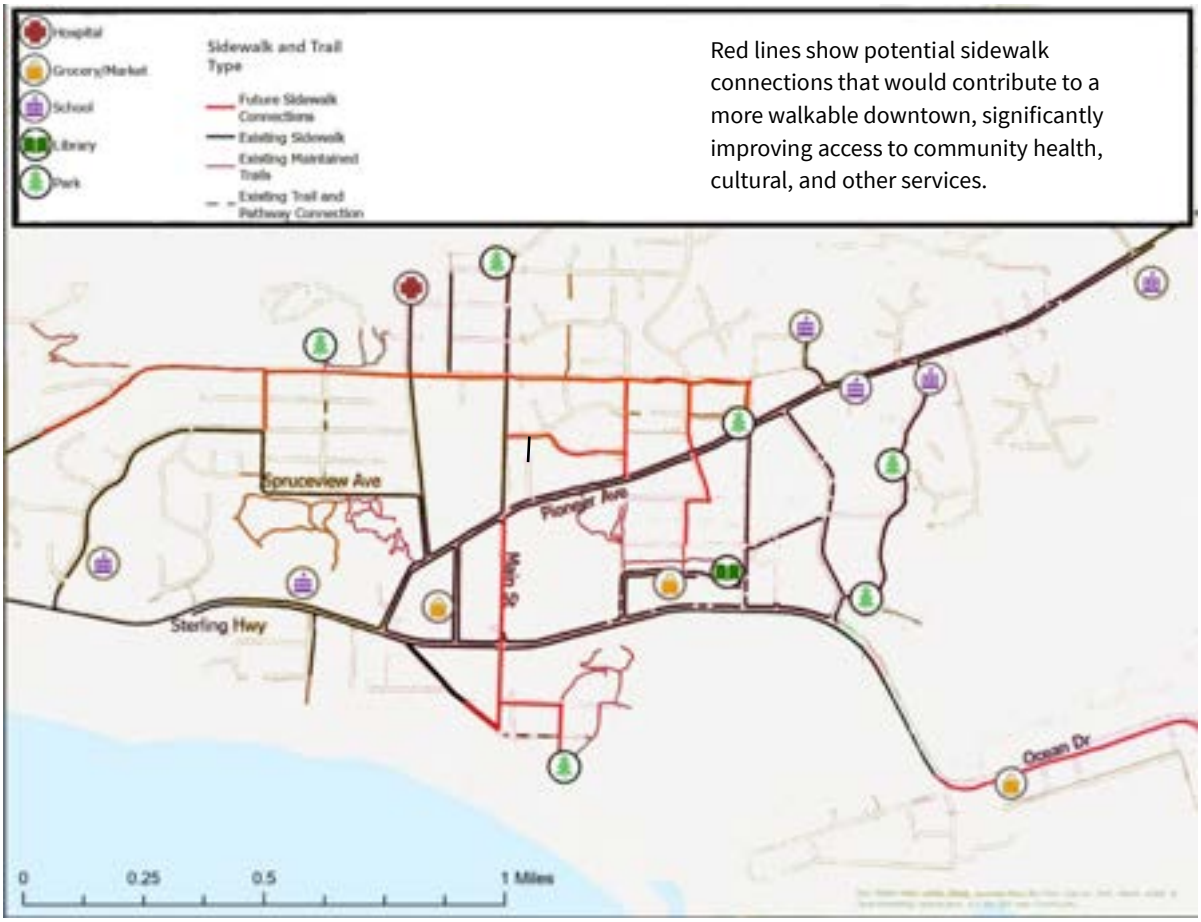
Road and Sidewalk Maintenance is a Community Priority

Homer has expressed a consistent opinion as to how the City should grow and the "look and feel" that residents want for the community. Key desires include a more focused and walkable downtown, a more walkable and bikeable community, and the development of an attractive community that mirrors the natural beauty of Homer's setting. The community roadway system is an important component of Homer's development and plays an important role in whether the community's goals will be realized. Street design should follow elements of Complete Streets, enabling safe access for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists of all ages and abilities. The development

of a comprehensive sidewalk and trail system will require the appropriate facilities be included with the construction of each new street. Important elements include standard designs for sidewalks, trails, streetside plantings, paving requirements and inclusion of traffic calming elements in residential streets.

Year-round maintenance of the transportation network is critical for improving access, safety, equity, and quality of life for Homer residents. Indeed, maintenance of roadways, sidewalks, and trails is identified in the 2024 Homer Transportation Plan [13] and was also identified as a priority through community outreach. In the community survey results, residents identified maintenance as one of the most challenging things about living in Homer, citing the need for improvements to state-maintained roads. The City of Homer's Public Works Department is responsible for maintenance on 29 miles of rural roads and 21 miles of urban roads. As additional roads and sidewalks are constructed, maintenance burdens must be considered. As an example, where sidewalks are constructed, crews can no longer push snow to the side of the road and leave it there.

Figure 24. Existing and Potential Future Sidewalk Connections



Residents Walk and Bike Year-Round

Walkable neighborhoods directly contribute to the small-town feel that Homer residents value. Connecting schools, shopping, the library, parks, and medical facilities can reduce vehicle trips, support affordable housing by reducing transportation costs per resident, and improve safety. Throughout the planning process, residents expressed a desire for improved infrastructure to walk and bike year-round. In the community survey results,

[13] Homer Transportation Plan (2024). https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning/page/78524/transportation_plan_07102024.pdf

residents identified a need for increased pedestrian connectivity and in bike infrastructure. Over 50 percent of respondents were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied over the availability of roads and sidewalks. [14] Currently, the City has over 24 miles of sidewalk and bike/walking pathways and almost 13 miles of maintained trails (Figure 24). However, many connections between paths are missing, leaving pedestrians to walk along the roadway or find a less desirable route to their destination. Examples of solutions include the Homer All-Ages and Abilities Pedestrian Pathway (HAPP) that will connect the Senior Center, main medical district, library, post office, police station, grocery store, and pharmacy, as well as existing trails. For longer trips, bicycles could be accommodated by widening shoulders or installing separated pathways on key routes, such as along the Sterling Highway, on East and West Hill Roads, Ocean Drive, and Pioneer Avenue. Creating a truck route to shift heavy truck traffic off Pioneer Avenue would foster a more walkable and bicycle-friendly downtown core. The recently completed 2024 Homer Transportation Plan identifies many of these challenges and offers recommendations for improvements to the non-motorized network.

Speed hump for slowing traffic to Bishop's Beach.

Traffic Flow and Safety Concerns

Homer's existing roadway network can support the future traffic growth that could come with increased population. Although most residents use a car daily, many would like to reduce those trips and use walking and biking more frequently, especially for commuting and to access recreation. [15] Three key areas to enhance longevity and access within the network include expanding sidewalks and trails, connecting new neighborhoods as they are built, and providing continuing maintenance. Implementing concepts and using existing tools such as Complete Streets, Safe Systems, Vision Zero, and the Kenai Peninsula Borough's Safe Streets for All Plan can help address some of these concerns to increase safety and access for all users. Other issues identified in the community survey results include truck routing, parking, pedestrian safety, and summertime congestion. These issues affect the entire transportation network, both motorized and non-motorized.

The Calhoun Trail is an example of one of the 25 city-maintained trails, together spanning almost 11 miles. Its maintenance and upkeep provides a pedestrian connection from Fairview Avenue to Bayview Avenue.

Continued Interest in Transit Opportunities

Providing public transportation could support households without access to a car and could also serve areas like the Homer Spit ("the Spit") where vehicle traffic overwhelms the network during the tourist season. Currently, local taxi companies transport most residents and visitors who don't have access to their own vehicle. Some private and nonprofit entities provide van service as part of their programs. In the past, some private companies have tried providing transit services more broadly, but these efforts have not been financially sustainable.

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[14] 83 percent of survey respondents from the Homer Transportation Plan Survey said they use a car daily but would prefer to walk and bike more.

[15] 83 percent of survey respondents from the Homer Transportation Plan Survey say they use a car daily but would prefer to walk and bike more. Learn more at www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning/page/78524/transportation_plan_2024_01302024_red_size_002.pdf

Goals

Goal A	Goal B
Provide a resilient non-motorized transportation network focused on connectivity, safety, and access to the downtown, to schools, and to trails for users of all ages and abilities.	Maintain a safe and sustainable motorized transportation network within Homer year-round to support the movement of people and goods throughout the Greater Homer Area.

City-Led Strategies and Actions

Icon Key:

- ⚡ Priority: An emerging priority for implementation
- 🛠 Capital: An action that includes a potential capital project
- ✱ Code: An action that recommends a specific code revision
- ♦ 2018: An action adapted from/carried over from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan

1. Build or improve safe roadway and pathway access and connections to key locations. ⚡

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Improve non-motorized connections to schools. 🛠	Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Community Development Department, Public Works Department, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District	Undetermined	Varies
b. Implement recommendations in the Homer Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan. 🛠 ♦	Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Community Development Department, Public Works Department	$278k (FY26 CIP)	Long (5+ years)
c. Implement the 2024 Homer Transportation Plan to guide investment priorities, design standards, and multimodal connectivity improvements.	Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Community Development Department, Public Works Department	*Varies*	Long (5+ years)

2. Maintain a year-round transportation network.

Action
a. Update design standards and road design for walking and biking infrastructure in Title 11 to support connectivity, safety, and ease of maintenance. ✱
b. Ask voters whether to renew the Homer Accelerated Roads and Trails fund beyond 2027.
c. Identify additional funding sources and strategies to support new construction, renovation, maintenance, and equipment for roads and trails.

Note: See the 2024 Homer Transportation Plan (Transportation Strategy 1c) for related policies on the following topics: bicycle parking, transfer of responsibilities for state road maintenance, improved winter maintenance on state roads, winter maintenance standards, updating City non-motorized facility design standards, Kachemak Drive reconnaissance engineering study.

Case Study: Public-Private Partnership Providing Public Transportation
In the City of Sitka, public transportation is provided under the oversight of the nonprofit Center for Community with two partner organizations: Sitka Tribe of Alaska (who operates the fixed-route scheduled bus service) and Southeast Senior Services (who operates the door-to-door paratransit service). Sitka Tribe of Alaska receives federal transit funding directly to the Tribe; the City of Sitka supports the services with yearly contributions and by maintaining the paratransit vehicles; other grants also help to meet the operating and capital funding needs. (https://ridesitka.com/)

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

3. **Maintain continued safe airport and ferry operations to support the movement of people and goods to and from the community and maintain Homer's status as a regional hub.**
4. **Explore public transit options, particularly in the Homer Spit area, to alleviate traffic congestion and improve accessibility for seasonal workers, residents, and visitors.**
5. **Install benches, trash cans, bike racks and create drop-off and pick-up locations for buses, taxis and visitors, in alignment with the Homer Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan.**
6. **Explore public parking in downtown.**

Note: See the 2024 Homer Transportation Plan for related policies on the following topics: truck network/truck routes, transit options, school pick up and drop off congestion, updating existing trail maps.

> *"State roads make up the backbone of the City of Homer transportation system, providing key connections between local city roads for walking, biking, driving, and the movement of freight… both state- and city-owned roads are needed to provide safe transportation options for residents, visitors, and the movement of freight."*
>
> ~ Transportation Plan 2024

Policies Supporting Transportation in Other Chapters

The table below summarizes the location of related policies in other parts of the plan that support and contribute to Homer's transportation goals. They are shown in order by chapter.

	Chapter and Strategy Number of Related Policies					
Topic	2. Land Use & Environment	3. Public Facilities & Services	4. Housing	5. Economic Development	7. Governance	8. Sustainability & Resilience
Infill and walkability	1, 5					
Trails	4					
Downtown development	5					
Homer Spit planning and development	5	4				
Homer airport land use	5					
Accessibility improvements		1, 7				
Port and harbor improvements		3				
Kenai Peninsula Borough Safe Streets and Roads for all		5				
Airport improvements		6				
Tsunami evacuation routes						2
Roads and bluff stability						2

Photo Credit: Lorna Branzuela

7. Governance

Overarching Theme and Context

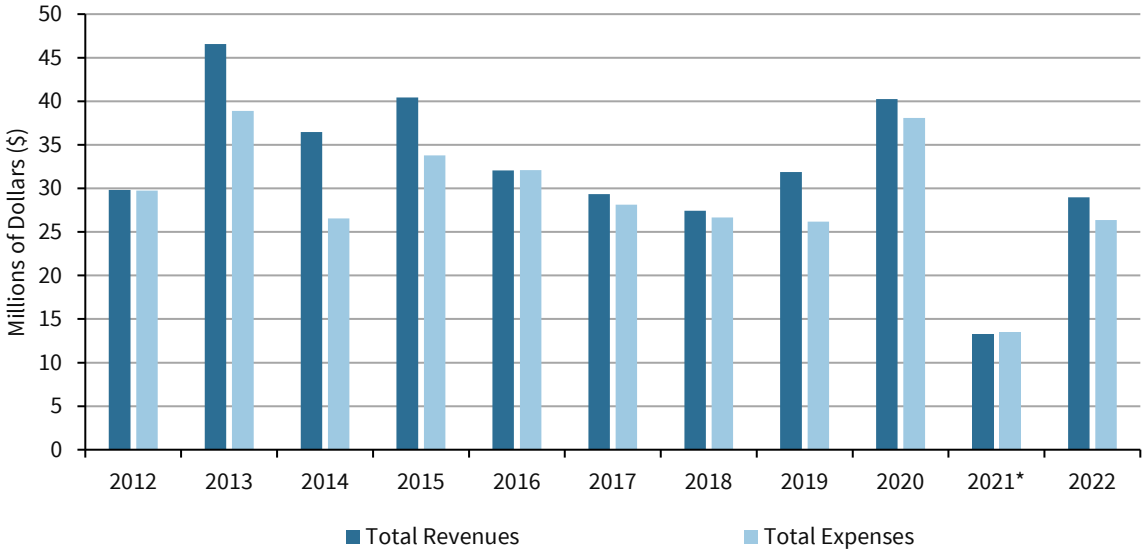
The City of Homer Faces Fiscal Uncertainty

Understanding the City's fiscal position—its revenues, expenditures, and economic capacity—is essential for informed and effective comprehensive planning. Municipal budgets are the foundation of local government operations. Like many small municipalities, Homer faces ongoing fiscal uncertainty that requires careful planning and prioritization of resources. This chapter begins with an overview of Homer's revenues and expenses as well as some of the challenges contributing to an uncertain fiscal environment. For more background, see Appendix G: City of Homer Fiscal Trends Report.

> *"Anything that requires significant funding needs to start with stating who is willing to pay for it."*
>
> ~Growth Scenarios Report Card Results

Over the years, the City of Homer's annual revenues and expenses have fluctuated. As seen in Figure 25, total revenues exceeded total expenses in nine out of 11 years – in six of those years, by a considerable margin. The two years where expenses exceeded revenues were 2016 and 2021, resulting in $57,641 and $169,125 deficits, respectively, for those years. Compared to the financial gains made in other years, these amounts were both small deficits.

Figure 25. Revenues and Expenses for the City of Homer, 2012–2022 (Millions of 2022 Dollars)



Note: Includes all funds. The City changed from a calendar year to a fiscal year, resulting in 2021 only covering six months. As a result, revenues and expenses shown for 2021 reflect six months of activity. A full fiscal year is shown for 2022 (July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022). Source: City of Homer audits (2012–2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis. See Appendix G: City of Homer Fiscal Trends Report for details.

About the Data in this Chapter

The primary sources used to inform key themes and draft policies in this chapter include City of Homer financial statements, budget documents, department reports and additional information and data from City sources; Kenai Peninsula Borough Assessing Department data; and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and Census Bureau data. These sources informed a detailed "City of Homer Fiscal Trends Report", prepared as part of the 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan process (see Appendix G). Community input, including the community survey, interviews with elected City officials, commissions, boards, and committees, and other community conversations, as well as research on comparable communities also informed key themes and policies.

The information in this chapter is based on available datasets at the time of plan development and may not reflect current trends. For current information about the City's budget and taxation trends, visit:

- City of Homer: Latest Operating and Capital Budgets: https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/finance/budgets
- Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development's Taxable Database: https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/OfficeoftheStateAssessor/alaskaTaxable-New.aspx
- Kenai Peninsula Borough Property Tax Webpage: https://www.kpb.us/departments/property-tax/property-tax-overview

The State of Alaska's fiscal situation has and continues to remain uncertain. As a result, the City cannot rely on some of the same state funding sources as it has in the past for certain programs. The pandemic caused further uncertainty in future revenue and expenditure activities for the City. An additional source of financial vulnerability is the City's water and sewer utility fund. The City owns expensive and expansive treatment, collection, and distribution infrastructure, with only year-round residents required to pay a full share of the cost of maintenance and operations of those systems. Capital grants have played a crucial role in Homer's finances, but they fluctuate significantly year to year. This variability creates challenges in long-term planning, making the City reliant on uncertain external funding sources.

Homer City Hall Sign

Homer faces challenges meeting increasing demands for services while dealing with high inflation following the pandemic. The City has experienced revenue growth, largely fueled by increased tourism. However, inflationary pressures on labor, supplies, and equipment have offset these gains, reducing overall purchasing power. While inflation is expected to stabilize, the City must carefully manage expenditures to maintain a balanced budget.

The following sections— "Revenue Snapshot" and "Taxation Snapshot" —provide additional context on the need to address the City of Homer's fiscal uncertainties.

Revenue Snapshot

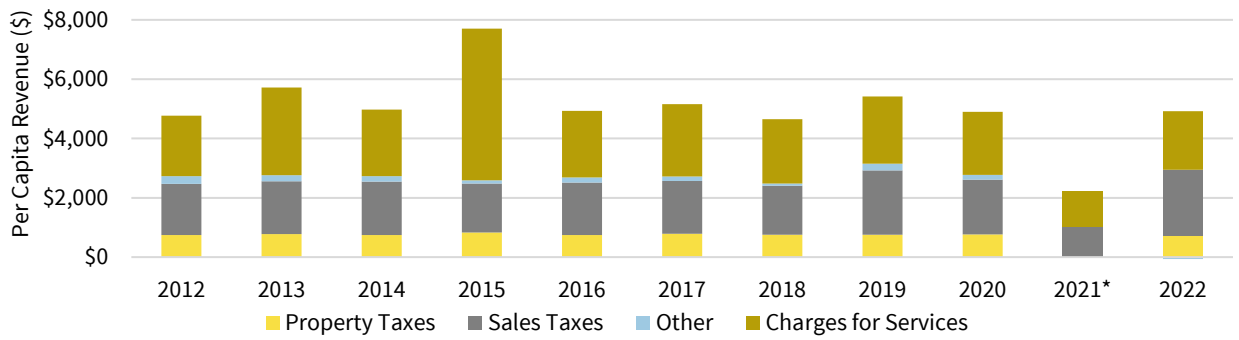
Total revenues for the City of Homer fluctuated between 2012 and 2022 with periods of growth and periods of shrinkage. One driving factor in revenue fluctuations is operating and capital grants, which are received periodically. Figure 26 identifies the largest single line-item revenue sources across all different funds and sources of revenues. As shown in the table, the largest revenue sources for Homer in 2022 were (1) sales tax ($12.34 million), (2) port and harbor services ($5.19 million), and (3) property tax ($3.91 million). As detailed in Figure 27, revenues per capita are generally stable at around $5,000 (excluding capital and operating grants and contributions). If all factors remain constant, for example, and if the City does not realize any additional revenue streams, the City could anticipate generating around $5,000 in revenue per capita in future years.

Figure 26. Inflation-Adjusted City of Homer Revenues, 2012, 2016, 2020, and 2022 (Millions of 2022 Dollars)

	2012	2016	2020	2022
Charges for services, port and harbor	$ 4.96	$ 5.26	$ 5.70	$ 5.19
Charges for services, water	$ 2.18	$ 2.38	$ 2.39	$ 1.95
Charges for services, sewer	$ 1.97	$ 2.09	$ 1.87	$ 1.81
Operating grants and contributions	$ 2.06	$ 1.33	$ 12.44	$ 1.35
Capital grants and contributions	$ 3.27	$ 5.06	$ 0.75	$ 1.20
Property tax	$ 3.80	$ 3.89	$ 4.24	$ 3.91
Sales tax	$ 8.90	$ 9.20	$ 10.15	$ 12.34
Other revenues	$ 2.69	$ 2.85	$ 2.72	$ 1.22

Source: City of Homer (2015, 2016, 2020, 2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis.

Figure 27. Per Capita Revenue by Category 2012 – 2022, Excluding Grants and Contributions (2022 Dollars)



Note: The amount shown for 2021 represents six months, due to the change from a calendar year to a fiscal year.
Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), ADOLWD (2024a, 2024b, 2024c), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis.

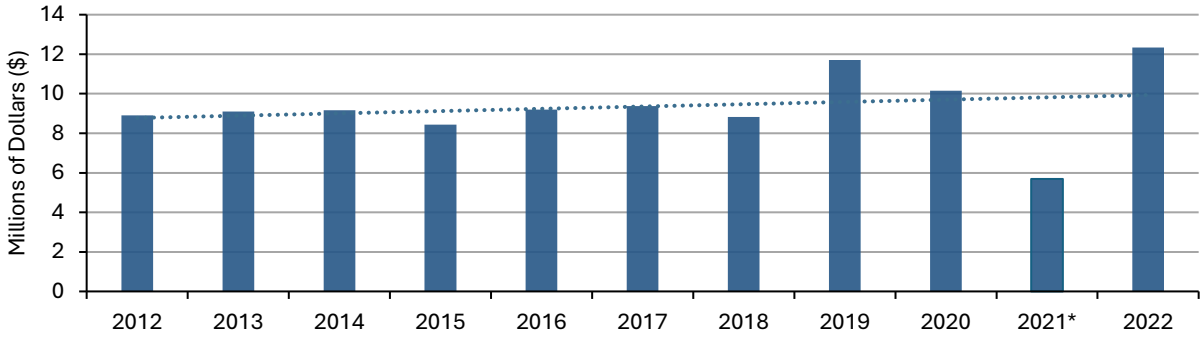
Taxation Snapshot

Figure 28 shows an upward trend in sales tax revenue for the City of Homer from 2012 to 2022. The City of Homer collects a year-round 7.85 percent sales tax (4.85 percent of which is for the City and 3 percent for the Borough) with a $500 cap. Homer has the second highest sales tax rate in the Borough behind Seldovia, which charges 9.5 percent seasonally (April through September). On a per-capita basis, sales tax revenue in 2012 was $1,734.81 and in 2022 it was $2,237.71 per person, demonstrating real growth relative to the population and inflation. It is likely that the increase in tax revenue per capita came from both an increase in spending as well as an increase in the tax rate in 2019. Some of this sales tax is applied toward a bond payment for Homer's police station.

> *"A big concern is that the actual city limits are so small compared to the actual areas that many residents live in and thus many of us who own businesses and earn sales tax for the city, do not actually live within the city limits and therefore are not able to vote on citizen decisions. Nor do we qualify for city services, such as the police and animal shelter. Something needs to change around all of that. Perhaps we don't need the city water and sewer where we live but would sure like to have more of a voice."*
>
> ~Community Survey Participant

Total property tax revenues have generally been steady from 2012 to 2022, increasing by about half a percent each year (Figure 29). One trend that could impact future property tax revenues received by the City is an aging population, since there are property tax exemptions for senior citizens. For residents who are 65 or older or are disabled veterans, the Borough exempts the first $150,000 of property valuation.

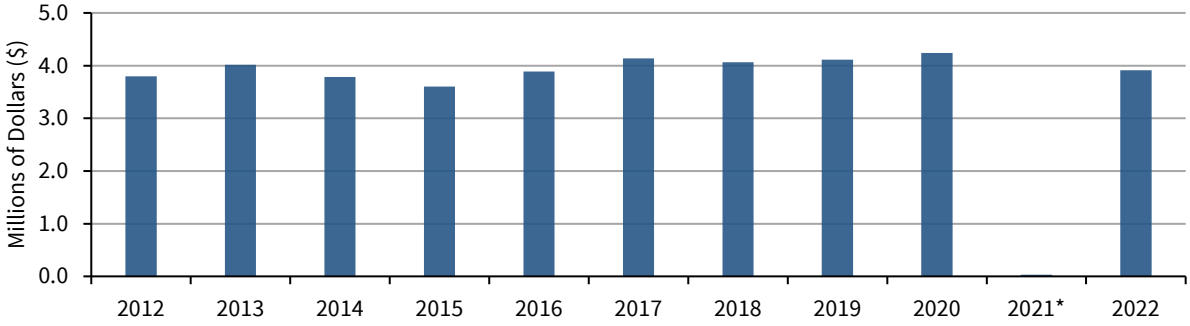
Figure 28. Homer Sales Tax Revenues 2012–2022 (Millions of 2022 Dollars)



Note: The amount shown for 2021 represents six months, due to the change from a calendar year to a fiscal year.

Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis.

Figure 29. City of Homer Property Tax Revenues, 2012–2022 (Millions of 2022 Dollars)



Note: *2021 is not shown, due to changes in tracking from a calendar year to a fiscal year.

Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

Other Themes and Related Fiscal Challenges

Revenue Growth Driven by Tourism, but Inflation Limits Gains

The City of Homer has experienced revenue growth, largely fueled by increased tourism. However, inflationary pressures on labor, supplies, and equipment have offset these gains, reducing overall purchasing power. While inflation is expected to stabilize, the City must carefully manage expenditures to maintain a balanced budget.

Dependence on Sales Tax as a Primary Revenue Source

Sales tax remains the most significant revenue source for Homer, contributing 75 percent of tax revenues in FY2022. In recent years, sales tax revenue has fallen both in nominal and inflation-adjusted terms, and also as a percentage of tax revenues, down to 61 percent in FY2025. This reliance makes the City vulnerable to economic downturns and shifts in consumer spending.

Aging Population and Increased Property Tax Exemptions

Property tax revenue has risen steadily in recent years with higher assessments and completion of new construction projects but faces future risks due to the increasing number of senior citizens eligible for property tax exemptions. In Homer, residents aged 65 and older represent a larger share of the population (22 percent) compared to Alaska as whole (14 percent). According to tax data from the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, the share of tax-exempt property in the Kenai Peninsula Borough has grown: there were 3,700 approved property tax exemption applications in the Borough in 2012, compared to

6,704 approved applicants in 2022. These exemptions could potentially impact the City's ability to generate stable revenue from property taxes. See Appendix G for additional details.

Staff Capacity Challenges Impact Service Delivery

The City of Homer faces staffing shortages that impact its ability to provide essential services efficiently. Limited personnel and funding constraints have led to delays in project implementation, code enforcement, and service expansion. Addressing workforce needs and limitations across City departments will be crucial for ensuring the City's long-term operational sustainability. If the City expands its infrastructure and services, that will likely require robust recruitment, training, and retaining of additional staff to operate and maintain any new facilities or programs.

Current staff capacity was a recurring theme throughout the 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan engagement process. Similar concerns were raised regarding the implementation of existing and potential policies or new code that are created through the updated plan and Title 21 code revision process.

Public Engagement and Fiscal Transparency are Important

Residents at a project open house, 2024

There is a strong demand for greater public involvement and education about the City's fiscal situation. Many residents outside City limits contribute to the economy but lack voting rights, leading to concerns about representation and service access. A key step in achieving a shared community understanding and ownership of City actions is consistent resident participation in City boards, commissions, committees, elected positions, and related City processes. Ongoing education for participants and residents on public involvement, information sharing, and civic engagement is key to reducing divisiveness and supporting inclusive policy and project implementation in Homer.

Homer Public Library

As evident in the robust community participation in comprehensive planning activities, residents across the Greater Homer Area are interested and invested in Homer's future. Based on responses to the community survey, residents highly value and look to the "City Council" and "City Government" for guidance on Homer's future (ranked 2nd in number of mentions after "non-profit and environmental organizations"). At the same time, as shown in Figure 22 in the Economic Development chapter, residents selected "Government" as the sector they desire the least amount of growth (most saying a combined "no growth/change" or "smaller than existing", even while noting lack of funding and/or staff capacity for fire and emergency services and road maintenance).

"Growth outside of the city depends on city services, but the city lacks funding to support growth outside the city."

~Growth Scenarios Report Card Results

"Some of this happens outside of city limits. How to develop without sacrificing the rural elements of Homer. Most people who live outside of limits don't want to be included because of fees. Homer is a hub, which can be a deficit for the city."

~Planning Commissioner comment

Core Functions Distributed Between the State of Alaska, Kenai Peninsula Borough, and City of Homer

Figure 30 illustrates the breakdown of responsibilities between the State of Alaska, the Kenai Peninsula Borough and the City of Homer, presented in alphabetical order.

Figure 30. Core Functions of the State of Alaska, Borough, and City

State of Alaska	Kenai Peninsula Borough second class borough*	City of Homer first class city*
• Alaska Marine Highway Ferry Terminal • Alaska State Troopers (outside of City limits) • Homer Airport • Road Maintenance of major roadways (including Sterling Highway, Pioneer Avenue, Homer Spit Road, Kachemak Drive, West Hill Road, and East Hill Road) • State Parks (e.g., Kachemak Bay State Park) • University of Alaska	• Hospital (via service areas) • Planning and platting • Regional emergency medical services (via service areas) • Road maintenance (via service areas) • Schools, via Kenai Peninsula Borough School District • Solid waste services	• Airport terminal • Animal control • City code enforcement • Elections • Parks and recreation • Planning and zoning (within City limits) • Police • Port and harbor • Public library • Right of way management • Road maintenance and snow removal (shared with State) • Volunteer Fire Department • Water and wastewater

Alaska has two primary classifications of municipalities: General Law and Home Rule. Within the General Law classification there are first class cities/boroughs and second class cities/boroughs. The Kenai Peninsula Borough is a second class borough and the City of Homer is a first class city. For both, powers are defined by state law and by local ordinances; while these powers can be broad, there are some limitations on certain activities like taxation. Home Rule municipalities generally have broader powers and may exercise all legislative powers not prohibited by law or charter. To learn more about the powers of municipalities, visit the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development Division of Community and Regional Affairs, Local Government Resource Desk: www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/LocalGovernmentResourceDesk/MunicipalGovernment/MunicipalGovernmentStructureinAlaska.aspx.

The Value of Collaboration and Partnerships in Fiscal Sustainability

Public-private partnerships (PPPs), or partnerships between the public sector and the private sector for the purpose of delivering a project or a service traditionally provided by the public sector, is one tool the City of Homer can use to complete priority community projects. By leveraging private investment and expertise, the City can support key projects without overburdening taxpayers. Successful PPPs in Alaska's coastal communities have demonstrated the ability to enhance economic development, improve public services, and expand infrastructure while reducing municipal costs. An example of an effective PPP in Homer today is in the community's Medical District with the South Peninsula Hospital (SPH)—a partnership between the City of Homer (landowner), Kenai Peninsula Borough (facility owner), SPH, Inc. Board of Directors (governance), and South Kenai Peninsula Hospital Service Area (public advisory board). Homer can benefit from similar partnerships in areas such as harbor improvements, renewable energy projects, and housing development. Similarly, the City can also partner with Tribal organizations or nonprofit partners that have access to different funding streams and resources to achieve shared priorities.

> *"The comprehensive plan is spearheaded by the city, but other partners help implement the strategies and actions."*
>
> ~Planning Commissioner comment

Goals

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C
Maintain long-term financial stability.	Enhance fiscal transparency and community engagement.	Strengthen collaboration and partnerships.

Icon Key:

- ⚡ Priority: An emerging priority for implementation
- 🛠 Capital: An action that includes a potential capital project
- ✱ Code: An action that recommends a specific code revision
- ♦ 2018: An action adapted from/carried over from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan

City-Led Strategies and Actions

1. Develop a long-term fiscal plan that is proactive, sustainable, and responsive to short-term challenges and opportunities. ⚡

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Establish a six-year budget framework to improve financial foresight and stability.	Administration Department, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Align the Capital Improvement Plan with the six-year budget.	Administration Department, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Implement asset management across all city departments.	Administration Department in coordination with all other City departments	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

2. Diversify revenue streams to reduce dependence on sales and property taxes. ⚡

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Increase financial reserves to mitigate risks from economic downturns or unexpected expenditures.	Administration Department, City Council, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Leverage City-owned land for development that aligns with economic and housing goals.	City Council, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Explore the feasibility of taxation options.	Administration Department, City Council, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
d. Use tools such as bonds, tax increment financing (TIF), Business Improvement District (BID) assessments, and other mechanisms to finance infrastructure improvements and public amenities in designated redevelopment areas.	Administration Department, City Council, Community Development Department, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
e. Offer property tax abatements (City-wide or targeted) to developers to incentivize investment in higher-density projects.	City Council, Community Development Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
f. Support small business growth through targeted incentives to expand the local tax base.	City Council, Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

3. Conduct operational efficiency audits to identify cost savings and streamline municipal services.

Action
a. Encourage infill development and connect customers to water and sewer systems where the infrastructure already exists to avoid additional build-out capital costs.
b. Solicit regular input from residents about desired services and facilities, and how to improve service delivery.
c. Engage City commissions and boards in their respective budget areas to inform prioritization and planning.
d. Evaluate staffing levels across departments and identify workforce gaps and inefficiencies based on current needs.

