

# Frequently Asked Questions

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### What is Planning & Zoning?

Elements characteristic of city planning include:

- general plans that summarize the objectives of (and restraints on) land development;
- zoning and subdivision controls that specify permissible land uses, densities, and requirements for streets, utility services, and other improvements;
- plans for traffic flow and public transportation;
- strategies for economic revitalization of depressed urban and rural areas;
- strategies for supportive action to help disadvantaged social groups; and
- guidelines for environmental protection and preservation of scarce resources.

### **Who Plans?**

It is the planning commission which has the statutory authority to engage in planning, platting, and zoning. The mayor appoints seven residents to serve on the planning commission. One member may live outside Homer City Limits. Terms runs for three years. The Homer Planning Commission is advisory to the Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission for platting and comprehensive planning.

What are the duties of the Planning Commission?

In its advisory capacity the planning commission can recommend certain planning ordinances to the council which can enact those recommendations into law.

The commission shall prepare and recommend to the council:

- a comprehensive plan consisting of maps and related texts for the systematic development of the city;
- a zoning ordinance to implement the plan;
- a subdivision ordinance;
- the official map of the City; and
- modifications to the documents specified above.

In the regulatory capacity the planning commission shall:

- act upon requests for variances;
- act upon requests for conditional uses.

In an advisory capacity to the Boroguh, the commission makes recommendations on platting actions.

### **What is the Comprehensive Plan?**

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, of the city, and may include topics such as: statements of policies, goals, standards, and land use plan, a community facilities plan, a transportation plan, and recommendations for plan implementation.

### **What is Zoning?**

Zoning is a tool for implementing the comprehensive plan. Zoning regulations are designed to:

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- provide for orderly development;
- lessen street congestion;
- promote fire safety and public order;
- protect the public health and general welfare;
- prevent overcrowding;
- stimulate systematic development of transportation, water, sewer, school, park and other public facilities.

Zoning is directed at the way land is used, at building size, lotline setbacks and so on. Districts within a municipality are defined and restrictions are placed on what can be done with or on the land within these districts. Subdivision regulations control the size and arrangement of lots, street, and utilities.

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