4. Increase public participation in budget planning, improve access to financial data, and foster community discussions so that policies reflect the needs and priorities of residents both inside and outside City limits.

Action
a. Educate residents about service levels, benefits, and costs for different parts of the City and those areas adjacent to City boundaries.
b. Educate residents on City powers, roles, responsibilities, and the benefits of different planning processes and tools.
c. Inform residents and visitors of the value of green infrastructure in reducing infrastructure costs, as well as educate the community on which types of green infrastructure works best in Homer.
d. Continue to create opportunities for youth involvement in City decision-making.
e. Educate the public about the benefits of higher density development, such as reduced traffic congestion and increased walkability.
f. Encourage shared planning and decision-making to align policies with community priorities and needs.
g. Establish code enforcement standards, and conduct public outreach on those standards, that protect our community's safety, preserve accessibility for all residents, maintain neighborhood property values, and ensure City regulations are applied fairly and consistently.
h. Develop a clear and orderly process to assess the need and apply for the expansion of the boundaries of the City of Homer, which is likely to be necessary over the coming decades as surrounding areas grow and develop. See Appendix K, Border Expansion Process, for additional information.

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

5. **Identify opportunities to coordinate with organizations including Tribal organizations, Alaska Native Corporations, public entities, and local and regional non-profits to leverage resources and provide services more cost-effectively.**
6. **Work with the Kenai Peninsula Borough to advocate for and implement policies that fiscally benefit borough communities.**

Policies Supporting Governance in Other Chapters

The table below summarizes the location of related policies in other parts of the plan that support and contribute to Homer's governance goals. They are shown in order by chapter.

	Chapter and Strategy Number of Related Policies					
Topic	2. Land Use & Environment	3. Public Facilities & Services	4. Housing	5. Economic Development	6. Transportation	8. Sustainability & Resilience
Higher density, sustainable growth	2					
Community and stakeholder input on zoning and policy tools	2					
Improved processes and efficiencies in zoning, design, and review	3					
Evaluation of creating a municipal Parks and Recreation Department		1				
High quality, sustainable municipal facilities and services		All				
Land dispositions			2			
Encourage expansion of select industries				1		X
Access to City facilities				2		
Sustainability and resilience in City planning						
Energy efficiency of municipal facilities						

Photo Credit: Adela Pederson

Photo Credit: Lorna Branzuela

Credit: Kyra Wagner

8. Sustainability and Resilience

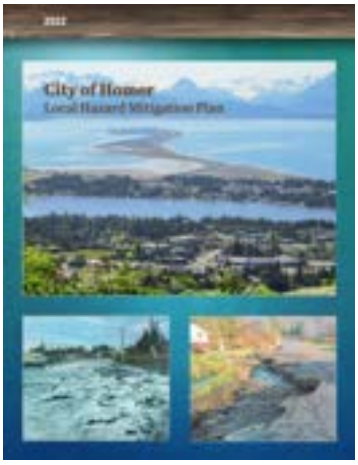
Key Themes Guiding the Plan

Natural and Climate-Driven Hazards Increase Risks to People and Infrastructure

Homer's natural setting makes it vulnerable to multiple hazards, including earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, wildfires, and flooding. These risks are expected to intensify as the region experiences the effects of a warming climate. The number of extreme wildfire danger days around Homer is projected to increase significantly by 2050, with higher temperatures, drought, and beetle-killed forests contributing to fire risk. Severe and extreme drought conditions are projected to occur around 20 percent of the time. [16] At the same time, inland flooding is expected to worsen, particularly around Beluga Lake, as 1-in-100-year rainfall events become more intense. [17] Although isostatic rebound may offer short-term relief from storm surge, flood depths on the Homer Spit ("the Spit") are expected to increase again by 2080, with parts of the Spit experiencing over two meters of inundation in a major event. [18] Several City facilities are also at risk including the Public Works campus, which lies in a tsunami inundation zone. [19] These evolving hazards highlight the need for forward-looking planning, facility siting, evacuation coordination, and land management tools to strengthen Homer's resilience over time.

A November storm caused damage to the Homer Spit Road, resulting in a State Declaration of Disaster Emergency. Credit: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Facebook, 2024

The City adopted a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2022, which identifies multiple hazards from a variety of sources, including wildfires, tsunamis, volcanoes, earthquakes, landslides, and more. It also identifies multiple recommendations for actions that would mitigate harmful effects from these hazards. This Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is part of the Homer Comprehensive Plan suite of documents, and the policies in the document should be considered alongside the action plan for this chapter and related chapters as part of Comprehensive Plan implementation.



Cover page of the 2022 City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Photo Credit: City of Homer

[16] Woodwell Climate Research Center. (2022). *Climate Risk Assessment: Homer and Seldovia, Alaska*. Retrieved from https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/publicworks/climate-risk-assessment

[17] Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy (ACCAP). (2023). *Alaska's Changing Climate: Localized Projections for Southcentral Alaska.*

[18] Suleimani, E.N. (2019). *Tsunami Hazard Assessment for the Kachemak Bay Area.* Alaska Earthquake Center.

[19] City of Homer. (2023). *Tsunami Risk Final Report and Recommendations for Public Works Campus.*

Sustainability and Resilience Are Core to City Planning and Investments

The City of Homer has a long history of leadership on sustainability, having adopted Alaska's first Climate Action Plan in 2007. Today, the community continues to express strong support for renewable energy, hazard mitigation, and environmental stewardship. In the 2023 community survey, 74 percent of respondents said it was "very important" to encourage renewable energy projects over the next 20 years. Community members also emphasized the importance of resilience-focused infrastructure, sustainable development practices, and forward-looking land use decisions. These values are reflected in the City's ongoing efforts to transition municipal facilities to more efficient energy sources, conduct energy audits, incorporate green infrastructure, and modernize capital projects to have long-term resilience. [20] As hazards and environmental stressors increase, integrating sustainability as a baseline assumption in all City policies and capital investments will help reduce future costs, improve operational efficiency, and protect the well-being of Homer's residents.

Open Space and Natural Lands Support Long-Term Community Well-Being

Homer's ecosystems, wetlands, and green spaces provide natural protection against flooding, erosion, and other hazards—while also contributing to the community's quality of life. Residents strongly support preserving these natural assets: 77 percent of community survey respondents identified the preservation of public open space as a top priority. In open responses and interviews, residents expressed support for concentrating new development in existing disturbed areas, avoiding steep slopes and flood-prone zones, and protecting wildlife corridors and critical habitat. Preserving wetlands, riparian buffers, and upland vegetation also enhances Homer's capacity to manage stormwater through low-impact development and natural drainage systems. Continued investment in data tools—such as Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) mapping, green infrastructure inventories, and watershed-based planning—will help the City and its partners prioritize land for conservation and align development with long-term environmental resilience.

Photo Credit: Kachemak Communications

> *"We need to make considerations about how we are going to get our energy in 10-20 years and adjust for climate change. Invest in ways to minimize our energy demand and alternative methods of harnessing our energy."*
>
> ~ Community Survey Results

[20] City of Homer. (2023). *Energy Audit Reports and Capital Improvement Plan Updates.* Kinney Engineering. (2020). *Low Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer*. City of Homer Public Works Department. Retrieved from https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/public_works/page/49271/low_impact_development_planning_study_6-30-20_final.pdf

Goals

Goal A	Goal B
Protect both existing and new infrastructure from the impacts of climate change, environmental constraints, and hazards.	Encourage Homer residents to be proud stewards of their community and the spectacular natural setting around them.

City-Led Strategies and Actions

Icon Key:

- Priority: An emerging priority for implementation
- Capital: An action that includes a potential capital project
- Code: An action that recommends a specific code revision
- 2018: An action adapted from/carried over from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan

1. Modernize City operations for long-term efficiency and resilience.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Completion
a. Incorporate sustainability (long-term resource stewardship) and resilience (ability to adapt and recover from disruptions) into the design and evaluation of all City plans, policies, and capital projects.	All City boards, commissions, departments	Undetermined	Ongoing
b. Conduct energy audits of City facilities and operations on a 10-year basis to identify cost-saving opportunities and inform capital upgrades.	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Transition City facilities and assets to more efficient and lower-emission energy sources where feasible.	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
d. Continue to seek grant funding and technical assistance for projects that restore ecological functions, reduce flood risk, or enhance long-term resilience.	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
e. Explore the use of local or alternative building materials to reduce building costs and improve resilience.	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

2. Reduce risk from natural hazards through proactive siting and planning.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Completion
a. Relocate municipal buildings out of tsunami inundation zones where feasible and continue to consider hazard-prone or unsuitable areas in future development projects.	Administration Department, Community Development Department, Public Works Department	$11.4 M for Public Works facility (FY26 CIP)	Ongoing
b. Provide information and signage to educate residents and visitors about tsunami evacuation routes.	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Completion
c. Incorporate landslide risk analysis into City planning using tools such as LiDAR mapping and geotechnical field assessments, with an emphasis on bluff areas most vulnerable to development and climate impacts. 🛠	Community Development Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
d. Continue to implement the Homer Beach Policy and Management Plan, including enforcement of existing regulations, establishment of future regulations, and public education to maintain, preserve, protect, and promote enjoyment of Homer's beaches. ♦	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee, Police Department, City Administration	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
e. Evaluate current bluff stability best practices in City infrastructure design standards, including guidance for street extensions, trails, utilities, and Right of Way (ROW) projects near coastal or inland bluffs. Incorporate if needed.	Public Works Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Long (5+ years)

3. Enhance natural drainage systems. ⚡

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Completion
a. Update and adopt the City's Low-Impact Development Plan (also referred to as the Green Infrastructure – Stormwater Master Plan) to incorporate current data on erosion, water quality, and flooding. The updated plan should identify strategic opportunities for wetland preservation and enhancement as a form of natural stormwater management.	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Continue to incorporate green infrastructure approaches (e.g., rain gardens, vegetated buffers, permeable surfaces) into City-led projects.	Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Continue to integrate wetlands, riparian areas, and other natural drainage features into the City's capital planning, permitting review, and long-term infrastructure decisions.	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
d. Explore incentives, recognition programs, or voluntary guidelines that encourage sustainable development practices on private land.	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Potential Partner-Led Strategies

4. Leverage partnerships to advance community-wide sustainability and resilience.

Policies Supporting Sustainability and Resilience in Other Chapters

The table below summarizes the location of related policies in other parts of the plan that support and contribute to Homer's sustainability and resilience goals. They are shown in order by chapter.

	Chapter and Strategy Number of Related Policies					
Topic	2. Land Use & Environment	3. Public Facilities & Services	4. Housing	5. Economic Development	6. Transportation	7. Governance
Title 21 and responsible growth	1, 2					
Title 21 and hazard mitigation	3					
Open space preservation	4					
Infill and sprawl reduction	5					
Green infrastructure / wetlands integration		3				
Hazard-based siting and resilience		5				
Long-range stormwater management plan		3				
Water and sewer management plan		6				
Food security				3		
Moderate, sustainable growth in tourism				9		
Transportation network sustainability					1, 3, 4	
Public-private partnerships						4
Engaging community about sustainability, stewardship						5

Appendices

Appendix A: Acronyms

Appendix B: Glossary of Key Terms

Appendix C: Methodology

Appendix D: Plan Review

Appendix E: Public Participation Overview

Appendix F: About Homer – Community Background

Appendix G: City of Homer Fiscal Trends Report

Appendix H: Land Use and Environment Chapter Background

Appendix I: Partner-Led Strategies and Actions

Appendix J: Implementation Plan

Appendix K: Border Expansion Process

2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan

Appendices

Adopted by the Homer City Council on November 24, 2025

HomerCompPlanUpdate.com

Appendix A: Acronyms

ACS	American Community Survey
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
AHFC	Alaska Housing and Finance Corporation
AS	Alaska Statute
CARMA	Capital Asset Repair and Maintenance Allowance
CDP	Census Designated Places
CIP	Capital Improvement Plan
DOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
EV	Electric vehicle
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FLUM	Future Land Use Map
FMR	Fair market rent
FY	Fiscal year
GhG	Greenhouse gas
GIS	Geographic information systems
GRAPI	Gross rent as a percentage of household income
HAPP	Homer All-Ages and Abilities Pedestrian Pathway
HART	Homer Accelerated Roads and Trails Program
HAWSP	Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program
HERC	Homer Education and Recreation Center
HUD	US Department of Housing and Urban Development
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
ISO	Insurance Services Office
KPB	Kenai Peninsula Borough
KPBSD	Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
KPC	Kenai Peninsula College
KPEDD	Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
LID	Low-Impact Development
MAPP	Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships
PARCAC	Parks, Art, Recreation, and Cultural Advisory Commission
PPP	Public Participation Plan
RFP	Request for proposal
RV	Recreational vehicle
SMOCAPI	Selected monthly ownership costs as a percentage of household income
SPARC	South Peninsula Area Rec Center
SPH	South Peninsula Hospital
TBD	To be determined
TORA	Transfer of responsibility agreement
US	United States

Appendix B: Glossary of Key Terms

This glossary is intended to provide definitions and clarification for terms in the 2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan including the Core Plan and other appendices.

Anadromous water body[1]: The portion of a fresh water body or estuarine area that (A) is cataloged under Alaska Statutes (AS) 16.05.871 as important for anadromous fish; or (B) is not cataloged under AS 16.05.871 as important for anadromous fish but has been determined by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to contain or exhibit evidence of anadromous fish, in which event the anadromous portion of the stream or waterway extends up to the first point of physical blockage. The term 'anadromous fish' species that are born in freshwater, migrate to the ocean to grow and mature, and then return to freshwater to spawn (e.g., salmon).

Area plan[2]: *(See also Master Plan*) A plan that covers specific subareas of a community that provides basic information on the natural features, resources, and physical constraints that affect development of the planning area. They may also specify detailed land-use designations used to review specific development proposals and to plan services and facilities.

Complete Streets[3]: Streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. This includes people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are traveling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders.

Downtown Area: *See Future Land Use Map, Figure 14 of the Core Plan.*

Greater Homer Area: *See Map of the Greater Homer Area, Figure 3 of the Core Plan.* The "Greater Homer Area" encompasses the City of Homer and its neighboring communities, including Diamond Ridge, Kachemak City, and Fritz Creek.

Green infrastructure[4]: Green infrastructure uses filtration, infiltration, and evapotranspiration to treat and soak up rainwater where it falls. It can deliver multiple environmental, social, and economic benefits beyond stormwater management alone. Terms such as nature-based solutions, green stormwater infrastructure, and low-impact development are also used to describe green infrastructure installations, and there is overlap between these concepts. When green infrastructure systems are thoughtfully designed to fit the site-specific, local, or regional needs of the community and environment, they can provide cleaner air and water, protect against flooding and excessive heat exposure, provide diverse habitat, and create beautiful green spaces for all to enjoy.

Growth, Minimal: In the Growth Scenarios Report Card Results, minimal growth is referred to as "status quo" where there is no growth or there is "natural," unguided growth that maintains current

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[1] Adapted from Alaska Statute § 41.17.950 (2023).

[2] Adapted from: Michael Davidson & Fay Dolnick (Eds.), *A Planners Dictionary* (PAS Report Nos. 521/522), American Planning Association, 2004.

[3] Adapted from U.S. Department of Transportation. (n.d.). *Active transportation*. https://www.transportation.gov/mission/office-secretary/office-policy/active-transportation/active-transportation

[4] U.D. Environmental Protection Agency (2025). *About Green Infrastructure.* https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/about-green-infrastructure

trends such as keeping current zoning and land use policies. This definition is consistent between the Core Plan and appendices.

Growth, Moderate: In the Growth Scenarios Report Card Results, moderate growth is referred to as "enhance" where there is a minimal increase in density through minor code modifications and a focus on current economic drivers. This definition is consistent between the Core Plan and appendices.

Growth, Significant: In the Growth Scenarios Report Card Results, significant growth is referred to "amplify" where there is a moderate increase in density through major code modifications that encourages new economic drivers aimed toward young families. This definition is consistent between the Core Plan and appendices.

Growth, Sustainable[5]: Creating long-term value without depleting natural or social resources, characterized by practices that are environmentally friendly, socially responsible, and economically viable.

Housing, Affordable[6]: *(See also Attainable Housing)* The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines "affordable housing" as housing on which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including utilities. Housing that is affordable can be built by private developers and open to all income groups. This is sometimes called naturally occurring affordable housing. Housing that is affordable can also be built using public investment and restricted to certain incomes. In some communities, there is an abundance of naturally occurring affordable housing that has been built by private developers. In other communities, the opportunities for housing that is affordable are few and far between, as housing prices have outpaced wage growth, causing housing to be out of reach for many households.

Housing, Attainable[7]: *(See also Affordable Housing)* Attainable housing means a variety of housing types for moderate- or middle-income households with incomes ranging between 80 – 120% of Area Median Income (AMI); this population segment sometimes is referred to as the 'Missing Middle'. Attainable housing is targeted towards income earners which may include teachers, healthcare providers, public safety personnel, armed service members, resort workers, etc. These individuals are typically ineligible for Affordable Housing because their household incomes often exceed the limits of Affordable Housing eligibility.

Infill[8]: Development or redevelopment of land that has been bypassed, remained vacant, and/or is underused because of the continuing urban development process. Generally, the areas and/or sites are not particularly of prime quality; however, they are usually served by or are readily accessible to

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[5] RVKS and Associates. (2024, December 5). *Strategies for sustainable business growth*. AGN International. https://agn.org/insight/navigating-growth-strategies-for-sustainable-growth/#:~:text=Sustainable%20growth%20focuses%20on%20creating,socially%20responsible%2C%20and%20economically%20viable

[6] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). *Glossary of HUD terms: A*. HUD User. https://archives.huduser.gov/portal/glossary/glossary_a.html

[7] Adapted from: Association for the Improvement of American Infrastructure. (n.d.). *Attainable housing terms*. https://aiai-infra.org/attainable-housing-terms/

[8] Adapted from: Michael Davidson & Fay Dolnick (Eds.), *A Planners Dictionary* (PAS Report Nos. 521/522), American Planning Association, 2004.

the infrastructure (services and facilities) provided by the applicable local governmental entity. Use of such lands for new housing and/or other urban development is considered a more desirable alternative than to continue to extend the outer development pattern laterally and horizontally thus necessitating a higher expenditure for capital improvements than would be required for infill development.

Infrastructure[9]: The built environment. FEMA defines public infrastructure as, "at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for roads, highways and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property; and structures, facilities and equipment that generate, transport and distribute energy including electric vehicle (EV) charging."

Master plan[10]: *(See also area plan)* A document that describes the physical development of the City which may include accompanying maps, plats, charts, descriptive and explanatory matter that shares the City of Homer Planning Commission's recommendations for the development of the City territory. This may include, among other things, development of the type, location, and sequence of all public improvements; the relocation, removal, extension or change of existing or future public ways, grounds, spaces, buildings, properties, and utilities; and the general extent and location of rehabilitation areas. A master plan for the City must be approved by the City Council after consideration and report by the Planning Commission.

Natural hazards: Earthquakes, extreme wind, rain, tide, wildfires, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions.

Resilience[11]: The ability of a community to anticipate, plan, and prepare for threats, persevere through stressful or disruptive events, and recover and adapt to new conditions.

Sustainability[12]: The process of using our finite resources as a community to balance the goals of economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and social equity to ensure that we can meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Tidelands[13]: Lands which are periodically covered by tidal waters between the elevation of mean high and mean low tides.

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[9] U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2023), *Infrastructure.* Federal Emergency Management Agency. https://www.fema.gov/about/glossary/infrastructure

[10] Adapted from: City of Homer. (n.d.). *Homer City Code § 2.72.030 – Powers and duties*. https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/homer-city-code

[11] Adapted from Fairbanks North Star Borough. (2024). *Climate Action and Adaptation Plan*. https://fnsb.gov/DocumentCenter/View/21949/climate-action-and-adaptations-plan?bidId=

[12] Adapted from Fairbanks North Star Borough. (2024). *Climate Action and Adaptation Plan*. https://fnsb.gov/DocumentCenter/View/21949/climate-action-and-adaptations-plan?bidId=

[13] Adapted from: City of Homer. (n.d.). *Homer City Code § 18.28.050 – Definitions*. https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/cityclerk/homer-city-code

Appendix C: Methodology

How Was this Plan Developed?

This plan was developed with extensive input from residents, city leadership and staff, commissions, committees, and other community leaders, and regional, state, and federal partners.

The following table summarizes the activities and inputs that contributed to this draft plan. Detailed summaries of project outreach activities can be found on the project website: homercompplanupdate.com.

In-Person Activities	
Steering Committee	The Steering Committee met 15 times (through December 2024) during the duration of the project and assisted in the development of the comprehensive plan. The committee plans to meet twice more during the drafting phase in January and February 2025. The five-member committee is comprised of two city council members, one city planning commissioner, one economic development commissioner, and a city resident representative nominated by the mayor and approved by the City Council. The roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee are outlined in City of Homer Resolution 23-129(A) and include: • Assist in the refinement and execution of the public outreach process, outreach program, and schedule. • Participate in public outreach activities and events including work with each of the member's represented organizations to keep them informed on the project and encourage their participation, solicit participation from a wide range of people and organizations in the community, participate in event exercises and provide feedback. • Provide feedback and recommendations on Comprehensive Plan draft documents. The Steering Committee meetings are noticed and open to the public.
City Meetings	The project team routinely provided updates at the **Homer City Council meetings and Planning Commission meetings**. The project team facilitated a **Joint City Council and Planning Commission Work Session** in March 2024 to kick off the project, review the overall purpose and legal basis for comprehensive plans and prepare the planning commissioners, Council members, and staff for the comprehensive plan revision process. The project team also attended and engaged many of the city boards and commissions including the **Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Library Advisory Board, Economic Development Advisory Commission,** and **Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Board**. Project team members also met with City department staff, including the library staff, public works staff, port and harbor staff, community development staff, and others.
Community Group Meetings	The project team attended and provided updates at the meetings of several active community groups including, the Homer Chamber of Commerce board of directors, Homer Guiding Growth, Homer Stormwater Working Group, Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) Steering Committee, MAPP Housing Working Group, Homer Marine Trades Association, and others.
Community Conversations and Open Houses	The project team hosted the following public community conversations and open houses where the project team discussed current economic conditions, emerging vision, values, priorities, and policies for the Homer Comprehensive Plan: • **Community Open House** March 28, 2024 at Alaska Islands and Oceans Visitor Center. • **Community Work Session on Growth Scenarios** October 22, 2024 at Alaska Islands and Oceans Visitor Center. • **Community Open House to launch Public Review Draft** Planned for February 11, 2025 at Alaska Islands and Oceans Visitor Center.
Events and Information Tables	The project team and Steering Committee attended the following community events or locations to engage with the community:

	• March 15, 2024: Hosted an information table at the Spenard Builders Supply's Contractors day to engage with local contractors, builders, and others. • April 11, 2024: Met with high school government class at Homer High School. • May 14-16, 2024: Held open hours at the Homer Public Library to receive feedback and provide information on the plan. • May 15, 2024: Hosted an Under 40 Focus Group to collect feedback and input from Homer residents under 40 years old. • May 24, 2024: Hosted a conversation with fishermen and marine trade representatives at the Gear Shed. • September 14 and 21, 2024: Hosted a booth at the Farmer's Market to engage with residents and visitors.
Interviews	The project team conducted more than two dozen interviews with business owners, community leaders, community organizations, and committees to learn about community challenges, priorities and collect suggestions for the plan.
Surveys	
Community Survey	The community survey was aimed at engaging residents and gathering feedback. The survey was open April 22, 2024, through July 1, 2024 and received 556 responses. The survey was distributed online, announced via project e-newsletters and website, announced via social media, in public meetings, and through outreach by Steering Committee members. The survey was also available in hard copy at the Homer Public Library and City Hall.
Business Survey	The business survey was aimed at engaging business owners. It was open from July 12, 2024, through August 25, 2024 and received 66 responses. The survey was designed and promoted with assistance from the City's Economic Development Commission and the Homer Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center.
Visitor Survey	The Visitor's Survey received five responses. The Project Team decided to not analyze these results due to the low response rate.
Interactive Map	The Interactive Comment Map was aimed at soliciting location-based input on community priorities. It was open in conjunction with the community survey, for the same time period and distributed through the same methods and received 224 responses.
Outreach and Media	
Project Website	The project website provided a place for residents to easily find background information about the project, downloads of past presentations and draft files, announcements of upcoming meetings, links to project surveys, and a form to sign up for project e-newsletters. https://homercompplanupdate.com/
Email Distribution	Throughout the project, the project team developed and sent multiple email project updates to nearly 250 interested community and partner subscribers.

Social Media	The project team announced project updates on social media, through the City of Homer's Facebook page that has 814 followers. The Homer Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center also shared some announcements, reaching its 5,600 followers.
Newspaper and Radio	Ads announcing public events were published throughout the project in the Homer News and newspaper staff covered some community events and conversations. Public Service Announcements announcing events aired on radio stations KBBI, K-Wave FM 105, KPEN FM 102, K-BAY 93.3, and KGTL AM 620/FM 100.
Research Tasks	
Mapping	The project team developed land use, transportation, and other relevant maps to use as decision-making tools and guide future development.
Secondary Research	The project team collected information from local, state and federal sources to tell the story of Homer: how it is changing and how the population, housing, economy and land use characteristics compare to other Kenai Peninsula communities.
Plan Review	The project team reviewed past and existing community, regional and other relevant plans and reports, including the 2018 Comprehensive Plan.

Appendix D: Plan Review

City of Homer 2045 Comprehensive Plan: Plan Review

Updated May 2025

Purpose

This plan review was conducted as part of the Background Research and Analysis Task for the City of Homer Comprehensive Plan Update. Documents reviewed were developed by local, borough, and state entities and will serve to inform the Comprehensive Plan Update alongside public outreach, mapping, and other data collection efforts.

In addition to summaries for each plan, this review identifies themes, strengths and challenges, and other commonalities amongst the plans and highlights key documents and plan excerpts organized by focus area.

Documents Reviewed

This review focuses on plans published after the 2018 Comprehensive Plan as well as key external components of the 2018 plan.

Name	Author/Source	Publication Date
State Transportation Improvement Plan Volume 1: Project Details	DOT&PF	2024
Transportation Plan	City of Homer	2024
Landslide Hazard Susceptibility Mapping in Homer, Alaska	Alaska DNR DGGS	2024
Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Strategy	South Peninsula Hospital	2024
2023 Community Health Needs Assessment	MAPP of the Southern Kenai Peninsula	2023
Alaska 2022-2023 Visitor Profile Report	Alaska Travel Industry Association	2023
Homer City Code	City of Homer	2023
2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan	City of Homer	2023
Adopted Biennial Operating Budget FY23-FY25	City of Homer	2023
Land Allocation Plan	City of Homer	2023
City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (Draft)	City of Homer	2023
City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for City Facilities (draft update)	City of Homer	2023
Community Conversation: Housing Solutions in the Greater Homer Area	City of Homer	2023

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2023-2027	State of Alaska	2023
Homer Quality of Life	City of Homer	2022
2022 Annual Traffic Volume Report	AMHS	2022
Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan	City of Homer	2022
Short Term Rental Basics Memorandum	City of Homer	2022
City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan	City of Homer	2022
Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment for Homer, Alaska	Alaska DNR DGGS	2022
Homer Public Works Campus Task Force Report	City of Homer	2021
City of Homer Beach Policy & Management Plan	City of Homer	2021
Executive Summary – Final Report and Recommendations on Tsunami Risk to the Public Works Campus	City of Homer	2021
City of Homer Climate Action Plan: Progress Report	City of Homer	2021
City of Homer Community Design Manual	City of Homer	2021
Road Assessment Report	City of Homer	2020
Low-Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer	City of Homer	2020
Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program Policy Manual	City of Homer	2020
Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2020 Update	KPB	2020
Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan	KPB	2019
Kenai Peninsula Borough Hazard Mitigation Plan	KPB	2019
Draft Kenai Peninsula Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan	KPB	2019
Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps for Homer and Seldovia, Alaska	Alaska DNR DGGS	2019
Business Retention & Expansion Survey Report	City of Homer	2018
Homer Comprehensive Plan	City of Homer	2018
Growing Local Food: A Survey of Commercial Producers on the Southern Kenai Peninsula	Homer Soil and Water Conservation District	2018
Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan	City of Homer	2011
City of Homer Climate Action Plan	City of Homer	2007
Homer Water and Sewer Master Plan	City of Homer	2006
Homer Town Center Development Plan	City of Homer	2006
Homer Area Transportation Plan	City of Homer	2005
Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan	City of Homer	2004

Emerging Themes

The following information was either found explicitly in multiple plans or was supported by content in multiple plans.

Mission and Vision

"Keep Homer a lively, vital community that effectively responds to change and growth while retaining what is best about Homer's character." (Homer Comprehensive Plan, 2018, p. 3-1)

Opportunities (copied from *2022 Homer Quality of Life,* SWOT analysis):

- Encourage multi-family housing.
- Increase ease of walking and biking.
- Collaborate with community partners on habitat, climate, erosion and other natural environment issues that impact quality of life.
- Find ways to keep young or returning residents in the community.

Values and Strengths

Residents enjoy the small town character and natural environment of Homer. These characteristics also appeal to visitors.

Strengths (copied from *2022 Homer Quality of Life* SWOT analysis):

- Small town feel and scale.
- Eclectic businesses, buildings and people.
- Wide variety of locally owned small businesses.
- Integrated town with outdoor environment.
- Connected community with vibrant cultural and business groups.

Challenges and Barriers

Homer is fairly remote, vulnerable to numerous natural disasters and climate-related threats and lacks some social support for the working population (e.g., transportation, childcare, affordable housing).

Weaknesses (copied from *2022 Homer Quality of Life* SWOT analysis):

- Lack of worker support: Housing, Childcare, Training.
- Difficulty for early to mid-career residents to thrive.
- Some infrastructure is in need of repair (roads) or expansion – storm water + green infrastructure.
- Local regulation does not result in the patterns and development the community would like to see.

Threats (copied from *2022 Homer Quality of Life* SWOT analysis):

- Difficult to recruit new talent.
- Poor retention of workers.
- Loss of town/wildlife interface.
- New residents may not become involved in the community; slow loss of volunteer run organizations, events and services; risk of gentrification; becoming a community of empty households.
- Costs of living and doing business.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies

Land Use & Environment

- Maintaining and improving environmental quality is a key theme in most plans.
- There are numerous threats from natural disasters that should be considered in land use planning.

Housing

- Affordability and availability are key barriers to housing.
- There is concern that tourism (short-term rentals) will make housing challenges worse.

Public Services & Infrastructure

- The City of Homer wants to provide reliable utilities without overburdening residents with costs.

Transportation

- Improving infrastructure for/access to transportation alternatives (transit, non-motorized transportation) is a goal for the City of Homer.

Economic Development

- Desire for sensible economic development/growth that supports the community without changing its character/charm.
- Tourism and fishing are important components of Homer's economy.
- The cost of doing business and employee recruitment/retention are key challenges.
- Aesthetic appeal/consistency is important to maintain appeal for tourism.

Health & Wellness

- Accessibility, walkability, and well-maintained public parks are priorities.

Sustainability, Resilience, & Climate Change

- More severe tsunamis are a concern.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies are important to the City of Homer.
- Maintaining and improving environmental quality is a key theme in most plans.

Quality of Life

- Residents enjoy the small town feel but struggle with the costs of living/doing business.
- Walkability, accessibility, affordability are all priorities.
- Infrastructure should support an aging population.

Individual Plan Summaries and Key Takeaways

Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (2024)

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) is a funding plan for transportation system preservation and development projects.

Key Takeaways

- Sterling Highway Milepost 157-169 Reconstruction Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill
    - Parent and Final Construction STIP ID: 2670
    - Stage 1 STIP ID: 34434
    - Stage 2 STIP ID: 34435
    - Stage 3 STIP ID: 34436
- Kachemak Bay Drive Milepost 0-3.5 Reconstruction (STIP ID: 34427)
- Homer All-ages and Abilities Pedestrian Pathway (HAPP) (STIP ID: 34426)

Transportation Plan (2024)

This draft plan identifies goals and objectives for the Homer transportation network. It also provides a description of the current state of the transportation system, best practices, and recommendations. It considers non-motorized transportation, land use, hazard mitigation planning, and climate action planning.

Key Takeaways

- Addresses motorized and non-motorized transportation, including transit.
- Safety and accessibility for all ages and abilities is a priority.

Landslide Hazard Susceptibility Mapping in Homer, Alaska (2024)

The Alaska DGGS assessed landslide hazards in Homer and Kachemak, mapping past slope failures, landslide susceptibility, and debris flow runouts. The data highlight areas more prone to landslides to aid planning and risk assessment.

Key Takeaways

- Areas around the Bluff Point landslide headscarp, Thurston Canyon, and near the end of China Poot Street are areas susceptible to deep-seated landslide hazards, which should be considered in planning efforts.

Community Health Needs Assessment (2023) and Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Strategy (2024)

In 2023, South Peninsula Hospital, in collaboration with the MAPP of SKP Health Coalition, conducted a community health needs assessment for the southern Kenai Peninsula. Upon reviewing the findings, the hospital identified an implementation strategy to address pressing challenges.

Key Takeaways

- The assessment identified needs related to mental health, housing, substance use, childcare, physical health, aging population, barriers to care, social isolation, and staff workforce shortages.
- Priorities included addressing the lack of affordable housing concerns and developing a communications plan to connect people to existing resources.
- Most implementation strategies were related to expanding access to care and support services, community engagement and collaboration, and workforce development and retention.

Alaska 2022-2023 Visitor Profile Report (2023)

This document, created by the Alaska Travel Industry Association, summarizes data regarding tourism in Alaska for the summer 2022 and winter 2022-23 seasons. This includes tourist demographics, trip purpose and details, and tourist satisfaction.

Key Takeaways

- Homer accounted for 9% of destinations identified by the over 4,000 people surveyed.
- Of all visitors to Alaska, 15% were independent travelers who visited Homer, 11% were part of a guided group that included time in Homer, and 2% were on a cruise that stopped in Homer.
- 10% of tourists who visited Homer were from the Eastern US, 8% were from the Western US, and 9% were international travelers.

Homer City Code (2023)

The Homer City Code, also known as the “Code of Ordinances, City of Homer, Alaska,” establishes regulations, limitations, and guidelines for activities within the City of Homer.

Key Takeaways

- Duties and powers of the Planning Commission are established in Section 2.72 with the intent of maximizing local involvement in planning.

- Title 10 establishes general provisions and protections for the port, harbor, and waterways.
- Title 14 establishes the City of Homer public utilities (water and sewer).
- Title 21 (Zoning and Planning) of the Homer City Code is applicable to all areas within the City of Homer and the Bridge Creek Watershed Protection District, which extends beyond the city limits.
- Policies, plans, etc. that promote high density should be avoided (Title 21).

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023)

This document identifies and prioritizes capital improvement needs in the City of Homer.

Key Takeaways

- The following legislative requests for FY25 were approved by the city council
    - Homer Harbor Expansion
    - Multi-Use Community Center
    - Slope Stability & Erosion Mitigation Program
    - Homer Harbor Critical Float System Replacement: Float Systems 4 & 1
    - Karen Hornaday Park Public Restroom Facility
    - A-Frame Water Transmission Line Replacement
    - Homer Spit Erosion Mitigation
    - New Public Works Facility

Adopted Biennial Operation Budget (2023)

The FY2023-25 biennial operation budget allocates approximately $26.2 million to the General Fund, Water & Sewer Special Revenue Fund, and Port & Harbor Enterprise Fund.

Key Takeaways

- The General Fund ($16.1 million) covers the departments of Administration, Police, Volunteer Fire, and much of Public Works.
- The Water & Sewer Special Revenue Fund ($4.3 million) is forecasted using a three-year running average and helps fund the Utility CARMA (Capital Asset Repair and Maintenance Allowance).
- The Port & Harbor Enterprise Fund ($5.8 million) covers expenses related to the Port of Homer and Homer Harbor and revenue from moorage, wharfage, parking, boat launching, and camping.

Land Allocation Plan (2023)

This plan identifies lands available for lease, leased lands, port facilities, city facilities and lands, parks, green spaces, cemeteries, bridge creek lands, and conservation easements. This plan is required by Homer City Code and is adopted annually.

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (2023)

This document describes the self-evaluation of ADA compliance issues at the City of Homer's parks, play areas, and campgrounds and includes a transition plan for correcting non-compliance. Accessibility is a priority for Homer to ensure people of all ages and abilities can live, work, and play in the community.

Key Takeaways

- Projects were assigned timelines for in-house completion; projects requiring a contractor are assigned a year in which staff anticipate preparing an Invitation to Bid.
    - Timeline A: can be completed within a year.
    - Timeline B: may be completed within 1-2 years.
    - Timeline C: may be completed within 3-5 years, or possibly sooner if done by a contractor.
- Locations of identified projects include Karen Hornaday Hillside Park, Bayview Park, Bishop's Beach Park & Beluga Slough Trail, Mariner Park and Campground, Fishing Hole Campground, Seafarer's Memorial Park, and Jack Gist Park.

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for City Facilities (2023 Draft Update)

This document describes the self-evaluation of ADA compliance issues at city-owned facilities in Homer and includes a transition plan for correcting non-compliance. Accessibility is a priority for Homer to ensure people of all ages and abilities can live, work, and play in the community.

Key Takeaways

- Non-compliance issues are prioritized following ADA standards for accessible design:
    - Priority 1: Building accessibility.
    - Priority 2: Equitable access to goods and services.
    - Priority 3: Restrooms.
    - Priority 4: All other measures.

Community Conversation: Housing Solutions in the Greater Homer Area (2023)

This document describes the results of an event at which community members discussed housing challenges in the Greater Homer Area. A survey conducted prior to the event indicated that affordability and availability were key barriers to housing in the area.

Key Takeaways

- The full notes of the workshop are included in this document (**NEW DATA**).

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2023-2027 (2023)

This plan identifies trends in outdoor recreation in Alaska, summarizes outdoor recreation by region, and provides seven statewide outdoor recreation goals.

Key Takeaways

- The plan notes there are no year-round public restrooms between Soldotna and Homer.
- The description of Southcentral is provided in Section B of Chapter 3 (page 24).

Homer Quality of Life (2022)

This document provides a Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats (SWOT) analysis for Homer's quality of life to guide positive economic growth. The analysis considered four broad categories: Business Climate, Built Environment, Natural Environment, and Social Climate.

Key Takeaways

- "Local regulation is not resulting in the patterns and development the community would like to see" (page 3).

2022 Annual Traffic Volume Report (2022)

This report provides passenger and vehicle traffic volumes in 2022 and previous years for the Alaska Marine Highway System, which includes Homer.

Key Takeaways

- *MV Tustumena* provides regular service to Homer.
- Includes **NEW DATA** about passenger/vehicle traffic.

Public Works Campus Task Force

The Public Works Campus Task Force was created by City Council via Resolution 20-125 to review findings from a 2019 Tsunami Inundation Report and make recommendations.

Key Takeaways

- The task force released a report summarizing findings and identifying preferred options in March 2021.
- The task force recommended relocating the Public Works Campus and critical equipment housed there to another location.

Short Term Rental Basics Memorandum (2022)

This memorandum describes the challenges, opportunities, and perceptions of short term rentals in the City of Homer. Many communities with similar characteristics to Homer are described as case studies.

Key Takeaways

- Approximately 63% of households in Homer are owner-occupied.
- 49% of parcels in Homer are non-commercial residential (**NEW DATA**).

City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)

This plan identifies nine hazards, assesses the risk to the City of Homer from each hazard, and identifies strategies to mitigate risk and vulnerability. Hazards include climate change, earthquakes, erosion, floods, landslides, severe weather, tsunamis, volcanoes, and wildfires. The goals of the plan are to enhance climate protection and adaptation efforts, create a healthy and safe community, and protect critical facilities and infrastructure against hazards.

Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment for Homer, Alaska (2022)

This report provides an analysis of the stability of coastal bluffs in Homer and was intended to inform the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update. Most of the coastline was determined to have a low to medium bluff instability hazard score.

Key Takeaways

- Results are provided by region.
- Diamond Creek: low to medium instability score.
- Bluff Point Landslide Area: has the fastest erosion rate in Homer and an instability score of medium.
- Downtown: high instability score.
- Munson Point: very low instability score.
- Kachemak Drive: low instability score.
- East End Road: medium instability score.

City of Homer Beach Policy & Management Plan

This plan encompasses the seven areas of beaches within the City of Homer and is intended to support the enforcement of existing regulations and future regulations and necessary actions that keep the beaches safe and enjoyable without causing detriment to the natural environment.

Key Takeaways

- Property lines of seafront properties may extend into the water.
- Maintenance, preservation, and protection of Homer's beaches is a priority.
- Public education through campaigns, signage, and other means is important to preserve beaches, promote safety, and minimize user conflicts.

Executive Summary – Final Report and Recommendations on Tsunami Risk to the Public Works Campus (2021)

This report was prompted by the 2019 Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps, which indicated that the City of Homer Public Works Campus would be inundated in a worst-case scenario tsunami. The report reviewed alternatives to minimize risk to public works equipment and buildings that would be needed to respond to a tsunami.

Key Takeaways

- The report recommends using a Long Term Incremental strategy to move the components of the Campus that can be moved.

City of Homer Climate Action Plan: Progress Report (2021)

This document provides an update on the city's actions in relation to the 2007 Climate Action Plan (CAP). The original CAP defined a strategy for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated through city operations

by 20%. As of 2019, overall GHG emissions decreased by 29.44% from 2006 levels. The analysis notes that changes in building square footage and average winter temperatures impacted stationary emissions.

Key Takeaways

- Report contains **NEW DATA**.
- Recommendations for further reducing GHG emissions include eliminating use of heating oil and improving the city's vehicle fleet.

City of Homer Community Design Manual (2021)

This manual outlines aesthetic considerations for certain applicable sites and structures in the City of Homer. The intention of the design manual is to maintain the appearance of the city's built environment to support the visitor industry; it is referenced in several areas of City Code.

Road Assessment Report (2020)

This document describes the road assessment process that was developed for the City of Homer. The process included collecting road condition data and integrating it into the city's GIS to allow road maintenance crews to update conditions in real time. The condition assessments were based primarily on the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) model, with some adaptations to account for vegetation concerns. This assessment process is intended to improve efficiency of road maintenance and provide better justification for maintenance costs.

Key Takeaways

- Most gravel roads were rated as "Fair" or "Good"
- Most paved roads were rated as "Good."

Low-Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer (2020)

This plan, also referred to as the Green Infrastructure – Stormwater Master Plan, describes techniques for mimicking natural drainage processes for stormwater management. The plan identifies major watershed drainage basins, estimates future runoff volumes for each basin, and estimates the costs to implement a storm drain system that utilizes Low-Impact Development (LID) practices compared to traditional stormwater management.

Key Takeaways

- Implementation of LID strategies would likely produce a positive economic benefit to City of Homer.
- Implementation of LID strategies would benefit water quality.

Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program Policy Manual (2020)

The Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program (HAWSP) was established to improve the health and welfare of Homer residents by extending water and sewer mains without increasing cost burdens on individual property owners. This document provides definitions of terms and defines maximum spending limits for the HAWSP.

Key Takeaways

- "The HAWSP is funded by a voter-approved dedicated sales tax, and assessments levied on benefited properties."

- The HAWSP should expand the capacity of water and sewer utilities while maintaining a good state of repair for existing infrastructure.

Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2020 Update (2020)

The Kenai Peninsula Borough, including the City of Homer, is part of the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD). This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the action plan for KPEDD to achieve its goal to enhance vitality and quality of life in Kenai Peninsula communities.

Key Takeaways

- Homer's population was experiencing slow-to-moderate growth at the time of the CEDS update.
- Homer has one of three Alaska Small Business Development Center offices in the KPB.
- Homer has one of two large ice-free ports with a Coast Guard presence in the KPB.
- Homer had the highest housing costs in the KPB at the time of the CEDS update.
- Homer was ranked as the 68th best port in the US by value of seafood landings.

Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan (2019)

This plan documents the visions, goals, and strategies that guide planning, funding, and development in the borough through 2039. Goals include economic diversification, proactive growth management, improved quality of life, access, and connectivity, and increased resident engagement and government efficiency. Homer is one of six incorporated communities within the Kenai Peninsula Borough; the plan focuses primarily on the areas outside these communities.

Key Takeaways

- Plan focuses primarily on land outside the incorporated cities.
- KPB receives a portion of the state's cruise passenger vessel (CPV) excise tax revenue based on dockings in Seward and Homer; this revenue is redistributed to the two cities for port-related capital improvement projects.
- The landings value of Homer's port seems to be decreasing over time (was in the top 50 in 2012 and 2013).
- Objective A. Support a more sustainable and resilient Kenai Peninsula by increasing production and distribution of quality, healthy agricultural products for local, state and export markets.
    - Homer Soil and Water Conservation District is listed as an entity that will be consulted as part of this objective.
    - 64% of residents surveyed in Homer and Anchor Point said agriculture was very important.
- City of Homer and KPB are voluntary participants in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Bradley Lake expansion was expected to increase capacity of the hydroelectric facility by 37,300 megawatt hours (facility owned by Alaska Energy Authority, which contracts with Homer Electric Association to provide electricity to the southern & central portion of the peninsula).
- Homer has high housing costs.
- KPB provides solid waste services throughout the borough. The Homer Transfer Station also collects hazardous waste.
- There are three National Register of Historic Places properties in Homer: Chugachik Island Site, Thorn-Stingley House, and Yukon Island Main Site.

- 44% of Homer and Anchor Point residents surveyed graded public transportation services as a D or F.

Kenai Peninsula Borough Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019)

This plan identifies actions to reduce the impacts of natural disasters, including earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, coastal erosion, wildfires, volcanic activity and ash fallout, avalanches, and severe winter weather. It also identifies actions to mitigate damage from human-caused disasters such as levee failures or accidental chemical releases. Local hazard mitigation plans are included as annexes in this plan.

Key Takeaways

- Bridge Creek Dam is identified as a High Hazard and Beluga Lake Dam is identified as a Significant Hazard by the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- The Bridge Creek Watershed Protection District extends beyond the City of Homer but is subject to City of Homer regulations (KPB Ordinance 99-47).

Draft Kenai Peninsula Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (2019)

This plan identifies existing transportation service providers and unmet transportation needs across the borough, including in the City of Homer. It provides goals and strategies to improve the efficiency of transportation services and address unmet needs.

Key Takeaways

- Homer is accessible via the Sterling Highway, Alaska Marine Highway System, and the Homer Airport Terminal & Cargo Facility.
- Transportation service providers serving Homer include: BUMPS (Ninilchik Traditional Council), Independent Living Center, Ryder Transport LLC, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (Division of Employment and Training Services), Alaska Division of Public Assistance – Work Services, and TNT Transportation.
- Information/communication gaps, coordination between local government and programs/agencies, cost to users and programs/agencies, and insufficient accessible vehicles are identified as key challenges.

Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps for Homer and Seldovia, Alaska (2019)

This document provides maps and worst-case scenarios for inundation from tsunamis generated by earthquakes or submarine landslides. The information is based on numerical modeling of tsunami dynamics and provides analyses for the cities of Homer and Seldovia, as well as Seldovia Village, Jakolof Bay, and Kachemak Selo.

Key Takeaways

- Maximum predicted wave height from a tectonic tsunami is 33-40 feet for Homer.
- Maximum predicted wave height from a landslide-generated tsunami is 13 feet for Homer Spit.
- Based on the modeling, numerous tsunami scenarios pose significant threats to Homer and Homer Spit.

Business Retention & Expansion Survey Report (2018)

This report summarizes the results of the Economic Development Commission's Business Retention & Expansion Survey. The survey was conducted to improve communication with local businesses, gather business owners' ideas, identify needs and concerns, and develop strategies and actions to retain and expand small businesses in the City of Homer.

Key Takeaways

- The survey had a response rate of 7% (112 completed surveys).
- 65% of respondents rated Homer as a good or excellent place to do business.
- 91% of respondents rated Homer as a good or excellent place to live.
- Transportation infrastructure, especially an affordable harbor with expanded infrastructure, are noted as key needs for businesses.

Homer Comprehensive Plan (2018)

This plan serves as a 10-year revision to the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update. It includes background information about the City of Homer and community values and guidance for land use, transportation, public services and facilities, economic vitality, and energy. The plan's key theme is "Keep Homer a lively, vital community that effectively responds to change and growth while retaining what is best about Homer's character."

Growing Local Food: A Survey of Commercial Producers on the Southern Kenai Peninsula (2018)

This survey aimed to gather insights from farmers, consumers, policymakers, and data to provide a broader understanding of the region's food system.

Key Takeaways

- Farm numbers on the Kenai Peninsula are rising faster than anywhere else in Alaska or the U.S. While farm numbers in the Lower 48 dropped by 3 percent over the past five years, Alaska saw a 30 percent increase, with the Kenai Peninsula leading at 60 percent growth.
- Supporting local agriculture means supporting local producers' needs, such as cold storage, labor, farm loans, agriculture land, and an FSIS-inspected slaughter facility.

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011)

This plan describes the conditions of the Homer Spit and recommends improvements and future land uses to maintain the unique characteristics of the Spit, which is important to residents and tourists alike.

Key Takeaways

- The Spit was not included in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan (or 2018 update) due to its unique characteristics and importance to the community.
- Transportation (traffic, parking, non-motorized transportation, transit), conservation, and economic development were key topics.
- "[Land] Uses include marine-related industrial and commercial, including fishing and fish processing, the harbor and harbor related business, the marine highway terminal, port facilities, fuel storage, retail, lodging, camping, parking, and recreational, conservation, and public land uses" (p. 6).

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2007)

This plan was developed in recognition of the severe consequences of human-caused climate change. In the interest of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the plan identifies mitigation recommendations in the categories of Energy Management, Transportation, Purchasing & Waste Reduction, Land Use, and Outreach & Advocacy. The plan also includes adaptation strategies to develop a more resilient community.

Key Takeaways

- The mitigation recommendations focus on interventions within the purview of the City of Homer. The Outreach & Advocacy category includes public education and encouraging change at various levels of government.
- Adaptation measures are focused on building a resilient local economy, protecting infrastructure, increasing emergency preparedness, and ensuring future development policies consider the impacts of climate change.

Homer Water and Sewer Master Plan (2006)

This plan was developed to guide improvements and expansions of the City of Homer's water and sewer utilities for a period covering 2006-2025.

Homer Town Center Development Plan (2006)

This plan provides a guide for development policy and public infrastructure improvements for the heart of the Central Business District, which was largely undeveloped at the time the plan was written.

Key Takeaways

- Green space, walkability, and curbing urban sprawl were identified as priorities.
- The plan emphasizes the need for sustainable, human scale development.

Homer Area Transportation Plan (2005)

The Homer Area Transportation Plan and the Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan together encompass the long-term planning for Homer's transportation infrastructure. Both plans will be replaced by the 2024 Transportation Plan once it is adopted.

Key Takeaways

- Traffic, connectivity, walkability, accessibility, and user conflicts (e.g., industrial/commercial and recreational traffic) were key issues with the system at the time.

Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan (2004)

The Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan and the Homer Area Transportation Plan together encompass the long-term planning for Homer's transportation infrastructure. Both plans will be replaced by the 2024 Transportation Plan once it is adopted.

Key Takeaways

- Infrastructure for non-motorized transportation should allow residents and visitors to travel throughout the City of Homer without needing a personal vehicle.

Plans and Plan Excerpts by Focus Area

The content below, which is organized by focus area, is copied from the respective plans and is intended to be used as a quick reference to locate information in each plan. Some plans are relevant in their entirety and therefore specific excerpts are not included. The following plans are relevant in their entirety to the entire Comprehensive Plan Update:

Homer City Code (2023) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Adopted Biennial Operating Budget (2023) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan (2019) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Homer Comprehensive Plan (2018) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2007) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform the update*

Land Use & Environment

Transportation Plan (2024)

Goal 1: Increase safety of interactions between modes of travel

> Objective 1B: Provide for safe use of the right-of-way by all transportation modes, considering the land use context and type of vehicle

Goal 2: Provide a connected network of local and collector roads and trails that balances modes based on land use contexts

Goal 3: Maintain transportation network to be viable year-round

> Objective 3G: Include appropriate improvements for each travel mode as part of reconstruction or new construction projects within the public right-of-way
>
> > As roads are constructed or reconstructed, infrastructure should be considered for each mode. New or improved infrastructure should be consistent with the land use context (such as providing sidewalks in urban areas and wide shoulders or separated paths in rural areas), meet design standards, and help to complete the priority network for that mode.

Policies:

- Truck Network
- E-Bike Legislation
- Bicycle Parking
- Traffic Calming
- Update Non-Motorized Facility Design Standards
- Complete Streets/All Ages and Abilities Policy

Projects:

- Parking Study
- Improve Drop-Off and Pick-Up Locations at Schools
- Neighborhood Connectivity to Schools

- Kachemak Drive Reconnaissance Engineering Study
- Pioneer Ave as an Extension of the HAP Loop
- Old Town Connections as an Extension of HAP Loop
- Regularly Update Existing Trails Maps
- Complete East-West Connections

Definition of Terms includes "Land Use Context" and "Traffic Calming"

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023)

"Each project listed in the CIP document has been evaluated for consistency with the City's goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The following goals were considered in project evaluation:

> Land Use: Guide the amount and location of Homer's growth to increase the supply and diversity of housing, protect important environmental resources and community character, reduce sprawl by encouraging infill, make efficient use of infrastructure, support a healthy local economy, and help reduce global impacts including limiting greenhouse gas emissions." (p. vi)

Land Allocation Plan (2023) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

City of Homer Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)

Ability to expand resources: "Integrate climate sustainability plans into Homer's Comprehensive Plan (including measures to reduce greenhouse emissions) through a series of local transportation, land use, building energy, water, waste, and green infrastructure programs and policies." (p. 5-7)

Recommended mitigation actions: "Adopt a comprehensive flood protection ordinance/overlay zone for areas that are in the SFHA or subject to flooding. Properties in this overlay are often subject to additional standards concerning development/land uses, building elevation, stream buffers, outdoor storage, building materials, and permitting procedures." (p. 5-9)

Integration of the 2022 LHMP: "Update of the Homer Comprehensive Plan to address hazards in the LHMP that are not currently included in it. Consider creating a hazard profiles section in the Comprehensive Plan. The land use planning process can help identify investments in nature-based solutions to natural hazards, including preserving parks and greenways." (p. 5-15)

Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment for Homer, Alaska (2022) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

City of Homer Beach Policy & Management Plan (2021) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Low-Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer (2020) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Kenai Peninsula Borough Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps for Homer and Seldovia, Alaska (2019) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2007)

Land Use/Planning & Zoning Mitigation Measures (p. 33)

Adaptation Measures (p. 37)

Homer Town Center Development Plan (2006) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Housing

Community Conversation: Housing Solutions in the Greater Homer Area (2023) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Homer Quality of Life (2022) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Short Term Rental Basics Memorandum (2022) *- priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

"The popularity of short-term rentals (STRs)1 have exploded in the last decade with the development and proliferation of online and app-based services such as Airbnb and VRBO. STRs are particularly popular in Homer with an estimated 326 units available, a significant portion of the local housing stock. This memo presents the positive and negative impacts of STRs, local context for STRs, and provides case study information regarding STR regulations methods found in other communities." (p. 1)

Kenai Peninsula Borough Economic Development Strategy 2020 Update (2020)

Housing Market: "Within the Kenai Peninsula Borough, homes are most expensive in Homer, averaging $298,209, and the Greater Kenai area homes are the least expensive, averaging $239,771. Home prices have decreased slightly with the statewide average between 2018 and 2019." (p. 12)

Updated Tsunami Inundation Maps for Homer and Seldovia, Alaska (2019) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011) *– priority* ***health*** *plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Public Services and Infrastructure

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023) *– various projects*

"Each project listed in the CIP document has been evaluated for consistency with the City's goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The following goals were taken into account in project evaluation:

> Energy: Promote energy conservation, wise use of environmental resources, and development of renewable energy through the actions of local government as well as the private sector." (p. vi)

Beluga Sewage Lift Station (p. 34)

Homer's Waste Water Treatment Plant Improvements (p. 43)

Water Storage Distribution Improvements, Phase 3 (p. 46)

Long-range projects on p. 66

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (2023) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

"Homer's mission is to be a dynamic community where all can live, play, work and invest. To make that mission a reality, it needs to be accessible. The City of Homer owns and manages 17 parks, comprised of over 520 acres of land, along with 5.41 miles of maintained trails. These range from small pocket parks and multi-use trails to forested natural areas, larger established parks with play areas, campgrounds, and sports fields. To ensure our parks, play areas and campgrounds are accessible to all, the City commenced the development of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Parks, Play areas & Campgrounds Transition Plan in 2021. This document will be incorporated with 108 the ADA Facilities Transition Plan adopted by City Council in 2019." (p. 4)

City of Homer Climate Action Plan: Progress Report (2021) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Category – Water & Wastewater Treatment Facilities: "As with the previous categories, the primary energy sources for Water & Wastewater Treatment Facilities are electricity and heating oil. The wastewater treatment facility also consumed 2,000 gallons of propane. These records were calculated for GHG using the same methods and emission factors as the previous electricity and stationary fuel consuming categories.

In addition to electricity and stationary fuels, N2O emissions from aerobic processing of waste, and N2O from effluent discharge are measured. The calculation for N2O emissions from waste treatment is based on community population for the given year, which in 2010 was 5,049 people. N2O for effluent discharge is based on daily Nitrogen load in kilograms released to the environment. The daily nitrogen load was 14 derived from a ratio of average wastewater treatment plant flows and monthly average NH3 readings for 2010.

All electricity and stationary fuel use for water and wastewater facilities was combined with N2O emissions from waste treatment to produce a GHG emissions grand total for this category." (p. 13)

"CO2e totals for 2019 are 951.22 metric tons less than totals for 2010 – a 21.78% decrease. The most significant decrease belongs to Buildings & Facilities followed by Water and Wastewater." (p. 17)

"A comparison of electricity use reveals a CO2e reduction of 987 CO2e (MT) between years 2010 and 2019. The largest reductions were achieved in the Water and Wastewater Treatment Facilities." (p. 19)

Executive Summary – Final Report and Recommendations on Tsunami Risk to the Public Works Campus (2021) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program Policy Manual (2020) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2009)

Energy Management Mitigation Measures (p. 28)

Purchasing & Waste Reduction Mitigation Measures (p. 31)

Homer Water and Sewer Master Plan (2006) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Transportation

Transportation Plan (2024) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (2024)

- Sterling Highway Milepost 157-169 Reconstruction Anchor Point to Baycrest Hill
    - Parent and Final Construction STIP ID: 2670
    - Stage 1 STIP ID: 34434
    - Stage 2 STIP ID: 34435
    - Stage 3 STIP ID: 34436
- Kachemak Bay Drive Milepost 0-3.5 Reconstruction (STIP ID: 34427)
- Homer All-ages and Abilities Pedestrian Pathway (HAPP) (STIP ID: 34426)

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023) *– various projects*

"Each project listed in the CIP document has been evaluated for consistency with the City's goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The following goals were taken into account in project evaluation:

> … Transportation: Address future transportation needs while considering land use, economics and aesthetics, and increasing community connectivity for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists." (p. vi)

2022 Annual Traffic Volume Report (2022) *– various references to Port of Homer*

Road Assessment Report (2020) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Draft Kenai Peninsula Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (2019) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2009)

Transportation Mitigation Measures (p. 30)

Intersections Planning Study (2005) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Homer Area Transportation Plan (2005) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Homer Non-Motorized Transportation and Trail Plan (2004) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Economic Development

2024-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (2023) *– various projects*

"Each project listed in the CIP document has been evaluated for consistency with the City's goals as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The following goals were taken into account in project evaluation:

> …Economic Vitality: Promote strength and continued growth of Homer's economic industries including marine trades, commercial fishing, tourism, education, arts, and culture. Support development of a variety of well-defined commercial/business districts for a range of commercial purposes. Preserve quality of life while supporting the creation of more year-round living wage jobs." (p. vi)

Alaska 2022-2023 Visitor Profile Report (2023)

The executive summary (p. 2) provides an overview of visitation to Alaska.

Data specific to Homer are mentioned on pages 32 and 33.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2023)

Chapter 3, Section B, Southcentral Alaska (excerpt from p. 24, information continues through p. 28):

> "This region includes the large majority of Alaska's population, most visited destinations, and well-developed outdoor recreation infrastructure. Diverse landscapes including long beaches, rivers, lakes, mountains, glaciers, and fjords offer boundless outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.
>
> Unique resources in the region include:

- This area has the most road-accessible outdoor recreation destinations, developed recreation facilities, and communities that offer visitor services in Alaska. This includes well-developed city parks and greenbelts.
- Southcentral boasts a mix of the most sought-after outdoor recreation experience. This includes accessing the alpine terrain, fishing on the Kenai Peninsula, visiting the marine mecca of Prince William Sound, visiting a growing network of year-round, in- and out-of-town trails, and discovering walkable "destination" communities such as Homer, Seward, Talkeetna, and downtown Anchorage.
- Large state and federally designated public land recreation areas include Chugach State Park, the Chugach National Forest, the southern side of Denali National Park, Denali State Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, portions of Lake Clark and Katmai National Parks, the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, and more.
- Parks and trails non-profit organizations in this region are active and successful."

Homer Quality of Life (2022) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Short Term Rental Basics Memorandum (2022) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section; see above excerpt from Housing section*

2022 Annual Traffic Volume Report (2022) *– various references to Port of Homer*

Kenai Peninsula Borough Economic Development Strategy 2020 Update (2020) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Human Capital: "Unincorporated communities with highway access, and in close proximity to commercial centers like Soldotna or Kenai show the highest rates of growth. Established cities like Seward, Homer, and Soldotna have grown at a slow-to-moderate pace, and several South Peninsula communities are losing population." (p. 6)

Infrastructure and Transportation: "The only communities currently on the Alaska Marine Highway System are Homer and Seldovia. Ferry service is a critical link for these cities." (p. 7)

Strengths: "Three Alaska Small Business Development Center offices: Seward, Homer and Kenai." (p. 8)

Tourism: "2016 summer visitation from outside Alaska estimates for Seward were 441,000 visitors, more than double Homer, Seldovia, Kenai and Soldotna combined. In Seward, an average of 50% arrive by plane, 45% arrive by cruise ship, and 5% arrive by highway or ferry. In Homer and Seldovia, an average of 77% arrive by plane, 11% by cruise ship, and 12% by highway or ferry. A majority of visitors to Kenai and Soldotna arrive by plane at 87%, 4% by cruise ship and 8% by highway or ferry." (p. 13)

Commercial Fisheries: "Three Kenai Peninsula ports rank among the top ports in the U.S. by value of seafood landings: Seward (15th), Kenai (37th), and Homer (68th). Adjusted for inflation, prices for pinks have declined since the 1980s. In constant dollars, sockeye prices in 2018 were about the same as in 1984. Sockeyes are the predominant commercial species in the upper Cook Inlet (which includes Seward) sees a larger catch of pinks as well as halibut and sablefish. Upper Cook Inlet salmon harvests for 2018 included 1,720,295 Sockeye, 163,859 Coho, 129,176 Chum, 70,741 Pinks, and 3,148 Chinook salmon." (p. 13)

Business Retention & Expansion Survey Report (2018) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Homer Spit Comprehensive Plan (2011) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2009)

Adaptation Measures (p. 37)

Homer Town Center Development Plan (2006) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Health & Wellness

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for City Facilities (2023)

"In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, this document shall serve as the City of Homer's Transition Plan.

This is an overview of the plan that includes the self-evaluation that identifies barriers to program accessibility and municipal owned properties throughout the City and includes project checklists to track improvements. The plan consists of an Inventory Assessment, implemented requirements and annual reassessment of goals and improvements.

The City of Homer ADA Coordinator will manage all aspects of ADA Compliance. This plan is available on the City of Homer website for review by the general public. Individuals are encouraged to submit comments or issues on accessibility of City programs and facilities by contacting the City ADA Coordinator." (p. 1)

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (2023) – see above excerpt from *Public Services and Infrastructure* section

Sustainability, Resilience, & Climate Change

Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment for Homer, Alaska (2022) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

City of Homer Climate Action Plan: Progress Report (2021) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Low-Impact Development Planning for the City of Homer (2020) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

City of Homer Climate Action Plan (2009) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Quality of Life

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for City Facilities (2023) – See above excerpt for *Health & Wellness*

City of Homer ADA Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas & Campgrounds (2023) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section;* see above excerpt from *Public Services and Infrastructure* section

Quality of Life (2022) *– priority plan; use the entire plan to inform this section*

Appendix E: Public Participation Overview

Links to Public Participation Inputs
Community Survey Comparison Results Summary (October 2024)
Business Survey Homer Comprehensive Plan Business Survey Summary (September 2024).
Homer Comprehensive Plan Community Survey and Interactive Comment Map Results (September 2024)
Homer Comprehensive Plan Community Survey and Interactive Comment Map Results – Executive Summary (September 2024)
Community Visit #2: May 2024 Results
Community Snapshot (May 2024)
Public Participation Plan (April 2024)
Project Overview Flyer (April 2024)
Community Visit #1: March 2024 Results
Additional small group conversations, Homer High School student outreach, and interviews through the process.

See these and other related materials on the project website:

https://homercompplanupdate.com/

Appendix F: About Homer – Community Background

2045 Homer Comprehensive Plan

Background Research and Data Analysis

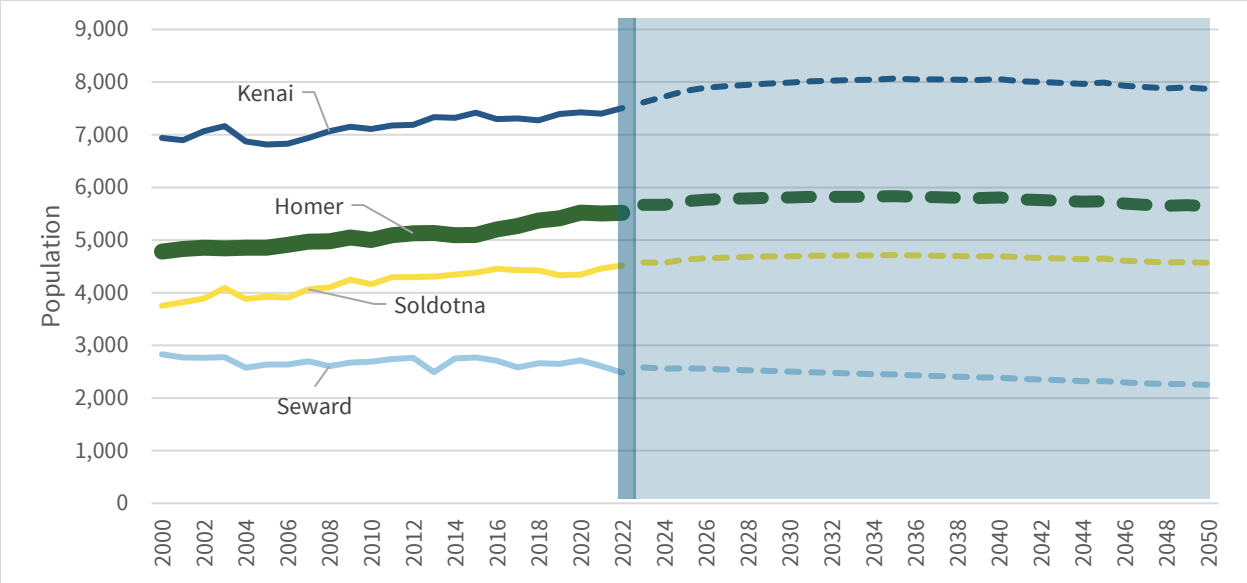
Prepared by Northern Economics, Inc.

Updated July 2025

Our People

Homer's population has been experiencing steady, modest growth over the past 22 years. Homer's population in 2022 was 15.4% larger than it was in 2000 (growing 0.7% year-over-year on average). Using ADOLWD forecasts, Northern Economics predicts a population increase from 2023 to 2050, with the population of Homer forecast to be 2.3% larger in 2050 than it was in 2022.[1,2,3,4] Population increases are also predicted for 2023–2050 in all comparison communities except for Seward, with year-over-year changes averaging 0.0% for Soldotna, and 0.1% for Kenai. The state as a whole is expected to experience 0.1% decline year-over-year on average from 2023–2050.

Figure 1: Historical and Forecasted Populations for Homer and Comparison Cities in the KPB



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development[1,2,3,4] and Northern Economics analysis

There are several small communities that surround Homer and treat the City of Homer as their hub. These surrounding communities—Anchor Point, Diamond Ridge, Fox River, Fritz Creek, Kachemak, and Nikolaevsk—provide an important context to growth in Homer proper.

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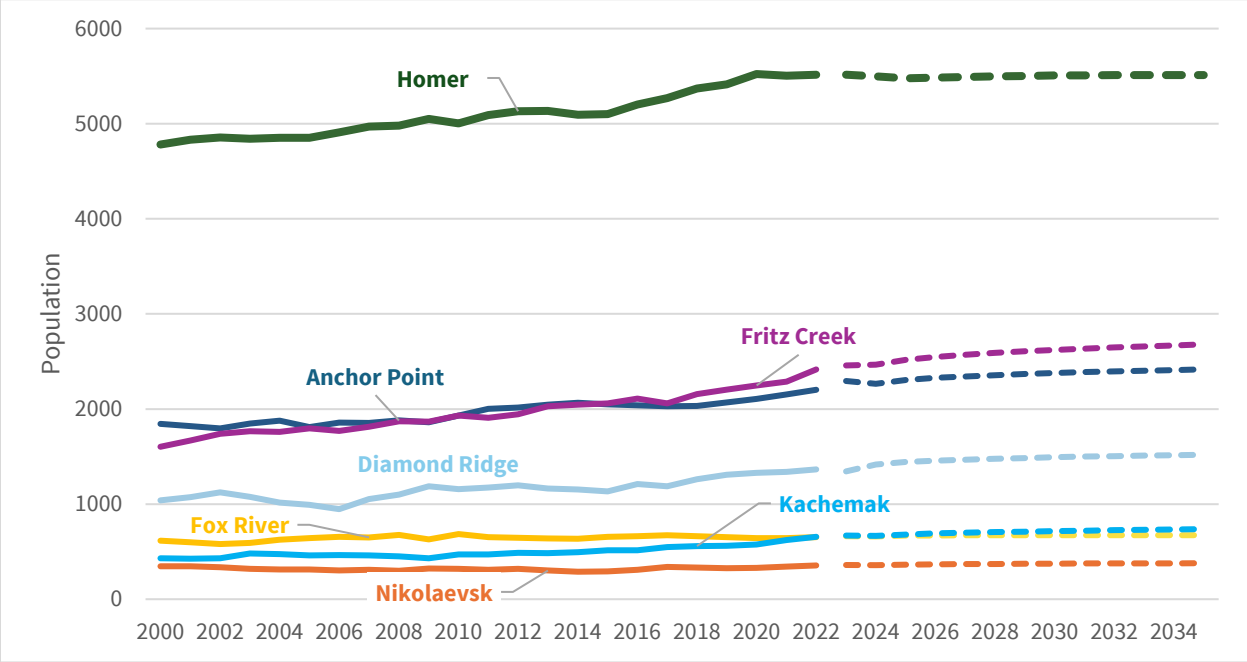
[1]Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Historical Data: Places, "Population, 2000-2010". https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/pop/estimates/data/TotalPopulationPlace_2000to2010.xls. Accessed March 18, 2024.
[2] Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Historical Data: Places, "Population, 2010-2020". https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/pop/estimates/data/TotalPopulationPlace_2010to2020.xls. Accessed March 18, 2024.
[3] Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Alaska Population Projections, "Alaska Population Projections 2023 to 2050". https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/pop/projections/pub/popproj.pdf. Accessed October 9, 2024.
[4] Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Places and Other Areas, "Cities and Census Designated Places (CDPs), 2020 to 2023". https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/pop/estimates/data/TotalPopulationPlace.xlsx. Accessed March 18, 2024.

As previously mentioned, Homer's population in 2022 was 15.4% larger than it was in 2000. Considered together, the surrounding communities were 30.0% larger in 2022 than in 2000. Additionally, since 1994 the total population of the surrounding communities has exceeded the population in the City of Homer. When taken together, the population in Homer and its surrounding communities was 23.4% larger in 2022 than in 2000.

Figure 2. Historical and Forecasted Population in Homer and Surrounding Community Populations, 2000–2035



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development[1,2,3,4] and Northern Economics analysis

Table 1. Kenai Peninsula Borough Components of Population Change, 2013–2023

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Population	56,852	57,366	57,631	57,995	58,058	58,232	58,328	58,849	59,049	60,000	60,898
% Growth	0.47%	0.90%	0.46%	0.63%	0.11%	0.30%	0.16%	0.89%	0.34%	1.61%	1.50%
Natural Increase	327	325	267	272	261	227	174	188	197	-2	80
Net Migration	-61	189	-2	92	-198	-53	-78	333	3	953	818

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development[1,5]

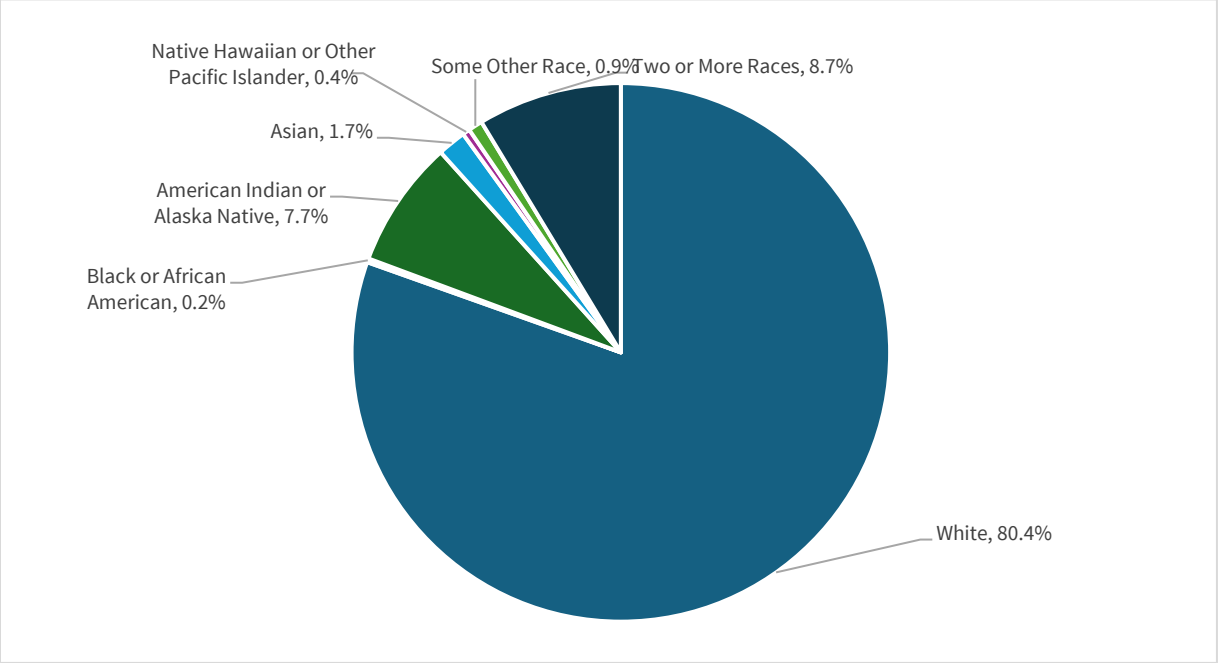
Table 1 summarizes the components of population change for 2013–2023 in the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB)—the lowest level of detail at which this information is available.[2,3]

[5] Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Population Estimates, Economic Regions and Boroughs/Census Areas, Components of Change, 2020-2023. https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/data-pages/alaska-population-estimates. Accessed April 8, 2024.

Over the period, migration into and out of the region fluctuated. For example, 2017 was a year with high out-migration, with a net migration of -198. On the other hand, recent years have had high rates of in-migration compared with the other years in the period, with 953 net migration from 2021 to 2022, and 818 net migration from 2022 to 2023.

The predominant racial group in Homer is white, and 80.4% of the population is white alone. The American Community Survey offers insights into race in Homer and other communities.[6] In Homer, 91.3% of the population is one race, while 8.7% is two or more races. As shown in **Figure *3***, 80.4% of the population is white alone and 7.7% is American Indian and Alaska Native alone. In Homer and the comparison communities, the predominant racial group is white, accounting for 70% or more of the population in each community, followed by American Indian and Alaska Native. This holds true for the state of Alaska as well, but white alone accounts for a slightly lower overall percentage at 64.1% of the state's population.

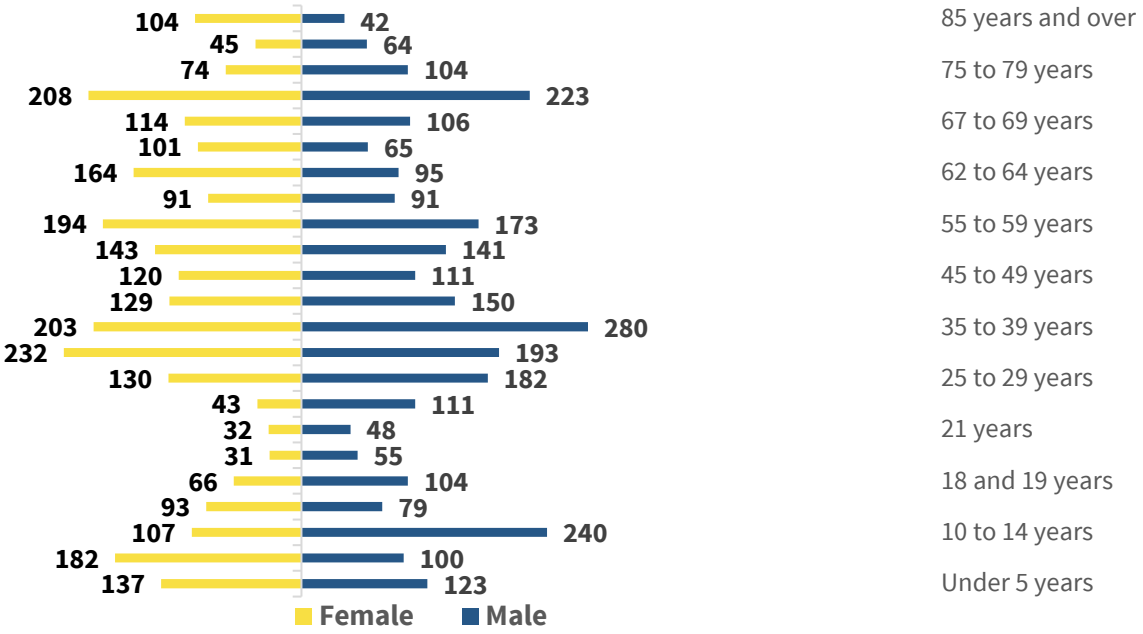
Figure 3. Race of Homer Population, 2022 (5-Year Average)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 data[4]

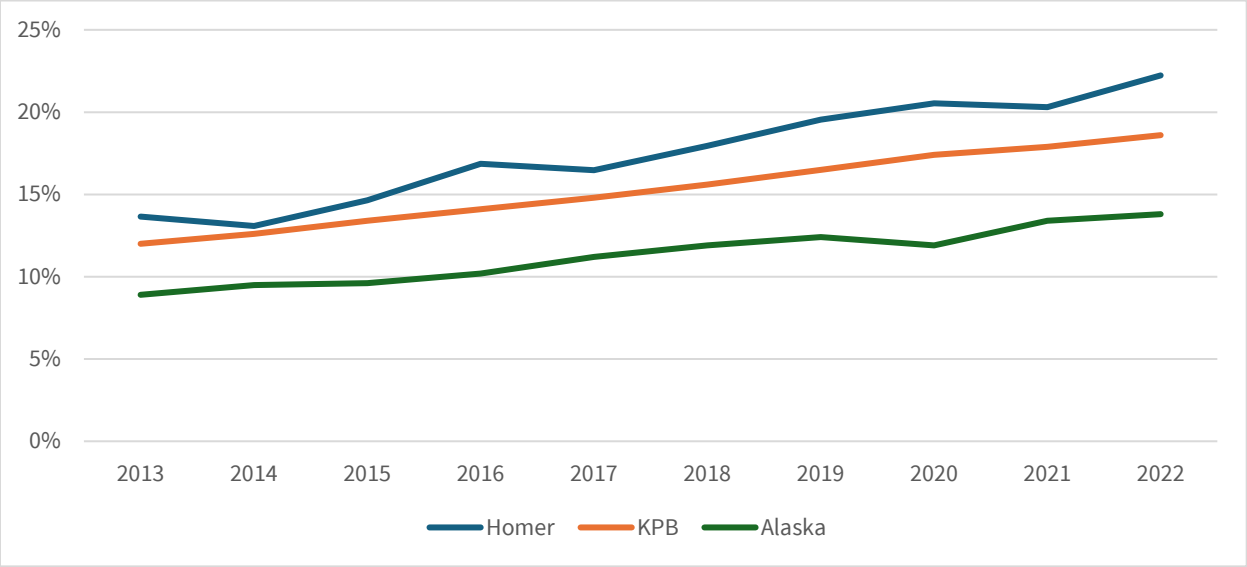
[6] U.S. Census Bureau. "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP05, 2022, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP05?g=160XX00US0233140. Accessed on March 18, 2024.

Figure 4. Age of Homer Population, 2022 (5-Year Average)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 data[7]

Figure 5. Senior Population (65+) Change Over Time in Homer, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, and Alaska



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 data[4]

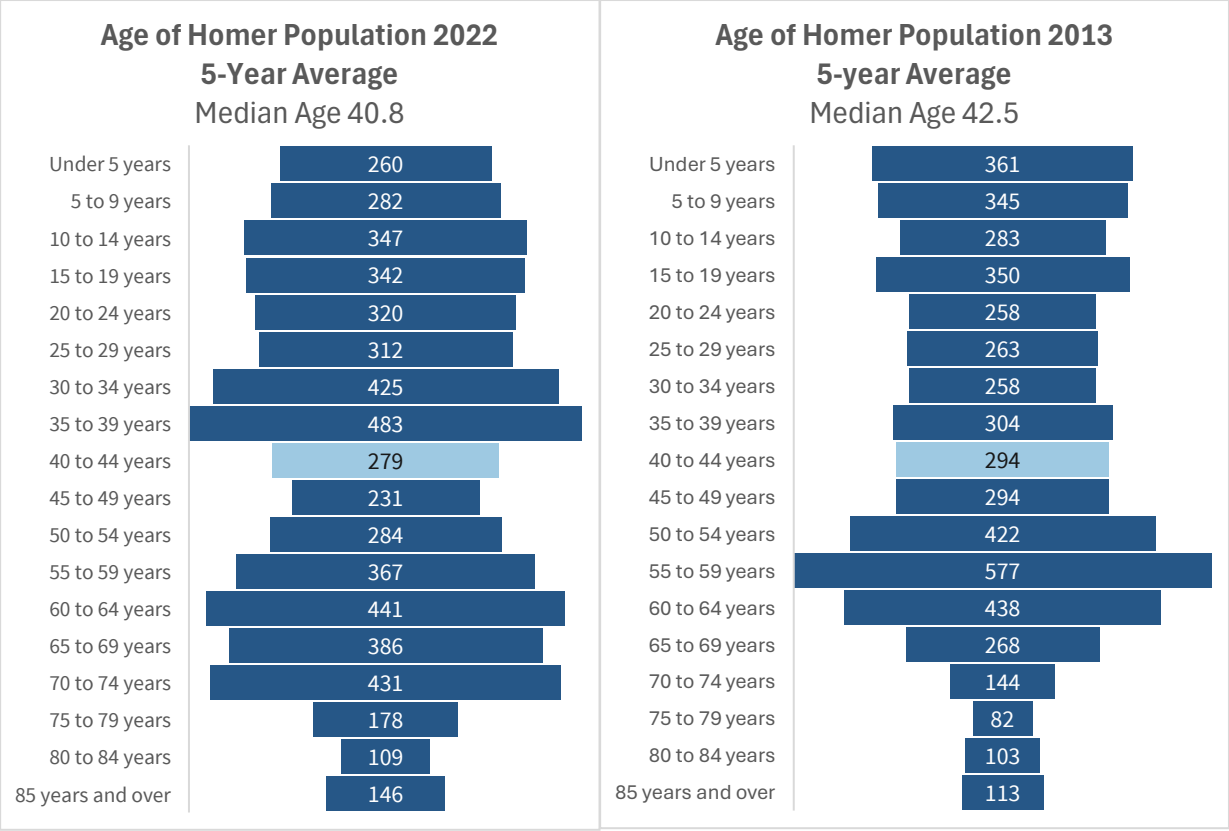
[7] U.S. Census Bureau. "Age and Sex." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, 2022, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S0101?g=160XX00US0233140,0238420,0271640&moe=false. Accessed on March 18, 2024.

Similar to the Kenai Peninsula Borough and the state of Alaska, Homer has a large and growing senior population. Over the last 10 years, we have seen the population across Alaska aging, with people over 65 representing an increasing proportion of individuals in many communities.[4] ***Figure 5*** shows that the 65 and over population in both Homer and the KPB has made up a larger share of the population compared to Alaska as a whole. Seniors have different needs from other age groups for their housing and medical care. Additionally, seniors may need additional transportation options for those who are no longer able to drive so they can stay connected and engaged in the Homer community.

The median age in Alaska increased from 33.1 in 2013 to 35.9 in 2022. During this time, KPB's median age increased slightly from 40.7 to 41.2. However, Homer experienced an interesting trend: the median age in Homer now was slightly younger in 2022 than it was in 2013, going from 42.5 to 40.8, while at the same time the percentage of the population that is age 65 and over has increased from 14% to 22%.

Figure 6 illustrates how the age distribution of the Homer population has changed from 2013 to 2022.[5] In 2013, the population shares at each age group were fairly uniform, except for a distinct increase in the population in the 50–64 age range. In 2022, that cohort had aged to where they are now contributing to the increase in the older population. It also looks like there has been notable growth in the 30–39 age group from 2013 to 2022, but that growth does not appear to be accounted for with the existing population in 2013 aging. This would suggest that new Homer residents that migrated to the area from 2013 to 2022 were likely in that age range or slightly younger when they moved there.

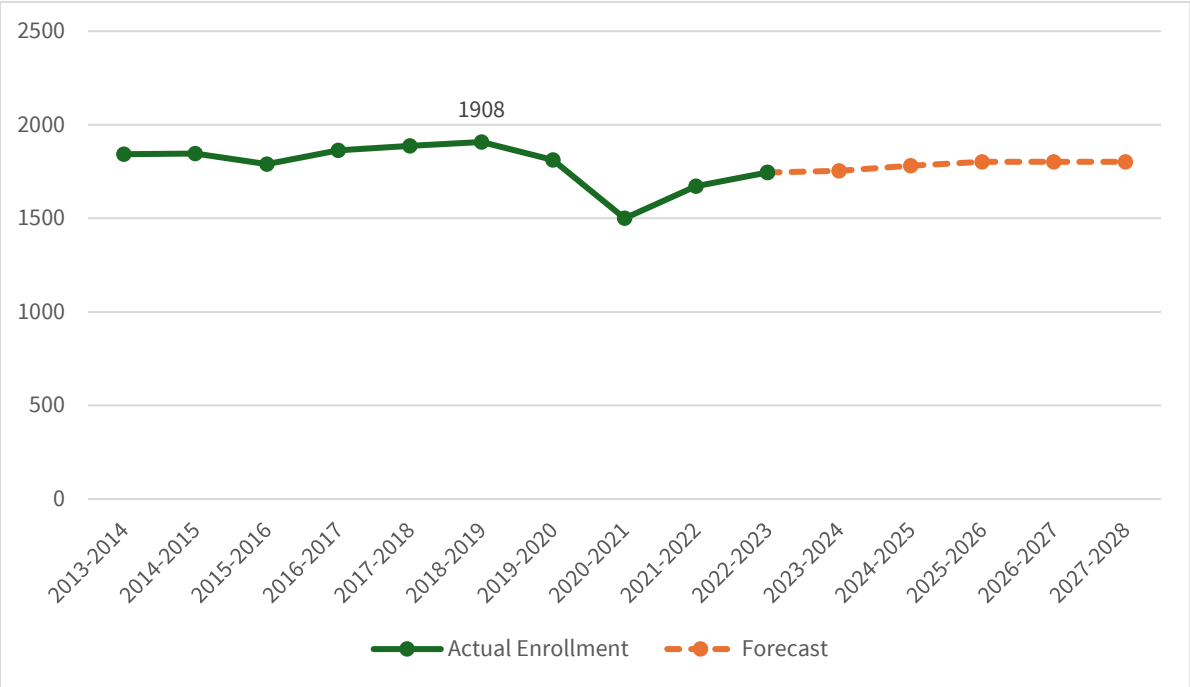
Figure 6. Comparison of Homer Population Age Distributions



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 data[5]

Enrollment in Homer area schools has fluctuated in recent years but has not rebounded fully from the dip during the pandemic. Homer is served by the Kenai Peninsula School District (KPBSD).[6] ***Figure 7*** shows enrollment trends for what the KPBSD considers Homer area schools. Enrollment has fluctuated over the past 10 years, with a notable decline following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, since then enrollment has recovered partially. Enrollment peaked in the 2018–2019 school year, with 1,908 students enrolled across all grades. KPBSD is forecasting increasing enrollment at the Homer area schools, while forecasting decreasing enrollment for the overall district.

Figure 7. Homer School Enrollment, Pre-Kindergarten to 12th Grade



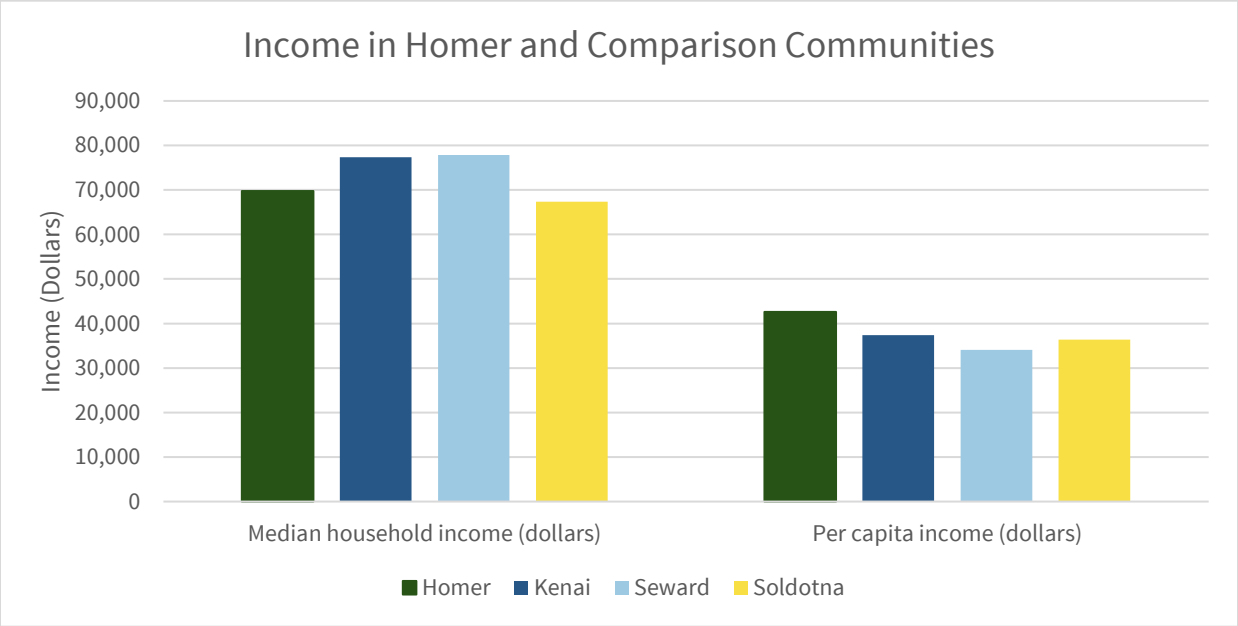
Source: Kenai Peninsula Borough School District[8]

[8] Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. "*Five-Year Enrollment Projection 2023-24 through 2027-28*". November 4, 2022. https://kpbsd.org/wp-content/uploads/departments/finance/budget-development/fy24/FY24-Projected-Enrollment-Document.pdf. Accessed April 26, 2024

Our Economy

Homer residents have a higher per capita income than residents of comparison communities. Figure *8* shows median household income and per capita income in Homer and comparison communities.[9] Homer has the highest per capita income among comparison communities, though Kenai and Seward have higher median household incomes. From 2013 to 2022, Seward had the greatest increase (30%) in median household income, while Homer's increased by about 2% over the same period. Kenai and Soldotna both saw decreases in median household income on an inflation-adjusted basis. Homer has a lower percentage of residents below the poverty level (12.7%) than Kenai and Soldotna, though it is more than twice the level seen in Seward (6.1%).

Figure 8. Income in Homer and Comparison Communities



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 data[7]

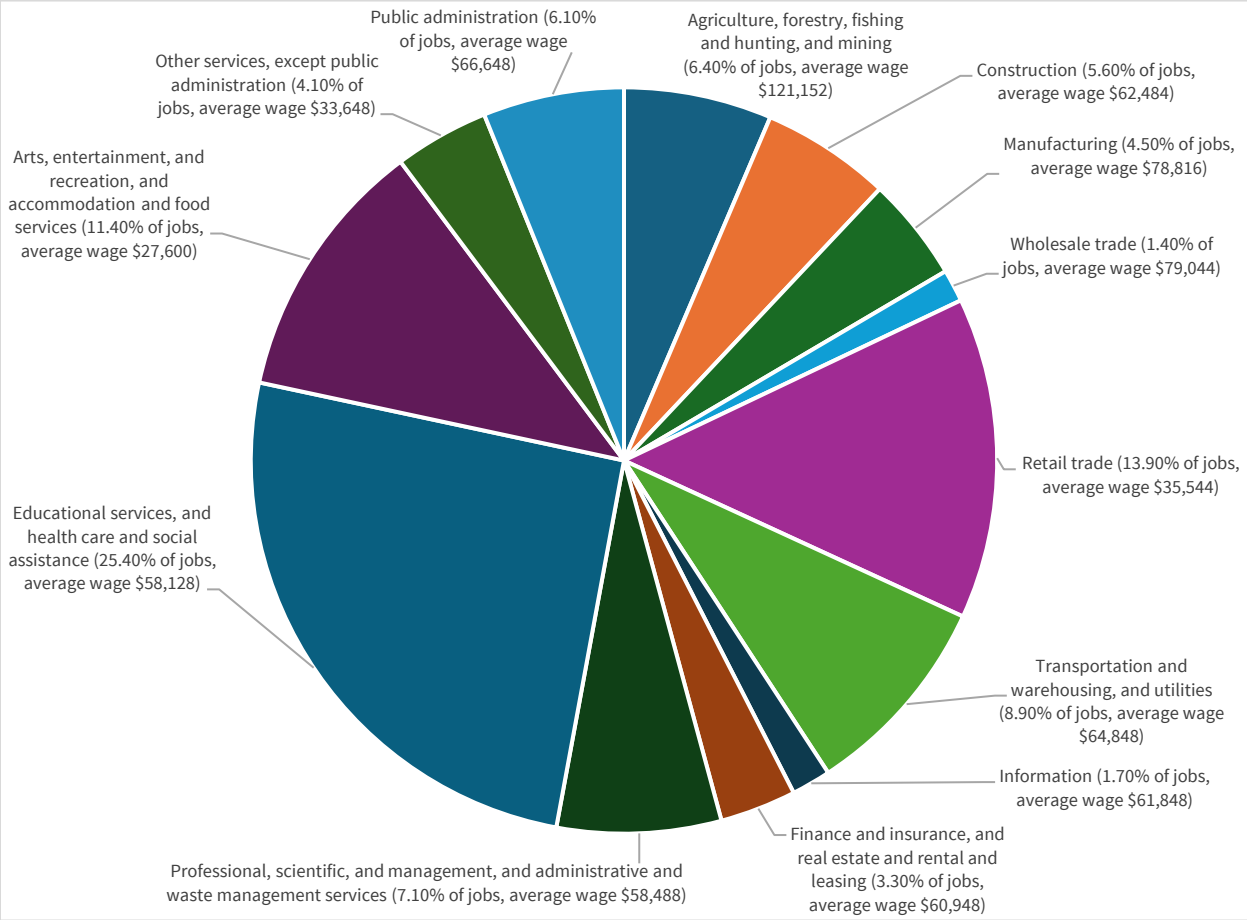
Homer has a diverse mix of industries. The three largest are 1) education, health care, and social assistance; 2) retail trade; and 3) arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services.[10] **Figure *9*** provides more detailed information on industries and wages in Homer. Based on monthly wage data for the Kenai Peninsula Borough, the average annual

[9] U.S. Census Bureau. "Selected Economic Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03, 2022 & 2013, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP03?q=per capita income&g=160XX00US0233140,0238420,0268560,0271640. Accessed on March 18, 2024.

[10] Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. "*Current Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), Annual January to December 2022*." 2022. https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/article/current-quarterly-census-employment-and-wages-qcew. Accessed April 26, 2024

wage for educational services, health care, and social assistance is $58,128, assuming year-round work at a typical wage. Although there is not one specific NAICS industry that is designated as "tourism", the industries that would be the most affected by tourism are 1) transportation and warehousing; 2) administrative and support and waste management and remediation services; 3) arts, entertainment, and recreation; and 4) accommodation and food services[11]. Retail Trade would also likely be impacted as well. The industries in the Kenai Peninsula borough with the highest average monthly wages were mining ($11,331), management of companies and enterprises ($10,569), and utilities ($9,470).

Figure 9. Percentage of Homer Workforce by Industry and Annual Wages by Industry for the KPB



Note: This method of wage calculation may overinflate real annual earnings for the Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, and mining industry since much of the work is seasonal and not the same monthly earnings year-round.

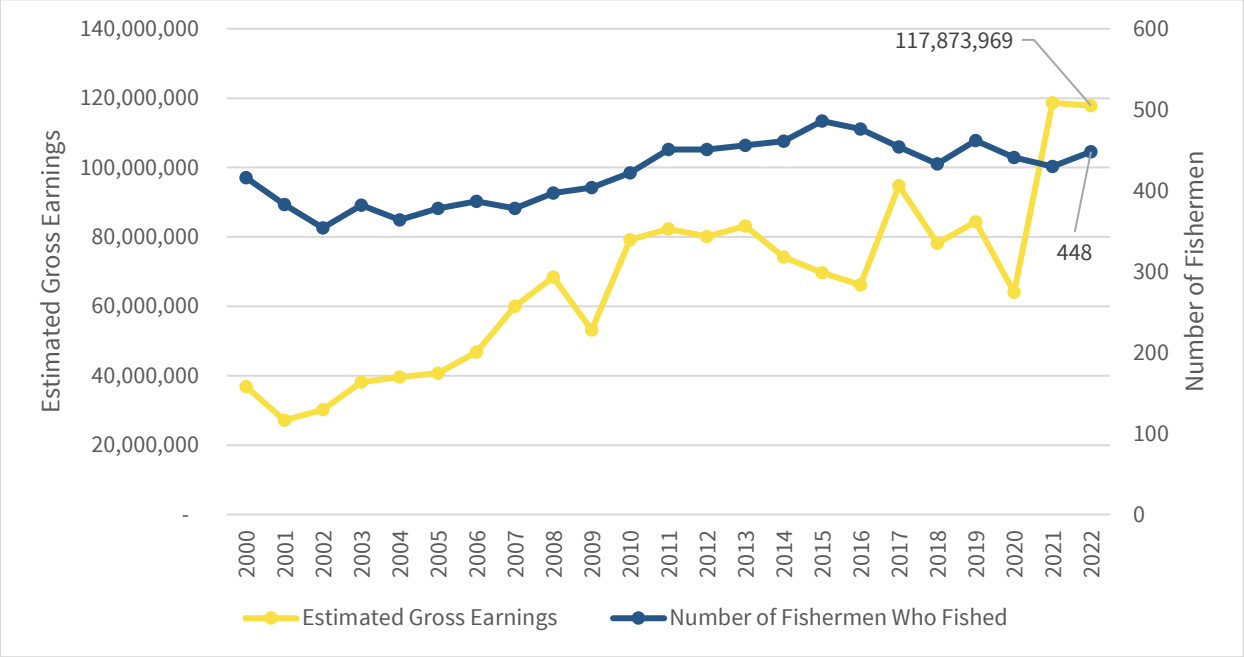
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 data[7]; ADOLWD Current Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages[8], Northern Economics Analysis

[11] The University of Texas at San Antonio. "*Tourism, Travel, and Hospitality*" https://libguides.utsa.edu/c.php?g=485669&p=3731491. Accessed April 29, 2024

Homer is a community with strong ties to the commercial fishing industry. **Figure *10*** shows the estimated gross earnings and the number of Homer residents who were commercial fishermen.[12] The number of commercial fishermen in Homer peaked in 2015 at 486. Estimated gross earnings have been trending upward, peaking in 2021 at just below $120 million. The large spike in 2021 and 2022 was likely the result of higher than usual prices per pound of seafood, combined with a larger than usual catch.[13] The industry saw the largest salmon run in the past 100 years in 2022.

Salmon was the largest fishery, accounting for $79.5 million of the total gross earnings in 2022. However, much of those earnings came from salmon caught in Bristol Bay, not in the waters immediately adjacent to Homer. Kenai, Seward, and Soldotna had much smaller gross earnings in 2022 than Homer. In comparison to other Alaska fishing communities, estimated 2022 gross earnings in Homer were nearly double those of Petersburg, while Kodiak had slightly higher earnings at an estimated $124.2 million.

Figure 10. Estimated Gross Earnings and Number of Fishermen

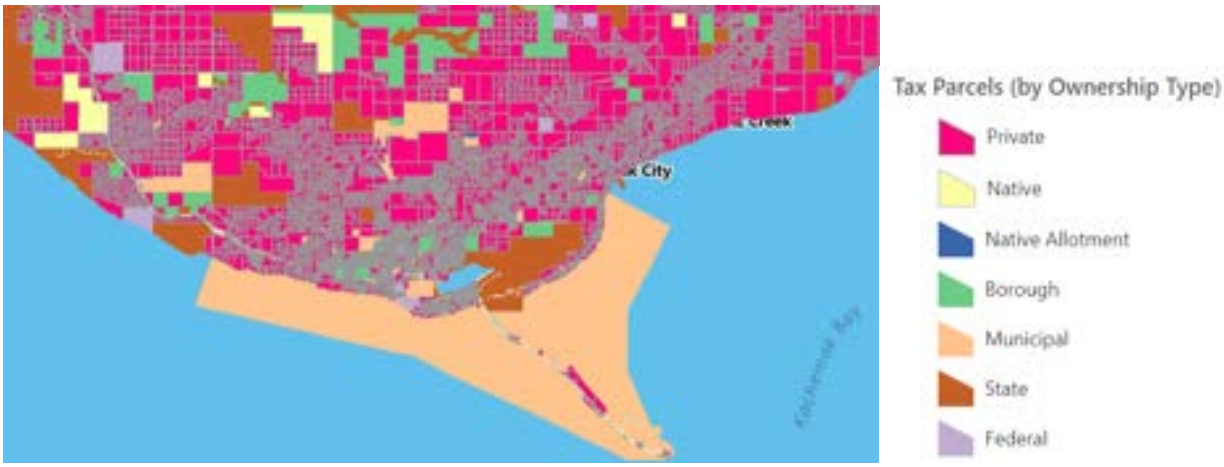


Source: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission[9]

[12] Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, Fishery Statistics – Participation & Earnings, Permit & Fishing Activity By Year, State, Census Area, or City. 2022. https://www.cfec.state.ak.us/gpbycen/2022/122256.htm Accessed March 18, 2024.
[13] Working, Mark. "Wild Alaskan Salmon- An Industry in a Crunch". *ZacharyScott Insight.* September 2023. https://zacharyscott.com/wild-alaskan-salmon-an-industry-in-a-crunch/. Accessed April 26, 2024.

Land Ownership

Figure 11. Land Ownership in the Homer Area



Source: ViewKPB[14]

Figure *11* shows the land ownership in Homer, which highlights a few key trends. Much of the land in the city of Homer is privately owned. The Homer spit is a mix of municipal and private land. Aside from the spit, the waterfront in Homer is mostly privately owned, with a few areas of state or federal ownership.

The 2019 KPB Comprehensive Plan included additional information about land ownership in the borough.[15] The KPB is largely publicly owned (87%), including federal (65%), state (21%), and local government land (1%). Of the remaining lands in the borough, 9% are owned by Native corporations and 3% are private owners. The Cook Inlet Regional Corporation is the largest private landowner in KPB, with over 330,000 acres of surface lands. However, when looking at established communities in the KPB, they have much higher rates of private ownership and different patterns from the rural land that influences broader KPB patterns.

Other comparison communities appear to follow similar land ownership patterns to Homer, in that they have more private ownership relative to the KPB. However, it appears that Homer has less Alaska Native owned lands immediately adjacent to it compared with other KPB communities. Homer also has less municipal owned land compared to the comparison communities.

[14] ViewKPB, https://geo.kpb.us/vertigisstudio/web/?app=ee8eef8b5c55417a8d2635a13658a76f. Accessed April 26, 2024
[15]Kenai Peninsula Borough. 2019 Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan. https://www.kpb.us/images/KPB/PLN/PlansReports/Comp_Plan/2019_KPB_Comprehensive_Plan.pdf. Accessed April 26, 2024

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Working, Mark. "Wild Alaskan Salmon- An Industry in a Crunch". *ZacharyScott Insight.* September 2023. https://zacharyscott.com/wild-alaskan-salmon-an-industry-in-a-crunch/. Accessed April 26, 2024.

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U.S. Census Bureau. "Selected Economic Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03, 2022, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP03?q=per capita income&g=160XX00US0233140,0238420,0268560,0271640. Accessed on March 18, 2024.

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Appendix G: City of Homer Fiscal Trends

Fiscal Trends

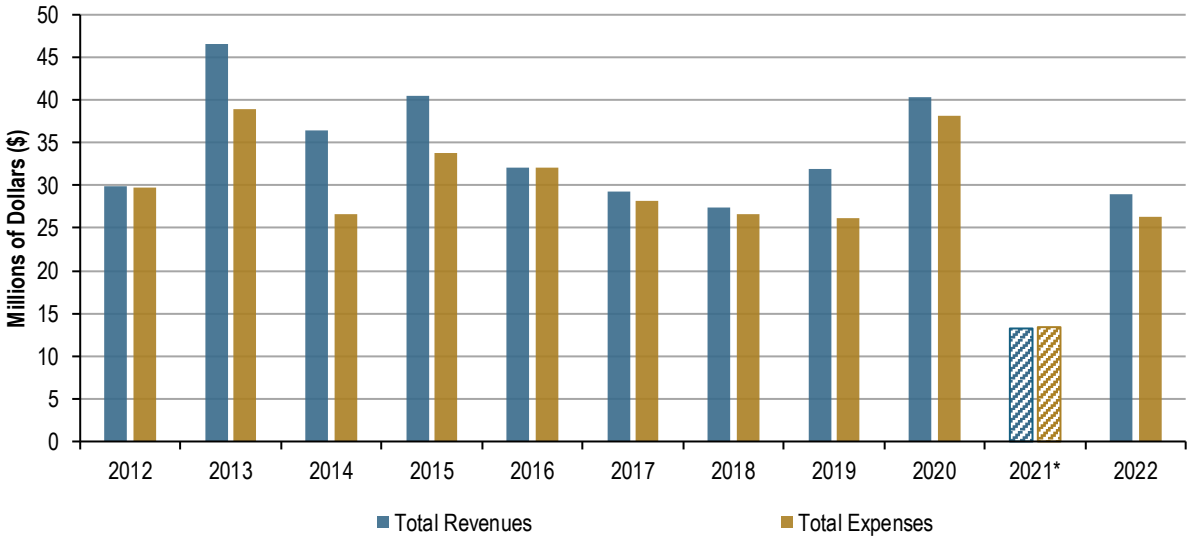
Prepared by Northern Economics, Inc.

Updated November 18, 2025

City Revenues and Cost of Service

Over the years, the City of Homer's annual revenues and expenses have fluctuated. It is important to note that in 2021, the accounting method changed from a calendar year to a fiscal year, so the 2021 data only cover 6 months instead of 12. As seen in Figure 1, total revenues exceeded total expenses in 9 out of 11 years—in 6 of those years, by a considerable margin. The two years in which expenses exceeded revenues were 2016 and 2021, resulting in $57,641 and $169,125 deficits respectively for those years. Compared to the gains made in other years, these were both small deficits.

Figure 1. Revenues and Expenses for the City of Homer, 2012–2022 (Millions of 2022 dollars)



*Note: *The City changed from a calendar year to a fiscal year, resulting in 2021 only covering six months. As a result, the revenues and expenses shown for 2021 reflect six months of activity. A full fiscal year is shown for 2022 (July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022).*

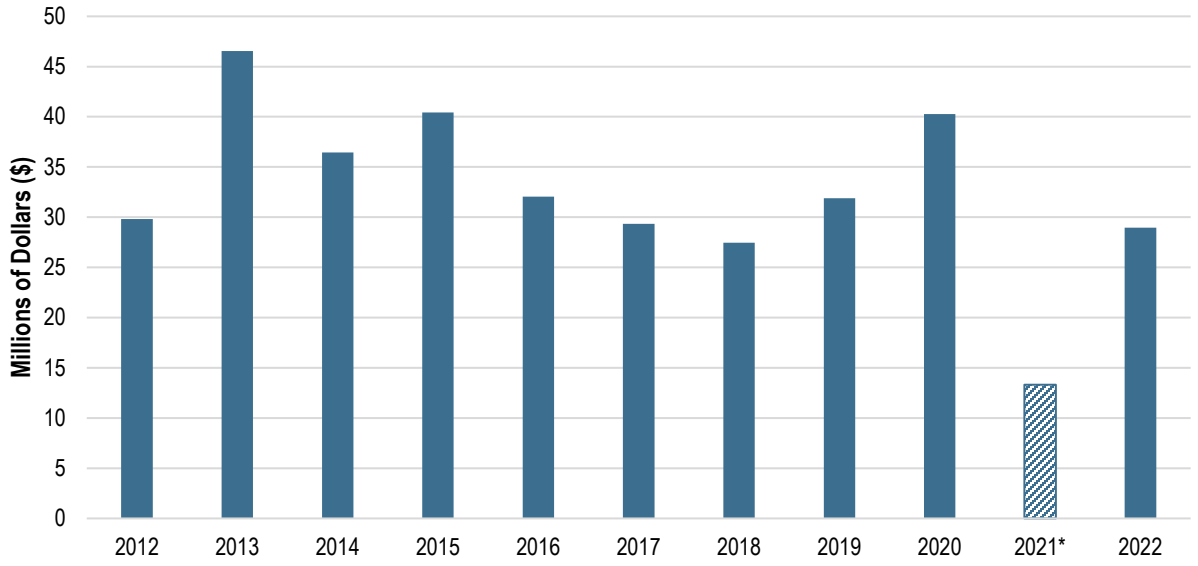
Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

Revenues

Figure 2 shows total revenue by year from 2012 to 2022, in 2022 dollars. City revenue experienced a slightly negative compound annual growth rate of -0.29% after being adjusted for inflation from 2012 to 2022. The total revenue in 2022 was about 3% less than the total revenue in 2012. It is worth noting that this year was still close enough to the pandemic that it might not be truly representative of the overall trend. When only examining pre-pandemic data, the compound annual growth for revenues was 3.82%, and when adjusted for inflation, the revenues in 2020 were 35% greater than they were in 2012. The total revenues have fluctuated between 2012 and 2022, and there have been periods of growth and periods of shrinkage. One driving factor in revenue fluctuations is operating and capital grants, which are received periodically.

The fastest growing revenue observed was sales tax (3.32% annual compound growth). Port and harbor revenue experienced compound annual growth of 1.11% from 2012 to 2022 after being adjusted for inflation. Both charges for services and property taxes also grew slightly (0.4% and 0.3% compound annual growth). Among various charges for services, the fastest growing was public safety (4.96% compound annual growth), and the revenues in 2022 were 62% greater than the revenues in 2012 when adjusted for inflation. The fastest growing services within the general fund were ambulance services (10.99% compound annual growth) and miscellaneous services (5.72% compound annual growth). After being adjusted for inflation, revenues from ambulance services were 2.8 times greater in 2022 than 2012, and revenues from miscellaneous services were 1.74 times greater in 2022 than 2012.

Figure 2. City of Homer Annual Revenue, 2012–2022 (Millions of 2022 dollars)



*Note: *The amount shown for 2021 represents six months, due to the change from a calendar year to a fiscal year.*

Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

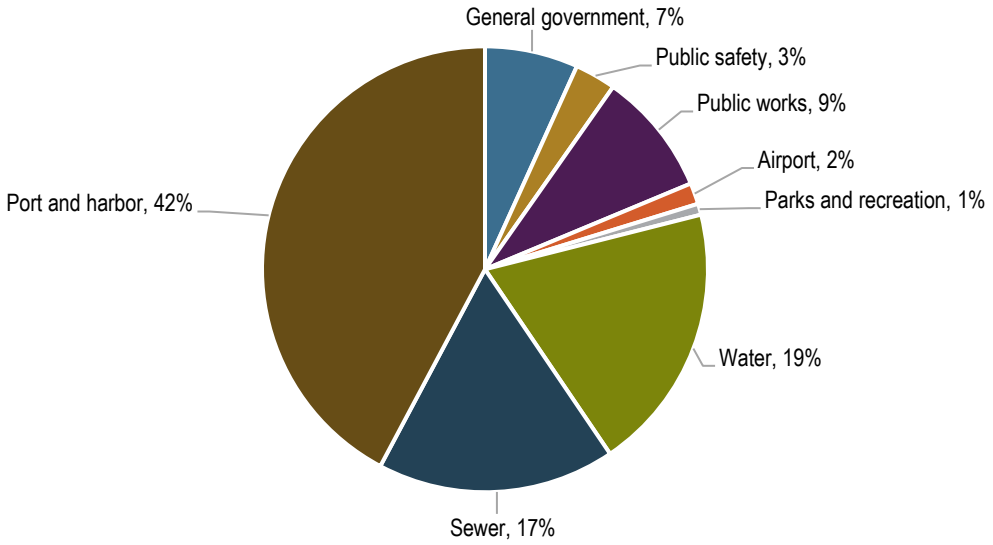
Table 1 shows the breakdown of significant sources of revenue for the City of Homer over time, adjusted for inflation. Typically, the revenue source that contributed the most total dollars was sales taxes (43% of total revenue in 2022). Charges for services was another significant revenue contributor (38% of total revenue in 2022). Figure 3 shows the average share of charges for service revenue by category. Within those categories, the greatest contributors were port and harbor (51%), water (18%), and sewer (17%). Port and harbor revenues were stable throughout the period when adjusted for inflation, with a compound annual growth rate of 1.11%.

Table 1. Inflation-Adjusted City of Homer Revenues, 2012, 2016, 2020, and 2022 (Millions of 2022 dollars)

	2012	2016	2020	2022
Charges for services, Port and harbor	$ 4.96	$ 5.26	$ 5.70	$ 5.19
Charges for services, Water	$ 2.18	$ 2.38	$ 2.39	$ 1.95
Charges for services, Sewer	$ 1.97	$ 2.09	$ 1.87	$ 1.81
Operating grants and contributions	$ 2.06	$ 1.33	$ 12.44	$ 1.35
Capital grants and contributions	$ 3.27	$ 5.06	$ 0.75	$ 1.20
Property tax	$ 3.80	$ 3.89	$ 4.24	$ 3.91
Sales tax	$ 8.90	$ 9.20	$ 10.15	$ 12.34
Other Revenues	$ 2.69	$ 2.85	$ 2.72	$ 1.22

Source: City of Homer (2015, 2016, 2020, 2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

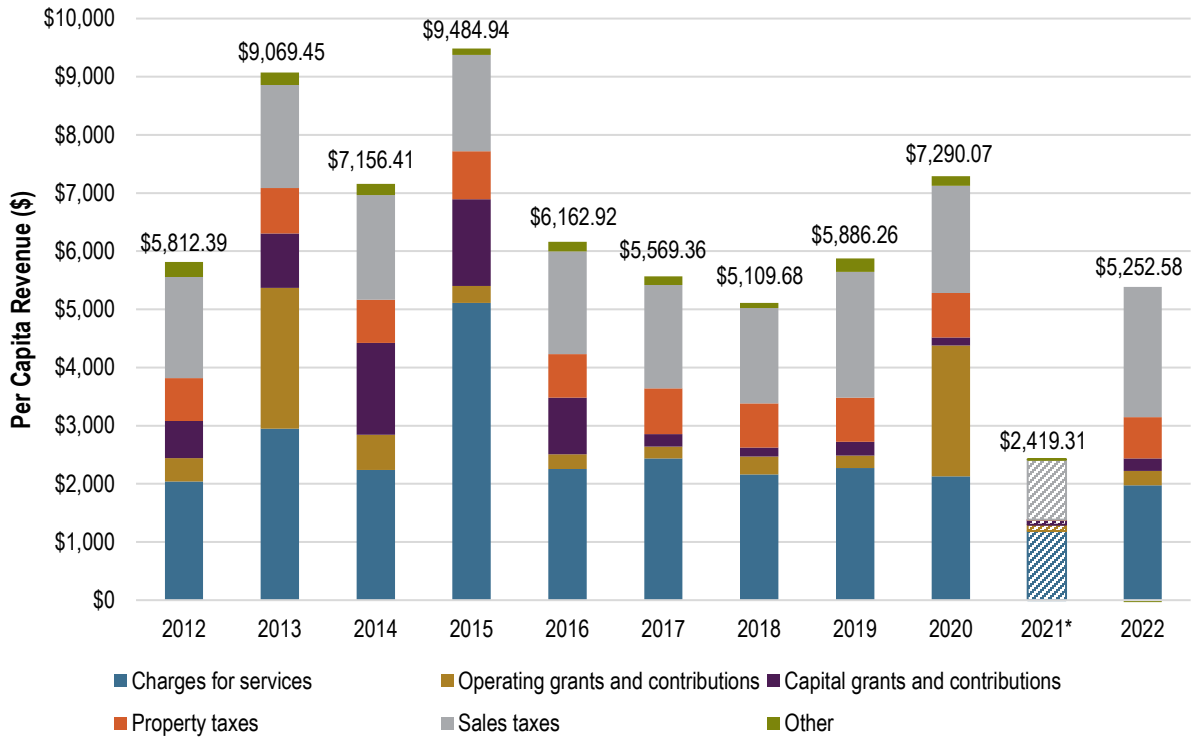
Figure 3. Average Share of Charges for Services by Category, 2012–2022



Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

Homer's population has increased over the past decade, growing 0.73% on average each year from 2012 to 2020 (ADOLWD 2024a, 2024b, 2024c). The population in 2022 was 7.48% greater than in 2012. Figure 4 shows annual revenues for 2012–2022 per capita and demonstrates the fluctuating nature of total revenues. Prior to the pandemic, revenues were on a downward trend, reaching a low in 2018. However, from 2018 to 2020, there was a rapid increase until the pandemic. It is hard to say whether the increasing pattern would have continued if it were not interrupted by the pandemic. The largest sources of revenue per capita were charges for services and sales tax. Infrequently, operating grants and contributions had one of the highest per capita revenues, but this is only when large grants were received.

Figure 4. Per Capita Revenue by Category 2012–2022 (2022 dollars)



*Note: *The amount shown for 2021 represents six months, due to the change from a calendar year to a fiscal year.*

Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), ADOLWD (2024a, 2024b, 2024c), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

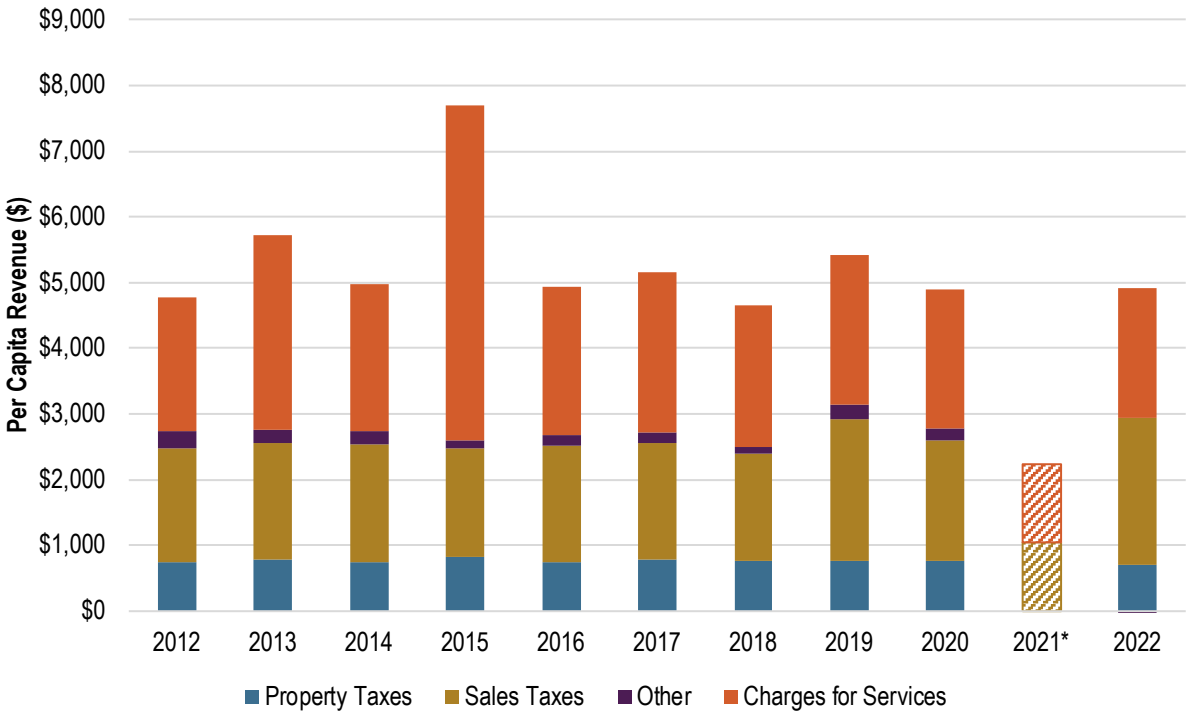
Looking at the broadest level of revenue categories, there were many categories that decreased on a per capita basis when including data for 2012–2022. However, when looking at the 2012–2020 period, most of the revenue categories experienced slight annual growth. This would suggest that 2022 may still be a recovery year from the pandemic, but since there are no data for 2023 yet, it is hard to say if the outlook is positive. However, even in years where revenues are lower, typically expenses have been lower as well, which is discussed in greater depth in the expenses section of this analysis.

When including 2022, total revenues shrank by 1% per year, and most revenue categories shrank or were stable. Sales tax and public safety were the only exceptions, growing 2.6% and 4.2% annually per capita. However, when only including pre-pandemic data from 2012 to 2020, most revenue categories grew slightly on a per capita basis. Total revenue for the period grew at 2.9% annually per capita. The revenue categories that had the greatest annual growth rates per capita were public safety (4.4%), general government (3.6%), and port and harbor (0.8%).

Figure 5 shows revenues without capital or operating grants and contributions to help isolate trends in the other, more consistent, sources of revenue. One notable exception within Figure 5 is 2015, in which there were unusually high revenues in the charges for services category. In 2014 and 2016, charges for services typically brought in between $11 million and $12 million. However, in 2015 there were special

assessments collected related to the natural gas pipeline, which boosted charges for services revenue to just over $26 million (City of Homer 2015). As shown in Figure 5, revenues per capita are generally stable at around $5,000, when we exclude capital and operating grants and contributions. As a result, it seems reasonable to anticipate that if no additional revenue streams are realized, the city should anticipate generating around $5,000 in revenue per capita.

Figure 5. Per Capita Revenue by Category 2012 – 2022, Excluding Grants and Contributions (2022 dollars)



*Note: *The amount shown for 2021 represents six months, due to the change from a calendar year to a fiscal year.*

Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), ADOLWD (2024a, 2024b, 2024c), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

City Expenses and Cost of Services

Total expenses in 2022 were less than total expenses in 2012 after being adjusted for inflation. However, this does not tell the whole story. Post-pandemic data are not the most reliable due to an accounting methodology change that impacted 2021, 2022 being a relatively low year in both revenue and expenses, and 2023 data not yet being available for comparison with 2022. For these reasons, this analysis has included discussion both including and omitting post 2020 data.

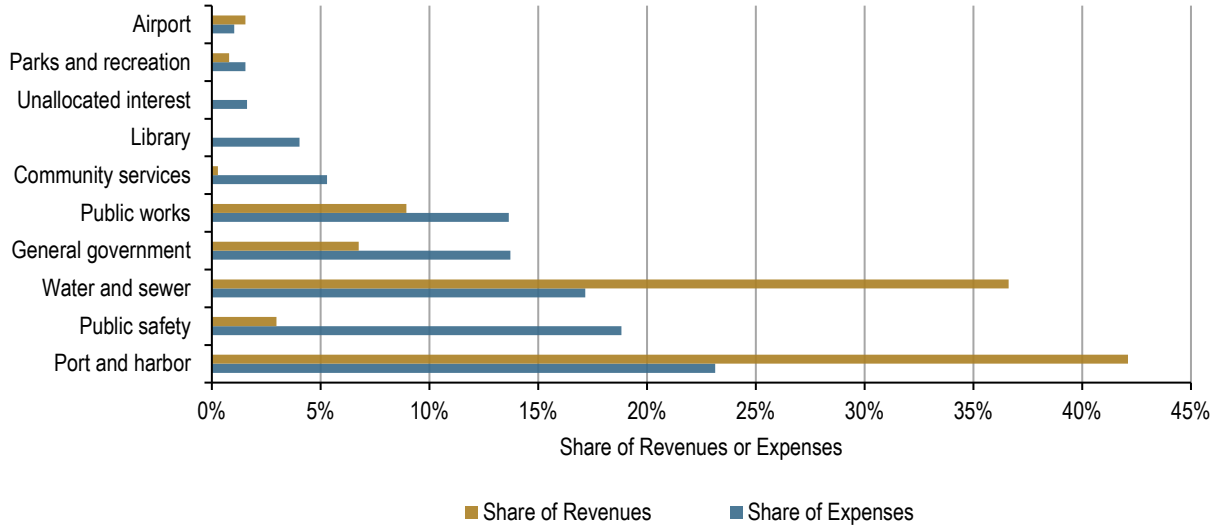
For 2012–2022, total expenses per capita decreased with a compounded annual rate of -1.9%. All categories of expenses decreased except for public safety expenses, which increased 1.9% annually.

When excluding the partial year in 2021, the average per capita expenses for 2012–2022 after being adjusted for inflation were $5,819.80, compared with $6,523.58 per capita revenues.

Port and harbor, public safety, and water and sewer make up the largest share of service-related expenses on average. The port and harbor alone accounts for 23% of expenses, which is offset by its making up 42.1% of revenues from services. Other significant expenditures include public safety (18.8% of expenses), and water and sewer (17.17% of expenses). Public safety did not generate a significant share of revenues from services to balance out the expenditures (2.97% of revenues). However, water and sewer generated 36.6% of revenues for services. Figure 6 compares the average share of service-related revenues compared to the share of expenses for various programs and services for 2012–2022. Not all programs and government functions exist for the purpose of generating revenue, and some are necessary government functions or community services. As a result, expenses tend to be more broadly shared across all programs and government functions, while revenues are concentrated in a few different programs.

Table 2 shows the breakdown of significant expenditures for the City of Homer over time, adjusted for inflation. Typically, the department that accounted for the greatest expense was port and harbor (22% of total expenses in 2022). Public safety was another significant source of expenses (22% of total expenses in 2022).

Figure 6. Average Share of Revenues and Share of Expenses by Program/Government Function, 2012–2022



Note: The calculations for revenues and expenses excluded operating and capital grants and contributions to capture the true program cost versus the amount of revenue it generates. Additionally, revenues from taxes are excluded from the 100% total since there is not a tax-specific expense with which to compare.

Source: City of Homer (2012–2022) and Northern Economics analysis

Table 2. Inflation-Adjusted City of Homer Expenses, 2012, 2016, 2020, 2022 (Millions of 2022 dollars)

	2012	2016	2020	2022
Port and Harbor	$ 5.89	$ 8.75	$ 6.68	$ 5.83
Public Safety	$ 6.02	$ 6.23	$ 5.75	$ 5.81
Public Works	$ 3.39	$ 3.76	$ 4.62	$ 4.39
Water and Sewer	$ 5.82	$ 5.40	$ 4.99	$ 4.38
General Government	$ 4.92	$ 4.12	$ 5.58	$ 4.20
Other Expenses	$ 3.71	$ 3.85	$ 10.46	$ 1.76

Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

Some programs generate enough revenues to cover well over their expenses without any other grants or contributions, and others do not. Many programs generate enough revenues to be mostly self-supporting with the revenue they generate from their charges for services. This leaves a relatively small deficit to make up through operating and capital grants and other tax-based revenues. Some programs are designated as "business-type activity", meaning they should recover all or most of its costs through user fees and charges. This includes water and sewer, and port and harbor. Usually, the port and harbor covers most of its expenses through charges for services and leaves a relatively small portion that needs to be covered through other means of support. The other programs covering most of their expenses are designed so that they can be primarily supported by taxes and intergovernmental revenue.

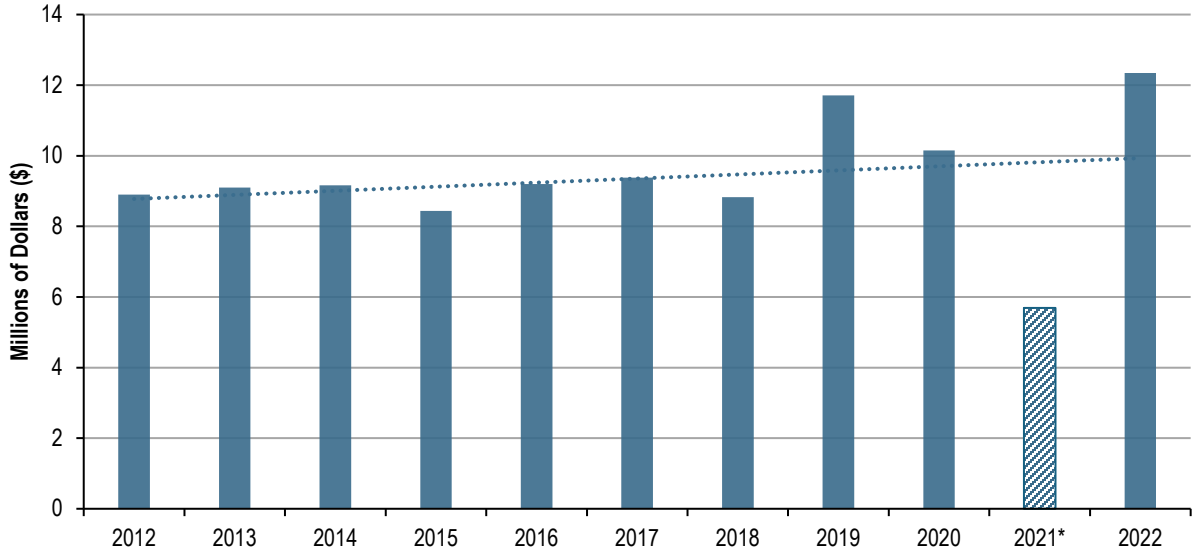
Taxation

The City of Homer receives sales tax revenue and property tax revenue. The Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) collects tax revenue on behalf of the city and then distributes it.

Sales Tax

The City of Homer collects a year-round 7.85% sales tax (4.85% of which is for the city) with a $500 cap (KPB 2024b). It is the second highest tax rate in the borough behind Seldovia, which charges 9.5% seasonally (April through September). The city's tax rate has been in effect since January 1, 2019, when it increased from 4.5% to finance the bonds for a police station. The increase expires once enough funds have been generated to pay all the debt service. Figure 7 shows the inflation-adjusted sales tax revenue from 2012 to 2022. Excluding 2021 from the calculation, sales tax revenue has grown an average of about 4% year over year from 2012-2022. The 33% increase from 2018 to 2019 was the result of the previously mentioned city sales tax increase.

Figure 7. Homer Sales Tax Revenues 2012–2022 (Millions of 2022 dollars)



*Note: *The amount shown for 2021 represents six months, due to the change from a calendar year to a fiscal year.*

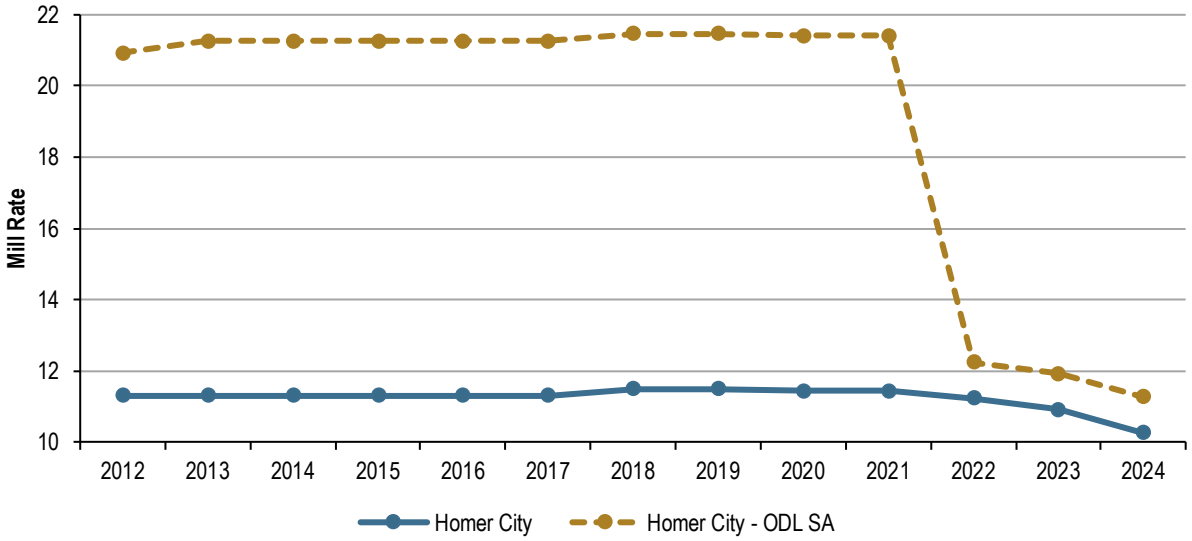
Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

On a per-capita basis, sales tax revenue in 2012 was $1,734.81 and in 2022 it was $2,237.71 per person, demonstrating real growth relative to the population and inflation. It is likely that the increase in tax revenue per capita came from both an increase in spending as well as an increase in the tax rate in 2019.

Property Tax

Property tax is collected by the KPB and then distributed to the cities, including Homer. The mill rate is the dollar amount of property taxes collected per $1,000 of assessed property value. In the City of Homer, the 2024 tax year mill rate is 10.26. Of the total 10.26 mill rate, 4.50 of that is for the City of Homer, 4.30 is for the Borough (standard across all properties in the borough), 0.34 is for paying off debts related to special projects, and 1.12 is for South Hospital (KPB 2024a). Figure 8 shows the mill rates in Homer from 2012 to 2024. As noted below the figure, a higher rate was assessed in the Homer City Ocean Drive Loop Service Area (ODL SA) to cover the cost of necessary seawall repairs that benefited the residents of that area. After funding the needs, the special assessment was removed in 2022. Over time, the mill rates have remained stable for the Homer area with small fluctuations. The general rate in the city hovers around 11 mills.

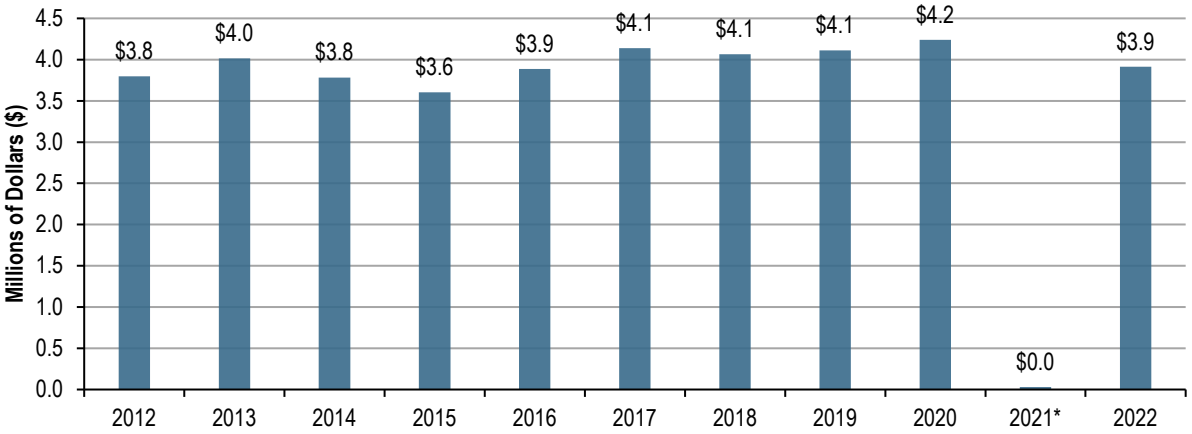
Figure 8. Historic Mill Rates Homer, 2012-2024



Note: Homer City – ODL SA refers to the Homer City Ocean Drive Loop Service Area, which had an increased mill rate to help cover seawall repairs (City of Homer 2020b).

Source: KPB (2024a)

Figure 9. City of Homer Property Tax Revenues, 2012–2022 (Millions of 2022 dollars)



Note: *2021 is not shown, due to changes in tracking from a calendar year to a fiscal year.

Source: City of Homer (2012–2022), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for inflation adjustments (2023), and Northern Economics analysis

As can be seen in Figure 9, total property tax revenues have been steady from 2012 to 2022, increasing by about half a percent each year. However, one trend that could impact future property tax revenues received by the city is an aging population, since there are property tax exemptions for senior citizens. For residents who are 65 or older or are disabled veterans, the KPB exempts the first $150,000 of property valuation.

The population over the age of 65 in the KPB increased from 11.3% of the population in 2012 to 18.6% in 2022. Homer has an even greater share of people over the age of 65 than the KPB and that share has been increasing as well (USCB 2022). In the KPB, there were 3,700 approved property tax exemption applications in 2012, compared to 6,704 approved applicants in 2022 (ADCCED 2024). This increase represented a 6.06% increase each year on average from 2012 to 2022. After being adjusted for inflation, the equivalent of $5,527,965 dollars were exempted in 2012, compared to $8,914,444 in 2022, a 61% increase. Considering optional tax exemptions in the KPB, the overall percentage of the tax base exempted has fluctuated, peaking at 31.3% in 2014 and going as low as 18.6% in 2013 (ADCCED 2024). In 2022, the percent of the tax base exempted was 20.7%. This could result in less revenue for the city when funds are redistributed to it from the KPB if the borough is generating less revenue.

Fiscal Challenges and Trajectory

The state's fiscal situation is still uncertain. As a result, the city cannot count on some of the same sources of state funding as it has in the past for certain programs. The pandemic also caused additional uncertainty in future revenue and expenditure activities for the city. The city will be utilizing federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act–Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds in 2023-2024. An additional source of financial vulnerability is the city's water and sewer utility fund. The challenge is that the city owns expensive and expansive treatment, collection, and distribution infrastructure. However, there are few customers to pay for maintenance and operations of the systems. The proposed best course of action has been to infill and hook up customers where the infrastructure already exists, avoiding additional build-out capital costs (City of Homer 2022).

Additionally, the city's FY24/25 budget notes that Homer is currently facing challenges meeting increasing demands for services while dealing with high inflation following the pandemic (City of Homer 2023). As a result, despite revenue growth, the buying power of the revenue growth has been hurt by market price increases. Supply chain disruptions have also been challenging for the city following the pandemic. However, there has also been an increase in visitation from independent tourists. While in the short term the rate of revenue increase is close to the rate of expense increases for cost of goods and services, the hope is that as inflation eases revenues will continue to remain strong and increase.

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Appendix H: Land Use and Environment Chapter Background

Supplemental Maps

This appendix provides a series of supplemental maps that informed development of the Future Land Use Map and corresponding policies in the Land Use and Environment chapter of the Core Plan. These figures present key background data on land ownership, existing land use patterns, current zoning, and environmental conditions within the City of Homer. Together, they offer geographic context and spatial analysis that supported the planning process.

Figures included in this appendix:

- **Figure 1:** City of Homer Location Map
- **Figure 2:** City of Homer Ownership Map
- **Figure 3:** City of Homer Current Land Uses Map
- **Figure 4:** City of Homer Zoning Map
- **Figure 5:** Environmental Constraints Overlay
- **Figure 6:** Environmental Constraints Overlay: Conditions
- **Figure 7:** Table of Descriptions in Environmental Constraints Overlay: Conditions
- **Figure 8:** Table of Description and map for Moose Habitat
- **Figure 9:** Environmental Constraints Overlay: Designations

Figure 1: City of Homer Location Map

These maps represent the best available data at the time of plan drafting and were used to identify development opportunities and environmental limitations across the community.

Figure 2: City of Homer Ownership Map

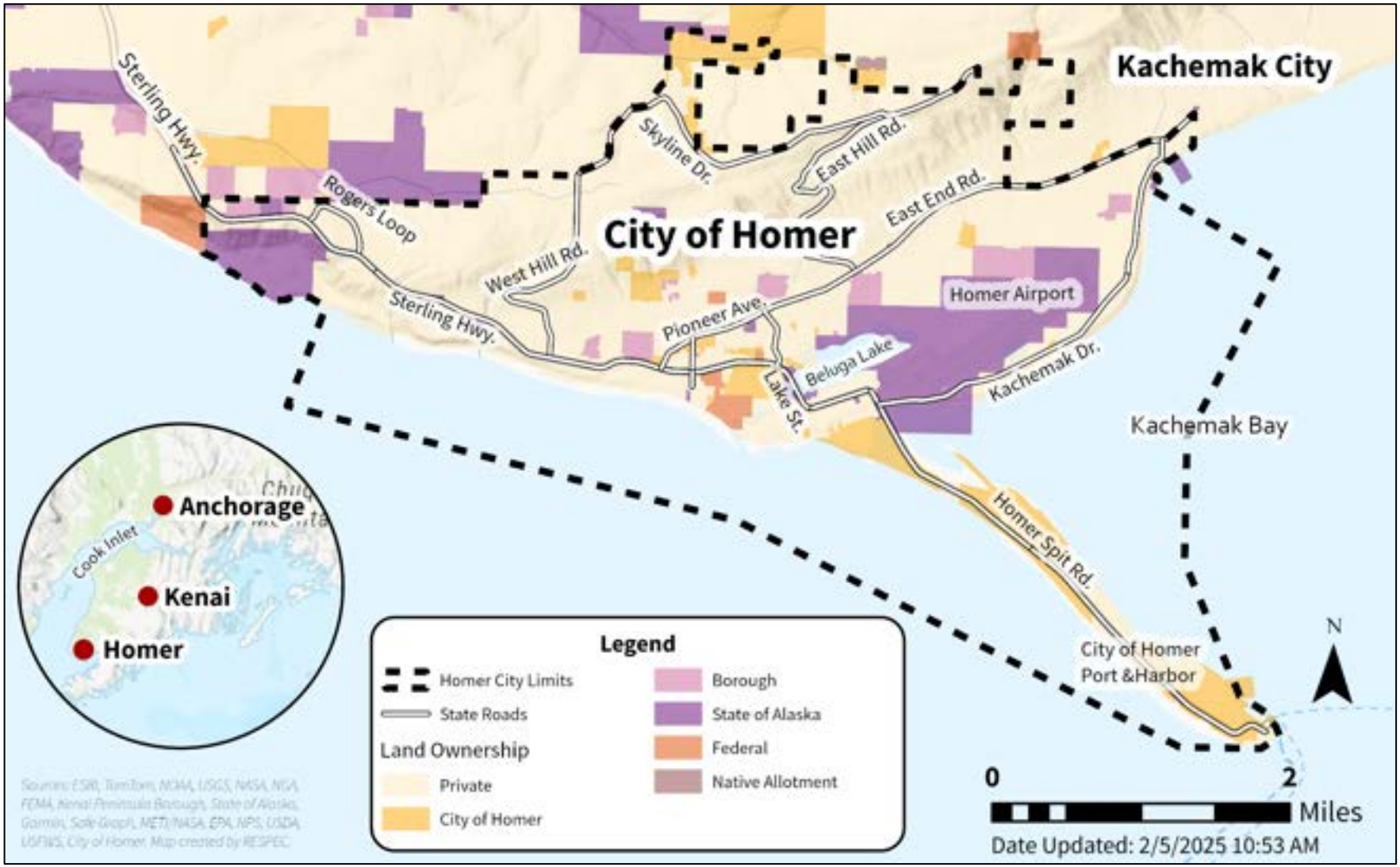


Figure 3: City of Homer Current Land Uses Map

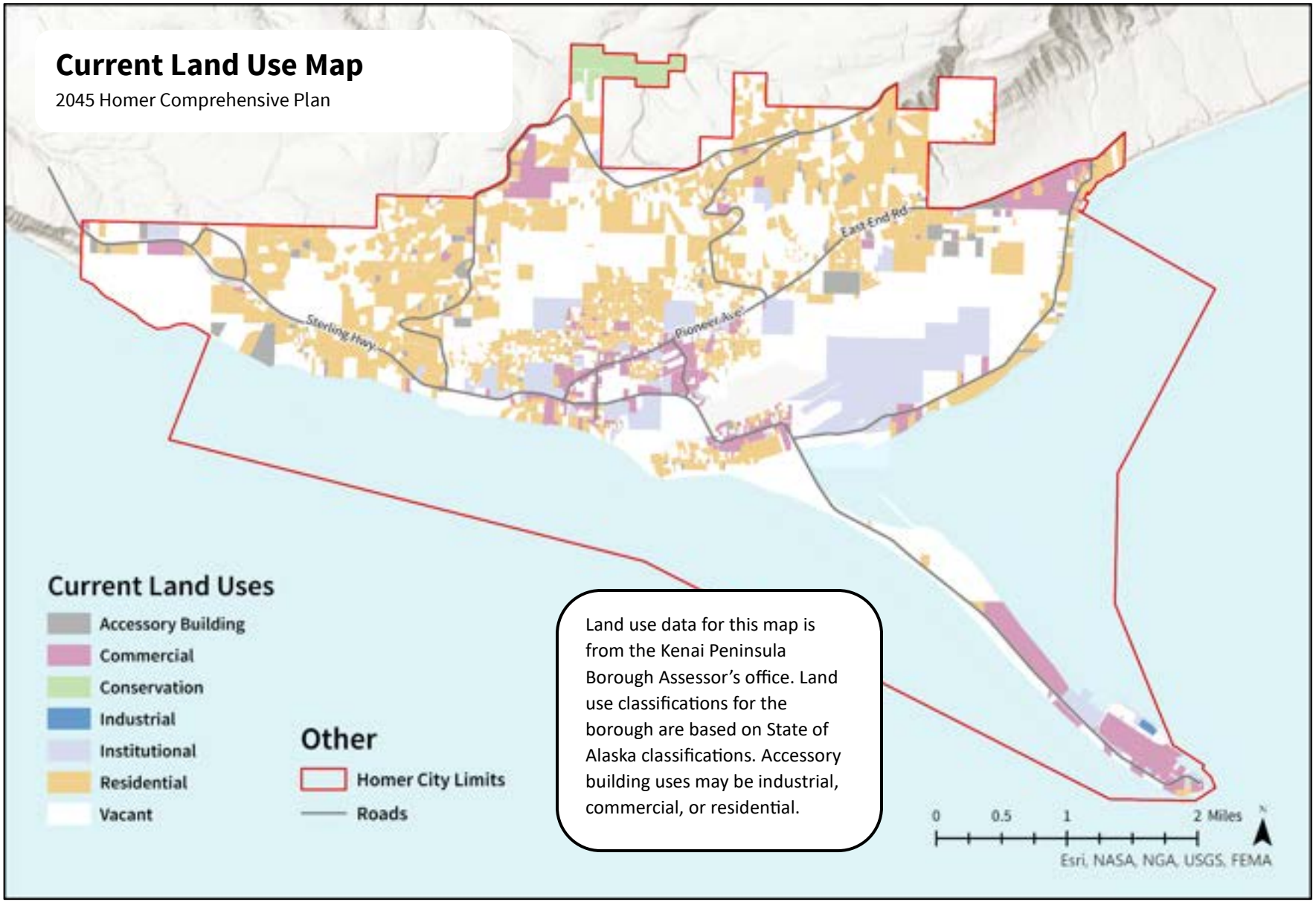
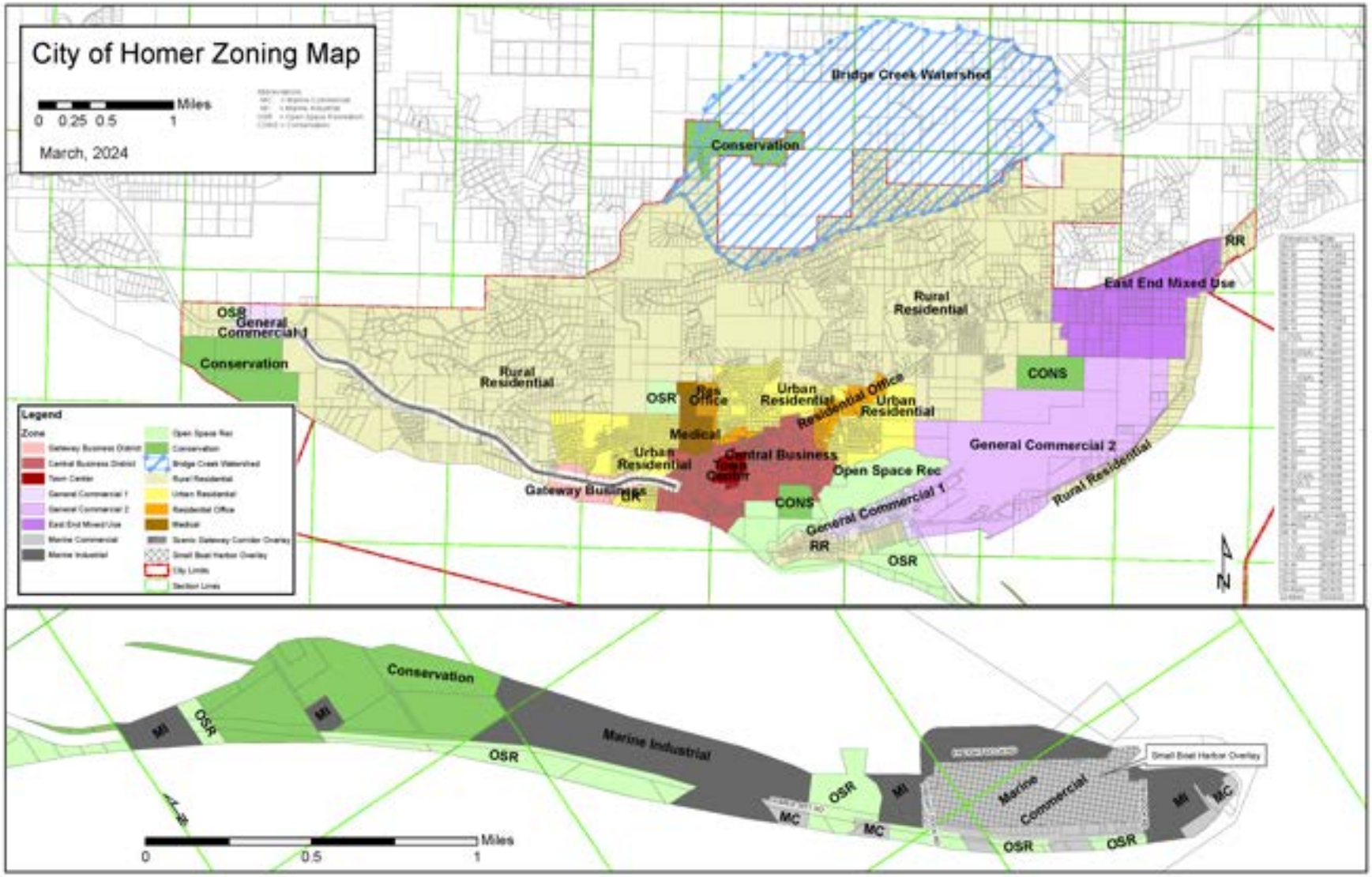


Figure 4: City of Homer Zoning Map

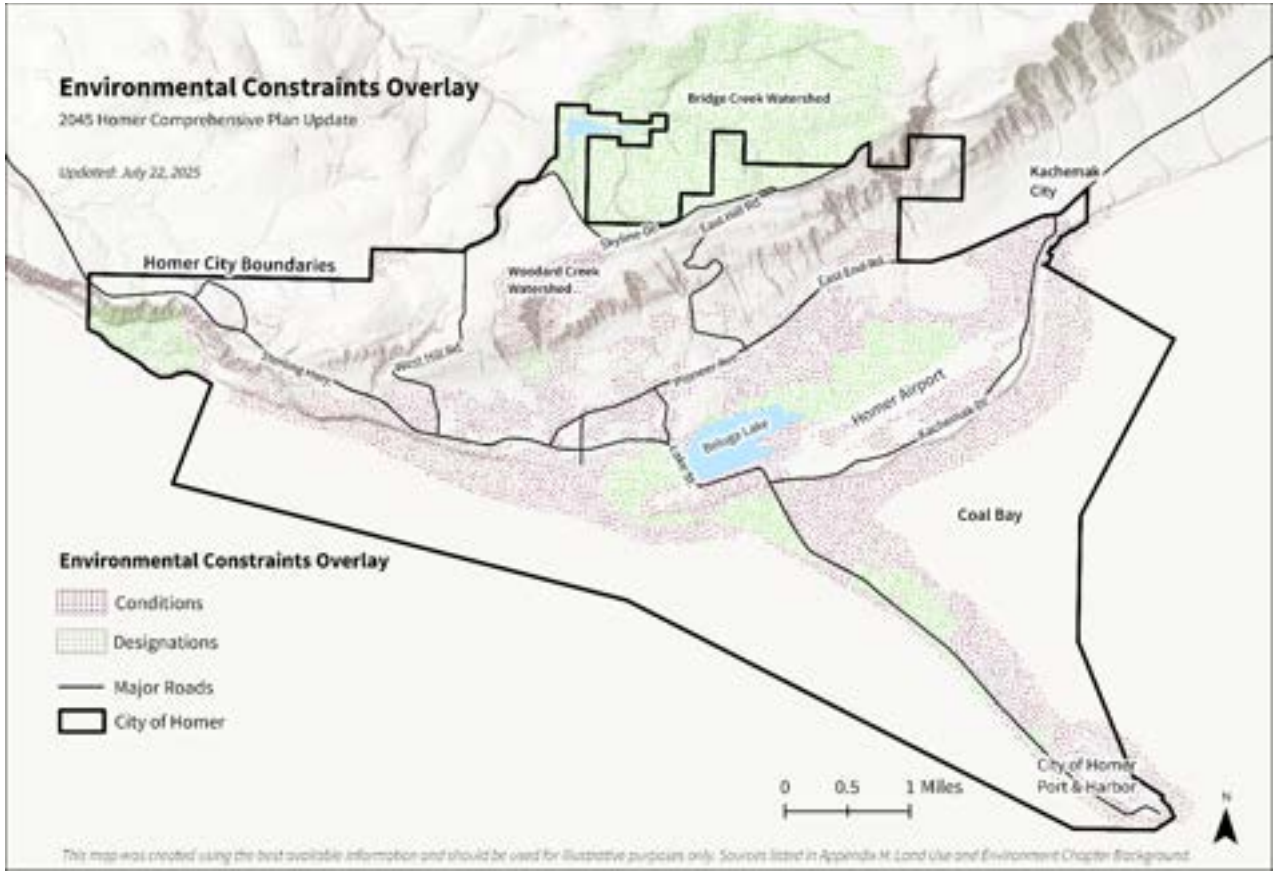


Environmental Constraints Overlay

The Environmental Constraints Overlay is a planning tool developed to support the Future Land Use Map and guide long-term land use policy decisions. It brings together a range of environmental data to illustrate where physical and ecological conditions may present limitations to development or require special consideration. The overlay is organized below into two maps:

- **Conditions** include physical characteristics of the landscape that may pose risks or limitations for development, such as watersheds, steep slopes, scarps, floodplains, hydric soils, and areas of high erosion potential.
- **Designations** include areas that are formally recognized by public entities for conservation or ecological value, such as the Homer Airport Critical Habitat Area.

Figure 5: Environmental Constraints Overlay



The Environmental Constraints Overlay accompanies the Future Land Use Map's base designations for the Plan. It provides a general illustration of environmental constraints that may affect development, based on approximate data. **It is not intended to serve as a definitive guide for site-specific decisions.** Detailed technical analysis should be conducted as part of any proposed site development to fully assess conditions. Additionally, users are encouraged to consult the original source data for each mapped constraint; citations for these sources are provided below.

Figure 6: Environmental Constraints Overlay: Conditions

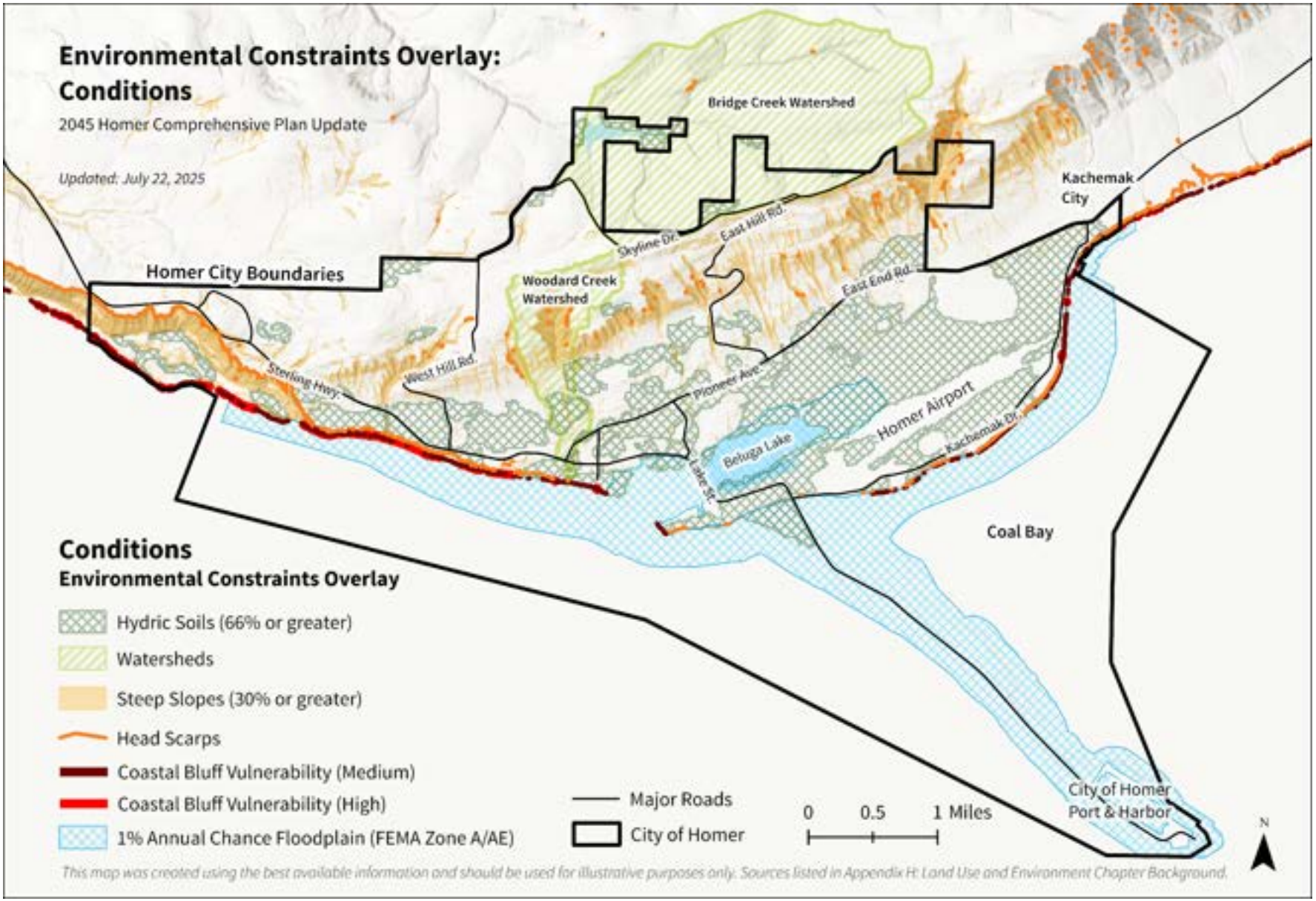
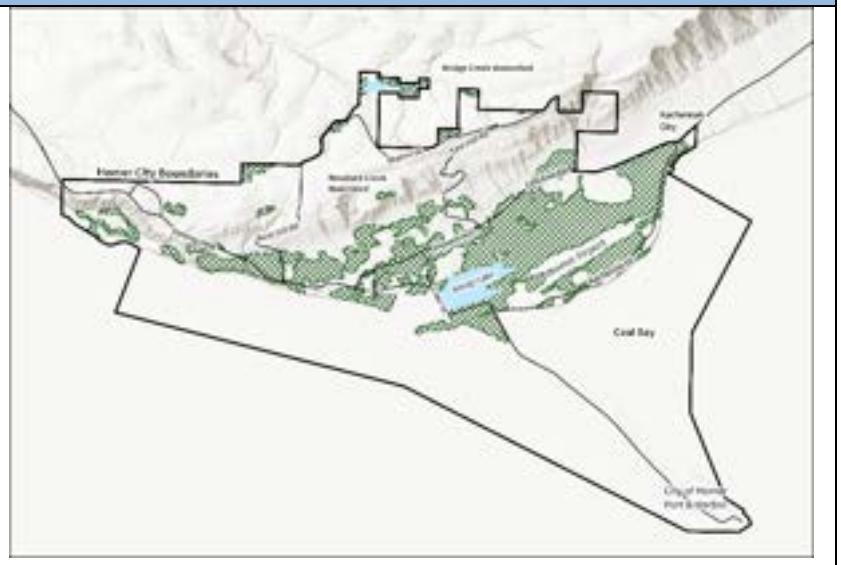
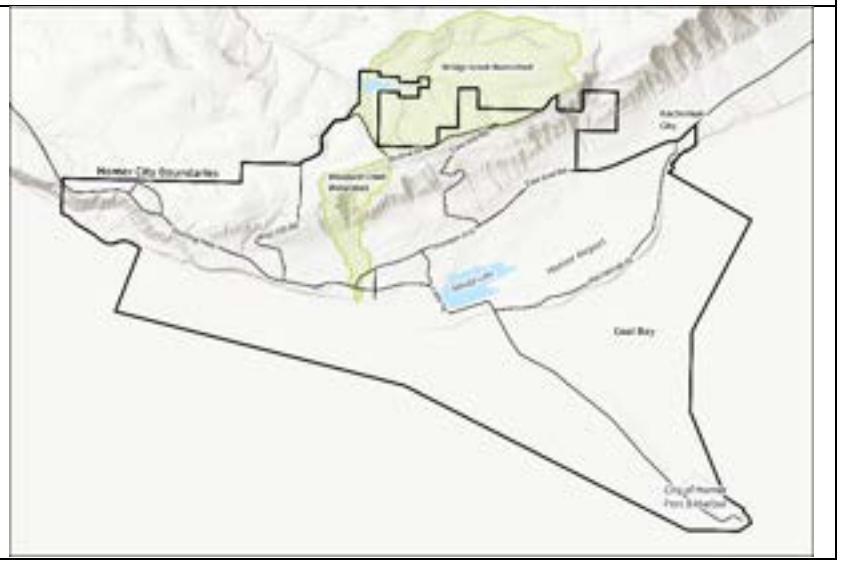
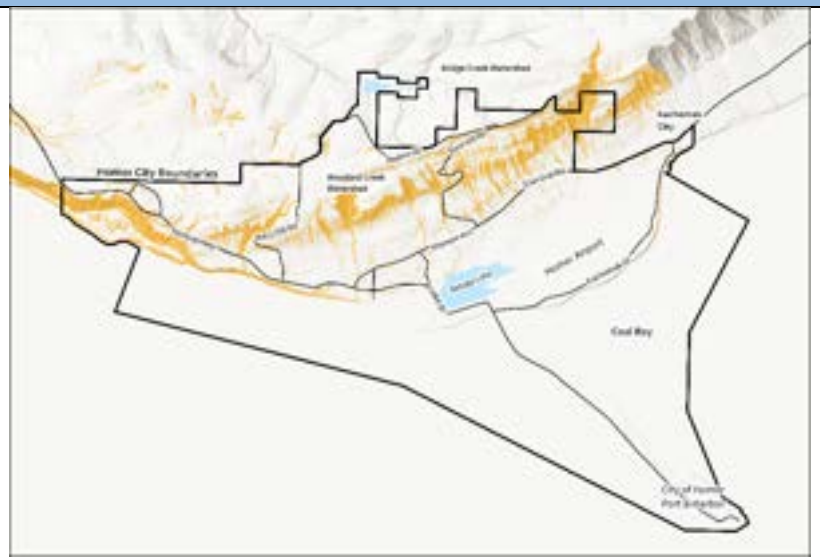
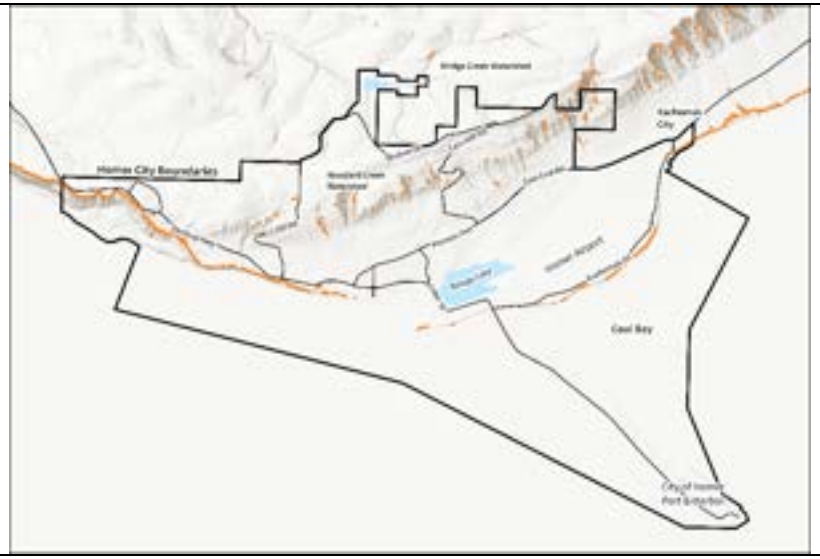


Figure 7: Table of Descriptions in Environmental Constraints Overlay: Conditions

Name, Description, and Source	Map Element
Hydric Soils (66% or greater) The constraints map shows partially (66-90%) and predominantly (more than 90%) hydric soils. Hydric soils are defined as soils that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part of the soil profile. They often signal the presence of wetlands or other areas with limited development potential due to poor drainage, seasonal inundation, or regulatory protections. They also help identify important ecological areas that provide natural water filtration, habitat, and flood mitigation functions. **Source:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. (2024). Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO) [Data set]. https://sdmdataaccess.sc.egov.usda.gov	
Watersheds A watershed is an area of land where all the water – whether from rain, snowmelt, or streams – drains into a common outlet, such as a bay or river. In Homer, key watersheds include **Bridge Creek**, which supplies the city's drinking water, and **Woodard Creek**, which flows through downtown and into Kachemak Bay. These watersheds are vital for maintaining water quality, managing stormwater, and supporting fish habitats. **Source:** City of Homer. (2024). *Watershed Boundaries* [GIS data]. City of Homer GIS Department. Retrieved from https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov	

Name, Description, and Source	Map Element
Steep Slopes (30% or greater) This layer highlights areas where the land surface rises sharply – slopes of 30 percent or more. Steep slopes can signal places where development may be more difficult due to poor soil stability, erosion potential, and increased costs. They can also indicate areas at higher risk of landslides. For more detailed landslide information in Homer – including mapped debris flows and slope failure zones – see the *2024 Landslide Hazard Susceptibility Mapping in Homer, Alaska* report. *Note that the study focuses on smaller-scale landslides and does not assess large landforms like the Bear Creek alluvial fan, which may also present risks.* **Source:** Developed from: Esri. (n.d.). *Terrain - Slope Percent* [Data set]. ArcGIS Living Atlas. Retrieved [insert retrieval date], from https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=304e82c39ca14273b41c26f07e692e93	
Head Scarps This layer shows the mapped upper edges of past landslides – known as head scarps – identified through high-resolution lidar analysis by the Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys. These features mark the original failure points of slope movements and may indicate areas of ongoing or future instability, even when no landslide deposits are visible on the surface. In Homer, head scarps are often found in steep upland areas and coastal bluffs, where they help identify terrain that may not be suitable for development without further geotechnical study. **Source:** Salisbury, J. B. (2024). *Landslide hazard susceptibility mapping in Homer, Alaska* (Report of Investigation 2024-3). Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys. Retrieved from https://dggs.alaska.gov/pubs/id/31155	

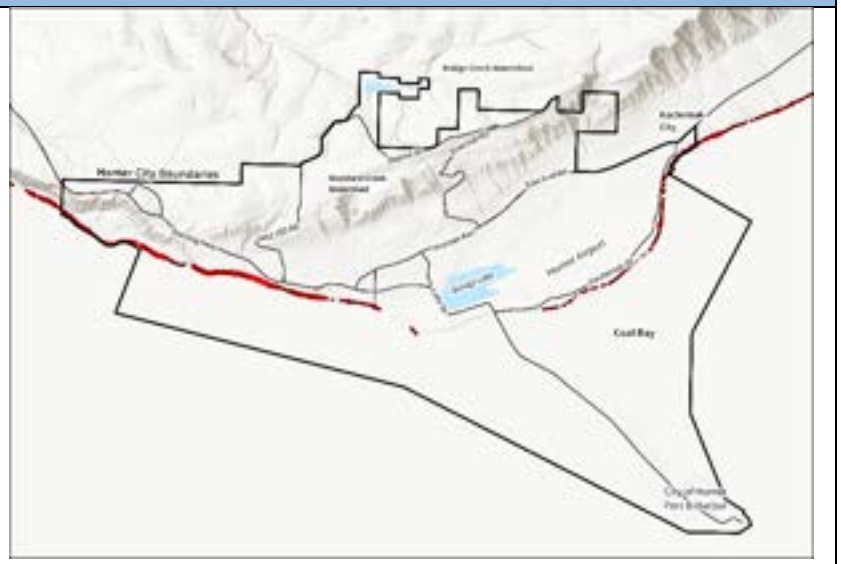
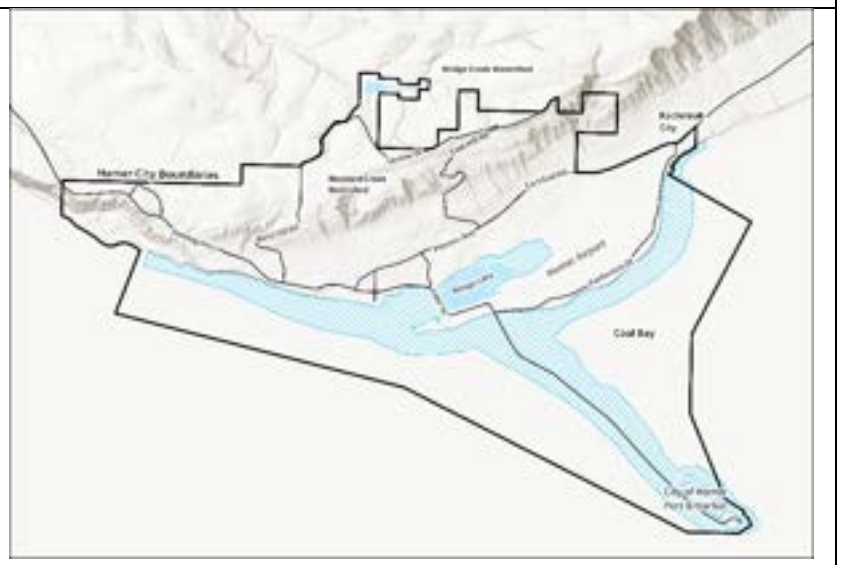
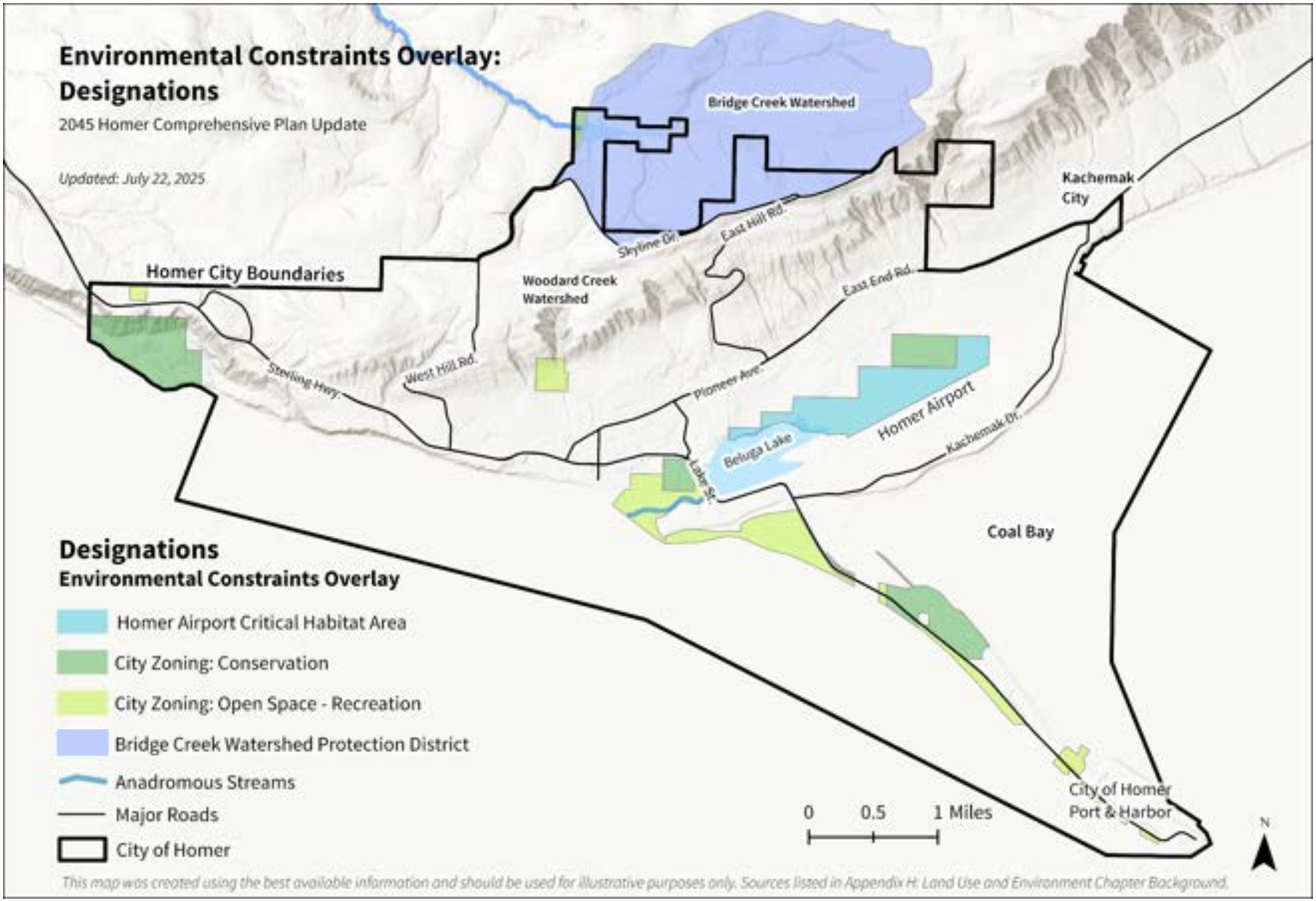
Name, Description, and Source	Map Element
Coastal Bluff Vulnerability This layer shows areas along Homer's coastline classified as having **medium** or **high** **vulnerability to bluff instability**, based on the 2022 *Coastal Bluff Stability Assessment for Homer, Alaska* by the Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys. These classifications are based on historical erosion rates, bluff height, slope, and the likelihood of future retreat. High vulnerability zones indicate areas where coastal erosion and slope failure are more likely to occur and may pose risks to nearby infrastructure or development. Including these areas on the constraints map helps inform decisions about shoreline development, safe access points, and hazard mitigation. **Source:** Buzard, R.M., & Overbeck, J.R. (2022). *Coastal bluff stability assessment for Homer, Alaska*. https://dggs.alaska.gov/pubs/id/30908	
1% Annual Chance Floodplain (FEMA Zone A/AE) This layer identifies areas within Homer that have a 1% annual chance of flooding—commonly known as the "100-year floodplain"—as defined by FEMA's Zone A and AE designations. These zones represent the highest flood risk areas mapped by FEMA and are often subject to stricter building and insurance requirements. Other FEMA flood zones, such as areas of minimal or undetermined flood risk, are not included here to maintain clarity and emphasize the most critical flood hazard zones for planning purposes. **Source:** Federal Emergency Management Agency. (n.d.). *Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map Database, City of Homer, Alaska, USA*. Retrieved from https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/digital-flood-insurance-rate-map-database-city-of-homer-alaska-usa	

Figure 8: Moose Habitat Map and Description

Moose are important wildlife on the southern Kenai Peninsula for fall harvest and year-round wildlife viewing. Lands within Homer provide important wintering and calving habitat that help sustain the population. While many moose have become acclimatized to Homer's human population, maintaining migration corridors from the higher elevation benchlands north of Homer, where they spend the summer and fall months, to low elevation habitats such as the Homer Airport Critical Habitat Area, where they spend the winter months, remains important for a sustainable population. The polygon on the map shows the region moose typically use in winter and summer to migrate between higher and lower elevations. Identifying undeveloped and lightly developed parcels in this area and in wintering areas in the city for moose habitat conservation will allow moose to continue their annual movements. Source: Lynn Whitmore, Kachemak Moose Habitat Inc. President (2024).

Figure 9: Environmental Constraints Overlay: Designation



Appendix I: Partner-Led Strategies and Actions

Key to Icons in the Plan

: **PRIORITY**. Emerging priority for implementation.

: **CAPITAL**. This action features a potential capital project (including those in planning and feasibility stages).

: **CODE.** This action recommends a specific code revision.

: **2018**. This action is adapted/carried over from the 2018 comprehensive plan.

Chapter 2 Land Use & Environment Potential Partner-Led Strategies

6. **Collaborate with public and private partners to enhance community spaces and recreational infrastructure.** ♦
    a. Promote public-private partnerships for the maintenance and improvement of parks, trails, and green spaces.
    b. Expand the adopt-a-park program to engage local businesses, service organizations, and youth groups in caring for public spaces.
    c. Explore the creation of a park endowment fund to support long-term maintenance and upgrades of outdoor recreation areas.
    d. Partner with local organizations and private property owners to complete sidewalks, install landscaping, improve building façades, and integrate green infrastructure in commercial areas.
    e. Encourage joint use agreements and shared investment in parking, access, and public amenities that support compact, walkable development.
7. **Coordinate with regional and state agencies to align land use policies with environmental stewardship and shared planning goals.**
    a. Work with regional land use partners to ensure development codes reflect adopted plans and evolving land management goals.
    b. Incorporate shared hazard mitigation, watershed protection, and climate adaptation priorities into local land use planning through ongoing interagency collaboration. ♦

Chapter 3 Public Facilities and Services Potential Partner-Led Strategies

7. **Identify and address the deficiencies of the Homer Airport (updated master plan, more reliable year-round service, etc.).**
   a) Collaborate with the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) in the development of a new airport master plan for Homer Airport.
   b) Collaborate with air carriers to provide more reliable year-round service to and from Homer Airport.
8. **Provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to live, work, and play in the community, including encouraging businesses and organizations to create accessible, ADA-compliant facilities.**
   a) Include accessible crossings in all future road projects. 🛠
   b) Ensure community hubs (schools, university campus, stores, services, parks) are accessible and connected for all ages and abilities. 🛠
9. **Collaborate with Borough, state, federal, and non-profit partners to maintain year-round access to community facilities for recreational, educational, social, and cultural activities.**
   a) Support the efficient use of existing community facilities. Partner with organizations to keep city facilities operating beyond normal hours.♦
   b) Continue to collaborate with the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) to use school facilities for recreational, educational, social, and cultural activities to the entire community after school hours and in the summer. ♦

Chapter 4 Housing Potential Partner-Led Strategies

3. Develop incentives and public-private partnerships for affordable and long-term housing development.

a. Conduct targeted borough land disposition for housing with specific objectives in mind: manufactured housing, smaller lots for more affordable ownership and rental products, duplexes, and triplexes. Note: The strategic approach to land disposition could occur through targeted negotiations/partnerships with local organizations, such as Tribes and Kenai Peninsula Housing Initiatives, Inc. In addition, the RFP process could be used to select developers/contractors and associated homebuyers for selected borough owned lots with specific housing objectives.

b. Explore the creation of a local housing fund and implement targeted incentives to encourage affordable housing development over luxury and short-term rental projects.

c. Address the scarcity of affordable land by exploring Community Land Trust models (example: Sitka, AK) and other strategies to lower land acquisition costs.

c) Explore ways to incentivize private property owners to place existing vacant parcels into residential use.

d. Build public-private partnerships with organizations that influence housing development, such as contractors, nonprofits, Tribal housing authorities, and lending agencies.

e. Explore possibilities for City land acquisition with the intent to develop attainable housing through a request for proposal (RFP) process.

d) Explore partnerships and solutions that could reduce the cost of shipping for building materials and manufactured homes to Homer.

e) Engage with lenders, insurance providers, utility companies, and housing advocates to identify barriers and potential solutions for financing, insuring, and connecting non-traditional housing types (e.g., yurts, tiny homes, manufactured housing).

Chapter 5 Economic Development Potential Partner-Led Strategies

4. **Support Homer's youngest residents and their families by making sure they have what they need to grow and thrive, including access to child care.** ⚡
   a. Ensure quality childcare is accessible and affordable, with parents and caregivers easily able to connect with available childcare resources and programs.
   b. Promote a healthy lifestyle by increasing activities available for youth.
   c. Promote volunteer and education opportunities for youth to become involved in civic life and contribute to improving the community.
5. **Expand career and job training resources, particularly in trades, construction, marine trades (including mariculture and shipping industries), and healthcare industries, to retain young residents and provide year-round employment.** ⚡
   a. Enhance health care opportunities and adjacent industries to strengthen local services and employment. ♦
   b. Create co-working spaces and incubator hubs for small-scale manufacturers and entrepreneurs. (The Commons in Ketchikan is a good case study https://www.tongassfcu.com/business/business-services/the-commons-at-tfcu/.)
   c. Encourage the retention of existing and the relocation of new Federal and State Government jobs and training programs to Homer. Promote Homer as a place to expand and attract government operations. ♦
   d. Continue and increase support for the Alaska Small Business Development Center business advisor located in Homer to foster local business growth.
6. **Support access to quality, affordable health care.** ⚡
7. **Promote fishing and maritime services as viable career options in Homer and demonstrate long-term support for and commitment to the industry.**
   a. Develop programs to attract seafood buyers and retailers to Homer, increasing competition and driving better prices for local fishermen.
   b. Expand hands-on training and apprenticeships to promote fishing as a viable career option.
   c. Offer grant programs, financial assistance, and legal services to support new entrants to the fishing industry.
   d. Promote sustainable, science-based fisheries management.
8. **Promote food security.**
   a. Identify supply chain vulnerabilities.
9. **Address barriers to workforce recruitment and retention (e.g., housing, child care).**
10. **Pursue moderate, sustainable growth in tourism, focusing on activities that benefit small businesses and minimize negative impacts on community character.** ♦
    a. Develop regenerative tourism strategies to balance visitor growth with environmental and community preservation.

b. Promote recreation, the arts, and non-governmental organizations as a complement to tourism and as an export industry. ♦

11. Support Homer's seniors, including the ability to remain in the community as they age.

12. Support high-quality K-12 and higher education in Homer, support teachers, and sustain lifelong learning opportunities for all residents.

a. Develop regenerative tourism strategies to balance visitor growth with environmental and community preservation.

b. Promote recreation, the arts, and non-governmental organizations as a complement to tourism and as an export industry. ♦

c. Promote Kachemak Bay Campus- KBC- programs, facilities, and opportunities for visiting college exchange students, Seniors, conferences, and lifelong learning.

Chapter 6 Transportation Potential Partner-Led Strategies

3. **Maintain continued safe airport and ferry operations to support the movement of people and goods to and from the community and maintain Homer's status as a regional hub.**
4. **Explore public transit options, particularly in the Homer Spit area, to alleviate traffic congestion and improve accessibility for seasonal workers, residents, and visitors.**
5. **Install benches, trash cans, bike racks and create drop-off and pick-up locations for buses, taxis and visitors, in alignment with the Homer Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan.**
6. **Explore public parking in downtown.**

Chapter 7 Governance Potential Partner-Led Strategies

5. **Identify opportunities to coordinate with organizations including Tribal organizations, Alaska Native Corporations, public entities, and local and regional non-profits to leverage resources and provide services more cost-effectively.**

    a. Build a coalition of public-private partnerships to support improvements to the commercial streetscape of Pioneer and Old Town.

6. **Work with the Kenai Peninsula Borough to advocate for and implement policies that fiscally benefit borough communities.**

Potential Kenai Peninsula Borough Policies that Could Benefit Homer

Potential Borough Policy	Description	Benefit(s) for Homer
Revenue-Sharing Based on Population Growth	Borough level policy that adjusts revenue-sharing allocations based on population growth.	As Homer grows, the policy would provide additional funds to support expanded public services, infrastructure, and public safety without burdening local taxpayers.
Capital Improvement Fund for Growing Municipalities	Establish a dedicated borough capital improvement fund to provide grants and low interest loans to cities experiencing growth.	Would help Homer to handle the infrastructure costs of population growth without taking on significant debt, reducing the burden on Homer's operating budget and freeing up funds for other critical needs.
Population-Weighted Grant Distribution	Borough level grant distribution system that prioritizes municipalities with a higher growth rate for specific needs, such as public safety or health funding. Grants could be allocated based on metrics such as population increase, infrastructure needs, and public safety demands.	Homer's infrastructure needs are expected to rise with additional population. These targeted grants would help ensure that the city can afford any necessary expansions without relying heavily on local taxes.
Borough-Wide Infrastructure Bonds	Issue borough-wide bonds for large-scale infrastructure projects that benefit growing cities like Homer, with repayment shared across the borough rather than being the sole responsibility of individual cities.	Large infrastructure projects are very costly for a single city. A shared bond would allow Homer to access necessary funds without incurring unsustainable debt.
Tourism and Recreation Investment	Implement borough-level strategies to boost tourism and recreational activities in cities experiencing growth. This could include building and maintaining parks, trails, and tourist attractions that drive additional sales tax revenue.	Boosting tourism-related investments could help offset the costs of population growth while generating additional revenue for the city's budget.

Chapter 8 Sustainability and Resilience Potential Partner-Led Strategies

4. Leverage partnerships to advance community-wide sustainability and resilience.

Advance Renewable Energy and Infrastructure Innovation

a. Support the expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the community to reduce transportation-related emissions and improve access for residents and visitors.
b. Collaborate with partners to advocate for and invest in renewable energy sources, including hydroelectric, solar, wind, and tidal.
c. Coordinate with utilities to pilot and plan for future microgrid networks that improve local energy resilience and distribution.

Strengthen Land and Watershed Stewardship Through Collaborative Planning

d. Partner with conservation organizations and regional land managers to restore, enhance, and manage wetlands and habitat systems that support resilience and watershed health.
e. Develop a wetlands inventory and management plan to guide long-term land use decisions based on the function and value of wetland areas.
f. Develop and consider adoption of an updated, science-based wildlife corridor map that integrates updated habitat data, climate resilience considerations, and land use patterns to inform protection of critical habitats.
g. Enhance stream corridors with constructed ponds, restored wetlands, and other ecological features that provide habitat, manage runoff, and improve recreational access.

Improve Mapping and Data to Support Resilient Land Use Decisions

h. Develop technical mapping tools, including stormwater drainage basins and flow paths, to guide City-led infrastructure decisions and support watershed-based planning.
i. Inventory land with geographic information systems (GIS) to identify priority sites for open space acquisition and hazard mitigation.

Promote Waste Reduction and Resource Recovery

j. Coordinate with the Kenai Peninsula Borough to support community recycling and resource recovery programs and explore opportunities for improved waste management.

Appendix J: Implementation Plan

Each chapter of the Core Plan includes a set of policies (goals, strategies, and actions) to guide the City, residents, and partners with achieving the community's vision. The following proposed implementation plan includes priority strategies that would be City-led. In the Core Plan, these are the strategies identified with the priority icon (✓). Priorities were selected based on community input, feedback from City staff, leadership, boards, and commissions, review of the 2008 and 2018 Comprehensive Plans and other relevant plans, reports, and City actions (e.g., City Council-adopted Capital Improvement Project list). Proposed action plans have varying specificity based on available data; for example, the cost of implementation is not available for all actions. These details will be revisited as the plan is implemented.

The following action plans provide broad guidance to support implementation of the comprehensive plan and should be considered working drafts subject to change. For example, many cost estimates are drawn from the City's FY26 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and reflect priorities at the time of adoption. The CIP is updated annually, and project costs and priorities may shift over time. Any proposed actions that require budget commitments or code changes will be further considered by the City Council for formal action and/or approval. As such, this implementation plan and proposed actions should not be considered a formal mandate to fully implement and/or fund all proposed City-led strategies and/or actions.

To support implementation, City staff, boards, and commissions will collaboratively prepare annual work plans based on the action plans. Annual work plans will consider existing and anticipated resources and will provide potential direction to City leadership and staff. As part of this annual work planning process, City departments will present on Comprehensive Plan accomplishments and proposed priorities to the City Council each year. The Community Development Department will create a website with tracking information for annual reporting of implementation progress.

Key to Icons in the Plan

🛠: **CAPITAL**. This action features a potential capital project (including those in planning and feasibility stages).

✱: **CODE.** This action recommends a specific code revision.

♦: **2018**. This action is adapted/carried over from the 2018 comprehensive plan.

Action Plan Tables

How are the action plans organized?

Strategy: Priority strategy; these are found in all chapters.

Actions: Near-term steps the City can take to move a strategy forward.

Who: Staff, committees, and partners who will lead and support implementation, in alphabetical order. Most actions will require collaboration to be successful.

Estimated Costs: Projected costs to implement the action over the next twenty years, when known.

Potential Resources: Potential funding sources to support implementation. The back of this appendix includes a reference list of lettered funding sources.

Target Timeframe: Approximate timeframe to complete the action, based on adoption date:

- Ongoing = no end date
- Short = 1-2 years
- Medium = 3-5 years
- Long = more than 5 years

Land Use and Environment Action Plan

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Funding Land Use and Environment Priorities: *To support implementation of strategies and actions in this section, see potential funding opportunities A, B, C, F, G, K, S, X, Z.*

Icon Key: 🛠 Capital Project | ✱ Code Revision | ♦ Action Carried Over from 2018 Comprehensive Plan

Strategy 1. Implement a Future Land Use Map that guides decisions about land use and growth.

Note: Actions associated with this strategy are encompassed in Land Use and Environment Strategy 2.

Strategy 2. Implement zoning reforms to support sustainable growth and attainable housing development.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Prioritize zoning reforms that expand housing choice, including support for higher-density and mixed-use development, infill, and housing types such as ADUs, townhomes, and modular homes. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
b. Create zoning tools like form-based codes and flexible use standards that accommodate evolving land uses and building types. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
c. Create consistent design and infrastructure standards that reflect neighborhood character and support multi-modal access. ✱ ♦	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
d. Align development regulations with community service availability, promoting growth in areas already served by schools, utilities, and other key services. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
e. Simplify and clarify the development approval process and related staff procedures. ✱ ♦	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
f. Improve enforcement and reporting procedures to address development-related health and safety issues, within scope of zoning and permitting authority. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
g. Gauge community and stakeholder support for zoning and policy tools that expand housing options, such as density bonuses, parking requirement adjustments, and other potential incentives for affordable and long-term housing development.	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
h. Modify zoning and permitting tools to support small business growth and economic resilience, including consideration for locally owned and emerging industries. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
i. Explore building codes and incentive programs to increase energy efficiency.	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
j. Clarify the definition of short-term rentals in city code (now referred to as Bed and Breakfasts) and define in what zones and under what circumstances short-term rentals may be allowed. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)

Strategy 3. Strategically align development regulations with natural hazard risks and land suitability to support safe, resilient, and responsible growth.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Use the City of Homer Hazard Mitigation Plan to inform updates to zoning and development codes, ensuring land use decisions reflect the latest risk assessments. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Clarify zoning procedures and criteria for rezoning reviews to maintain consistency with the comprehensive plan and hazard mitigation goals. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
c. Update development standards for steep slopes, drainage ways, and erosion prone areas such as shown on the environmental constraints overlay included in this plan, to manage grading, erosion, runoff, and vegetation clearing. Encourage the use of green infrastructure and site-responsive design solutions to improve drainage and reduce hazard exposure. ✱ ♦	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
d. Strengthen stormwater and erosion control provisions in City code, incorporating green infrastructure techniques—such as	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
vegetated buffers and infiltration features—to reduce coastal bluff erosion and other site-based hazards. ✱♦			
e. Improve coordination between subdivision design standards and site-level review to carry hazard mitigation measures through from platting to construction. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
f. Consider expanding the range of conditions that may be applied to Conditional Use Permits to address riparian protection, soil stability, wetland preservation, and related site concerns. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
g. Develop fill requirements for parcels located in targeted areas documented to contain 66% or greater hydric soils. ✱	City Administration, Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Strategy 4. Protect and enhance green space in Homer to support critical habitat conservation, recreational access, and community well-being.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Complete priority upgrades to existing City parks, including Karen Hornaday Park, Bayview Park, and Jack Gist Park. 🛠	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department, City Council	Karen Hornaday: $1.1M Jack Gist: $840k Bayview: $190k (all from FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Continue to improve existing trails and public access points to meet the needs of families, seniors, and residents and visitors with limited mobility. 🛠	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department, ADA Advisory Board	Undetermined	Ongoing
c. Enhance or improve safe public access to beaches at designated public access points as feasible. 🛠	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
d. Develop and implement a Master Park and Recreation Plan to proactively guide park maintenance, upgrades, and future facility needs. 🛠 ♦	City Administration, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
e. Continue to develop a city strategy for targeted open space acquisition.	City Council	Undetermined	Long (more than 5 years)

Public Facilities and Services Action Plan

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Funding Public Facilities and Services Priorities: *To support implementation of strategies and actions in this section, see potential funding opportunities B, G, I, K, M, N, O, P, Q, R, V, Y, Z.*

Icon Key: 🛠 Capital Project | ✱ Code Revision | ♦ Action Carried Over from 2018 Comprehensive Plan

Strategy 1. Provide safe, year-round public facilities for residents of all ages and abilities.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Maintain the library as a thriving community space for learning and connecting, including assessing the library's anticipated need for growth and improvements over the next decade and planning for upgrades. 🛠	Library Advisory Board, Library Department, Information Technology Department	Remodel engineering study: $75k (FY26 CIP)	Ongoing
b. Implement the 2023 City of Homer Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan for Parks, Play Areas and Campgrounds and the Transition Plan for City Facilities to correct deficiencies and implement policies that increase accessibility of Homer's public facilities and recreation spaces. Priority sites for upgrades include City Hall, Karen Hornaday Park, the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon Accessible Ramp and Fishing Platform, and removing parking and pavement barriers at City facilities. 🛠	ADA Advisory Board, Administration Department, Public Works Department, Port and Harbor Department	City Hall: $1.1M Fishing Lagoon Ramp & Platform: $770k Parking Barrier Removal: $386k (all from FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Plan for and construct a new, multi-purpose community center in Homer's downtown to serve the social, recreation, cultural, and educational needs of the Homer community. Preferred features include a general-purpose gymnasium, multi-purpose space for instructional programs, safe walking/running, dedicated space for youth, and possible emergency shelter. 🛠	Administration Department, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, City Council	~$16.05M (FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)
d. Demolish the Homer Education and Recreation Complex (HERC) and identify opportunities for remediation of the site. 🛠	Administration Department, City Council	Undetermined	Long (more than 5 years)
e. Consider and evaluate changing the City's organizational structure to provide park facilities and recreation services by establishing a dedicated Parks and Recreation Department.	Administration Department, Finance Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
f. Maintain City facilities at levels that are sufficient to support events that draw visitors such as festivals and activities (e.g., clean restrooms on the Homer Spit ("the Spit"), RV dump stations, adequate trash collection, etc.). 🛠	Administration Department, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
g. Update the Homer Airport Terminal to address deferred maintenance and improve accessibility. 🛠	Public Works Department, Administration Department, City Council	$1.3 M for initial repairs and renovations (FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)

Strategy 2. Continue to provide high-quality water and sewer services within the City to meet current and anticipated demands.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Update the 2006 Water and Sewer Master Plan.	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Continue to build, upgrade, and replace water and wastewater infrastructure to meet industry standards, changing regulatory requirements, and replace aging systems. ♦🛠	Public Works Department	$707k for wastewater treatment plant improvements $10.4 M for water storage and distribution improvements (FY26 CIP)	Ongoing
c. Maintain the water and sewer Capital Asset Repair and Maintenance Allowance (CARMA) funds for repair and replacement of facilities that serve existing customers.	Finance Department, Public Works Department, City Council	Undetermined	Ongoing
d. Use the Homer Accelerated Water and Sewer Program (HAWSP) to fund the design and construction of facilities that support new and existing customers.	Finance Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
e. Continue to limit and manage development in the Bridge Creek Watershed Protection District to maintain its suitability as a drinking water source.	City Council, Community Development Department,	Undetermined	Ongoing

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
	Planning Commission, Public Works Department		

Strategy 3. Maintain and improve Port and Harbor infrastructure.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Develop a long-range Port and Harbor Management Plan that considers the environmental and economic significance of the Spit, the impacts of climate change, and natural hazards like earthquakes, tsunamis, and erosion.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Erosion Mitigation: $4M (FY26 CIP)	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Maintain infrastructure to maximize longevity and ensure safety of users. 🛠	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
c. Maintain and promote Homer's status as a "working waterfront" by being a partner for the Alaska Marine Highway System, the U.S. Coast Guard, commercial operations, and other state and federal partners.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
d. Plan for and construct a large vessel haul out facility. 🛠	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	$5.3 M (from FY26 CIP)	Long (more than 5 years)
e. Consider opportunities to integrate complementary marine industrial and tourism uses, for example by constructing walking paths and viewing platforms that would allow visitors to observe aspects of the marine trades that they may not be able to see elsewhere. 🛠	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
f. Continue to explore the operational, financial, and environmental feasibility of the harbor expansion and related infrastructure, including environmental review, geotechnical studies, and funding strategies to align with public safety, traffic, and parking objectives on the Spit. 🛠	Port and Harbor Department, Community Development Department, Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, City Administration, City Council	$278 mil (Fy26 CIP)	Long (5+ years)

Strategy 4. Develop new facilities to support access and safety on the Homer Spit.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Develop new non-motorized infrastructure providing safe access to the harbor and improve the accessibility of existing infrastructure, including ADA improvements at the Fishing Hole. 🛠	ADA Advisory Board, Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
b. Further Develop parking at the base of the spit such as on existing underutilized airport parking areas on Kachemak Drive, designate formal parking areas to minimize parking in unsuitable areas, and consider seasonal shuttles and pay-to-park options in congested areas to reduce traffic. 🛠	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department, City Council	Undetermined	Long (5+ years)
c. Evaluate the need for a new parking structure on the Spit that could also serve as a shelter-in-place location during tsunamis. 🛠	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Long (5+ years)
d. Improve viewpoints for wildlife observation. 🛠	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department, Public Works Department, Planning Commission, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
e. Evaluate the uses of City-owned property on the Spit and confirm uses align with the needs and aesthetics of the area.	Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)

Housing Action Plan

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Funding Housing Priorities: *To support implementation of strategies and actions in this section, see potential funding opportunities B, G, L, U.*

Icon Key: 🛠 Capital Project | ✱ Code Revision | ♦ Action Carried Over from 2018 Comprehensive Plan

Strategy 1. Implement zoning reforms to encourage attainable housing development for young people, families, seniors, college students, and seasonal workers.

Note: Actions associated with this strategy are encompassed in Land Use and Environment Strategy 2.

Strategy 2. Assess Homer's housing needs and maintain data collection.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Complete a housing stock report and buildable lands inventory.	Administration Department, Community Development Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Evaluate the City's land portfolio to identify any feasible opportunities for strategic dispositions.	Administration Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Update housing indicators annually to track housing issues, constraints, needs, and opportunities.	Administration Department, Community Development Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
d. Monitor short-term rentals and their impact on the housing market and develop strategies to mitigate impacts of short-term rentals on year-round housing.	Administration Department, Community Development Department, City Council	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Economic Development Action Plan

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Funding Economic Development Priorities: *To support implementation of strategies and actions in this section, see potential funding opportunities A, B, D, E, G, I, M, N, O, P, Q, R, T, U, V, W, Y.*

Icon Key: 🛠 Capital Project | ✱ Code Revision | ♦ Action Carried Over from 2018 Comprehensive Plan

Strategy 1. Invest in infrastructure that supports economic growth in key sectors.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Incentivize sustainable growth of the marine trades in Homer to expand services offered locally, create jobs, support fishing, increase the City's taxbase, and reduce the need to travel to other areas of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. 🛠 ✱	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Economic Development Commission, Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
b. Continue to develop the Homer Spit (the Spit) in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner to provide opportunities for marine trades and tourism. 🛠	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Economic Development Commission, Port and Harbor Advisory Commission, Port and Harbor Department	Undetermined	Ongoing

Strategy 2. Celebrate Homer's status as a vibrant hub for arts, culture, and community engagement.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Update the Parks, Art, Recreation, and Culture Needs Assessment, and continue to expand City partnerships with other organizations and entities to implement recommendations.	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission Administration Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Support arts and culture installations and spaces in the community, including Homer's museums and galleries and on the Spit. 🛠	Economic Development Commission, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission	Undetermined	Ongoing
c. Collaborate with citizen groups and nonprofit organizations to address community needs by providing limited technical assistance and the option to use City land or facilities at reduced rates. ♦	City Administration, City Council	Undetermined	Ongoing
d. Increase the presence of Alaska Native art, signage, and history around Homer.	Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing

Transportation Action Plan

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Funding Transportation Priorities: *To support implementation of strategies and actions in this section, see potential funding opportunities A, B, C, F, G, K, S, X, Z.*

Icon Key: 🛠 Capital Project | ✱ Code Revision | ♦ Action Carried Over from 2018 Comprehensive Plan

Strategy 1. Build or improve safe roadway and pathway access and connections to key locations.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Improve non-motorized connections to schools. 🛠	Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Community Development Department, Public Works Department, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District	Undetermined	Varies
b. Implement recommendations in the Homer Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan. 🛠 ♦	Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Community Development Department, Public Works Department	$278k (FY26 CIP)	Long (5+ years)
c. Implement the 2024 Homer Transportation Plan to guide investment priorities, design standards, and multimodal connectivity improvements.	Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Community Development Department, Public Works Department	Varies	Long (5+ years)

Note: See the 2024 Homer Transportation Plan for related policies on the following topics: e-bike legislation, complete streets/all ages and abilities policy, traffic calming, bicycle safety campaign, parking study, neighborhood connectivity to schools, extension of the Homer All Ages and Abilities Pedestrian Pathway (HAPP) Loop, walking and biking infrastructure priorities, complete East-West connections.

Governance Action Plan

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Funding Governance Priorities: *The below policies are all internal and no funding sources have been identified to support implementation.*

Icon Key: 🛠 Capital Project | ✱ Code Revision | ♦ Action Carried Over from 2018 Comprehensive Plan

Strategy 1. Develop a long-term fiscal plan that is proactive, sustainable, and responsive to short-term challenges and opportunities.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Establish a six-year budget framework to improve financial foresight and stability.	Administration Department, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Align the Capital Improvement Plan with the six-year budget.	Administration Department, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Implement asset management across all city departments.	Administration Department in coordination with all other City departments	Underdetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Strategy 2. Diversify revenue streams to reduce dependence on sales and property taxes.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Increase financial reserves to mitigate risks from economic downturns or unexpected expenditures.	Administration Department, City Council, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Leverage City-owned land for development that aligns with economic and housing goals.	City Council, Community Development Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Explore the feasibility of taxation options.	Administration Department, City Council, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
d. Use tools such as bonds, tax increment financing (TIF), Business Improvement District (BID) assessments, and other mechanisms to finance infrastructure improvements and public amenities in designated redevelopment areas.	Administration Department, City Council, Community Development Department, Finance Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
e. Offer property tax abatements (City-wide or targeted) to developers to incentivize investment in higher-density projects.	City Council, Community Development Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
f. Support small business growth through targeted incentives to expand the local tax base.	City Council, Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Sustainability and Resilience Action Plan

See Appendix A for a list of acronyms.

Funding Sustainability and Resilience Priorities: *To support implementation of strategies and actions in this section, see potential funding opportunities A, B, C, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, Q, X.*

Icon Key: 🛠 Capital Project | ✱ Code Revision | ♦ Action Carried Over from 2018 Comprehensive Plan

Strategy 1. Modernize City operations for long-term efficiency and resilience.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Incorporate sustainability (long-term resource stewardship) and resilience (ability to adapt and recover from disruptions) into the design and evaluation of all City plans, policies, and capital projects. ✱	All City boards, commissions, departments	Undetermined	Ongoing
b. Conduct energy audits of City facilities and operations on a 10-year basis to identify cost-saving opportunities and inform capital upgrades. 🛠	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Transition City facilities and assets to more efficient and lower-emission energy sources where feasible. 🛠	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
d. Continue to seek grant funding and technical assistance for projects that restore ecological functions, reduce flood risk, or enhance long-term resilience.	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing
e. Explore the use of local or alternative building materials to reduce building costs and improve resilience.	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)

Strategy 2. Reduce risk from natural hazards through proactive siting and planning.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Relocate municipal buildings out of tsunami inundation zones where feasible and continue to consider hazard-prone or unsuitable areas in future development projects. 🛠	Administration Department, Community Development Department, Public Works Department	$11.4 M for Public Works facility (FY26 CIP)	Ongoing
b. Provide information and signage to educate residents and visitors about tsunami evacuation routes. 🛠	Administration Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Ongoing

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
c. Incorporate landslide risk analysis into City planning using tools such as LiDAR mapping and geotechnical field assessments, with an emphasis on bluff areas most vulnerable to development and climate impacts. 🛠	Community Development Department, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
d. Continue to implement the Homer Beach Policy and Management Plan, including enforcement of existing regulations, establishment of future regulations, and public education to maintain, preserve, protect, and promote enjoyment of Homer's beaches. ♦	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department, Parks, Art, Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee, Police Department, City Administration	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years)
e. Evaluate current bluff stability best practices in City infrastructure design standards, including guidance for street extensions, trails, utilities, and ROW projects near coastal or inland bluffs. Incorporate if needed.	Public Works Department, Planning Commission	Undetermined	Long (5+ years)

Strategy 3. Enhance natural drainage systems.

Action	Who	Estimated Costs	Target Timeframe
a. Update and adopt the City's Low-Impact Development Plan (also referred to as the Green Infrastructure – Stormwater Master Plan) to incorporate current data on erosion, water quality, and flooding. The updated plan should identify strategic opportunities for wetland preservation and enhancement as a form of natural stormwater management.	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
b. Continue to incorporate green infrastructure approaches (e.g., rain gardens, vegetated buffers, permeable surfaces) into City-led projects.	Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years)
c. Continue to integrate wetlands, riparian areas, and other natural drainage features into the City's capital planning, permitting review, and long-term infrastructure decisions.	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Short (1-2 years), Ongoing
d. Explore incentives, recognition programs, or voluntary guidelines that encourage sustainable development practices on private land.	Community Development Department, Planning Commission, Public Works Department	Undetermined	Medium (3-5 years) long

Funding Opportunities to Support Implementation (alphabetically by name)

Below are potential funding opportunities to support implementation of the priorities in the comprehensive plan. The funding opportunities are referenced by letter in the "Potential Resources" columns in the action plan tables above. This list is intended to offer broad guidance for implementation. Details for each funding opportunity are likely to change over time, and some funding opportunities may not be renewed. At the time of plan development, the federal funding landscape is rapidly evolving, and these opportunities may no longer be available in the future. The list below was compiled prior to July 2025.

Each funding opportunity is summarized using the categories below:

- **Name**: The name of the funding opportunity, with a hyperlink to more information. Each funding opportunity was given a unique letter to use for reference in the action plan tables above.
- **Funder**: The agency or organization who funds the opportunity
- **Relevant Chapters**: The chapter(s) that are most relevant to the funding opportunity; when a chapter name is listed here, the funding opportunity is connected to one or more actions in the tables above.
- **Award Information:** Details regarding funding availability, minimum and maximum award amounts, estimated number of awards made annually, and other helpful insights. These numbers are subject to change and are based on most recent information; not all opportunities will have this level of detail.
- **Eligibility:** A description of who is eligible to apply for the grant (note: other entities not listed may also be eligible, check opportunity for further eligibility questions).
- **Description**: A summary of the purpose of the opportunity, including what types of projects/activities are eligible.
- **Due Date/Frequency**: The deadline for the funding opportunity and the typical frequency to apply based on past grant cycles.

A. Alaska State Capital Project Submission and Information System (CAPSIS)

Funder: Alaska State Legislature; Must contact Alaska State Representatives to begin the process.
Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment, Public Facilities & Services, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, Sustainability and Resilience
Award Information: Amounts range. Recent trail and recreation projects have received between $1 and $6 million.
Eligibility: State, locality, or Congressional district
Description: The Alaska State Capital Project Submission and Information System (CAPSIS) is the system that allows organizations to submit funding requests for capital projects to their legislators for consideration and approval.
Due Date/Frequency: Annual; Contact Homer State Representatives in the fall to begin process.

B. Coastal Program FY25

Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment, Sustainability and Resilience
Funder: U.S. Dept. of the Interior (DOI), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

Eligibility: City governments, Native American tribal governments & organizations, nonprofits
Award Information: Total Funding: $6M; Award Ceiling: $500K.
Description: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Coastal Program is a community-based program that helps coastal areas with technical and financial support to address complex conservation challenges of priority coastal ecosystems. This support is mainly provided through cooperative agreements with conservation partners and landowners, including state and Tribal agencies. The goal is to restore and protect fish and wildlife habitats on both public and private lands. Coastal Program staff work with partners, stakeholders, and other Service programs in important areas for conservation. They set goals and priorities for habitat conservation in these focus areas. The program has specific lists of priority species and focus areas for each U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service region. Applicants seeking technical or financial assistance from the Coastal Program are required to contact a local Program office BEFORE developing or submitting an application. You can find this information in the current strategic plan at this link or by contacting your local Coastal Program office at this link. Projects are developed collaboratively by partners and Service field staff. All Coastal Program projects must align with the missions of the U.S. Department of the Interior, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Coastal Program. They are also based on sound biological principles and the best available science.
Due Date/Frequency: September 30, 2025.

C. Commercial Fishing Occupational Safety Training Project Grants

Funder: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - ERA
Relevant Chapters: Economic Development
Award Information: Max: $975,000; Min: $250,000; Estimated Total Program Funding: $3M; Expected # of Awards: 20.
Eligibility: Native American tribal organization or government, City governments, Small businesses, Nonprofits
Description: The goal of the training grant program is to enhance the quality and availability of safety training for United States commercial fishermen. Availability includes the frequency, geographic considerations, channels or partners of dissemination, culturally and/or educational appropriate training material, and other characteristics of a successful training program. As a result, the Coast Guard and NIOSH invite applications to support the development and implementation of training and education programs that: develop and deliver training which addresses the needs of commercial fishermen in the United States, provide qualified marine safety instructors, or otherwise accepted by the National Maritime Center instructors and faculty to conduct the training, evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the training program on reducing injuries among fishermen, and coordinate with existing training programs and partnerships with industry fishermen.
Due Date/Frequency: January 31, 2028.

D. Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program, Alaska

Relevant Chapters: Economic Development, Sustainability and Resilience
Funder: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), Rural Development (RD)
Award Information: Grants can be approved up to 75% of project; typical award range is up to $150K

Description: Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and/or improve essential community facilities, to purchase equipment, and to pay related project expenses. Examples of essential community facilities include: 1) Healthcare facilities such as hospitals, medical clinics, dental clinics, nursing homes, or assisted living facilities; 2) Public facilities such as town halls, courthouses, airport hangars, or street improvements; 3) Community support services such as child care centers, community centers, fairgrounds, or transitional housing; 4) Public safety services such as fire departments, police stations, prisons, police vehicles, fire trucks, public works vehicles, or equipment; 5) Educational services such as museums, libraries, or private schools; and 6) Utility services such as telemedicine or distance learning equipment
Due Date/Frequency: Open Year Round.

E. Community Support for Marine Debris Removal

Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment, Sustainability and Resilience
Funder: NOAA and State of Alaska
Award Information: Total $2M. Award Ceiling $200K. # of awards: 10
Description: Projects may consist of onshore or boat-based activities to remove marine debris from coastal areas and waters, such as derelict fishing gear, beach litter, etc. Removal locations may include bays, marshes, and beaches as well as upstream sources such as coastal adjacent streams, rivers, ponds, and shorelines.
Due Date/Frequency: Anticipated release December 2025.

F. Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS)

Funder: United States Senate Committee on Appropriations; Need to contact senators for consideration (Sen. Murkowski / Sen. Sullivan)
Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment, Public Facilities & Services, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, Sustainability and Resilience
Award Information: $200,000 to $14.4 million for selected infrastructure and community development projects. Average award amount for selected community development projects is $2 million.

Eligibility: State, locality, or Congressional district
Description: This process allows Alaskans to identify and receive federal assistance for needs in the state. The CDS has funded a range of infrastructure, energy, and community development projects. In 2023 the CDS through Murkowski's office secured funding for approximately 24 projects with an average award of $2 million ranging from $200,000 to $5.6 million.

Due Date/Frequency: Annual; FY26 requests were open from January 6, 2025, to March 31, 2025. Monitor in January 2026 for FY27 requests.

G. Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG)

Relevant Chapters: Sustainability and Resilience
Funder: State of Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM)
Award Information: 2024 EMPG Program funds will only be used to support emergency management staff salaries for activities outlined in your application work plan. Requires 50% match.
Description: The 2024 EMPG continues FEMA's and the Alaska DHS&EM's efforts to sustain and enhance all-hazards emergency management capabilities. Emergency management must coordinate for natural and man–made hazards, as well as technological events, that threaten the security of the homeland and the safety and well-being of citizens.
Due Date/Frequency: Annual and typically published between April and July.

H. Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund (ESHPF)

Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment, Public Facilities & Services, Economic Development, Sustainability and Resilience
Agency: National Park Service
Deadline: July 15, 2025
Award Information: Min: $75,000; Max: $15M; Est Total Program Funding: $48M; Expected # of Awards: n/a.
Description: The National Park Service Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund (ESHPF) program supports recovery, and related expenses, for historic and cultural resources in areas impacted by natural disasters occurring in calendar years 2023 and/or 2024 that have received a major disaster declaration pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act). Resources must be listed in or determined eligible by the applicable State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, equivalent Tribal register, or designated a National Historic Landmark, either individually or as contributing to a district. Unlisted resources must be listed in the National Register or equivalent Tribal register by the conclusion of the grant. Eligible resources must have incurred damage by a natural disaster with a major disaster declaration in calendar years 2023 and/or 2024.

I. Environmental Regulatory Enhancement

Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment, Sustainability and Resilience
Funder: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Native Americans (ANA)
Award Information: Total Funding $2M; Award Floor $100K; Award Ceiling $900K; # of Awards: 4
Description: The ERE program enhances the ability of tribal governments to provide effective stewardship over the lands, water, and air that encompass their communities, following tribal cultural preservation and natural resource management priorities to achieve environmentally healthy and sustainable communities.
Due Date/Frequency: Anticipated release January 2026 / Annual.

J. First Nations Grant Programs

Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment, Sustainability and Resilience
Funder: First Nations Development Institute
Eligibility: Federal- and State-Recognized Tribal Governments, Native-controlled nonprofits, Native 7871 Organizations, Fiscally-sponsored Native community organizations.
Award Information: Depends on the program; recent program awards have ranged from $1,000 (Native Agriculture & Food Systems Investments Scholarship) to $50,000 (Advancing Tribal Conservation Easements Grant)
Description: Grants opportunities are available throughout the year to support tribal projects in the following program areas: Native Foods & Health, Native Youth, and Community Asset-Building.
Due Date/Frequency: Varies, grants tend to be one-time opportunities in specific subject areas. One recent grant opportunity included "Advancing Tribal Conservation Easements Grants."

K. Homes Production Grant Program

Relevant Chapters: Housing
Funder: U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Award Information: Total Funding $40M; Award Floor $1M; Award Ceiling: **$**2M**;** Est. # of Awards 20;
Cost sharing/matching required
Description: The Healthy Homes Production Program (HHP), part of HUD's broader Healthy Homes Initiative since 1999, aims to tackle multiple childhood diseases and injuries by addressing housing-related hazards comprehensively. Unlike programs targeting single hazards, HHP integrates efforts to control various environmental health and safety risks in housing units. Cost sharing/matching required. Key objectives include protecting vulnerable residents, such as children and elderly, from these hazards in low-income housing, promoting cost-effective healthy home practices, and building local capacity for sustainable hazard prevention. The program emphasizes collaboration between health and housing sectors, supports economic opportunities for low-income individuals, and ensures environmental justice and compliance with disability regulations. It aims to enhance housing quality while safeguarding public health through integrated, community-focused initiatives.
Due Date/Frequency: Last due September 3, 2024 / Annual.

L. Humanities in Place Grant Program

Funder: Mellon Foundation
Relevant Chapters: Economic Development, Public Facilities & Services
Award Information: Typical award range is $250,000 - $1 million.
Eligibility: Most grants are made to non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations. Proposals are accepted by invitation.
Description: Humanities in Place supports a fuller, more complex telling of American histories and lived experiences by deepening the range of how and where

our stories are told and by bringing a wider variety of voices into the public dialogue. Working with media, heritage and public spaces, history museums and other institutions, and conveners of shared experiences—including the digital or ephemeral—we strive to expand the public expression of the histories that have made us and the values we hold. Our program works across and within diverse communities, encouraging bold, innovative rethinking of past practice, as well as visionary new approaches for how to collectively understand, uplift, and celebrate more complete stories about who we are. Through the program's strategy of "Promote Greater Engagement and Understanding", these grants support projects and programs with a place-based focus that promote greater access, interaction, and exchange of stories and experiences toward a fuller appreciation and understanding of a wider variety of our histories, narratives, and expression. This grant supports exhibitions and interpretive materials and supports public places and institutions.

Deadline: Rolling.

M. Museums for America

Funder: Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)
Relevant Chapters: Public Facilities & Services, Economic Development
Award Information: Total Program Funding $21.7 million, Award Floor $5,000, Award Ceiling $250,000 with an average of $180,825 per award . Est. # of Awards: 120
Eligibility: State, local, or tribal government or be a private, nonprofit organization, must qualify as a museum.
Description: This program supports museums of all sizes and disciplines in strategic, project-based efforts to serve the public through exhibitions, educational/interpretive programs, digital learning resources, professional development, community debate and dialogue, audience-focused studies, and/or collections management, curation, care, and conservation. This is a 1:1 cost-share funding opportunity.
Deadline: Forecasted for release with a November 14, 2025 deadline.

N. Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP)

Funder: U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration
Relevant Chapters: Economic Development, Public Facilities & Services
Award Information: Max: $125M; Min: $1M; Estimated Total Program Funding: $500M; Expected # of Awards: 40.
Eligibility: Native American tribal government, City governments, County governments
Description: Eligible projects for FY 2025 PIDP grants shall be located either within the boundary of a port, or outside the boundary of a port and directly related to port operations or to an intermodal connection to a port. Grants may be made for capital projects that will be used to improve the safety, efficiency, or reliability of: (1) the loading and unloading of goods; (2) the movements of goods into, out of, around, or within a port, such as for highway or rail infrastructure, intermodal facilities, freight intelligent transportation systems, and digital infrastructure systems; (3) operational improvements; (4) environmental improvements, including projects to improve port resilience; and (5) port and port-related infrastructure that supports seafood and seafood-

related businesses, including the loading and unloading of commercially harvested fish and fish products, seafood processing, cold storage, and other related infrastructure.
Due Date/Frequency: September 10, 2025.

O. Public Humanities Projects

Funder: National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
Relevant Chapters: Public Facilities & Services, Economic Development
Deadline: September 10, 2025
Award Information: Total Program Funding $5.5 million (both deadlines combined), Award Ceiling $400,000 ($550,000 with staff position added). Est. # of Awards: 13
Eligibility: a nonprofit organization, an accredited institution of higher education (public or nonprofit), state or local government or one of their agencies, a federally recognized Native American Tribal government.
Description: This program supports projects in three categories: Exhibitions (permanent, temporary, or traveling); interpretive programs at Historic Places; and Humanities Discussions. Projects must engage humanities scholarship to analyze significant themes in disciplines such as history, literature, ethics, and art history. Awards support projects that are intended to reach broad and diverse public audiences in non-classroom settings in the United States. Projects should engage with ideas that are accessible to the general public and employ appealing interpretive formats. Public Humanities Projects supports projects in three categories (Exhibitions, Historic Places, and Humanities Discussions), and at two funding levels (Planning and Implementation).

P. Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs

Funder: Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA)
Relevant Chapters: Public Facilities & Services, Economic Development, Sustainability and Resilience
Award Information: Min: $100,000; Max: $30M; Expected # of Awards: 3,000.
Eligibility: District Organization; Indian Tribe or Consortium; State, County, City or political subdivision of a State; Institution of higher education; public or private non-profit organizations
Description: EDA intends to advance general economic development in accordance with EDA's investment priorities, but also to pursue projects that, where practicable, incorporate specific priorities related to equity, workforce development, and climate change resiliency so that investments can benefit everyone for decades to come. Each project funded must be consistent with at least one of EDA's Investment Priorities: Equity; Recovery & Resilience; Workforce Development; Manufacturing; Technology-Based Economic Development; Environmentally-Sustainable Development; and Exports & Foreign Direct Investment. Each project must be consistent with the region's current Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Funds may be awarded through EDA's primarily construction-oriented Public Works program or through the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program, which provides investments to support a wide range of construction and non-construction activities. Applicants do not need to specify the program (Public Works or EAA) for which they are applying. EDA will consider the application under the most appropriate pool of funding.

Due Date/Frequency: There are no application submission deadlines. Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until the publication of a new PWEAA NOFO, cancellation of this PWEAA NOFO, or all available funds have been expended. EDA intends to review applications expeditiously upon receipt of the complete application.

Q. Rasmuson Foundation

Relevant Chapters: Public Facilities & Services, Economic Development
Deadline: Rolling
Award Information: Example project range, not a prediction of future amounts $35,000 - $1.5 million
Eligibility: Eligible organizations will either be an established 501(c)(3), or a local or Tribal government.
Description: Rasmuson Foundation offers a variety of grant programs to respond to community priorities, ranging from capital needs to programmatic or strategic projects. By not having restrictions on sectors or focus areas for our grantmaking, they look to their partners to identify what is most important to their communities. **Community Support Grants**: The Foundation anticipates awarding approximately 10 to 20 mid-sized grants annually, ranging from $35,000 - $250,000. **Legacy Grants**: The Foundation anticipates awarding approximately 10 to 15 grants over $250,000 annually. Legacy grants are most applicable to the Homer Strategic Priorities. Recent examples of awards at this level include a new childcare facility, a small business development program, a new hub for business and community connection, and the creation of a quota bank to promote rural and indigenous access to fisheries.

R. Recreational Trails Program Grant

Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment
Funder: Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Award Information: Award Floor: $0. Award Ceiling: $300,000 for Motorized/Motorized diversified projects and $200,000 for Non-motorized/Non-motorized diversified projects.
Description: DPOR offers this competitive, reimbursable, matching trail grant for maintaining public recreational trails and related facilities, and for safety and educational projects.
Due Date/Frequency: September 30, 2025 / Annual.

S. Save America's Treasures

Funder: National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
Relevant Chapters: Public Facilities & Services, Economic Development
Deadline: December 10, 2025 (forecasted)
Award Information: Total Program Funding $26.5 million in FY24, Award Ceiling $750,000 (FY24).

Eligibility: a nonprofit organization, an accredited institution of higher education (public or nonprofit), school districts, state or local government or one of their agencies, a federally recognized Native American Tribal government.
Description: This program provides preservation and/or conservation assistance to nationally significant historic properties and collections. Grants are awarded through a competitive process and require a dollar-for-dollar, non-Federal match, which can be cash or documented in-kind. The grant program is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

T. Small Surface Water and Groundwater Storage Projects (Small Storage Program)

Relevant Chapters: Public Facilities & Services, Economic Development, Sustainability and Resilience
Funder: U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation
Award Information: Total Funding $43.5M; Award Ceiling $30M; # of Awards: 7
Description: This program's objective is to enhance water storage opportunities for future generations by funding small surface water and groundwater storage projects. The program funds up to a 25% Federal cost-share to plan, design, and construct surface and groundwater storage projects between 200 and 30,000 acre-feet that will increase water storage or move water to or from a storage project.
Due Date/Frequency: Apr 17, 2026

U. Social and Economic Development Strategies for Alaska

Relevant Chapters: Economic Development
Funder: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Native Americans (ANA)
Award Information: Total Funding $2M; Award Floor $100K; Award Ceiling $900K; # of Awards: 3
Description: This program provides targeted support for community-based, Village-specific projects to improve and strengthen the administrative and management capacity of Alaska Native Village governments and governments that are central to social and economic self-sufficiency in Alaska. This announcement promotes economic and social self-sufficiency for Alaska Natives and is intended to respond to the unique governmental structures in Alaska at the Alaska Native Village level.
Due Date/Frequency: July 2025 / Annual.

V. Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program: Non-compete grants

Funder: Environmental Protection Agency / Philanthropy Northwest (administrator)
Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment, Sustainability and Resilience
Award Information: $75,000 non-compete grant option
Eligibility: Eligible applicants include those serving areas with populations of 50,000 or fewer people.

Description: Over three years, Philanthropy Northwest will be distributing over $40 million in grants to communities and tribal nations who have been negatively impacted by environmental changes in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.
Due Date/Frequency: August 1, 2025. Complete non-compete grant request here.

W. United States Marine Highway Program (USMHP)

Funder: U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration
Relevant Chapters: Public Facilities & Services, Economic Development, Transportation
Award Information: Max: $14,042,621; Expected Number of Awards: 25. Includes a 20% minimum match requirement.
Eligibility: Native American tribal organization or government, City governments, Small businesses, Nonprofits
Description: The United States Marine Highway Program (USMHP) statute authorizes the U.S. Department of Transportation ("Department" or "DOT") to make grants to implement Projects or components of Projects that 1) provide a coordinated and capable alternative to landside transportation; mitigate or relieve landside congestion; promote Marine Highway Transportation; or use vessels documented under 46 U.S.C. chapter 121; and 2) develop, expand, or promote Marine Highway Transportation or shipper use of Marine Highway Transportation
Due Date/Frequency: July 15, 2025 / Annual

X. Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program in Alaska

Funder: USDA Rural Development
Relevant Chapters: Land Use and Environment, Public Facilities & Services
Award Information: Current loan interest rates effective 4/1/25: Poverty: 2.500%; Intermediate: 3.375%; Market: 4.250%.
Eligibility: Most state and local governmental entities, private nonprofits, federally-recognized tribes.
Description: This program provides funding, in the form of long-term low-interest loans, and grants (if funds are available) for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage to households and businesses in eligible rural areas. Areas that may be served include: rural areas and towns with populations of 10,000 or less; Tribal lands in rural areas; and colonias. Funds may be used for drinking water sourcing, treatment, storage and distribution; sewer collection, transmission, treatment and disposal; solid waste collection, disposal and closure; and storm water collection, transmission and disposal.
Due Date/Frequency: Applications accepted on ongoing basis.

Appendix K: Border Expansion Process

The following is from the 2018 Homer Comprehensive Plan, Appendix B, to guide Chapter 7 Governance Strategy 4, Action e: *Develop a clear and orderly process to assess the need and apply for the expansion of the boundaries of the City of Homer, which is likely to be necessary over the coming decades as surrounding areas grow and develop.*

Summary

Develop a clear and open public process for future changes to City of Homer boundaries. Explore a planned, phased possible expansion; and initiate and establish regional planning processes with the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

Existing land use and future growth around the periphery of Homer has significant impacts on the quality of life, the environment, and the economy of those who live and work within city limits. As a consequence, the City needs to be open to the possibility of annexing lands beyond city boundaries. Some of the specific benefits for those in the annexed areas include:

- Access to water for domestic use
- Improved fire protection services
- Improved street maintenance and snow removal services
- Improved law enforcement services provided by the City police department (as continued growth in outlying areas requires more services than the Alaska State Troopers can provide)
- Local control over planning and zoning (when done in a manner that reflects local values, city planning and zoning authority can help avoid the intrusion of incompatible uses into neighborhoods and help maintain and increase property values)
- Right to vote for elected representatives in Homer, and serve on City Boards and Commissions (currently sales tax provides the majority of the city's revenue. People outside city boundaries pay sales tax but don't vote for the people who make the decisions about how sales tax money is spent)

Step 1: Develop a clear and orderly process to assess the need and apply for the expansion of the boundaries of the City of Homer, which is likely to be necessary over the coming decades as surrounding areas grow and develop.

Step 2: Develop a fair, planned process for involving affected members of the public when considering annexation.

Step 3: Develop land use and infrastructure policies to address issues such as access and water use for areas that may be annexed in the future.

Winners of the Homer Comprehensive Plan photo contest, clockwise from top left: Tim Hatfield, Kyra Wagner, Tim Hatfield, John Bushell, Derek Mueller